Africa with Lions

Compiled by André T. Morkel

The family farm near Somerset West and Cape Town was far away from the wild life associated with Africa. Even when stamouer Philip Morkel settled at *Onverwacht* in 1713, there would have been few, if any, of the larger game animals around. The shipwrecked sailors of the *Schonenberg* walking from Cape Agulhas to the farm in 1723 shot a hippopotamus for food on the way, but that was on the far side of the mountains bordering the Hottentots Holland.

Some years later members of the family ventured deeper into Africa, to Bechuanaland and Rhodesia (now Botswana and Zimbabwe) as told in the series "*Voorburg* Morkels" and "*Morgenster* Morkels". The following stories about lions are from P.W. Morkel's Family History(1). I was alerted to one of these fascinating tales when Mick Graham-Smith, originally from Southern Rhodesia mentioned that an acquaintance, Gary Brockman, had an ancestor saved from a lion attack by a Morkel. We met Gary and he showed us a magazine of 1898 with an account as experienced by his great-grandfather Ernest Brockman, who survived the attack by a ferocious lion. Gary mentioned that Ernest afterwards worked as a postmaster in the Cape Province town of Montagu where kids would gather to look at his hand minus some fingers. Jenny Morkel (3) worked at Telkom with Jacqueline Wetselaar, a great granddaughter of Ernest Brockman – once again a Morkel and Brockman working together for a telecommunications company. The skull of the lion is in Jacqueline's family and her mother Jean (née Brockman) took photos of the skull and a claw set in a pendant.

Part 1
Brockman and the Lion

The story (1, p27) as related by Daniel Johannes MORKEL (1869 – 1903).

From a newspaper extract.

The death of Mr Dan Morkel, which we chronicled yesterday, calls to mind that his life as a pioneer has been full of thrilling adventure and hairbreadth escapes. One of the most thrilling adventures he himself described.

Writing to a friend from the African Transcontinental Telegraph Camp, Mitsidjie, Mr Morkel says: -

> "on September 5, between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning, I heard there was a lion in the camp. I jumped out and took my gun with me. A few minutes elapsed before I could make out where the lion was. I called out to Brockman whose hut was about 40 yards from mine, but got no reply. I then thought Brockman was outside trying the shoot the lion, as he was very anxious to shoot one. On walking up to his hut I met his Native boy shivering and calling out: *Nkango! Nkango!* (Lion. Lion). I called out to my boys (300) in the camp to bring fire. They came out of their Msasas (huts) but could not move. After I had discovered that the lion was inside the hut with Brockman I fired several shots through the roof to frighten him out, but he stuck inside roaring all the time. It was pitch dark. I expected the lion to jump out any moment.
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> All this time there was not a sound from Brockman, and I could not make out what he was doing, and it was too dangerous to fire into the hut for fear of hitting Brockman. All of a sudden Brockman shouted to me: "For God's sake save my life. He has got hold of me". I rushed to the door of the hut with a torchlight of grass in the one hand and my gun in the other. I kicked the door open, stepped a few yards back, and threw the light to see where to fire. The lion then rushed out dragging Brockman along. I fired, and hit the lion just below the eye, which dropped him, and Brockman dropped at the same time. Brockman then jumped up, ran 10 yards and fell. The lion was making a tremendous noise in his death agony. The boys then shouted "*Nkango atawa"* (the lion is running away). I called out for a light but they all shouted "*Kjopa ambira"* (we

are very frightened). I wanted to give the lion another shot, but my cartridge stuck, so I rushed up to him and hit him across the nose, which settled him. I broke my gun in two.

After all this I wanted to send for Dr. Croft to Domira Bay, five miles away, and it took me a considerable time to get Native boys to go away from the camp in the dark. Brockman was bleeding dreadfully all the time, and all I could do was to put him in a warm bath, which relieved the pain. I can assure you that it was not a pleasant time. I have since heard from Brockman (in a letter written by a mission lady) that he cannot thank me enough for saving his life, and I also received a letter from Capt. Daly, a representative of the U.S.A. Company and the A.T.I. Company, congratulating me on saving Brockman's life".

