

Tygerberg Farmers object to VOC pricing policy in 1716

Samuel Walters, the first Free Burgher owner of Altydgegacht and several other farmers in the Tygerberg challenged the price control of wheat by the VOC in 1716.

On December 31, 1715 the Political Council decided that the price of wheat would be reduced (from f8:10 to 8 light Guilders per bag)¹. Samuel Walter, together with farmers from his community, presented a letter to Governor Abraham Douglas on February 26, 1716 requesting them to reconsider this decision. According to the signatories they had a lot of expenses:

*"jaarliks veele onkosten aan smits, wagenmakers, onderhouding van slaaven en verlies van deselve moeten bekostigen"*².

The original signatures of the farmers are shown in this historic document, the first of a farmer's revolt in the Tygerberg. The signatories (original spelling of the names on the document) were: Pieter Van der Westhuijsen from the farm Oude Westhof, Samuel Walter-De Tigerbergen, Anthonij from Rooijen-Bloemendal, Nicolaas Loubster-Welgemoed, Aletta Verweij-Doodekraal, Floris Slabbert-Contermans Kloof, Matthijs from Den Berg-Welvergenoeugd, Beatrix Verwij-Clara Anna's Fontein, Jan and Pieter Van de Westhuijsen-Elsieskraal/De Oude Wetshof, Jurgens Pieter van Den Heever-Meerendal, Hendrik Oostewald Eksteen-Lowenstein/Evertsdal. Most of these farmers were the ancestors of South African families and in all probability were a close-knit community. The descendants of these families have played significant roles within the South African history and economy.

Dit is het merk van Pieter van
den Westhuijsen

Samuel Walter

Anthonij

Dit is het merk van
Nicolaas Loubster

Aletta Verweij

Floris Slabbert

Matthijs van den Berg

Beatrix Verweij

Jan van der Westhuijsen

Pieter van der Westhuijsen

Jurgens Pieter van den
Heever

Hendrik Oostewald

A historical and unique document showing the signatures of 12 of the Tygerberg founder farmers protesting against the grain pricing policy of the VOC.

Source: Cape Archive

¹ Resolutiën, C35, 31.12.1715, TANAP transcription, Cape Archive, pp. 39-42.

² Requesten en Nominatiën, C223:1715-1717, Cape Archive, pp.107-109.