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Entry Nr. 463 Manuel Valero

Aaron Spencer Fogleman
Northern Illinois University, aaronfogleman@niu.edu

Robert Hanserd

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Aaron Spencer Fogleman and Robert Hanserd (eds.), *Five Hundred African Voices: A Catalog of Published Accounts by Africans Enslaved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1586-1936* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2022).

Catalog number: **463**
Name(s) of African providing account: **Manuel Valero**
Date account recorded: 1864
Date account first published: 1996
Date of entry creation or last update: 20 September 2021

Source: English translation of statement printed on p. 99-100 and 198n23 in VOICES OF THE ENSLAVED IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY CUBA: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY, edited by Gloria García Rodríguez. Translated by Nancy L. Westrate. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. Copyright © 2011 by the University of North Carolina Press. Used by permission of the publisher. www.uncpress.org.

Text of Account:

English translation –

p. 99:

“Havana, June 13, 1864

Manuel Valerio, native African, Congolese, and slave belonging to Don Juan Bautista Nunez, resident of the city of Santa Maria del Rosario, across the street from the church, comes before Your Excellency and states that: He was sold this year to the aforementioned Nunez on two conditions: that once a month he receive a pass to travel to the capital to see his children, and that the moment he became dissatisfied in his service he would

p. 100:

be granted an authorization to seek another master. Neither of these conditions was met, and on several different occasions he protested his master’s lack of compliance with the above stipulations, desperately wishing for his master to abide by the terms of the agreement. In light of such distressing circumstances, he resolved to run away, and effectively did so on June 8. [This he did only] in order to plead his case before Your Excellency by means of the account in the report submitted in support of his petition, and to learn if by virtue of your intervention his owner could be compelled to issue the permit necessary to seek out another master. This was the only

remaining solace for this wretched slave in compensation for his suffering and by virtue of all that had befallen him.

I beseech Your Excellency, should he consider it reasonable, to summon the above-named Don Juan Bautista Nunez to appear before Your Excellency in court and to compel him [Nunez] either to comply or to enforce the above-stated conditions. In the meanwhile, he [the petitioner] will go wherever Your Excellency may deign to send him as a surety, trusting that, as an act of your renowned benevolence and justice, you will bestow such a boon upon him.”

Comments from Gloria García Rodríguez: (p. 198n23)

“The file abruptly ends with a letter from the syndic from Santa Maria del Rosario in which he throws doubt on Valerio’ s statement and added that the latter had a permit to look for another master and that, as of September 2, still had not returned to his master.”

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