



315  
DOMESTIC

EAST AFR. PROT.

C O  
36017

N<sup>o</sup> 36017

3 Oct. 08

Name of Individual

(Subject)

Residence & other

1908

Transvaal Farmers in E A P

9 Sept

Address

The party of 202 have complied with all conditions except possession of outlet of water required for improvements during five years. Ask that water be sent to go to allow them to take up land.

Signature Page

1/29/08

(Witness)

Mr. A. B. ...  
P. 36014. ...  
... drafted for ...  
36017. ...  
... matter also.

M.L. 13/10

P.S.R.

13/10

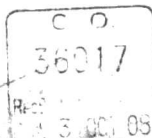
Copy for (name) ...

Signature Page

1/29/08

9th Sept/08.

To - The Rt. Hon. The Secretary of State  
for The Colonies,  
Colonial Office - L O N D O N.



Sir,

I have the honour to state that I am deputed by the party of Fransvaal Farmers recently arrived in British East Africa to beg for your most earnest and early consideration of our position.

Our party consists of 252 members including 67 men of age. We arrived at Mombasa on 16th July bringing with us our horses, waggons, carts, & other personal property, hoping to settle permanently in this country. Before deciding to come here and to face the heavy expense of doing so, we had carefully read the Government Reports and Laws for allotment of land for settlement in B.E.A.

At the earliest moment after arrival Mr. van Rensburg (late Commandant of Bethel, Fransvaal) and myself, as elected by the party, were kindly granted an interview by His Excellency the Governor who was then in Mombasa. We asked Major Leggett, who was in Mombasa, and who was a friend of ours in South Africa, to accompany us to the Governor.

The first question discussed was the financial means required of immigrants under the Law here. His Excellency said that each family on landing must have £50 and asked if Mr. van Rensburg and myself would guarantee the full amount under this Law for the whole party. This we did at once and permission was given that the whole party might land and go up-country. On this our friends loaded their waggons, horses &c on to the trains & left for Nakuru at once, having paid out over £500 on landing charges, Customs duties & railway rates.

At the same interview with His Excellency we discussed the Law for taking up land. The Governor's secretary gave us a copy of the Land Law before the interview. We informed His Excellency that we, personally, could vouch for the fact that all our party were working farmers, ready and anxious to settle and set to work on the land, & that we had already, through friends here laid out much of our capital in buying oxen for transport & ploughing, & that these were standing ready for us at Nakuru. We asked that an area might be allotted in bulk to our party, on the scale approved by the Law as for each family, & we said that if such area could be granted, we could arrange for all the money to be forthcoming to pay the Application Fees & Rents, & also for the Survey & Title Deeds which would be due after we had completed the amount of permanent improvements required by the Law. We wish very clearly to say that these were the only items mentioned to us either in the printed paper of the Land Laws or by His Excellency.

The Governor kindly agreed to the land being allotted in bulk so that the separate farms could be marked off by the community and we were told to see the Land Commissioner at Nairobi to fix the total area that might be applied for by the whole party and the Fees and Rents to be paid. Mr. van Rensburg and I went to see the Lieutenant Governor and the Land Commissioner at Nairobi. The latter told us that he could arrange to grant us the land in bulk, to be divided up by ourselves, & he suggested certain areas that we could inspect and apply for, viz:- South or North of the boundary of land already surveyed on the Guas Ngishu. He asked if we had seen the printed rules.

which show that 3000 acres of 3rd class land can be allotted per family, and he explained that the land we could apply for would be 3rd class land, and Rent one penny per acre. We had already seen these rules, and also knew from them that forty times the rent has to be spent on permanent improvements before anyone can get a title to the land and that this must be done within five years, failing which the land would be taken back by Government and all the work & money spent on it lost to the farmer. We were quite ready to accept these rules and to pay the Fees & Rents, and we returned to our party at Nakuru and set to work to inspect the land in order to make the application.

A committee of our party was sent out and returned at the end of August and we decided to ask for the land North of the surveyed area, and that we should ask for 150,000 acres. This is enough for 55 farms of 3000 acres. We might have asked for 57 farms making 301000 acres, one for each farmer of full age in our party, but we thought it best not to ask for more than would be worked as entirely distinct farms, & not for example to ask for two separate farms for cases of brothers working together.

Mr. van Rensberg and I then went to Nairobi to apply for the land. We arrived on September 3rd and were told at the Land Office we must deposit £5 for each 3000 acre farm. This we understood and were ready to do. But we were also told by the Land Office that we must show that we have £15,000 before the area could be granted. Next day we went again and were told a mistake had been made, & that our party must show £27,500 before the fifty-five farms could be granted.

This was the very first we had heard of a guarantee being needed. It is not put down in the Land Laws & was not in any way told us when we landed and saw the Governor, nor when we were told by the Land Commissioner that our party could have the area of so many 3000 acre farms in a block. We had been told that forty times the rent had to be spent on improvements before we could get any Titles, and that we should lose the land after five years if we did not do so much, but nothing was said about our having to possess all that large sum at the start.

His Excellency kindly granted us another interview and said that a Meeting of the Land Board would be held at once to give their views and we were asked to meet the Land Commissioner the next day. We did so and the Commissioner told us that he had received the Report of the Land Board but did not quite agree with it & that he could not alter the rule that had been made that every applicant must show at the outset that he had capital equal to forty times the rent.

Now, Sir, we are asked to show at the outset that we can possess the whole amount required for improvements which the Law gives us five years to do. We have as a party already spent over £2000 in coming here, on ships, Customs duties, railways, & the cost of living while waiting for land. We have capital, but not so much as we are asked to show, & not one of us is destitute or anywhere near it. We are all practical farmers & hope to make our homes on the land allotted to us and our earnings in the first five years will go largely into improvements, in addition to what we have to start with, and we quite understand that if we fail we shall not get Titles to the Land and that the Government can take back the land with all the improvements made by our work and our money. Every day we are kept waiting increases our expense & reduces our resources. We shall be very pleased to prove to the Government that we do now possess £10000 counting the cattle, implements &c bought for our work.

to beg that you may be pleased to consider these facts and if  
to cable to His Excellency so that we may take up the land  
title our families and get to work before our means are further  
lost, and so that we may get the advantage of the small rains  
October.

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We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

For the whole party -

*Salpitreros*

*J. J. P. ...*