ACTIVITY: Wading  
CASE: GSAF 1950.03.26 / SA-099  
DATE: Sunday March 26, 1950  
LOCATION: The incident took place in the Eastern Cape Province at Morgan's Bay, a holiday resort on the bank of the Ntshala River, 51 kilometres northeast of East London, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 32°42.3'S, 28°20'E

NAME: W.H. or N.H. Wright
DESCRIPTION: He was a male, a clerk at the Standard Bank in Johannesburg.

BACKGROUND
WEATHER: According to the East London meteorological station temperatures ranged from 15°C to 25°C, the humidity was 74% and, at 16h00, the barometric pressure was 29.75 inches. The sky was clear throughout the day. At 08h00 there was a six-knot southwesterly light breeze and at 14h00 a six-knot south-easterly light breeze was recorded.  
MOON PHASE: First Quarter, March 26, 1950
SEA CONDITIONS: The water was muddy.
ENVIRONMENT: Morgan's Bay lies in the lee of high cliffs which are nesting sites of white-breasted cormorants. Bird life is prodigious and there is a tranquil lagoon inside the river mouth. The day after the accident a large shark was seen less than a kilometre off Orient Beach, East London by the crew of the tug Mary. A report was made to the signal station and life-guards at Orient Beach were notified.
DISTANCE FROM SHORE: The incident took place within 100 metres of shore.
DEPTH: One metre
TIME: “Midday”

NARRATIVE: Four people had been in the water. Wright's wife had returned to shore and he was wading out for a “last surf” when his left ankle was gripped by a shark. He did not pull away; he kept still, reached down and hit the shark. The shark released his ankle, but its teeth lacerated his right hand.

INJURY: The wound on Wright's left leg extended from his instep to his foot above the ankle. Both sides of the leg and his right hand were lacerated.

FIRST AID: Wright limped to his hotel, about 100 metres away, where a doctor cleaned the wound. He was taken to Frere Hospital in East London by private car, arriving there about two hours after the accident.

TREATMENT: Wright was kept at the hospital for observation; he remained overnight and
was discharged the next day.

**SPECIES:** According to press reports the incident involved a “spear-eye” shark about 1.5 to 1.8 metres in length. (Spear-eye is a name used indiscriminately for a variety of species of smoothound sharks, soupfin sharks and grey sharks.)

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Marie Levine

*Caption: Mr. W. H. Wright, a clerk at Standard Bank in Johannesburg, was bitten by a shark at Morgan Bay, East London on Sunday. He is recuperating in Frere Hospital.*

*Photo courtesy Daily News.*