

NEGRO HELD FOR ASSAULT ON YOUNG
Will Foster Suspected of the
Murderous Attack on "Sugar Babe"
Injured Wagoner Undergoes Operation
Though His Skull is Terribly
Fractured he May yet Survive
His Injuries

John Young, manager of the "Inman Express," who was murderously assaulted on the Howard Gap road three miles from the city, Monday evening by highwaymen, receiving injuries from which it was thought he could not possibly recover, was operated on at the city hospital yesterday morning, and is now getting on much better than was thought possible under the circumstances. It was found that his skull was fractured in four places. He had a gash inflicted by a pocket knife on the left side of his throat, reaching from close under his ear to within a fraction of the jugular vein. His right cheek was split open from the root of his ear to the corner of his lip. He had a deep cut behind his right ear. His jaw bone was broken and his skull fractured in four places. He had been struck in the head with the elbow of a joint of pipe.

Negro Arrested

Will Foster, a colored man, who lives near the Holiness church on Hamburg Heights, has been arrested and lodged in jail, on the strong suspicion that he is one of the assailants. The tracks about the bloody scene give evidence that one of the men implicated wore a shoe that very much run down, and the shoe that Foster had on when arrested tallied exactly with the track. There is also a second track, that of a man wearing a much smaller shoe than Foster, but as yet suspicion has not fastened on any other strong enough to warrant arrest. Then, too, circumstantial evidence is against Foster in another way. The first parties coming to the assistance of Mr. Young saw a figure gliding away in the darkness through the field of one S.P. Booker colored, in whose yard the wounded man had crawled. Directly the supposed self same figure came again on the scene from the direction the retreat had been made. The negroes took note of this and when the sheriff and others arrived they were told of the circumstances and Foster was pointed out, with the result that later he was arrested and early yesterday morning was brought to Spartanburg and lodged in jail.

John Young was on his way home from Spartanburg when he was assaulted on the Howard Gap road Monday night. He was on his big "express wagon," which was loaded with all manner of freight to be delivered to Inman merchants. He was about one mile from the Spartanburg Junction, at a point where the Valley Falls road leaves the Howard Gap Road. Just a few hundred yards ahead is a colored church. It was a few minutes after 9 o'clock, and the congregation were leaving. Several negroes coming down the road heard the blows, but they thought it was Mr. Young whipping up his mules with an extra heavy load of "express." Coming nearer, they heard a man groaning over in the yard of S.P. Booker, a colored man, who lives right on Howard Gap road. The first one to reach the wounded man to find that it was Mr. Young in a desperate condition was Wash Johnson. Johnson was followed by George

Swindler, Jim Booker and Rich Young, all colored. As the party came up they noticed a figure gliding away through Booker's field.

Was Praying

Mr. Young when found was crawling toward Booker's house. The negroes say he was praying. Jim Booker, the negro boy who lived in the house, and was doing what he could for the sufferer, says that Mr. Young wiped his forehead several times and drawing his clotted fingers down and rubbed the sticky substance between them would exclaim "Is this my brains?" To George Swindler, the second man to come to him, Mr. Young said "It was only one man who did it." He kept saying over and over "It's in the wagon." From this it is inferred that he was trying to tell them where his money was, if that would insure his life. His sons, who were in town yesterday, said that fit with the custom of their father to carry his money not on his person, but secreted among the numerous cargo of his wagon.

Immediately after the colored people found Mr. Young in so desperate a condition they sent up an alarm. Messrs. Robertson and Gibbs were the first white men on the scene. As soon as the crowd began to gather a lone figure was seen to approach from the direction in which the figure was seen to glide away across the field when the crowd came up. It was Will Foster and he appeared to be as innocently concerned in the welfare of Mr. Young as any on the scene. He was pointed out to the sheriff, and a strict watch kept on him until his arrest yesterday morning.

M.A.F. Robertson keeps a store just about fifty yards from the scene of the assault. Mr. Young was taken to the store, and there received any attention as could be given. Preparations were made to take him to the city hospital and at an early hour yesterday morning he was placed in a ward of the new sanitarium.

Operation Performed

An operation was performed on the wounded man between 11 and 12 o'clock yesterday morning by Drs. Dean, Heinitsh, Black, Blake and Jeffries. He stood the operation well. It is the opinion of the physicians that there is a slight chance for Mr. Young's recovery.

