

## **Appendix: Transcribed Newspaper Accounts of the Emancipation Day Parade at Key West, Florida.**

**New York Herald, February 11, 1863, p.8.**

Interesting from Key West.

The Negro Emancipation Jubilee.

Our Key West Correspondence. Key West, Jan. 29, 1863.

*Negro Celebration in Key West in Honor of the Proclamation – The parade and Its Commander – How It Was Received by the Population – The Ladies of Color and Their Appearance*

The n\_\_\_\_ers<sup>1</sup> have had to-day a grand celebration in honor of obtaining their freedom, by virtue of the President's proclamation, in which Key West was not excepted, but Norfolk and New Orleans were. The celebration consisted first of a parade, and ended with a grand dinner at the barracoons. The parade was the great feature of the day. It consisted of about two hundred and fifty he n\_\_\_\_ers, of all sizes, ages, and complexions, marching in columns of two, with proper officers. They were commanded by "Sandy," a venerable n\_\_\_\_er of huge proportions, formerly the property of Mr. Baldwin, of this place. It was a matter of doubt for some time before Mr. Baldwin left Key West<sup>2</sup> – says the oldest inhabitant – if he belonged to Sandy or Sandy belonged to him. Sandy to-day evidently felt his importance. He was attired in a full suit of black, with a sash and rosette on his breast of enormous size and of the most gaudy colors; he had suspended to his side a cavalry sabre, and wore an army fatigue cap. His martial bearing and the resemblance of his foot to a scrubbing brush, with his leg for a handle, were remarked on every side. All conceivable costumes could have been found in the procession, and all shades of color, from the light straw, showing only a slight "lick of the tar brush," to the blackest ebony. As the procession moved through the streets it was flanked on either side by a crowd of wenchies, dressed in their best attire and presenting the appearance of a walking rainbow, and the number of n\_\_\_\_er children in advance of and following the procession showed the African race to be largely on the increase. As they marched on, cheers were given, over and over, again, for Mr. Ferguson,<sup>3</sup> Captain Curtis<sup>4</sup> and the other prominent abolitionists of Key West, and they finally brought up at the Baptist church, where services were performed. The darkeys were not unmolested in their march. They were pelted with stones on several parts of the route; basins of dirty water were

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<sup>1</sup> The racial epithets are fully spelled out in the original publication. Despite being published in a northern city, the New York *Herald* was a generally pro-Democratic, pro-slavery publication that specialized in "colorful" reporting.

<sup>2</sup> John P. Baldwin, a Bahamas native, was mayor of Key West from 1857 to 1861, until those elected under Florida law were removed by federal officials. He was a slaveowner and Confederate sympathizer, and he and his family moved to The Bahamas during the war.

<sup>3</sup> George W. Ferguson was a former Miami arrowroot farmer and postmaster who moved to Key West before the war. He became a successful island merchant and was a member of the Union Volunteer Corps.

<sup>4</sup> Cornelius Curtis was a harbor pilot, a member of the island's Union Volunteer Corps, and Secretary of the Loyal National League of Key West.

emptied on their devoted heads; several were knocked down, and the American flag, with which they were marching, was taken from them and the staff broken over the head of the bearer. No serious outbreak occurred; but there would have been had not the provost guard been out in force. Not one person among these who have heretofore borne the reputation of being disloyal interfered in any manner with the celebration. The dinner, I understand, gives every promise of being a grand affair; but, not being one of those favored with an invitation, I shall have to imagine all that will be said and done on the occasion. It is a most fortunate occurrence for all concerned, but especially for the whitewashed n\_\_\_\_ers – i.e. abolitionists – that the thermometer to day was as low as fifty-two degrees – six degrees lower than it has previously been this winter. Had it been an ordinary hot day the atmosphere in the neighborhood of the procession and within the barracoons would have been unbearable.

**New York Times, February 12, 1863, p.2.**

FROM KEY WEST

*A Negro Jubilee*

From Our Own Correspondent

KEY WEST, Wednesday, Feb. 4, 1863

The 30th [sic] of January was made memorable to the negro population of the island, by a grand effort to celebrate their advent to freedom. A procession was formed, and marched through the principal streets, cheering at such houses as they considered friendly. They may claim to have conducted themselves with order and propriety, and that no unpleasant incident occurred, except that a lady, believing that negroes should not be marching through the streets with their best clothes on, even on such an occasion, dashed a pitcher of water upon them from an upper piazza as they were passing. In the afternoon, at 3 o'clock, they assembled at the Barracoon, and were joined by a large number of naval and military officers and citizens, in discussing the good things which were bountifully furnished. Speeches and toasts were delivered.

Two years since a collection of half-a-dozen of these people at any private or public place would have been peremptorily dispersed. And any darkey who should speak or dream of hopes of freedom would have been a subject for the severest punishment. Nor is this change entirely owing to the presence of National power. People are seeing, reflecting, and becoming convinced that it is not wisdom to waste the resources of the country in quelling the rebellion and still preserve the cause. To save our house when threatened, we must extinguish the fire. Our citizens are coming up to this sentiment, and it is as rapidly spreading as any great truth ever progressed against established prejudice and error.

**The Sunbury [PA] *American*, March 7, 1863, p.3.**

11 February 1863

For the Sunbury *American*.

Letter from the Sunbury Guards.

BEAUFORT, S.C., February 11, 1863.

Some two weeks ago, the Emancipation Proclamation, or Act, was celebrated at Key West, and a high time the lads and lasses of dark hue had of it. In the morning the male portion had a procession, with music (furnished by themselves), and banners flying; conspicuous was the Stars and Stripes. By the way, a Conk, that is a resident of the Key, hailing from Nassau, N.P., whose ancestors [sic] were tories, and fled from Charleston to Nassau during the Revolutionary war, threw a stone at the procession as it was passing by, and came very near hitting the flag we are fighting for, when a stalwart son of Lehigh county,<sup>5</sup> asked the fellow if he had thrown that stone to insult the flag, when he received an answer, something like 'my own business,' for which he received a stunner from 'the shoulder' that sent him reeling to the ground, from which he had to be carried by his friends, teaching him a lesson not to meddle with the emblem of Liberty when the 47th boys are about. In the afternoon the party had a gay and happy time at the Baracoon, a short distance from Fort Taylor, on the beach. Four large tables were set, and to say they 'groaned' under the weight of good things, substantial and dainty, would be telling, literally, the truth. The refreshments were not dealt out grudgingly, but every one had their fill, of which more than one officer and many soldiers can bear witness to. Your humble servant did not partake, being merely a looker on. Mr. Curtis, a rich shipmaster, addressed them in a neat speech, welcomed them as citizens, since the President, in his wisdom, had made them so, and hoped they would keep as good a character for honesty and truth as they had when they were in bondage. Sandy, the aristocratic farmer of the race, was called on and made a speech of the day. The days festivities concluded with music and dancing – the latter accomplishment being done up in a much better style by 'ye ladies colored' than the 'divine creatures' of that little island could do.

H.D.W. [Henry D. Wharton, 47th Pennsylvania Regiment, Company C]

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<sup>5</sup> Pennsylvania.