

# SLAGTERSNEK



In 1815, a farmer (Frederik Bezuidenhout) from the eastern border of the Cape Colony, suspected one of his Khoi labourers, by the name of "Booi", of theft and withheld his wages. Booi accused Bezuidenhout of abusing and mistreating him and Frederik Bezuidenhout was summoned to appear before a magistrate's court. He refused to appear in court twice and was scheduled for arrest. Bezuidenhout resisted and fled to a cave near his home where he defended himself against the soldiers sent to capture him. When he refused to surrender he was shot dead by one of the soldiers.

One of Bezuidenhout's brothers, Hans Bezuidenhout, swore revenge. Together with a neighbour Hendrik Prinsloo, Hans Bezuidenhout organised an uprising against the British colonial power, believed by them to be hostile towards the Afrikaner farmers. On 18th November 1815, a commando of rebels met an armed force from Landdrost (led by Jacob Glen Cuyler, the military commander on the eastern frontier) at Slachter's Nek. Negotiations failed and the majority of the rebels left without any shots being fired. Twenty rebels surrendered, followed by several more over the following days. However, some of the leaders, among whom was Hans Bezuidenhout, refused to turn themselves over to the British authorities. On 29th November 1815, they were attacked by colonial troops. Everybody but Bezuidenhout surrendered and, like his brother, Hans died while resisting arrest. The rebels were finally charged and tried at Uitenhage

The accused were:

- Hendrik Frederik Prinsloo
- Nicolaas Balthazar Prinsloo
- Wiilem Jacobus Prinsloo
- Nicolaas Prinsloo
- Wiilem Prinsloo
- Johannes Prinsloo
- Willem Krugel
- Hendrik van der Nest
- Cornelis van der Nest
- Stoffel Rudolph Botha
- Wiilem Adriaan Nel
- Thomas Andries Dreyer
- Johannes Bronkhorst
- Hendrik Petrus Klopper
- Jacobus Klopper
- Petrus Laurens Erasmus
- Joachim Johaunes Prinsloo
- Johannes Frederik Botha
- Hendrik Frederik Prinsloo
- Nicolaas Balthazar Prinsloo. (He took part in the Great Trek and was murdered with the van Rensburg trek party at Djindispruit, Limpopo River, Mozambique at the end of July 1836.)
- Hendrik Prinsloo
- Stephanus Bothma
- Abraham Bothma
- Cornelius Faber
- Theunis de Klerk



Some were cleared, others imprisoned or banished. Six were sentenced to death but one of these was pardoned by the Governor, Lord Charles Somerset. On 9th March 1816 the remaining five were hanged in public at Van Aardtspos.



Four of the nooses broke during the procedure as the hangman who came to perform the execution had not realised there were five to be hung, and old ropes had to be used. The four whose ropes broke, as well as the public, pleaded for their lives but Colonel Jacob Glen Cuyler (who was an American by birth and had remained loyal to Britain during the rebellion of the American colonies) ordered that they be hanged a second time and they were

hung one by one. The names of the five who were hanged were Hendrik Prinsloo, Stephanus Bothma, Abraham Bothma, Cornelius Faber and Theunis de Klerk.

Although many of the frontier boers did not support or agree with the rebellion, some Voortrekkers have claimed that it was one of the reasons for the Great Trek.

On 9th March 1916, exactly 100 years after the execution, a monument was unveiled on the spot where the hanging took place, on the N10 south of Cookhouse.