It will be remembered that Mr. Dan Morkel was of Major Forbes' party, who were supposed to have been murdered on the telegraph line between Tete and Salisbury, and where he showed considerable pluck in going back and burying the remains of Captain McCullum, who was so fearfully mutilated by the Mashonas. For his intrepid deed he was highly commended by Major Forbes, and it was his intention to accompany Major Forbes to Cairo with the line and get the handsome bonus of £5,000 offered by the right Hon. Cecil Rhodes.

Comment by Mrs. P.A. Morkel:
At the time this adventure with the lion occurred, my husband and myself were living at Blantyre, Nyasaland *(now Malawi).* It was just after the late Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897, when all Nyasaland had gathered together in Blantyre to celebrate, that Mr. Brockman and my brother-in-law, Dan, bid us goodbye and left for their long trek into the wilds. With them were their native boys carrying the material for the Transcontinental telegraph line.

When I next saw Mr. Brockman passing through Blantyre on his way to England, just shortly after he left the Mission hospital, he was and looked a wreck. It was a miracle he ever recovered from this dreadful mauling. Two of his fingers had been chewed off, the flesh down his one thigh had been torn down, he limped and his nerves were shattered. He told me that at night he could not sleep alone in a room, the eyes of the lion like coals of fire and his foul breath as he grabbed hold of him and pulled him from the bed, still haunted him.

Mr. Brockman lived in England for a while but later returned to Salisbury, S. Rhodesia (he died not so long ago in Cape Town).

Dan died in 1903, at Fort Jameson, N. Rhodesia, where he was buried – (he was a brother of my husband.) The above incident is a copy of a newspaper cutting still in my possession.

Ernest Brockman's account

Gary Brockman has the details of this terrible incident as related by his ancestor Ernest Brockman.

Published in *The Wide World Magazine* of June 1898 (2).

Out of the Lion's Jaws
By Ernest Brockman

The most appalling true narrative on record.

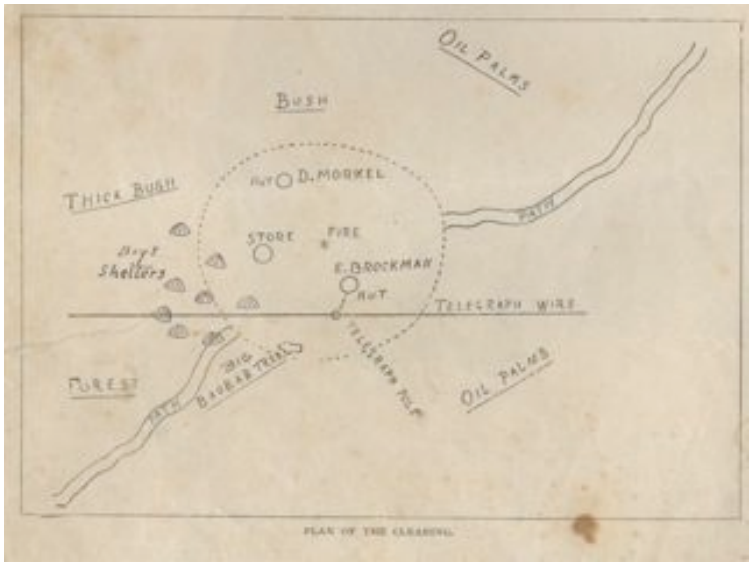
My name is Ernest Brockman and my present age is 28. In May 1896, having served the Chartered Company as postmaster and telegraphist in Mashonaland *(now part of Zimbabwe)* I returned to England for six months holiday. At the expiration of this period I went back to Africa, making straight for Beira *(a port in the then Portugese colony of Mocambique),* where in December of the same year I was introduced to Major Forbes, who represented Mr Cecil Rhodes in Northern Rhodesia *(now Zambia),* and had charge of the telegraphs and general administration of that particular territory. The construction of the Trans continental telegraph – Rhodes' pet Scheme, the "Cape to Cairo" telegraph – was being actively pushed forward, and major Forbes suggested that I should join the working party "at the front" going direct to Chinde, at the mouth of the Zambezi.

