

James Nelson

The Brunswick Times-Advertiser; Monday 23 July 1894; pg. 1 cols. 3-4

ASSASSINATED!-Conductor Jim Nelson Foully Murdered-Shot Down on His Train While Trying to Pacify a Drunken Rabble-To Be Buried in Brunswick.

Jim Nelson is dead!

Shot and killed instantly by a cowardly negro while performing his duty.

This was the message that saddened the hearts of Brunswick people this morning.

Train No. 3, 1st section, on the Brunswick and Western railroad left Brunswick last night at 7:45, twenty minutes late on account of the large excursion party which had spent the day here. Conductor J.F. Nelson was in charge of the train.

A large crowd of negroes were on board, and the usual number of them drunk beyond control.

Conductor Nelson, having collected tickets, passed through the train on his way to the baggage car. As he passed through the colored coach a white man, Mr. Higgs, and a negro, were standing in the aisle of the car quarrelling. The negro was flourishing a pistol, and making threats. Conductor Nelson spoke to him saying, "you must put up the pistol, or you may hurt some one." The negro did not reply, and Conductor Nelson started on to the baggage car. He had gone about ten feet, when the negro deliberately raised his pistol and fired, the ball striking Conductor Nelson in [the] left side of [his] back, and entered his heart killing him almost instantly.

The man who fired the cowardly shot pulled the ball cord and brought the train to a stop within a minute after the deed was done, and with a number of other negroes who were in the car made a break for the woods.

Engineer Jno. Farmer rushed from cab to the coach when he learned the cause of the stop, and raised the form of the murdered man in his arms, where he died in a short time. The body was carried to the baggage car and taken to Albany.

The shooting occurred at the thirty-four post, midway between Lulaton and Nahunta.

The negro is said to be well-known, and lives at Hisford's still.

As soon as information could be gotten to Waycross, W.S. Crawford, yardmaster at Waycross, and Sheriff Miller left by special train with bloodhounds for the the [sic] scene of the escape. Considerable trouble was experienced, as the dogs would invariably return to the railroad track, after going out into the swamps a few hundred feet. Mr. Crawford and Sheriff Miller are determined though and will stick to the trail until the dastardly assassin is caught.

Several negroes were arrested at Nahunta this morning and carried to Waycross, where they will be held until the guilty one is apprehended.

Superintendent Haines was in Jacksonville, but upon hearing of the murder, came to Waycross at once, where he is now, and every effort will be exhausted to run the criminal down. The murderer will doubtless be caught, and summarily dealt with.

Conductor Nelson came up from St. Simon yesterday at noon, having been there with his wife for ten days on a vacation. He was accompanied by his sister-in-law, Miss Mayo, and spent the afternoon at the Ocean House, and mingled with his friends, being in the same happy, good-natured mood that one always found him.

When he left last night, it was his his [sic] first regular trip since his

vacation.

Miss Mayo was in the rear sleeper attached to the train, but was not apprised of her brother-in-law's sad death until this morning when they reached Albany, where the remains were taken.

A steamer was sent to St. Simon this morning to bring Mrs. Nelson to Brunswick, where a special train had been provided to take her to Albany.

The news was gently broken to her, and she was completely prostrated with grief. A large number of ladies from the island accompanied her to the city, and several went to Albany on the special train.

Jim Nelson was a man whom every one liked. Always smiling, kind and gentle, and ever ready to serve his fellow man, true to his employes [sic], he numbered his friends by the score. No sadder event has ever occurred in this section. He was popular with every one, and the sympathy of the entire city goes out to his grief-stricken wife and relations.

Mr. Nelson was about thirty-two years of age and was born in this city. His residence has been in Albany since his marriage there, about four years ago.

THE FUNERAL-THE TIMES-ADVERTISER received a message from Mr. John C. Lehman, who accompanied Mrs. Nelson to Albany, stating that the funeral services will be held at the residence of Mr. Hiram Read, this city, in the morning at ten o'clock.

The remains will reach Brunswick at 8 o'clock this evening on a special train and will be interred tomorrow morning in Oak Grove cemetery, beside the grave of his father.

The Brunswick Times-Advertiser; Tuesday 24 July 1894; pg. 1 col. 6

JIM NELSON'S FUNERAL-Buried Beside His Father in Oak Grove This Morning.

The special train bearing the remains of Conductor J.F. Nelson, arrived last night over the B. & W., at 8 o'clock. Messrs. Thos. Mayo, J.D. Embry and W.E. Smith, of Albany, and Geo. W. Coates, Mark Verdery and John C. Lehman accompanied the remains to Brunswick.

The remains were taken to the residence of Mr. Read.

At nine o'clock this morning the funeral services were conducted at Mr. Read's residence by Rev. J.M. Lovett.

The remains were taken to Oak Grove cemetery, where they were laid to rest by loving hands, by the side of his father.

The pallbearers were Messrs. Geo. W. Coates, Tom Welsch, John Farmer, R.S. Wells, J.T. Embry, and John C. Lehman.

A large crowd of his brother employees and friends attended the last sad rites.

Mrs. Nelson and her mother, Mrs. Mayo, were so prostrated that they could not accompany the remains to Brunswick.

ON THE TRAIL-Conductor Nelson's Murderer Still at Large Johnson is the Man.

Nothing has been left undone to facilitate the capture of the negro Johnson who so brutally shot Conductor Jim Nelson. The B. & W. officials have been especially ready to give aid to the officers of the law. The entire section is aroused and Johnson is almost sure to be apprehended. The sheriff of Ware is out in the woods

and large bodies of men are scouring the whole section.

Several negroes have been arrested, but so far Johnson has evaded the law.

If caught, he will probably be lynched.

LATER-The latest news from the scene is that Johnson was seen to swim across the Satilla river at some point in Wayne county this morning. The parties who saw him did not know he was wanted. However, the searching party came along and heard that he had passed and he is now completely surrounded, and will probably be apprehended before night.

The Brunswick Times-Advertiser; Friday 27 July 1894; pg. 1 col. 6

THE MURDERER-Of Conductor Nelson Still at Large, but Officers After Him.

Several negroes have been arrested on suspicion that they were Tom Johnson, the murderer of Conductor Nelson, but up to last night no trace of Johnson has been accomplished. The sheriff of Ware county has kept a large posse on the look out, and in all the adjoining counties the sheriffs are ready to co-operate with him. It is now believed that Johnson is in the Okeefenokee swamp, in hiding near the place of his father's home.