John Young is one of the best known characters in Spartanburg county. For years he has run the "Inman Express," bringing a load of farm produce to town daily, selling it out and on his return trip carrying a load of supplies to the small country merchants along the road and to the store keepers in Inman. The merchants say that he is just as reliable as the Southern Express Co. and they let him handle their money just as they would allow a bank man to handle it when they make a deposit in the bank. Often Mr. Young has brought down several bales of cotton, sold them and carried the money back with him to the parties, in Inman.

He was a man of many peculiarities. He never cut his hair and never shaved, and always appeared as wild and as rugged as some of the wildest characters of the mountains. He was known to every man, woman and child in the county as "Sugar Babe Young." He comes by this sobriquet honestly for long ago he came to call everybody whose acquaintance he made when he met them afterward, "Sugar Babe." Whether he be a business man, a lady, a boy, or a girl, John Young always says "Hello, Sugar Babe."

Young was born and raised near Campobello. He has been married two times. His first wife was a Miss Ballew whose family lived just above Earle's mill on Pacolet River. After four or five years of married life, she died, and Mr. Young moved down to Gramling with his mother, who died one or two years ago. Today he lives in the town of Gramling in a small house near the railroad. He does not farm, for he only possesses the house and a small lot therewith. For twenty years he has made his living hauling goods between Inman and Spartanburg.

The Proprietor of the "Inman Express" lives in his wagon, and sleeps in it. It has been many a day since he slept in a bed. He is a great fellow for talking about sanctification or any of numerous Christian virtues.

His second wife did not live with him very long. They did not have any fuss, but quietly parted, she going back to her people. Mr. Young has not dismissed her altogether from his mind, for he is in the habit of going to see her on Christmas and the other holidays and taking her some present, just as he used to do in his courting days.

Sheriff Nicholls and his assistants are at work on the case, and hope to land the other assailant in jail with Will Foster before many more hours roll around. Robbery was the motive of the dreadful assault on Mr. Young on Monday night. It is not known whether the highwaymen succeeded or not in this purpose. Sheriff Nicholls found several dollars on the person of the wounded man.

At midnight last night information from the city hospital was to the effect that for the last several hours Mr. Young had been resting well; that his condition was serious, but that still there was a chance for him.

Spartanburg Weekly Herald, Thursday, December 12, 1907, Page 1:

**WILL FOSTER SAID
TO HAVE CONFESSED
MURDERING YOUNG**

**Told his Cousin that he and Another Man Committed
the Crime**

**HER STATEMENT MADE BEFORE
SOLICITOR**

**County Officials Said to have Been Invited to Dine Where the Negro
Girl Worked and Heard Story.**

It is reported on the very best authority that Will Foster, the negro who is being held in jail on the charge of killing Mr. John Young, of Inman, on the Howard Gap Road a few nights ago, has confessed to the crime.

A day or two ago a Negro girl, a cousin of Will Foster's called at the jail to see him. In his conversation with her it is claimed that Foster told the girl that he and another party killed Mr. Young and they got only 50 cents from him.

Invited to Dinner.

The girl repeated the conversation she had with Foster when she went back to the home of the family where she was hired, and a gentleman of the house took note. He is said to have invited Deputy Sheriff White and Solicitor Sease around to his house to have the girl repeat Foster's confession, as made to her, to them.

The officials invited were at the table and the meal was being served. The girl had no suspicion of there being high officials being present. She was waiting on the table. The gentleman of the house incidentally asked her about the statement she had made to members of

his family concerning Foster's confession, and at once the girl began talking on the subject and did not let up until she had told the whole business. The girl will be held as state's witness.

The name of the man Foster is said to have implicated, if it is known to the county authorities, has not been given out, and it is believed they are directing their energies toward his capture. Solicitor Sease and Deputy Sheriff White are both out of the city and no statement could be had from them last night. Sheriff Nicholls would neither confirm nor deny the truth of the report that Foster had confessed.

Circumstantial Evidence.

Foster is being held under very strong circumstantial evidence. He acted suspiciously the night of the murder, appearing on the scene, from no one knows where, and offering to help unasked when he was a complete stranger to the crowd. Then, too, his shoes were tried to the tracks in the road that night where the assault was made and they fitted exactly. He could not give a good account of his presence there, and the account that he did give was upset by the statement that his wife made to Deputy Sheriff White and the police officers who called late that same night at Foster's home to ask her the time he left the house and where he had gone.