I promptly acted on this suggestion, and some weeks later found myself one of a very large party of telegraph workers at the very heart of Central Africa. The great work is going on surely and rapidly. Yet it is practically unknown to people at home. We worked in sections or gangs, each section being

composed of 100 or 200 natives under the command of a white man experienced in the work of telegraph construction. The first gang cleared the forest along the route where the wire was to be laid, the next gang dug holes for the poles, and the third section fixed the poles upright and placed the insulators in position. The section I had charge of was the last of all, and my duty was to test the wire after the ordinary work of the day was finalised. I had to see that proper communication was maintained with our base at Blantyre, so that we could order up stores as required. Our object was to take the wire right up to Lake Tanganyika, whose northernmost point was about 700 miles from the extreme south of Lake Nyassa.

About the beginning of October last year, I found myself settling down to work in the telegraph camp about 30 miles distant from Kota Kota. My mate, the only other white man at a place beside myself – was a stout hearted Irishman *(sic)* named Dan Morkel; and we had a following of about 50 natives. Our camp was established and a small clearing in the great forest about two hundred yards in circumference. This clearing was almost entirely encircled by oil palms, which stretched away on all sides for countless miles, interspersed at intervals with groups of rubber trees and prickly cactus. This open space also contained three regularly made huts, built for us by the natives, whilst they themselves put up curious little brushwood shelters for their own use. My friend Morkel occupied one of the huts, the second was used as a storage-house, whilst I was the occupant of the third. These huts were circular in shape, and about 10ft in diameter. It is necessary here to say a word or two about the construction of the huts. Stout poles, 2ft or 3ft apart, were first of all driven into the ground to form the skeleton of the hut, and the walls were simply of matting, woven out of strips of shredded bamboo. There was, however, an inner coating of twisted grass, and a thatched roof or the same material.

My hut was near the centre of the clearing, and close by it was the telegraph wire on which we were working. A small wire ran right down into my hut, and was connected with a telegraph instrument resting on a cask that stood by my bedside. The cask itself contained our sugar and was used by me as a table. My bed was composed of four bamboo stumps, with bamboo netting stretched between them, on which a mattress was laid, and I was provided with a couple of pillows and two or three blankets. Above the bed was a mosquito net, supported on bamboo poles at the corners, and enveloping me completely like a big square meat-safe. The bed I should mention, stood close to the wall of the hut, almost opposite the doorway, which was merely a small opening, blocked up at night by a shield of grass and bamboo. My Lee-Metford rifle stood leaning against the sugar barrel, where I had placed it on retiring to rest. These details may be uninteresting in themselves, but they are, nevertheless, necessary to a complete realization of my terrible tale.



PLAN OF THE CLEARING

On the fateful day I rose soon after sunrise – say about quarter to six – and, as I had no very pressing business on hand, I went out into the forest round about for a little shooting, accompanied by two or three of the natives. My luck was not very great however, although I succeeded in potting a hartbeest; and I returned to the camp about four o'clock, when I had tea with Dan Morkel in the open air. When the meal was over, we sat smoking before the big fire our boys had lighted for us, and we continued to tell yarns to another until nearly ten o'clock. This gossip in front of the camp fire in the open air was our regular custom on fine nights. At this time the dry season was drawing to a close, and the weather was not quite as warm as it had been. At a little after ten o'clock I began to yawn, so I rose to my feet and tried to peer out into the extraordinarily dense darkness of the night. I said goodnight to my companion, and we each went off to our respective huts, intending to go to bed without further delay. I was not sleepy, however, and after getting into bed I commenced to read a copy of *Tit-Bits* that had reached me by the last mail. My reading lamp was the end of a candle, stuck in an old whisky bottle, and placed on the sugar cask by the side of the telegraph instrument. I gradually dozed off and lost consciousness. The next thing I remember was waking suddenly up about midnight and listening to the

doleful howling of the hyenas that surrounded the camp. These brutes were afraid to come too near but as they didn't seem inclined to go away, I thought it would be a good idea to go out and see what effect a shot might produce amongst them. I drew on my coat and trousers, and took my rifle, and went out into the darkness, where nothing was visible except the hideous eyes of the hyenas gleaming amongst the forest trees. The silence of the night was strangely oppressive – so much so, in fact, that I thought of going across to Morkel's hut and asking him to come out and have a shot with me. I changed my mind, however, as he was not a keen sportsman, and went noiselessly over to my hut, when I fastened up the door again, and then slipped into bed.

