

2005

El Corrido de George Silva

Enrique Lamadrid

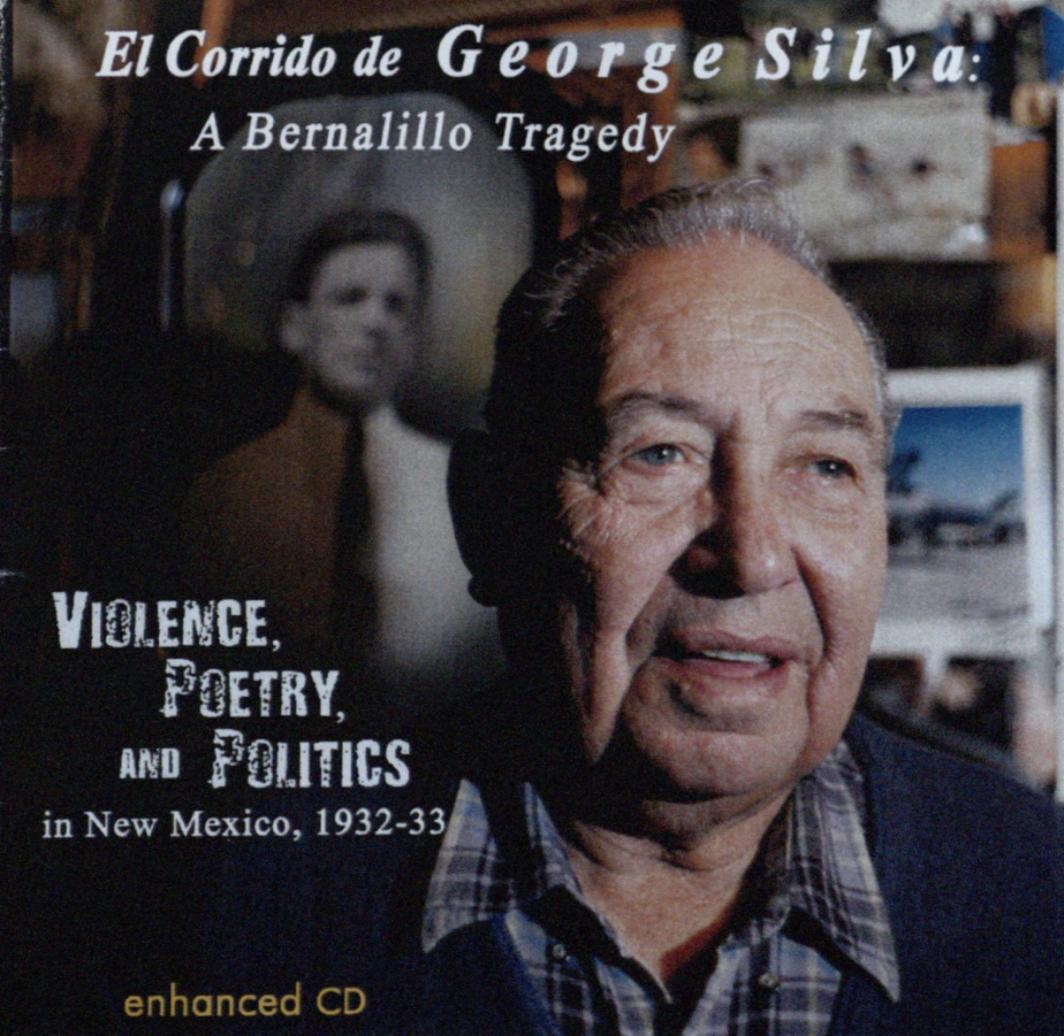
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El Corrido de George Silva:
A Bernalillo Tragedy

**VIOLENCE,
POETRY,
AND POLITICS**

in New Mexico, 1932-33

enhanced CD

El Corrido de George Silva - A Bernalillo Tragedy: *Violence, Poetry, & Politics in New Mexico, 1932-33*

Corridista, Ramón Luna, 1933. Voice and arrangement, David F. García.
Guitar, A. J. Martínez. Trumpet, Michael Martínez. 2006.

Over the years, the many visitors and patrons of Silva's Saloon in Bernalillo have wondered about *El Corrido de George Silva*, the broadside ballad framed on the wall, which is covered with family and community memorabilia. Bartender Félix Silva often tells the tragic story of his uncle George, an enterprising young man from a hard-working and well respected Lebanese / Nuevo Mexicano family. On the night of October 9th, 1932, an Anglo con-man who had been passing bad checks in Bernalillo lured George for a ride west of town, hoping to rob him and crack the safe at his gas station. When Silva tried to escape, he was shot in the back and thrown into an arroyo.

Desperate family and friends searched for him everywhere for two months. Soon after his body was found, his mother died of grief and shock. In a controversial prosecution, charges were reduced even as the perpetrator arrogantly claimed self-defense and openly expressed his disdain for Hispanos. It became clear to all that the murder of George Silva was a hate crime. Most newspapers avoided the ethnic issues and speculated on imagined motives of jealousy, passion, and revenge. This shocking case inspired protests and political action.

Ramón Luna, the most celebrated composer of the day, wrote a *corrido* to commemorate the tragedy and its impact on the Silva family. He captured the pain and indignation of the people of Bernalillo and New Mexico in their ongoing search for social justice.

Read more about *El Corrido de George Silva* in text and photo files of this enhanced CD. They include notes, translations, newspaper articles, a facsimile of the broadside, and photos of Silva's Saloon, the oldest bar in Bernalillo, New Mexico, opened in 1933, after the tragedy.

Produced by Professor Enrique Lamadrid and research assistant David F. García, Southwest Hispanic Research Institute and Chicano Hispano Mexicano Studies, University of New Mexico. Cover portrait of Félix Silva courtesy of Miguel Gandert. Additional photos by Enrique Lamadrid. Foundational research by Reuben Montoya and Professor Felipe Gonzales. Special thanks to Félix, his daughter Denise, and their legendary hospitality. © 2006 Peregrino Productions.

ENHANCED CD INSTRUCTIONS - This enhanced CD contains audio track, texts, and photos. Texts and photos can be viewed on a computer.

BOOM BOX / CD PLAYER - 1. Insert & play like any other CD.

PC / WINDOWS - 1. Insert CD. 2. Index may pop up automatically, if not click My Computer or Windows Explorer.

3. Click Word & PDF files for texts. 4. Click Picture File, click thumbnails under View, & open with Windows Picture and FAX viewer. 5. To play the audio track, open Windows Media Player in Accessories & Entertainment menu.

APPLE / MACINTOSH - 1. Insert CD & click double CD icons when they pop up. Click Word or PDF file for texts & notes. 3. Click Picture file for slide show. 4. Open I-Tunes to play audio track.

AGRADECIMIENTO DE LA FAMILIA SILVA

On behalf of the Silva family, we would like to thank UNM's Southwest Hispanic Research Institute and Dr. Enrique Lamadrid for their commitment and guidance in bringing *El Corrido de George Silva* to completion. Special gratitude is due David F. García for his research, his voice, and musical arrangement. Miguel Gandert generously took the time to shoot the portrait for the CD jacket. Thanks also to Reuben Montoya for providing the historical information from his father's records as sheriff of Sandoval County in 1932. Dr. Felipe Gonzales also provided research and analysis in his book on the Hispano Cause in New Mexico politics in the 1930s. The family is indebted to musicians, A. J. and Michael Martínez, who brought this corrido to life with such passion and emotion. We will be forever grateful to Ramón Luna y Gallegos for creating this corrido and conveying the truth about George Silva's untimely death. Thank you all for helping to preserve our history for generations to come.

