

Morris, Abraham, !Gami-#nun (Bondelswart) Commander

* ca.1872 at Warmbad

+ 29.05.1922 at Bergkamer in the *Haib River Gorge near the Oranje River

Abraham Morris was born in ca. 1872 at Warmbad.

He was a !Gami-#nun (Bondelswarts) military commander under Jakob Marengo between 1903-1906.

During the beginning of the German Nama War 1903-1913, the !Gami-#nun uprising in October 1903, he was Marengo's most important commander.

On 25.10.1903 a dispute about judicial power and the right to possess weapons arose between the Bondelswart Nama and the Germans.

Bondelswarts Chief **Jan Abraham Christian** and German District Chief Lieutenant **Walter Jobst** were killed during a violent clash in Warmbad.

The Bondelswarts rose up under the leadership of Johannes Christian, who succeeded his elder brother Abraham Christian, and Leutwein later reported that Jobst was mistaken in his judgement to use violence against Abraham Christian.

In the ensuing war against the Bondelswarts, the Germans were supported by Hendrik Witbooi.

After the death of Jobst, Lieutenant von der Bussche organised the defence of Warmbad.

On 10.12.1903 a battle was waged at the south-eastern edge of the Great Karas Mountains in which H. von Burgsdorff and his Witbooi Nama allies defeated the Bondelswarts under the command of Jakob Marengo and **Abraham Morris**.

The latter, who had a Scottish father and a !Gami-#nun mother became Marengo's military right hand.

Jakob Marengo, together with Morris, continued the war in the **Great Karas Mountains** where, as reported by Leutwein, Marengo exercised an "unusual human war style".

Two days later Lieutenant Böttlin was defeated by the Bondelswarts in the battle of **Hartebeestmund** at the Oranje River.

Böttlin and some of his men were wounded.

They were taken across the river to British territory, to the Roman-Catholic mission station at Pella.

During the Great Nama Uprising as from October 1904 he again joined Jakob Marengo.

His skillful guerrilla tactics gave the Germans a hard time.

On 25.11.1904 **the battle of Alurifontein**, south of Warmbad, was fought between the Germans under Captain von Koppy and Lieutenant Count Kageneck and Jakob Marengo with Abraham Morris and Johannes Christian, Captain of the !Gami-#nun.

Lieutenant von Heydebreck was killed.

The battle ended with heavy losses for the Germans.

Two days later Warmbad was attacked by Jakob Marengo and Abraham Morris.

On 10.03.1905 Abraham Morris was forced by Captain von Koppy to abandon the Garup waterhole.

The battle of Narudas ("Robber Henrick's Place") was fought against three German sections under Major von Kamptz and Captain Friedrich von Erckert (in presence of the commander of the southern front, Colonel Berthold von Deimling) (coming from the west), Captain von Koppy (coming from the south) and Major von Lengerke (sealing off the east).

Jakob Marengo and Abraham Morris were defeated and escaped in the direction of Khauxa!nas.

Marengo was wounded during the battle.

On 21.03.1905, after the battle of Narudas, a three kilometre German column of wagons with captured material headed for Keetmanshoop.

In spite of Marengo's injury, a battle was fought between the Bondelswarts and the Germans at **Uchanaris**, 60 km south east of Keetmanshoop.

The Germans suffered more casualties than they had at **Narudas**.

The Nama managed to recover some of their material losses suffered at Narudas.

On 05.08.1905 Abraham Morris attacked the Germans at Wortel (Nomaos). On 13.09.1905 a skirmish was fought at Guigatsis between Morris and the Germans.

After Captain Hendrik Witbooi was killed in action on 29.10.1905 at Vaalgras/Koichas, Morris continued the war.

In March 1906 the battle of Wasserfall at the Oranje River was fought by Captain Johannes Christian from the !Gami-#nun, Jakob Marengo and Abraham Morris against the Germans under Beyer.

On 08./09.04.1906 **the battle of Fettkluft** was fought by Jakob Marengo with Abraham Morris and Johannes Christian against the Germans under Heuck, with heavy losses for the Germans.

On 23.07.1906 Johannes Christian and Abraham Morris attacked Uhabis.

After this skirmish he moved to Steinkopf in the northern Cape Colony. Morris refused to return to Namibia, despite German attempts at negotiating a return to have him under control, as he was considered a threat.

Morris served as a scout to British forces in Namibia during World War One.

In April 1922, Abraham Morris, Jakob Marengo's co-commander who had fled German SWA (c. 1906) during the German-Nama War 1903-1913, returned home from exile in South Africa.

He crossed the Oranje River at Haibmund.

Morris and his party reached Guruchas (!Guruxas) near |Haib on 28.04.1922, where he was greeted by the Bondelswart Captain Jakobus Christian.

This was reported to the South African authorities in Warmbad and Windhoek. The SWA Administrator issued a warrant for Morris' arrest.

An attempt was made to bring Morris to Warmbad but the !Gami-#nun (Bondelswarts) refused to allow this.

Negotiations between the South Africans (Noothout, Superintendent of the **Dreihoek** reserve and Roman Catholic Father Krolkowski from Guruchas) and the Bondelswarts were stalled.

On 25.05.1922 Noothout's house at **Dreihoek** was raided by the !Gami-#nun.

Four days later the !Gami-#nun were attacked by South African soldiers using war planes, bombs and submachine guns, and there were more than 100 casualties on the !Gami-#nun side.

Abraham Morris was killed on 29.05.1922 in Bergkamer in the |Haib Gorge near the Oranje River.

A famous South African novel, James Ambrose Brown's "**The return**", was modelled after Morris' life story.

(By Klaus Dierks)

==

<http://www.travelnewsnamibia.com/tag/warmbad/>