I couldn't have been there long before I fell into that sound sleep from which I was to have such a ghastly awakening. It was – as near as possible- two o'clock in the morning when I suddenly became conscious of something moving backwards and forwards, and up and down underneath my bed. Just as consciousness was growing clearer and stronger, a loud, long, and indescribable *sniff, sniff,* broke the stillness of the night. Though my experience of Africa was not extensive, I instantly realized that my death was at hand, and that *a man-eating lion was under my bed!* No other animal, as I knew perfectly well, would be bold enough to come right into my hut in this manner.

Now, everyone will ask what were my feelings in this dreadful situation. Well, all I can say is, that everyone of my faculties seemed to be utterly paralysed with horror. Though perfectly conscious of everything that was going on, I was unable to utter a sound. My heart beat as though it would burst, and its tremendous throbbings almost suffocated me. I was almost fainting with terror at the thought of so fearful a fate. After a moment or two I became aware that the lion had got out from under the bed, and was sniffing his way along the edge, perhaps a little puzzled by the mosquito curtains. I then seemed to realize that I *must* do something, and instinctively, yet as noiselessly as possible. I huddled up all the pillows and bedclothes up over my head and face – actuated by the same instinct, perhaps, which prompts little boys and girls to dive under the bed-clothes when afraid of the bogey man.

No sooner had I done this than the lion, with a horrible *purr, purr,* grabbed me by the right shoulder, and dragged me out on to the floor, bedclothes and all. The brute immediately commenced to suck the blood that streamed down my neck and chest, and every time I moved he bit more savagely. As I raised my knees to get into a crouching, protective position, he gave me a little pat with his paws which nearly broke my leg, and inflicted a dreadful wound. After a moment or two of this awful experience on the floor of the hut the monster dropped me out of his mouth, placed one proud and massive paw on my chest, and then, throwing back his noble head, he gave one, two, three, four terrific roars of triumph and defiance. As these mighty, reverberating sounds died away in deep, hoarse growls I could hear the devil's own uproar outside. The natives were firing off their guns like mad – the wonder is they never killed each other. I afterwards learned that the first thing each of them did was to swarm up the nearest available tree to get out of harm's way. It is necessary to bear in mind that a darkness prevailed in the clearing which might, in homely language have been "felt".

"MORKEL LEVELLED HIS RIFLE AND FIRED"

It seems that Morkel was awakened at the first roar, and without a moment's delay he got out of bed, put on his trousers and hat, and then sallied forth with his rifle, thinking that the lion must be very close to the camp, judging from the loudness of the roar he himself had heard. He made his way, or rather felt his way, over to my hut, doubtless wondering why I had not come out to meet him. He was guided partly by the excited cries of the natives, and partly by the loud purrs of the frightful brute that had got me. When Morkel got to the door, he cried out, "Brockman, where are you? Speak to me, for God's sake!" I heard him, as indeed I had heard everything else but was unable to utter a sound, though I was fully aware that my life depended upon it.

Morkel must have worked round my hut, and seen the hole made by the lion, who simply pushed the poles on one side, and then tore out the mat walls, and crawled under my bed. Then, of course, poor Dan realized what had happened, and he ran round to the other side, and kicked the door down.

All this time, the only thing I seemed to take an interest in was the loud sipping suck, made by the lion as he drew my life-blood into his reeking jaws. I remembered with a pang of regret, that I had not lived a model life recently and began to pray as I had never prayed before. As I prayed I thought how curious it was that I should be lying there without the slightest sense of pain, with a man-eating lion chewing my flesh and drinking my blood. I *could* not realize the full horror of the thing.

I had been lying on my back on the floor of the hut with my neck and head resting against the side when Morkel kicked in the door. As he did so the lion drove his terrible fangs into my right groin, and the next moment, with another loud *pur-r-r-r,* he leapt out of the hut into the darkness – almost into Morkel's face. As he ran with me he seemed to be twisting and jerking me round side-ways, as though striving to get me on his back. You may imagine Dan Morkel's feelings as he groped around in the inky darkness, screaming out first to one native and then another to bring lighted bunches of grass, for god's sake. He found his way into my hut, and on feeling in the bed he placed his hand in a large pool of blood, which gave unmistakable information as to what had happened. The lion ran across the clearing with me for about thirty yards, and put me down under a big boabab tree, the situation of which is shown on the accompanying sketch-plan.