Denise and Félix Silva
Bernalillo, New Mexico
2006

CORRIDO DE GEORGE SILVA

Pongan cuidado señores
Lo que vamos a cantar,
La tragedia de George Silva
Que lo acaban de matar

El día nueve de octubre
El treinta y dos al contado
Por unos cobardes hueros,
Pues Silva fue asasinado

A las doce de la noche
Cómo lo había de pensar,
Le brincan como serpientes
A matarlo por detrás.

Los cobardes asesinos
Cuando lo vieron sufriendo,
Le dieron otro balazo
Pa' quitarle su dinero.

Cuando se vió George Silva,
Revolvándose en su sangre,
En alta voz aclamaba
La bendición de su madre.

Decían los asesinos,
Eso no es ningún delito
De matar un Mexicano
Como cualquier conejito.

Cuando ya estaban seguros
De que Silva muerto estaba
Se lo echaron en el carro,
Y al desierto lo llevaban.

La gente de Bernalillo,
Lo salieron a buscar
Pero todo salió en vano,
No lo pudieron hallar

Lo buscaron varios días,
En las lomas y desierto
Siempre pensando en hallarlo
Fuera vivo o fuera muerto.

Hermanos y sus amigos
En Dios tenían confianza,
En poder hallarlo vivo,
Era su única esperanza.

Su pobre madre llorando,
A los Santos aclamaba
Cada hora y cada momento,
Su querido hijo esperaba.

Sin saber la pobre madre,
Que su hijo ya era muerto,
Por unos cobardes hueros
Y tirado en un desierto.

Su pobre madre con pena,
Y con justicia lloraba
Que su hijo ya era muerto,
Su corazón le avisaba.

Priscila también decía,
Con su corazón partido:
Hermanito de mi vida
¿Qué es lo que te ha sucedido?

Sus hermanos como locos,
Donde quiera lo buscaban,
Sin saber los pobrecitos
Que su hermano muerto estaba.

Por Wilds el estudiante,
George Silva fue encontrado,
Estudiante de asesino
Para mejor declarado.

Los cobardes asesinos,
Al alguacil le avisaron
Que como unas cuatro millas
Un hombre muerto se hallaron.

Luego el Alguacil Mayor
Al Juez de Paz avisó,
El Juez de Paz al momento,
A un jurado nombró.

Le avisaron a sus hermanos
Y se van con el jurado,
Descubrieron que era George
En un arroyo tirado.

Cuando Félix lo miró,
Y por él fue conocido,
Pues lloraba por su hermano
Con el corazón partido.

Pobrecita de su madre,
Cómo fue lo que sufrió,
Hasta la eterna tumba
Su querido hijo siguió.

Priscila, James, Tony y Félix,
Que Dios les mande el consuelo:
En qué martirio estarán,
Hermano y madre perdieron.

Aquí se acaba el corrido
Y mucho me alegro yo,
Que hayan sido extranjeros,
Pero nuestra gente nó.

Por Ramón Luna y Gallegos
Fue compuesto este corrido
A un querido fiel amigo
George Silva, de Bernalillo.

Copyright 1933

Corrido de George Silva

Pongan cuidado señores
lo que vamos a cantar,
la tragedia de George Silva
que lo acaban de matar.

El día nueve de octubre,
el treinta y dos al contado,
por unos cobardes hueros,
pues Silva fue asesinado.

A las doce de la noche
cómo lo había de pensar,
le brincan como serpientes
a matarlo por detrás.

Los cobardes asesinos
cuando lo vieron sufriendo,
le dieron otro balazo
pa' quitarle su dinero.

Cuando se vio George Silva
revolcándose en su sangre,
en alta voz aclamaba
la bendición de su madre.

Decían los asesinos,
-Eso no es ningún delito
de matar un mexicano
como cualquier conejito.

Cuando ya estaban seguros
de que Silva muerto estaba,
se lo echaron en el carro
y al desierto lo llevaban.

La gente de Bernalillo
lo salieron a buscar,
pero todo salió en vano,
no lo pudieron hallar.

Lo buscaron varios días
en las lomas y desierto,
siempre pensando en hallarlo
fuera vivo o fuera muerto.

Hermanos y sus amigos

Ballad of George Silva

Give your attention, gentlemen
and women, to what we will sing,
the tragedy of George Silva
who they have just killed.

On the ninth day of October,
of 1932 and counting,
by some gringo cowards,
well, Silva was murdered.

At twelve midnight
it is difficult to imagine,
they jumped him like serpents
to kill him from behind.

The cowardly murderers
when they saw him suffering,
shot him once again
to take away his money.

When George Silva found himself
writhing in his own blood,
in a loud voice claimed
the blessing of his mother.

The murderers said,
-It is not a crime
to kill a Mexican
like any little rabbit.

When they were sure
that Silva was dead,
they threw him in the car
and took him to the desert.

The people of Bernalillo
went out to search for him,
but all was in vain,
they couldn't find him.

They searched several days
in the hills and the desert,
always hoping to find him
whether dead or alive.

Brothers, sisters, and friends

en Dios tenían confianza,
en poder hallarlo vivo
era su única esperanza.

Su pobre madre llorando,
a los Santos aclamaba,
cada hora y cada momento,
su querido hijo esperaba.

Sin saber la pobre madre
que su hijo ya era muerto,
por unos cobardes hueros
y tirado en un desierto.

Su pobre madre con pena
y con justicia lloraba,
que su hijo ya era muerto,
su corazón le avisaba.

Priscila también decía,
con su corazón partido:
-Hermanito de mi vida,
¿qué es lo que te ha sucedido?

Sus hermanos como locos,
donde quiera lo buscaban,
sin saber los pobrecitos
que su hermano muerto estaba.

Por Wilds el estudiante,
George Silva fue encontrado,
estudiante de asesino
para mejor declarado.

Los cobardes asesinos,
al aguacil le avisaron,
que como unas cuatro millas
un hombre muerto se hallaron.

Luego el Alguacil Mayor
al Juez de Paz avisó,
el Juez de Paz al momento,
a un jurado nombró.

Le avisaron a sus hermanos
y se van con el jurado,
descubrieron que era George
en un arroyo tirado.

had confidence in God,
to find him alive
was their only hope.

His poor mother crying,
called on the Saints,
each hour and every moment,
she awaited her beloved son.

The poor mother did not know
that her son was already dead,
at the hands of gringo cowards
who threw him in the desert.

His poor mother cried
with pain and justice,
her heart had informed her
that her son was already dead.

Priscila also said,
with a broken heart:
-Little brother of my life,
what has happened to you?

His brothers like crazy,
looked for him everywhere,
without realizing, poor souls,
that their brother was dead.

Because of Wilds the student,
George Silva was found,
a student of murder
to better say it.

The cowardly murderers,
informed the deputy,
that four miles away
they had found a dead man.

Later the high sheriff
told the justice of the peace,
the justice immediately
appointed a jury.

They notified his brothers
who accompanied the jury,
and found that it was George
thrown into an arroyo.

Cuando Félix lo miró
y por él fue conocido,
pues lloraba por su hermano
como el corazón partido.

Pobrecita de su madre,
cómo fue lo que sufrió,
hasta la eterna tumba
su querido hijo siguió.

