

"A Negro Stampede - Sharp Conflict Between Policemen and Runaway Negroes,"

New York (NY) *Herald*, August 17, 1862

<https://stampedes.dickinson.edu/document/new-york-ny-herald-negro-stampede-sharp-conflict-between-policemen-and-runaway-negroes>

A Negro Stampede—Sharp Conflict Between Policemen and Runaway Negroes.

From the New Orleans papers of the 4th and 6th inst. brought to this city by the steamer, we extract the following additional items of news:—

NEGRO STAMPEDE—DEADLY WEAPONS USED—DISPERATE CONFLICT BETWEEN POLICEMEN AND NEGROES.

[From the New Orleans *Delta*, August 5.]

We learn that there was a stampede of one hundred and fifty negroes yesterday from the plantations along the coast below the city.

This morning, about four o'clock, a portion of the above number, supposed to be twenty-five or thirty, were met by the police of the Third district about Montegut street, when a running fight took place, extending up to St. Ferdinand street. The negroes were armed with cane knives, scythe blades and clubs. When they saw the police the leader of the gang called to them to come, that they were drilled. The police, finding that the negroes were determined to resist, opened on them with their pistols and closed in with their clubs. They captured fourteen and killed one. Of those captured nine were so badly wounded that they had to be sent to the hospital. Five of them were pronounced mortally wounded. All of this party belonged to Mr. Morgan, whose plantation is about twenty-eight miles below the city. Four of the policemen were wounded, but to what extent we were unable to learn. There seems to be a lack of discipline on the part of some connected with the Third district police system to allow the public to be made acquainted with the doings of the police, except through certain quarters.

The body of the dead negro was lying at the station, awaiting the arrival of the Coroner. The other five we

saw in the lock-up. They are all tall, hearty, sprightly looking negroes, notwithstanding their dreful talk about being overworked and under paid. That, however, is usually the case with negroes; and it not unfrequently happens that those best cared for make the most complaints.

We understand that one of the negroes stated that two Frenchmen induced them to leave the plantation by telling them that if they could get to the city they would have plenty to eat and nothing to do.

Those in the lock-up denied that they intended to fight, but said they expected to be locked up in some jail where they could make complaint against the overseer. Still they were found with arms in their hands. The one who put in this plea, on being asked why he had a cane knife in his hands, answered that he picked it up where some of his comrades dropped it. And notwithstanding his denial to be locked up he attempted to escape by flight, when he was brought to by a stone which struck him in the back.

As this party passed the barracks it is stated two of them were stopped. Some of their cane knives being covered with blood, it was supposed they had a fight before they met the police.

[From the New Orleans *Post*, August 5.]

About half-past one o'clock yesterday morning the Third district was the scene of one of the most desperate negro affairs which this city has yet witnessed. Shortly before that hour the police of that district discovered coming along the levee a large band of negroes, evidently runaways, and determined to carry out their schemes at all hazards and cost. They were armed with all sorts of weapons which plantations afford, from cane bill-hooks to clubs.

When they reached about Montegut street, the police ordered them to halt, and proceeded to endeavor to arrest them. Instead of surrendering themselves, however, they immediately attacked the police in a most ferocious manner. The officers immediately called for further assistance, and were speedily reinforced, almost to the whole strength on duty in the district; but so furious were the negroes that they were in danger of being completely overcome. Their clubs and pistols were freely used, but so numerous was the gang of negroes that they were not equal to the task which had fallen on them. By this time the whole neighborhood was in a state of terrible excitement, and assistance from other quarters being absolutely necessary to save the police, a detachment of militia from adjacent quarters hastened to the spot and lent their aid. It did not take long after this to convince the negroes that they were overpowered, for three of them were soon killed, a number desperately wounded, and the mass of them scattered, some running in one direction, some in another, some jumping into the river and swimming off, and so forth.

The total number of the band, it would seem, was something like one hundred and fifty; but they were not all together at the time of the police attacking them. They had run off last night from plantations down the coast. From one, that of Thomas Morgan, Esq., some thirty have run off, thirteen of whom are now in the parish prison, nine in the Charity Hospital, and one killed.

Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands

National Park Service Network to Freedom / House Divided Project at Dickinson College

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We saw those in the Charity Hospital this morning. They are as follows:—

1. Henry, 18 years of age; born on the plantation of Mr. Morgan. He is badly contused about the head and elsewhere; not so badly, however, but what he was about to be sent from the hospital to jail. He says that the gang started from the plantation on Sunday night, when the moon was about two hours high.

2. Philip, aged 35 years, shot in the ear, and will probably die.

3. Lewis, 16 years old, severely contused about the head, but in condition to be removed from the hospital to jail.

4. Monroe, aged 20, with his skull fractured, and badly contused in various parts of the body. His condition is critical.

5. Adams, 25 years of age, heavily hit about the shoulder, and apparently stupefied by his share in the fight. He was to be removed to jail.

6. Hossy, aged 32, badly beaten about the head with clubs. Kept in the hospital.

7. Braxton, aged about 60 years; born, not like the preceding ones, on the plantation, but in Virginia. Severely hit on the back of the head, and with contusions elsewhere. He was to be removed to jail.

8. Joe, aged about 60; like the foregoing, from Virginia. Shot in the upper part of the thigh and severely contused with club blows.

9. Johnson, aged about 60, born on the plantation, shot in the thigh; severe cut over the eye; badly beaten over the head.

After the mastery had been obtained over the gang they were taken to the Third district police station; but Mr. Holander, the clerk, seeing the condition of these above mentioned, considerably sent them to the Charity Hospital.

Besides the three killed and the nine wounded negroes above noticed, there are others also more or less hurt.

Four of the police officers, we regret to learn, are pretty badly injured.

We presume the Coroner will hold an inquest on the bodies of the three killed negroes, when we expect further and perhaps more accurate details.

The affair has created great excitement throughout the city, especially in the lower districts; but this is nothing like commotion to what exists in the country below. Apprehensions of the gravest character are felt on all the plantations, and measures for protection against the dreaded evils are being most anxiously canvassed.

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