"HE DEALT HIM A TERRIBLE BLOW ON THE HEAD"

He ran with a springy leap, purring loudly as he went, for all the world like a contented cat. Even as he ran he was sucking violently, and as the flesh became dry in one place, he let me half drop out of his jaws, and then bit savagely in another place, and commenced to suck again. If I moved an arm he bit it viciously, and an uneasy jerk of my leg would be punished by a terrible scrape of the claws. I lay on my back at the base of the tree with the lion on top of me, occasionally gazing at me with his great, luminous, greenish yellow eyes, which seemed to fill me with unutterable loathing and horror, so expressionless and cold were they, yet so diabolical in their ruthless cruelty.

I ought to tell you that from the very first I had not ceased to wonder how it was that the lion didn't kill me outright – either by biting my head or tearing me to pieces with his terrible claws. I had seen lions kill oxen by driving their heads down between their legs and so breaking their necks, and I knew that if the monster who was drawing my blood in streams into his mouth only chose to kill me, he need only give me one tap with his all-powerful paw.

But the lion seemed perfectly content and quiet with his prey. I felt his long, rough tongue scraping up my thighs and abdomen, and as it crept up higher and higher I felt little gusts of his horrible stinking breath, which was so loathsome that I thought I should faint, so intense was the disgust that filled me. I had turned my head away, but still the long greedy tongue rose higher and higher towards my throat. Up to this time I had been reflecting in a strangely calm manner, on the curious aspects of this frightful affair, precisely as though I were a disinterested outsider, instead of the dying victim of a man-eater. As I felt the lion's carrion soiled jaws near my face and throat, however, I was seized with terror, and instinctively I threw up both arms, and thrust them far in between his jaws, almost down his throat. As I did so the monster snapped off three fingers of my right hand, and, horrible as it may seem to the reader, I actually left my arms and hands lying idly in the lion's jaws. "Thank God," I thought, "he is satisfied with sucking the bleeding fingers he has bitten off, and as long as I can keep him at arm's length I will yet have a few moments of life left for earnest prayer." And I prayed – God! How I prayed. Sometimes it seemed to me it was a little hard to die in this way, and I felt I didn't want to leave my bones in that horrible place. My life, however, was ebbing away, and later on I didn't seem to mind it so

much. I grew fainter and fainter, and – so I am told- I kept moaning feebly, “Dan, Dan. Oh, why can’t you shoot him, or do something? Oh, Dan, Dan, Dan.”

Constantly my thoughts reverted to my people at home, and I felt bitterly sorry on their account, for I knew how horrified and shocked they would be at my terrible end. After thinking of these things for a few moments, I would resign myself to death with a feeling of complacency, and then next moment, perhaps I would have some kind of vague idea that I should be saved after all. I could distinctly feel each bite, because, although it caused not the slightest pain, yet, as the fearful fangs were driven into a fresh place in my thighs – the monster only chose the more fleshy parts – I was conscious of a strange numbness in that particular part. I kept murmuring to myself, gently “Perhaps he won’t kill me after all – perhaps he will, though the moment he has sucked that place dry. I wonder when he will commence eating me”; and then I reflected, quite in a serious sort of way, “He will find me very dry eating, after all the blood-sucking he has done.”

During all this time the boys kept screaming *“Nkanga, Nkanga!”* (the lion, the lion), just as if they themselves were in any danger in the lofty trees up which they had swarmed. Poor Dan Morkel was simply waltzing around the clearing in utter bewilderment and agony of mind. The appalling blackness of the night added a horror to the thing which no pen could describe. At last my friend did induce two of the natives to make a couple of torches of dry grass, and by the lurid and uncertain light of these, Morkel was enabled, though very indistinctly, to see the lion standing over my prostrate body.

He was an enormous gaunt brute, over 10 ft. in length, and with a luxuriant tawny mane that imparted to him a majestic appearance. Dan told me afterwards that, as he approached with his gun, I was moaning or crooning softly to myself. Up to this time my unfortunate companion was afraid to shoot, lest he should kill me instead of the lion. He screamed out, “Keep cool, Brockman” – a funny admonition, this – “only keep cool, and I will do what I can for you!” As he approached, the lion took his fangs out of my groin, which was by this time a mere pulp and he faced about, growling and snarling horribly, and with one big paw on my chest.