Priscila, James, Tony y Félix,
que Dios les mande el consuelo:
En qué martirio estarán,
hermano y madre perdieron.

Aquí se acaba el corrido
y mucho me alegro yo,
que hayan sido extranjeros,
pero nuestra gente no.

Por Ramón Luna y Gallegos
fue compuesto este corrido,
a un querido fiel amigo
George Silva, de Bernalillo.

When Félix saw him
and identified the body,
he cried for his brother
with a broken heart.

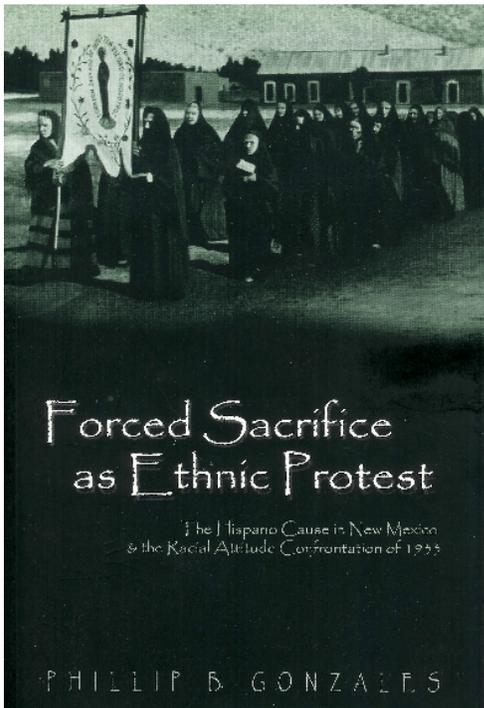
His poor mother,
how she suffered,
following her beloved son
to her eternal tomb.

Priscila, James, Tony, and Félix
may God send you condolence:
What martyrdom they must be in,
losing a brother and a mother.

Here the ballad ends
and I am much gratified
the murderers were strangers,
and not our own people.

By Ramón Luna y Gallegos
this ballad was composed,
for a beloved, faithful friend
George Silva, of Bernalillo.

Social and Political Contexts of the Murder of
George Silva, 1932-1933



Phillip B. Gonzales

Forced Sacrifice as Ethnic Protest: The Hispano Cause in New Mexico & the Racial Attitude Confrontation of 1933

(New York: Peter Lang, 2001)

Quotes from Chapter 3 "Heightened Conflict, the Stock of Prejudice, and the Politics of Collective Readiness"

A context of intense ethnic politics in the 1930's, what UNM sociologist Phillip Gonzales and the newspapers of the time called the Hispano Cause. A partially planned and partially spontaneous process of "consensus formation" and public political protest followed the contentious elections of November 1932, in response to a general atmosphere of racial prejudice and incidents of intergroup violence. The vicious and calculated murder of George Silva was an incident which received sensational statewide coverage. The perceived shortcomings of the justice system inspired Hispano citizens to mobilize to express their frustrations and desire for change. Rising tensions also led to confrontations and demonstrations at the University of New Mexico. Gonzales summarizes the case as follows:

"It was in October 1932, at the height of New Mexico's Independent fusion movement in a historic election year, that George Silva was reported missing. His disappearance, after having closed down his gas station late at night, made news across the state. Twenty-two years old, Silva was from a prominent merchant family in the community of Bernalillo, fifteen miles north of Albuquerque. A reward was offered for finding him "dead or alive." Many rumors and false sightings were reported. Front page stories

reported law enforcement authorities following up on tips and leads. Then, in late December, four months prior to the [UNM] Confrontation, Silva's body was found in the bush several miles outside of Bernalillo. He had been shot to death.

As it happened, Silva had been lured out of town by William Smith, an itinerant trader who had moved to New Mexico a few years before. Police also arrested an accomplice, George Wilds. An unwitting teenager, Wilds confessed that Smith intended to trick Silva into going out of town with him, on the pretext of taking him to a party, in order to rob him. On the drive, Silva sensed the ruse and tried to escape. Smith shot him in the back. The tragedy was heightened in late January when Silva's heartbroken mother, bed-ridden since the discovery of her son's body, suddenly died.

Hispanos immediately framed the killing of Silva in terms of a racial crime. Newspapers quoted Wilds saying that Smith's plan was "to get some easy money from a Mexican." Smith's arrest incited the people of Bernalillo. As one report had it, a "small crowd of spectators fell in behind the prisoner and trailed him to the west court house entry from which vantage spot they watched him clamber into the car and be driven away." As indication of the deep ethnic meaning of the case, a friend of the murdered youth composed a *corrido* (ballad) in memoriam to Silva, denouncing the murder by "cowardly gringos," lamenting that the offenders considered it no crime "To kill a Mexican/Like any little rabbit," and suggesting that by their act, they also murdered George's mother.

Smith was originally charged with first degree murder by Hispano district attorney Eugene Luján, who happened to be on the executive committee of Bronson Cutting's Progressive Party. Before the accused came up for trial, however, a new district attorney, Thomas Mabry, was sworn into office. Mabry changed the charges against Smith, accepting a guilty plea on a reduced charge of second degree murder. This turn of events sparked Hispano indignation. On March 30, 1933, Bernalillo citizens conducted a *junta de indignación* [meeting of indignation], one report saying that 300 people attended, another claiming 500. The gathering drew resolutions "strongly condemning" Mabry. Hispano Independents, in addition to Luján, came in from out of town to speak at the rally, including Jacob Crist, a progressive Democrat representing the Silva family as special counsel; Tranquilino Baca; the popular boxer Eddie "Mack" Quintana; and the editor of *El*

Independiente, José Jordi. Causing greater attention to the case, Crist went public in a dispute with Mabry. The latter charged the former with unprofessional conduct in his Bernalillo protest appearance. Crist accused Mabry of betraying Bernalillo citizens by not taking the citizens' lawyer into confidence on the decision to reduce Smith's charge. Smith was soon sentenced to ten years in prison, which Hispanos considered too lenient." (2001: 105-106).

*El Corrido de George Silva: the Role of Broadside
Ballads in the Political Process*

David F. García and Enrique Lamadrid

The *Corrido* ballad in the form of printed broadsides or *volantes* occupies an intermediate space between orality and literature. Since they seldom enter oral tradition, the recovery of these ephemeral texts reveals complex historical contexts, poetics, and social praxis. Although memorial corridos abound in 19th and 20th century New Mexico newspapers, the majority deal with themes of mortality, loss, and redemption. The death of George Silva at the hands of an Anglo con-man in the fall of 1932 near the town of Bernalillo, New Mexico provoked more than memories and reflection.

The motive of the murder was robbery, but the cold-blooded violence and racist boasting of the murderer mobilized the community to demand justice for what today would be called a hate crime. A ballad emerged to tell the story, but *El Corrido de George Silva* was too combative and graphic for any newspaper to publish. Instead, a broadside was printed for public distribution. Somehow a copy survived which was proudly displayed for many years with other family memorabilia on the wall of Silva's Saloon, the oldest bar in Bernalillo.

