

Wally

Wally worked his whole life on a plantation in Suriname during the 18th century. From sunrise to sunset, he was forced to plant, harvest and process sugar cane.

Jonas Witsen lived far away in Amsterdam. At the age of 25, Witsen inherited three plantations and all those enslaved on the plantations. Keen to earn more money, he enforced a stricter regime against the enslaved peoples. Wally and 155 other men, women and children enslaved on the Palmeneribo Plantation were forced to work an extra day and were given even less freedom. For Wally, enough was enough: "Our new master is rich enough; you fellows don't need to work so hard."

After a series of conflicts, Wally fled with a group into the forest. A few days later they were captured. The group was condemned to a slow and painful death by being burned alive. Afterwards, the decapitated heads of Wally and his supporters were displayed on pikes in the city as a warning to the other enslaved people.

Enslaved men digging trenches on a plantation in Suriname, c. 1850

View of the mill and the boiling house of the Waterland plantation in Suriname, Dirk Valkenburg, 1708

The Waterland Plantation, Dirk Valkenburg c. 1698-1718

"Kappa", large cast iron kettle in which sugar cane juice was distilled, 19th century

Musical Instrument made out of a calabash (bottle gourd), used in Winti rituals, before 1938

Gathering on one of the sugar plantations of Jonas Witsen, Dirk Valkenburg, 1708

Iron sugar cane machetes, c. 1800-1850