"PHOTO OF MR BROCKMAN, TAKEN IN THE OFFCE OF "THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE" REPRESENTING HIM AS HE CAME OUT OF THE HOSPITAL”

How Morkel kept his head at ten paces from the lion I don’t know, but, anyhow, he levelled his rifle and fired. The lion immediately staggered back a few paces, clear of my body, for he had been hit fairly in the eye, and the ball, after touching his brain, had come through the lower jaw, which it had broken badly. Morkel immediately proceeded to reload, but he was in such a desperate hurry that the lever of his rifle jammed, and he found himself practically helpless. Will it believed that this desperate man, now fairly at his wits’ end, rushed forward towards the lion and dealt him a terrific blow on the head with the stock of his rifle? This did the lion no harm, whereas Morkel’s gun was literally crumpled up. My friend, however, at once implored his torch-bearer to run over to the hut and get my rifle, and with this he killed the lion in two other shots.

It may be asked, what did I do when I felt myself free? It is important to remember that when Morkel’s first shot rang out in the night air, the lion had been worrying, biting, and sucking me for about *thirteen minutes.* Well, the moment the brute retreated from me, I actually got up on to my legs and ran for twenty or thirty yards! Then I fell like a stone to the earth, and I remember no more until the next day, when I found myself in a warm bath, that had been prepared by Morkel to wash my wounds – *of which I had one-and-twenty !* My poor friend tells me that my naked body presented so shocking, so revolting a spectacle, my hands, groins, and thighs being chewed bloodless, like paper pulp, that he nearly lost his reason, and became delirious. All that night, however, my heroic companion had sat by my bedside until daybreak, and well do I remember that with awakened consciousness came the first poignant shock of agony from my wounds. For many days and nights I suffered the torments of the accursed, taking not one atom of solid food, but only enormous draughts of brandy and champagne.

Now comes the horrible sequel to my story. Remember, at this stage I am hundreds, if not thousands, of mile from civilization, and even the nearest doctor is far away from this remote spot. Without wishing to harrow you with unnecessary details, I may say that every one of my wounds mortified – no doubt to the poisonous filth that incrusted the man-eater's fangs. As I was growing rapidly more and more feverish, Morkel resolved to send me by lake steamer to Bandawe, where I would be attended by Dr. Prentice, of the Livingstone Mission at that place. This steamer was due to make its monthly call the following day at Domara, only a few miles from our camp. A messenger was therefore sent to intercept the captain, and ask him to make a call a little further down, the lake in order that I might be put on board. I was wrapped in blankets and laid on a plank, which in turn was placed transversely on a canoe. Just after we had started for the steamer, however, quite a "sea" arose on the lake and the plank shifted to one side, so that if I had not been grabbed by one of the men in the boat, I should have drowned! Is it not pitiful?

It took a day and a half to reach Bandawe, the weather being boisterous, and the water very choppy. A little hut was rigged for me on the deck, but I had a shocking time of it. When Dr. Prentice saw me at the mission station he told me that my case was utterly hopeless. My right leg, I was told, would have to go, but owing to my condition, it was deemed inadvisable to amputate it immediately on my arrival. There was no chloroform at the mission and the ether had gone wrong through the climate, and therefore would not act. Thus I had to lie, conscious and screaming, in agony, while the doctor was cutting and carving away the mortified flesh from all parts of my tortured body. It is perfectly clear that my day had not come, for all the bites in the thigh had missed the artery by about an eight of an inch.

And night after night I went through the whole fearful business again. Ghastly, horrible nightmares took possession of me, and I would have gone raving mad were it not for the powerful opiates that were administered. A slamming door, the sudden appearance of a man before me, anything and everything, threw me into a perfect agony of terror, pitiful to witness. My mind and reason were all but gone, and I, who had been a giant of strength, was like a timid little child, a mere wreck of a man in mind and body.

The British South African Company have been very kind to me, for, of course, it isn't as though I had gone out hunting, when naturally, I should have to take the risks incidental to sport of that kind. I believe mine is the only case on record of a man-eater taking a white man out of his bed at night. I still hobble about on sticks, and I often wake up in a cold perspiration, thinking I can hear the soul destroying sniff, sniff of the man-eating lion beneath my bed.