Bartender Félix Silva often tells the tragic story of his uncle George, an enterprising 22 year old man from a hard working and well respected Lebanese / Nuevo Mexicano family whose surnames include Shaheen, Silva, and Gallegos. On the night of October 9th, 1932, an Anglo con-man who had been passing bad checks in Bernalillo lured George for a ride in a shiny rental car, hoping to rob him and crack the safe at his gas station. On the highway west of town, with a young accomplice, he later claimed that all he did was "ask Silva for a loan." What he left out was that the request was made at gunpoint. When Silva jumped out of the moving car in an escape attempt, he was shot in the back, then again in the head. The body was dragged to an arroyo and hidden behind a juniper tree. Fearing the worst, desperate family and friends searched for George everywhere for two months. The tragedy was compounded when Dolores Gallegos Silva, his grief-stricken mother, died of grief and shock not long after his remains were found.

After a reward was offered by the family, the murderer cynically persuaded two high school boys to "find" the body so he could collect the money. The suspicions of the police were raised when the youths said they were looking for Christmas trees in an

area nowhere near the forests of the nearby Jemez Mountains. The investigation led to the perpetrator, who was still passing bad checks in Albuquerque. In unrepentant declarations to the police, he claimed self defense and revealed his disdain for Nuevo Mexicanos. He reportedly blustered that taking "easy money from a Mexican" should carry little consequence.

In the spring of 1933, in a controversial prosecution led by a new Anglo District Attorney, charges were reduced from first to second degree murder. The suspect was allowed to plead guilty to lesser charges to avoid a trial in a community already convinced of his guilt. Most local newspapers steered clear of the divisive issues of ethnic politics and insisted on sensationalizing the crime, speculating on motives of love, passion, and revenge, since what appeared to be a woman's garter was planted near the body.

Ramón Luna, the most celebrated composer of the day and family friend, took up the gauntlet and wrote a *corrido* to commemorate the tragedy and its impact on the Silva family. From its narrative perspective in the chain of events, the *corrido* was probably written in March 1933, after the death of George Silva's mother, and before the mass protest meetings the next month. These *juntas de indignación* featured speeches by politicians, editorial writers, and even a popular boxer. *Volantes* or broadside flyers of speech and *corrido* texts were often distributed or even sold for a few pennies at such gatherings, especially after the musical performances or formal presentations.

The *junta de indignación* is a grass-roots democratic tradition common in nineteenth and twentieth century New Mexico, along with campaign rallies and related social events. People were moved and inspired as they congregated to express their views directly. *Corridos* were and still are embedded in this political process and drew on the power of music and verse to lyrically address the issues of the day.

Loosely based on popular accounts and published reports of the tragic events, the *Corrido de George Silva* dramatizes the ethnic and racial conflict that the newspapers avoided. In typical *corrido* fashion, the stage is set with date, time, and place, plus powerful evocations of the emotional tone. With the exception of composer, Ramón Luna y Gallegos, and the high school student accomplice, Wild, the only names mentioned are those of the family, George, Félix, James, Tony, and Priscila, who was only ten years old. Complete sympathy with the victim and his family is memorialized in a graphic death scene in which Silva writhes in his own blood as he begs for the last blessing of his mother:

Cuando se vio George Silva
revolcándose en su sangre,
en alta voz aclamaba
la bendición de su madre.

When George Silva found himself
writhing in his own blood,
in a loud voice claimed
the blessing of his mother.

In other verses we hear the cries of brothers and sisters as they discover their loss of both their brother and their mother. Since their father died six years before, they were orphans and underage at the time of the double tragedy. It is a tribute to the strength of the Silva children that they managed to stay together and prosper as a family.

On the other hand, the murderers are portrayed with complete disdain, characterized as serpents waiting to strike from behind. Their cynical testimony to the authorities minimized their crimes and even claimed self-defense. With bitter sarcasm, the corrido quotes them, emphasizing their disregard for Nuevo Mexicanos:

Decían los asesinos,
-Eso no es ningún delito
de matar un mexicano
como cualquier conejito.

The murderers said,
-It is not a crime
to kill a Mexican
like any little rabbit.

In the Silva case "Easy money from a Mexican" led just as easily to pull a trigger to shoot one in the back. Deadly accurate in most details, the ballad is mistaken in only one - the location where Silva was actually shot. The lyrics claim he was shot then dumped on the outskirts of town. Confessions rendered to the police indicate that Silva was taken there first, then shot as he attempted to escape.

The related themes of racial tension and ethnic solidarity give closure to the ballad, with the composer expressing his relief that foreigners and not his own people were the perpetrators of the tragedy.

Aquí se acaba el corrido
y mucho me alegro yo,
que hayan sido extranjeros,
pero nuestra gente no.

Here the ballad ends
and I am much gratified
the murderers were strangers,
and not our own people.

In the political climate of 1933, the Silva case attracted state-wide attention as another example of racism and a catalyst for action. The ephemeral medium of the broadside corrido is deserving of the attention of scholars and students of cultural history to recover popular literature and its sometimes pivotal

role in politics. In *El Corrido de George Silva*, Ramón Luna captured the pain and indignation of the people of Bernalillo and New Mexico in their ongoing search for social justice.

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A complete analysis of the impact of the George Silva case on ethnic politics in New Mexico in the 1930s is found in Chapter 3 "Heightened Conflict, the Stock of Prejudice, and the Politics of Collective Readiness".

Newspaper Reporting of the George Silva Murder
and its Political Aftermath:
October 1932-March 1933

- "Extend Silva Case," *New Mexican*, October 16, 1932, 6.
- "Report Silva is Held Captive," *New Mexican*, October 22, 1932, 1.
- "Probe Slaying of George Silva," *New Mexican*, December 27, 1932 and December 30, 1932.
- "George Silva Murdered is Jury Verdict," *Albuquerque Tribune*, December 28, 1932 and December 29, 30, 1932.
- "El Cadaver de G. Silva Fue Hallado," *La Bandera Americana*, December 29, 1932.
- "Expect Other Arrests Soon in Silva Case," *Albuquerque Tribune*, January 2, 3, 5, 1933, 1. Also in *Albuquerque Journal*, January 2, 1933. *New Mexican*, December 31, 1932, January 2, 1933. *La Bandera Americana*, January 5, 1933.
- "Says Silva Killed to Save Life," *Albuquerque Tribune*, December 31, 1932, 1. *New Mexican*, January 6, 1933.
- "Brother of Dead Man Threatens Smith in Court" *Albuquerque Journal*, Friday, January 6, 1933.
- "Fallece la Madre de George Silva," *La Bandera Americana*, January 26, 1933.
- "George Silva's Mother Dies in Bernalillo," *Albuquerque Journal*, January 23, 1933, 1.
- "Mass Meeting at Bernalillo Condemns Mabry," *Albuquerque Journal*, March 31, 1933, 1.
- "Culpan a Mabry en Una Junta Política Habida en Bernalillo," *La Bandera Americana*, April 6, 1933, 2.
- "Meet Condemns District Attorney," *New Mexican*, March 31, 1933, 2.
- "La Administración de Justicia en el Condado de Sandoval," *El Independiente*, April 7, 1933.
- "Jacob Crist to the Public Mind," *Albuquerque Journal*, April 11, 1933, 6.

FEW CLEWS IN SILVA KILLING; PROBE PUSHED
Material From Woman's Apparel Found Nearby
Doubtful Link
Inquest Continued to Wednesday at Bernalillo

A white strip of cloth, resembling a woman's had band or part of a dress belt, and three discharged cartridges were held by officers Tuesday as possible clues to the slayers of George Silva, 22, Bernalillo merchant, whose body was found Saturday after he had been missing since October 9.

The cloth and the cartridges were found near the spot where two Albuquerque high school students discovered the body about seven miles northwest of Bernalillo and near the Cuba road.

