home; in 1855 master sold my mother, and in 1861 he sold me to S. Connell of St. James Parish for $2,400; here I worked by task at my trade; one morning the bell was rung for us to go to work so early that I could not see, and I lay still, because I was working by task; for this the overseer was going to have me whipped, and I ran away to the woods, where I remained for a year and a half; I had to steal my food; took turkeys, chickens and pigs; before I left our number had increased to thirty, of whom ten were women; we were four miles in the rear of the plantation house; sometimes we would rope beef cattle and drag them out to our hiding place; we obtained matches from our friends on the plantation; we slept on logs and burned cypress leaves to make a smoke and keep away mosquitoes; Eugene Jarreau, master of hounds, hunted for us for three months; often those at work would betray those in the swamp, for fear of being implicated in their escape, we furnished meat to our fellow-servants in the field, who would return corn meal; one day twenty hounds came after me; I called the party to my assistance and we killed eight of the bloodhounds; then we all jumped into Bayou Maupun; the dogs followed up and the alligators captured six of them; "the alligators preferred dog flesh to personal flesh;" we escaped and came to Camp Parapet, where I was first employed in the Commissary's office, then as a servant to Col. Hanks; then I joined his regiment.

2. Corporal Octave Johnson, a Union Soldier, Describes His Escape from Slavery During the War, 1864

[New Orleans, February 1864]


I was born in New Orleans; I am 23 years of age; I was raised by Arthur Thiboux of New Orleans; I am by trade a cooper; I was treated pretty well at home; in 1855 master sold my mother, and in 1861 he sold me to S. Connell of St. James Parish for $2,400; here I worked by task at my trade; one morning the bell was rung for us to go to work so early that I could not see, and I lay still, because I was working by task; for this the overseer was going to have me whipped, and I ran away to the woods, where I remained for a year and a half; I had to steal my food; took turkeys, chickens and pigs; before I left our number had increased to thirty, of whom ten were women; we were four miles in the rear of the plantation house; sometimes we would rope beef cattle and drag them out to our hiding place; we obtained matches from our friends on the plantation; we slept on logs and burned cypress leaves to make a smoke and keep away mosquitoes; Eugene Jarreau, master of hounds, hunted for us for three months; often those at work would betray those in the swamp, for fear of being implicated in their escape, we furnished meat to our fellow-servants in the field, who would return corn meal; one day twenty hounds came after me; I called the party to my assistance and we killed eight of the bloodhounds; then we all jumped into Bayou Maupun; the dogs followed up and the alligators captured six of them; "the alligators preferred dog flesh to personal flesh;" we escaped and came to Camp Parapet, where I was first employed in the Commissary's office, then as a servant to Col. Hanks; then I joined his regiment.

3. John C. P. Wederstrandt and I. N. Steele, Two Slaveholders, Lose Control of Their Slave Labor, 1862, 1865

Statement of John C. P. Wederstrandt

New Orleans [La.]: Sept. 19, 1862.

Sir, In obedience to an order of Col. J. N. French Provost Marshall, I respectfully submit the following statement—

On Monday last, while on a visit to my plantation, I was startled at the dawn of day by the announcement of my brother in law Mr. Smith the manager of the place, that the negroes were in a state of insurrection; some of them refusing to work—Proceeding immediately to the Cabin Yard, I found them gathered in different groups & on enquiry learned, that some of them would not work at all, & others wanted wages, I informed them, I should not pay them wages, & being excited by their ingratitude & not wishing to feed and clothe those who would not work, & to avoid any difficulty, as my sister and her four small children were on the place, I said that it was better to part in peace & go off quietly & that I did not