(Note: Two pictures, "Ernest Brockman" and "The lion grabbed me by the right shoulder" in the magazine were too indistinct to be copied)

Skull and Claw (set in a pendant) of the Lion that attacked Ernest Brockman

Photo Jean Wetselaar (née Brockman) (3)

Part 2
Lost in the Bush and Licked in the Face by a Lion

MORKELS IN RHODESIA (1, p50ff)

Dr Hans Sauer, the friend and collaborator of Cecil Rhodes, who accompanied him on his famous visit to make peace with the Matabele in the Matopos tells a good deal about a member of the Morkel family. In his well-known biography "Ex Africa", Dr Sauer writes:

> "On the Umzingwani River we found some transport wagons under the conduct of Morkel, whose father was a well-known coach proprietor and transport rider in Griqualand and the Transvaal. Morkel had with him his several men travelling as passengers, amongst them an Afrikander from the old Colony, to whom the vast stretches of the Bushveld were new and unknown. One afternoon this youth left the camp armed with a shotgun and three cartridges. He had set out to shoot some guinea fowl or a small buck for the pot. Morkel and his friend heard three shots fired at about a mile distant from the camp and concluded that the hunter had bagged something and would presently turn up at the camp.
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> "As the afternoon wore away and the short African twilight set in they began to feel uneasy at the absence of their companion, and when night fell they fired off guns at regular intervals in order to give the missing man some indication of the position of the camp. They also lighted large wood fires in the hope that the glow from these would catch the eye of the man lost in the bush. The gun-firing and the beacon-lights were all in vain. The missing man did not return, and as lions were not uncommon, they came to the conclusion that the worst had happened. Next morning search parties were organised and the forest country was well beaten for miles around the camp, without result. The search continued for considerably more than a week, and all hope of finding the lost man had almost been given up, when Morkel riding out in a last attempt, suddenly saw a ragged figure running through the bush. He rode down the fugitive, who, on the near approach of Morkel, dived underground into an ant-bear (aardvark) hole. After much difficulty Morkel succeeded in extricating his post passenger. The man, however, was now nothing but a gibbering idiot; his clothes were torn to ribbons by the wait-a bit thorn-bushes *(wag 'n bietjie"),* and his fingers, with which he had dug up roots to eat were bleeding and wounded. He could not speak and made gibbering noises like an ape. Morkel had to overpower him and tie his hands before he could get him back to the wagons.
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> "The sick man was sent on, under guard, to Fort Victoria, by the weekly coach which worked between Mafeking and Salisbury. It took more than three months for him to recover his sanity and general health. He acted as postmaster of Umtali for years after his recovery."

Dr Sauer continues:

> "Morkel himself, a year or two after, was the victim of a terrible adventure. With a friend he had gone on a prospecting expedition in the Zambesi Valley, where – I think on the north bank of the Zambesi – they established a camp from which they operated. As a protection against lions they had built a large hut or room with stout wooden poles lashed together, the roof being thatched with grass. The hut contained two stretched beds also built of wooden poles with cross piece and covered with cut grass serving as mattresses.
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> As often happened in those days. both Morkel and his companion were stricken down with malaria, and were so ill that they were confined to the hut under care of their native servant. They were now so weak that neither of them were capable of movement, and one night a lion entered and began licking the exposed side of Morkel's face. He soon became aware of this licking but could do nothing to protect himself. Fortunately his companion woke up, saw the lion and shouted at the native. The boy heard the shout, leapt up, and taking a burning log entered the hut and thrust the torch into the lion's mane. This courageous act put an end to the scene, as the lion bolted without delay. On examining his master, the boy found that the lion has almost entirely licked away one side of this face. Both Morkel and his friend recovered, but Morkel was terribly disfigured for life.

A.R. Morkel was one of the close friends of the great scout and hunter, Frederick Courtney Selous. It was he who, in 1917, wrote to the Selous Memorial Committee, after the pioneer had been killed in the east African campaign:

"The natives around my farm all remember him though it is well over 25 years since he was last here; and it is pretty good testimony to his character that, wherever he travelled amongst natives, many of whom I have talked to about him, he was greatly respected and esteemed as a just man. We the settlers of Rhodesia, will always have this legacy of him, that he instilled into those natives a very good idea of British justice and fairness".