The inquest into the death, set for Tuesday morning, was continued until Wednesday morning while officers are making additional investigations. Justice Emiliano Lucero will preside at the inquest at the court house in Bernalillo.

Doubtful Link

Whether the cloth and the cartridges are connected with the case was problematical, officers said. The cloth may have been lost near the road since the murder.

M.J. McGuinness, assistant district attorney, who with District Attorney Eugene D. Luján, Tuesday visited the point wherer the body was found, said he believed two 38 caliber cartridges found near the place are at least two years old. Deputy Sheriff Mariano Montoya, however, believes the weather since October 9 could have caused the shells to be in their present condition.

The third shell of a smaller caliber is not so old, officers stated. Silva's right shoe was found Tuesday morning about 100 feet from where the body was discovered. The left shoe was on the body, but was untied.

To Examine Body

Silva's body probably will be examined here Tuesday afternoon in the Blakemore-Exeter mortuary. The body may be buried here Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday.

The two students who found the body will not receive the \$200 reward offered by Félix Silva, brother of the slain man, shortly after he disappeared. He announced Tuesday that too long a time has elapsed since the reward was offered. Robert Masters and Ed Hogg, high school students who found the body, and George Wilds, another high school student who was with them

at the time, were among the group which went to the scene Tuesday. The jury and Justice Lucero visited the death spot Monday.

Albuquerque Journal

Wednesday, December 28, 1932

TESTIFY AT SILVA INQUEST

Return Open Verdict; Jealousy Theory Advanced

Another chapter in the murder of George Silva, 22, Bernalillo merchant, whose body was found near the Cuba road northwest of Bernalillo Saturday, closed Wednesday morning with an inquest and without bringing out any new clues or motives to the murder.

The jury which sat at the inquest at Bernalillo found that "The deceased was shot to death by multiple gun shot wounds inflicted on his head and body by persons unknown to the jury."

The inquest was before Justice Emiliano Lucero and only four witnesses testified. They were Ed Hogg and Robert Masters, high school students who found the body, and George Wilds, another high school student who was with them at the time, and District Attorney Eugene D. Lujan.

Prosecution on Stand

The district attorney took the stand to tell of the examination of the body by Dr. E.M. Clayton, Bernalillo county physician, at the Blakemore-Exeter mortuary Tuesday afternoon.

Dr Clayton found a bullet wound through the head and one in the chest on the right side, either of which might have caused death, Lujan quoted the doctor as saying.

Assistant District Attorney M.J. McGuinness, who represented the state, was to consult members of the Silva family Wednesday afternoon as he planned to continue an investigation. He is holding three discharged cartridges, one of which he connects with the bullet wound through the head and a strip of white cloth, resembling a woman's handkerchief, for further study.

Jealousy Theory

Deputy Sheriff Mariano Montoya still believes jealousy the cause of the murder because of Silva's popularity with young women of Bernalillo.

Montoya said Wednesday he believed the same persons who burned Silva's filling station and store a year ago are involved

in the murder, but this mystery also has not been solved.

Funeral services for Silva were held in the Catholic church at Bernalillo late Tuesday and burial was in the Catholic cemetery there. Several hundred persons attended the service, at which Father Lambert officiated.

The high school boys who found the body indicated Wednesday they would make a fight for the \$200 reward which had been offered by Felix Silva, a brother, for the finding of Silva or his body, and which the brother now says will not be paid. Silva claims too much time has elapsed.

New Mexico State Tribune Saturday, December 31, 1932

EXPECT MORE ARRESTS SOON IN SILVA CASE

Prosecutor's Office Is Not Yet Satisfied

WILL QUESTION MAN

Seek to Clear Up More Details of Murder

Although two men have signed confessions in connection with the killing of George Silva, the district attorney's office suspects other arrests in the case, it was said today.

The prosecutor's office is not yet satisfied that all angles of the Bernalillo crime have been cleared up.

District Attorney Mabry, Assistant Prosecutor Joe Whitehouse, and Field Agent Nick Cordova went to Bernalillo Monday afternoon. They planned to continue their investigation there. It also was announced they would have the scene of the crime photographed and surveyed.

A number of persons who are believed to have some knowledge of details of the case are to be questioned it was said. The quizzing began early Monday afternoon with Robert Masters, high school youth who was with George Wilds when Silva's body was "found" northwest of Bernalillo.

Masters' mother and brother Wally accompanied him to the district attorney's office.

Implicated Self

Wilds is held in the county jail here as result of a signed statement he gave the district attorney Sunday night—a statement involving the 18-year-old youth in the crime and painting William J. "Governor" Smith as a cold-blooded murderer.

As result of late developments in the case, preliminary hearing for Smith has been indefinitely postponed. It

originally was scheduled for Tuesday afternoon before Justice Emiliano Lucero in Bernalillo.

When Wilds will be arraigned on the murder charge to be filed against him is not yet certain, the prosecutor said.

Asked To Accompany

Wilds, in his statement, said he was asked by Smith to accompany the latter to Bernalillo to "get some easy money from a Mexican." The two left here about 10:30 pm in a rented car, which had been obtained for them by Mrs. Ruth Kearney, close friend of Smith according to Wilds.

Arriving at Silva's Bernalillo filling station, the Albuquerqueans found him absent, so drove north of town to the road leading to Ellis's ranch.

While the tow men sat there waiting for a train going north from Albuquerque passed, Smith is quoted by Wilds as saying he'd "like... on that."

Returning to Bernalillo, they found Silva in his room. He had just finished taking a bath.

Asked About Check

"Silva asked Bill (Smith) about a check Silva was holding for him and Bill said he'd take care of it."the statement reads. Then Smith told Silva he and Wilds had a date with three girls and wanted Silva to complete the party.

Lured by this, Silva left the room. The three men drove north to the Cuba road, turned west and traveled four or five miles.

Wilds said this date was entirely fictitious and that after the girls were not found, Smith asked Silva for a loan of between \$500 and \$700.

Silva Agreed

Silva agreed to the loan, and the car was turned and headed for Bernalillo.

Wilds was driving the car, Smith sat in the middle, and Silva on extreme right of the one-seater.

Silva must have sensed something wrong, for:
"We could see another car coming from Bernalillo heading in our direction and George jumped out of the car and started to run up the highway. Bill jumped out and ran after him and I drove the car on down the road towards Bernalillo until I had passed this car then I turned around and came back. I came back driving slow as I was not sure where I would find Bill and George. I noticed them off to the south of the road, fighting, so I drove on up a little further and turned around and came back.

Heard Shot

"Just before I got even with them I heard a shot. I stopped the car, and Bill hollered to me to come over there. George was still alive and Bill asked me to help take him to a little arroyo down off the hill from where we were standing."

Wilds said he searched Silva's pockets and found about \$4. Then he returned to his car. On the way back he heard another shot, Smith came a little later.

"I believe," Wilds dictated, "that Bill said something at the time about finishing it up or making a good job of it."

"That he had done it or was going to do it?" asked Police Captain R.C. Charlton.

"Well, that he had done it," answered Wilds.

"Now let me ask you a question," said Charlton. "When you carried Silva down hill and deposited his body under the tree, he was alive?"

"Yes sir."

"And breathing?"

"Yes."

"...He was not shot in the head when you carried him down the slope? He was shot after you left there?"

"Yes sir."

County Physician E.M. Clayton has said the shot in the head caused death.