(Mick Graham-Smith mentioned that his father knew Arthur R. Morkel who was a magistrate)

Sources:

1. Philip William Morkel, 1961. *THE MORKELS. Family History and Family Tree*. Published privately.

2. The Wide World Magazine. An illustrated Monthly of True Narrative. Vol I. April to September 1898. London. George Newnes Ltd. Southhampton St., Strand. p 225 – 233 (June 1898 edition).
   This is a fascinating magazine with travel and adventure stories from around the world, written in the style of that period, when the British Empire was at its peak. Its motto was "Truth is Stranger than Fiction".

3. Jennifer Morkel and Jacqueline Wetselaar. Emails November 2010 and March 2011.

Family lines.

There are four Morkels mentioned in the above stories – Daniel Johannes Morkel, his brother Paul Andries Morkel, an unidentified Morkel quoted by Dr. Sauer and A.R. Morkel. It is possible that Sauer's unidentified Morkel is either Daniel or A.R.

The Morkel Dr Sauer wrote about had a father who ran coaches and transport. I could not locate a coach/transport owner in the Morkel family but there is an intriguing possibility. The Zeederberg family was well known for their coaches to Kimberley and Johannesburg in the 19th century. Daniel Johannes Morkel's grandmother was a Zeederberg – a promising lead. However, his father, also Daniel Johannes Morkel was the owner of *Morgenster*, the beautiful farm in Somerset West and did not operate coaches.

Family line of Daniel Johannes Morkel and Paul Andries Morkel.

a1 **Philip Morkel *27.2.1677 (Date uncertain) Hamburg Germany, † *(Onverwacht,* Hottentots Holland) 12.4.1735** x 25.3.1708 Maria Biebow ~25.3.1708 †1713 **xx 17.11 1713 Catharina Pasman ~ 17.8.1691 †29.3.1764.**
b3 Willem ~ 25.1.1718 †1788

b3 **Willem Morkel ~25.12.1718 + (*Onverwacht)* 1788** x 11.5.1749 Sara van Brakel ~ 11.11.1716 †28.3.1759 **xx 22.7.1759 Helena Catharina Malan *(Morgenster)* ~ 11.3.1736 †27.10.1825.**
c6 Daniel Johannes ~ 2.9.1764 †15.8.1825

c6 **Daniel Johannes Morkel ~ 2.9.1764 †(*Onverwacht)* 15.8.1825** x date ? Hester Sibella Keeve ~ 17.12.1676 †13.1.1792 xx 6.9.1793 Maria Dorothea Louw ~17.12.1775 †1801 **xxx Sophia Alida Brink ~25.4.1808 †19.11.1824**
d9 Willem *3.6.1803 ~ 1.7.1804 †27.12.1876

d9 **Willem Morkel *3.6.1803 ~ 1.7.1804 †27.12.1876 *(Morgenster)* x Nov 1830 Isabella Margaretha Zeederberg *28.2.1809 †28.7.10.1886**
e1 Daniel Johannes *12.9.1832 †4.9.1894

e1 **Daniel Johannes Morkel * 12.9.1832 †4.9.1894 x Maria Adriana van der Bijl *2.1.1844 †26.12.1904**
f3 Paul Andries * 25.1.1868 x Jeanette Schulz
f3 Daniel Johannes * 15.7.1869 †1903 age 34 at Fort Jamieson, Rhodesia.

Family Line of A.R. Morkel. (Arthur Loreth Rubidge Morkel?)

This Morkel is mentioned only briefly above and I list only the basic outline.

1st: Philip Morkel x Catharina Pasman.
2nd: Willem Morkel x Helena Catharina Malan
3rd: Willem Morkel x Anna Margaretha Wium
4th: Willem Morkel x Esther Leonora Louw
6th: Pieter Loret Morkel x Susanna Petronella Wessels
7th: Petrus Johannes Morkel x Sarah Margaret Rubidge

8th: Arthur Loreth Rubidge Morkel Farmer at Shamve, Southern Rhodesia * 14.5.1871 at Bloemhof, Orange Free State †11.7.1937 at Salisbury x Alice Hendrina Southey * 22.9.1878 Graaf Reinet †20.9.1929 Johannesburg.
5 Children.