Drove Back

Leaving the scene of the slaying, Wilds and Smith drove back to Bernalillo and parked their car on the south side of the baseball park; then walked up the railroad tracks to the filling station. They entered the store building thru a back door and tried to open the safe, Wilds said. During the talk before he was killed Silva had mentioned he would get the money to loan Smith from the safe, the confession said.

Then, "Bill saw a fellow coming up the street in Bernalillo towards the store and said we had better leave. So we went out the back door and over to the railroad tracks and just after we got there a car drove in and drove in back of Silva's store and I imagine it went into the garage."

Couldn't Tell

"Could you tell," asked Charlton, "what kind of a car this was or how many persons were in it?"

"No sir."

"But it went into the garage back of Silva's store?"

"I could not say it went into the garage," Wilds responded, "but the lights went out and must have gone into the garage."

Silva's automobile was found locked in the garage Oct. 10,

the day following his disappearance.

Wilds and Smith, the statement continues, drove back to the former's Old Town home and there Smith gave Wilds his gun and told him to hide it.

Slept Little

Wilds didn't sleep much that night because he had "too much to think about."

This was Sunday. Middle of the week Wilds said he saw Smith again and "he said he was going to Detroit and somebody had threatened Ruth (Mrs. Kearney) and he wanted me to give her the gun. Bull left on Friday and I took the gun to Ruth Saturday."

"Ruth knew his gun, did she?" asked District Attorney Mabry.

"She knew it was coming," answered Wilds, "because she asked me the next day how com I had not brought it up and I said I had forgotten it. So then I took the gun up Saturday."

Gave it Again

About a month ago, Wilds said, Smith gave him the gun again, shortly after Smith returned from Detroit. "I took it back out to the house and buried it."

Wild's first story of the shooting, told Sunday afternoon to Attorney Joe Dailey who represents Smith, in the main bore out Smith's statement that he killed Silva in self defense. Sunday night, when the district attorney and Charlton took up the questioning, Wilds was at first inclined to hold to the same statements.

He changed his tale because "Mr. Charlton gave me to understand that he had the true story. I did not know whether he did or not but I thought I might as well tell the truth."

Found Incorrect

"Charlton checked up some of my statements and found they were incorrect.

"I am telling the true story," Wilds said, "because I could not make the other one stick, I do not believe now."

Bob Masters and Ed Hogg, the two students who were with Wilds when the body was "discovered," had been "given to understand that Bill had stumbled across the body up there on the highway but he was afraid to turn it in.

"We were to go up there and locate the exact spot so Bill could send somebody else up there and have the body turned in. That's all the other boys knew of it," Wilds said.

"They do not know anything about me being tangled up with it," Wilds concluded.

Masters is a brother of Mrs. Kearney.

Smith characterized Wilds' statement as being "all wet."

Mrs Kearney has been questioned in connection with the case and has told officers, they say, that Smith came to her home on night of the shooting and admitted slaying Silva. Smith had blood on his clothing at the time," she said, according to officers.

NEW DETAILS IN SILVA CASE ARE REVEALED

Bernalillo Merchant Got \$525 From Bank Before Slain
\$300.00 IN SAFE

What Became of Remainder Still Undetermined

With robbery definitely established as the murder motive, officers Tuesday continued their investigation of the brutal slaying near Bernalillo of George Silva, 22, Bernalillo merchant, to learn what became of the loot.

Silva is known to have cashed three checks for a total of \$525 in Albuquerque on October 8, the day before he was killed, it is said. Of this amount \$300 was found in his store safe, but officers have not located the remaining \$225. A gold watch and a \$10 gold charm, constantly worn by Silva, are also missing.

George Wilds, 18-year-old high school student, who, the district attorney's office has announced will be charged with William J. "Bill" Smith, Cuba, for the murder has revealed new details to the authorities since his first statement.

Smith some time ago is said to have obtained several hundred dollars from a number of Albuquerque friends ostensibly for handling a cattle deal. He told a very alluring story of quick and large profits from the transaction, the friends say.

Planned to Rob Safe

If Silva had not jumped from the automobile no one would have been hurt, in the opinion of young Wilds. Smith planned to get the combination to Silva's safe, let Silva out of the car near Bernalillo, and he told Wilds to go to the Silva store and get money from the safe while Silva was walking home, Wilds' statement shows. Only part of the statement has been revealed by the district attorney's office.

"After Bill asked George for the money, George told him he would be glad to let him have it and said at the time that there was no need of having come all the way out there, but if he (Bill) had told him this at the store he would have let him have it and would just call it a loan and Bill would pay it back whenever he was able." Wilds told officers.

"Bill asked George for the combination to the safe and said we would let George out a little closer to town and we could get the money and leave before George got to town. George agreed and told Bill the combination after which we turned around and started back to Bernalillo.

Wrote it Out

"Bill then gave George a pencil and a piece of paper and asked George to write it out, which George did. We started on into town and noticed another car coming towards us when George jumped out of the car and started running back up the highway. In my estimation, if George had never jumped from the car nobody would have been hurt."

The combination given Smith apparently was not correct, for Smith and Wilds were not able later to open the safe. There is some doubt that Silva was noticed by persons in the car Wilds says came up the highway.

Whether Silva's clothing was searched before Smith told Wilds to go through the pockets is one angle officers are investigating. Wilds found but \$4 in the pockets, of which he was given \$1. A "worthless" \$5 check given at first as the cause of the murder was found in the safe by Silva's family.

Gave Mother Dollar

His statement that he got but \$1 is borne out to some degree by the fact that he gave his mother \$1 the next morning, explained he had earned it through "driving a car to Belen."

The district attorney's office was preparing Tuesday to file a murder complaint against Wilds. No definite time has been set for his arraignment or for the preliminary hearing of Smith, who last week entered a not guilty plea at Bernalillo.

BROTHER OF DEAD MAN THREATENS SMITH IN COURT

Felix Silva Restrained by Officer and Another Brother; May Take Suspect to Penitentiary

Removal of William J. (Bill) Smith, 32, Cuba, confessed slayer of George Silva, 22, Bernalillo merchant from the Bernalillo county jail to the state penitentiary at Santa Fe "for safe keeping" was said to be under consideration by Sandoval county officers Thursday night.

The discussion followed threatening gestures by Felix Silva, brother of the slain youth, in the court of Justice Emiliano Lucero, at Bernalillo, after Smith waived preliminary hearing on first degree murder charges.

Silva, who sat behind a railing, moved toward Smith and cursed him. Police Capt. Russell Charlton, who was one of the guards present, stepped between the two, and restored order as Neime Silva, another brother held Felix in check.

The court room was crowded beyond capacity. There was no disorder as Smith was led through the crowd and placed in an auto for the return trip to Albuquerque.

M.J. Guinness, former assistant district attorney, representing the Silva family, said the people of Bernalillo are law abiding and there is no necessity for Smith's removal from the jail here.

George Wilds, 19, high school student, who also waived preliminary hearing on the first degree murder charge, was returned with him to the county jail here. Both men are being held to the district court without bond.

Albuquerque Journal
January 23, 1933.

Monday,

GEORGE SILVA'S MOTHER DIES IN BERNALILLO

Had Been Confined to Her Bed Since Son's Body Was Found; Two Men Accused of His Murder

Mrs. Felix Silva, mother of George Silva, slain Bernalillo merchant whose disappearance attracted statewide attention, died at her home in Bernalillo Sunday morning.

She had been confined to her bed since the finding of her son's body shortly before Christmas, and death was believed to have resulted from heart trouble.

She was 49 years of age and is survived by three sons, Felix Jr., James and Tony, and by a daughter, Priscilla. Her late husband died, about six years ago.

Mrs. Silva was born in Bernalillo and spent most of her life there. Funeral services will be held there Monday morning. The Plakemore-Exter mortuary in charge.

Two persons, William "Bill" Smith and George Wilds, are being held on charges of murder, awaiting trial in connection with the shooting of George Silva.

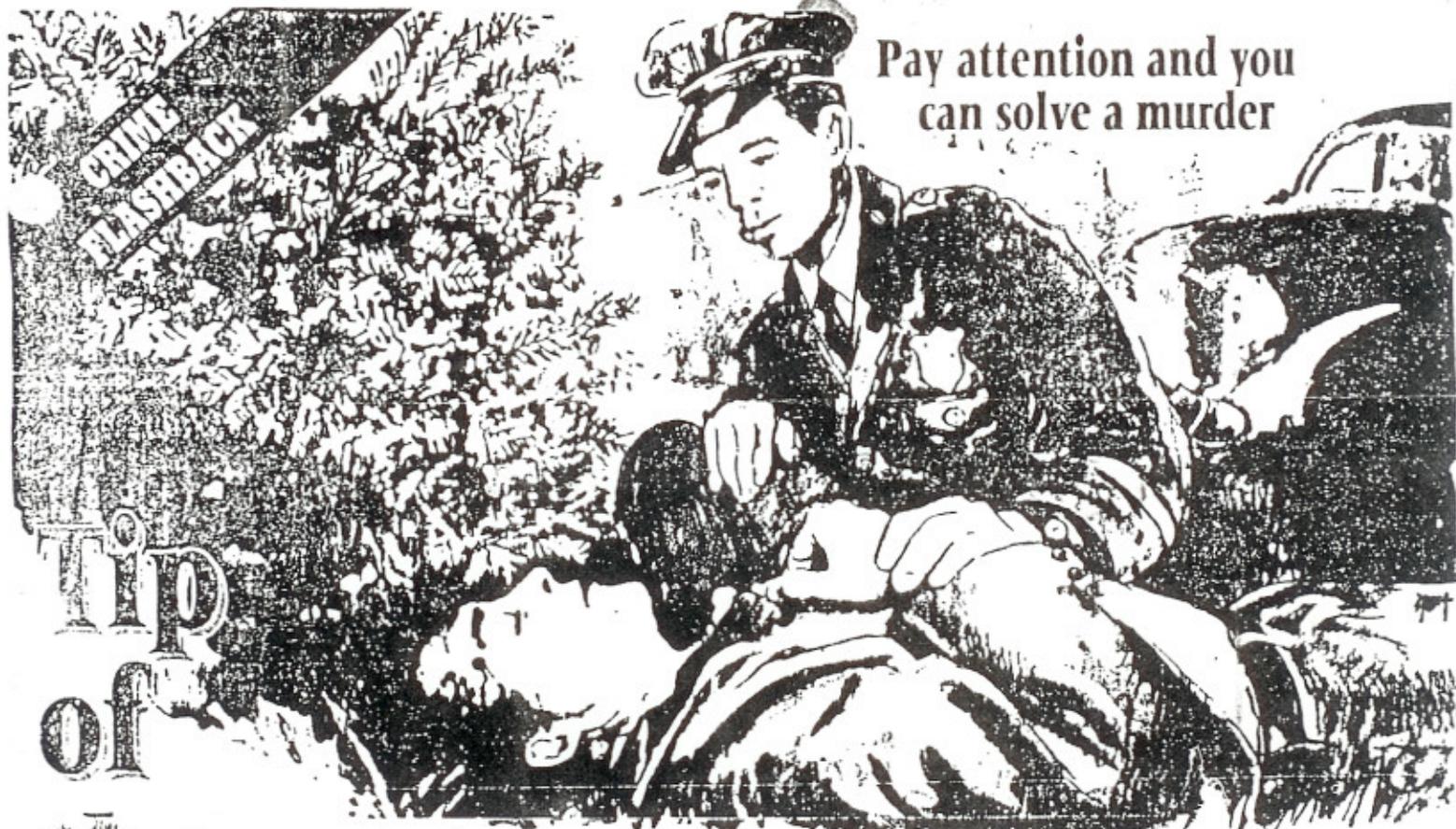
MASS MEETING AT BERNALILLO CONDEMNS MABRY

Resolutions Declare District Attorney Wrong in Accepting Second Degree Plea From Smith

A resolution strongly condemning District Attorney T.J. Mabry for accepting a guilty plea for second degree murder from William Smith in the death of George Silva of Bernalillo, was adopted at a mass meeting held in Bernalillo Thursday night. An attendance of 500 was claimed.

The resolution declared in one place that "in our opinion no jury on earth would have failed to find the defendant guilty of murder in the first degree." A number of murders occurring in Sandoval county during the last 12 years have not been satisfactorily prosecuted, it was stated.

Speakers were Attorney J.H. Crist of Santa Fe, a special sposecutor; Alcario Mondoya, Jose Jordi, Abelino Lucero, Eddie - Mack, and Justice Tranquilino Baca.



Pay attention and you can solve a murder

Tip of the stunted tree

MAX HAINES



Halfway through this devious yarn you will be given the opportunity to discover the flaw in the statement of one of the characters, which led to the solution of the murder. We will attempt to present you with all the clues available to Sheriff Joe Montoya of Bernalillo, New Mexico, in 1933 when the crime took place.

The Silvas family consisted of a widowed mother and her four sons, George, Felix, Tony and James. All were hard working, reputable young men who were devoted to each other and their mother. No one in the community had a derogatory word to say about the Silvas family.

One hot autumn day, Felix, Tony and James called on Sheriff Montoya with the startling news that their older brother George was missing. They told the Sheriff that George had been missing for three days. He had last chatted with them in front of his apartment, which was located behind the family's general store. It was 10 o'clock on Saturday night, Oct. 9. George had told his brothers that he was going directly to bed.

When George didn't show up for Sunday dinner, Felix went to his brother's room. George's bed had not been slept in. Nothing had been taken from the room. In fact, George's money and some jewellery were visible on a bureau. There was no sign of a struggle. His car was still in the garage. Felix went on to explain that his brother had never been away overnight without advising their mother.

Montoya, realizing that the Silvas were a well respected, no nonsense clan, took the disappearance seriously. He knew that they must have made

inquiries themselves in the three days that their brother had been missing.

The boys volunteered that they had called several of George's friends without any concrete results. Initially, they thought that George's best friend, Bill Smith, might know something, but when they called Smith's ranch, they were told that he was away visiting in Detroit.

Montoya wired Detroit police to check up on Smith. The next day he received a reply, advising him that Smith had arrived in Detroit on Oct. 9 to visit a girlfriend. The Detroit police had received this information from Smith's girlfriend. Unfortunately, she didn't know his present whereabouts. She only knew that he had left Detroit.

The next day Bill Smith walked into the Sheriff's office, inquiring as to what had happened to his hunting and fishing buddy, George Silvas. The Sheriff had to admit that he simply didn't know. He was interested in anything Bill had to tell him about George. Bill told the Sheriff that George had no enemies. He did give the Sheriff one juicy bit of information. He claimed George had told him that his brothers resented him, as the oldest son, having a larger share of the family business than they did.

The Sheriff had a hard time swallowing this last bit of information. As far as he knew, the Silvas boys were extremely loyal to each other. However, one can never be sure of such things. Families have been known to keep dark secrets to themselves.

Understandably, George Silvas' disappearance made the headlines of the local newspaper. The publicity brought immediate results. One young man called the Sheriff, advising him that he had seen George at 11 o'clock on the night of his disappearance. He was talking to someone in a car, whom the witness was unable to identify.

Evidently, George had not gone to bed at 10 p.m., as he had told his brothers. This was verified when the owner of a dance hall reported that the missing man had been in the dance hall around 11:30 p.m. and had left by himself. The dance hall owner was the last person to see George Silvas.

Some weeks passed and the missing person's case remained unsolved despite a \$5,000 reward being offered to the person leading authorities to George Silvas, dead or alive.

Wally Sands, a 16-year-old high school student, rushed into the Sheriff's office and related the following story. He and three other youths had driven out across the mesa to find a Christmas tree. About five miles outside of town, they drove past mountains lush with pines and cedars. As they drove, Sands noticed a rather small, stunted cedar just off the highway. The young people stopped. With Wally leading the way, they ran to the tree. Suddenly, he stopped short and gasped. Wally Sands had discovered the body of George Silvas.

Sheriff Montoya, accompanied by Wally, picked up Felix Silvas and drove out to identify the body. The Sheriff was pretty sure that it was George who lay out on the mesa. He was right. Felix tearfully identified his brother's body. The Sheriff noted that

there were two bullet holes in the victim's head, either one of which could have been fatal.

The Sheriff drove Wally back to his office. He wanted to question the boy further. You see, there was something in his earlier recital of how he had discovered the body that didn't ring true. Did you catch the flaw in the boy's story?

Montoya wanted to know why the boy had stopped his car and headed directly for a stunted tree when they had driven by beautiful pines and cedars. Wally stuttered. Then he broke down and shouted, "I didn't kill him! I didn't." The Sheriff wanted to know more.

Wally, now in tears, continued to tell the Sheriff that he had met a friend who had offered him a drive in his brand new car. Wally had accepted the lift. Later, they had picked up George outside the dance hall. Out on the mesa, George and the owner of the vehicle had commenced to argue. Wally thought that the argument had something to do with a bad cheque. Evidently, the owner of the car had stuck George with a worthless cheque. George insinuated that instead of buying a new car, his friend should have honored his cheque.

The two antagonists got out of the car. Wally heard shots and saw George fall to the ground. The vehicle's owner had dragged George's body off the road. He came back and told Wally that if he ever revealed what he had seen, he would be killed. Later, when the reward of \$5,000 was posted, this same man instructed Wally to accidentally discover the body so that he could collect the reward. He would then turn the money over to the friend or be killed.

It was a fantastic yarn with one detail missing. Who was the friend with the new car? Poor Wally Sands blurted out the name - Bill Smith.

But how could that be? Smith had been in Detroit at the time of the murder. Montoya once again contacted Detroit police. This time their investigation was far more thorough. They learned that when Smith was in the company of his girlfriend, he kept telling her that he had arrived on the ninth of the month. It was only natural that when questioned as to when her boyfriend had arrived in town, the date that came to her mind was the ninth. You might recall that, when the first inquiry was made of the Detroit police, the case involved a missing person and not a murder.

Bill Smith was taken into custody. When faced with Wally Sands' and his girlfriend's statements, he confessed to the murder. It had happened exactly as Wally had told the Sheriff. Bill added, "I didn't mean to kill him. George was my best friend. I guess I just lost my head. What else can I say?"

On Feb. 10, 1934, Bill Smith was found guilty of murder. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, all because of a bright sheriff and a stunted Christmas tree.



Reunion For Two Troubadours

Guitar-strumming Eddie Gallegos, right, New Mexico's official good will ambassador, had a happy reunion with an old troubadour friend Wednesday when Ramon Luna came to town and the two got together for the first time in more than 30 years. Luna is the man who taught Gallegos to play the guitar 45 years ago. The two first came to Albuquerque in the 1940s when a plane carrying a Will Rogers show was temporarily grounded here. Early in their career, Luna and Gallegos recorded a song, El Final de San Marcial, which Gallegos still considers "the national anthem of New Mexico." Luna now lives in Apache Junction, Ariz. (Journal Photo by Jerry McCullough)



Silva's Saloon, Bernalillo



Silva's Interior



Felix Silva, Jr.



Felix serving



Flight License



Felix Silva, Sr.



Memorabilia



Silva Jr. and primos



Well-stocked cantina



George Silva

ALBUQUERQUE NEW MEXICO LEADING NEWS PAPER
 52nd Year Volume 218 Published every morning. Entered as second class matter, October 3, 1917. Post Office at Albuquerque, N. M., of 1917. **PRICE FIVE CENTS**
 Saturday Morning, December 31, 1932.

SLAYER OF SILVA CONFESSES
JOURNAL
 Sunday Morning, December 25, 1932. **PRICE FIVE CENTS**

WILLIAM J. SMITH, CUBA, SAYS BERNALILLO MAN STARTED PISTOL FIGHT
 Claims He Fired in Self Defense After Merchant Had Tried to Kill Him During Argument Over Check. While Two Were on Automobile Ride; Describes Disposal of Body. Anonymous Tip Leads to Solving of Three Month Mystery

Silva Found Slain Near Bernalillo; Missing 2 Months

Albuquerque High School Students Discover Body Six Miles West of River Near Cuba Road

KILLED ABOUT TIME OF DISAPPEARANCE
 Body, Badly Decomposed, Brought Here; Bad Scar Still Discernible on His Face

Apparently slain: the body of George Silva, 22, Bernalillo merchant, who disappeared October 9, last, was found Saturday afternoon near the Cuba road six miles west of the Rio Grande.

Robert Masters and George Wilds, Albuquerque high school students, members of a party gathering Christmas decorations, discovered the body, badly decomposed, about 210 feet south of the highway, approximately three short

CLUE OF THE STUNTED TREE
Joseph Fulling Fishman

THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE COUNTY of Sandoval, New Mexico, the Silvas were held up as an example of what a family should be. The widowed mother and her four sons, George, Felix, Tony, and James—in order of age—all displayed a profound affection for one another.

When, on a sultry day in late summer, Felix, Tony and James trooped into his office in the town of Bernalillo, Sheriff Joe Montoya knew from their expressions that something was wrong.

"George disappeared," Felix said, "—three days ago. We're afraid something happened to him."

"Did he say where he was going before he left?"

"No, didn't even say good-by. He's never done anything like this before. Tony, Jim, and I left him in front of his apartment, which is in back of our store, at ten o'clock Saturday night. He told us he was going right to bed. When he didn't show up for the family dinner on Sunday, I went to his room. The bed hadn't been slept on. There was no sign of a struggle, nor was anything missing. His money and jewelry were around in plain sight."

"Did you make inquiries among George's friends?" Montoya asked.

"Some of them—he has dozens. We thought at first he might have gone to Bill Smith's ranch. He said his wife

CLUE OF THE STUNTED TREE 233
 "He could have gone in someone else's," Montoya snapped, "—or in a train or bus."
 The day after the story of George's disappearance broke in the newspapers, a young man stopped the sheriff on the street. "Mr. Montoya," he said, "I saw George Silva at seven o'clock the night he vanished, talking to some people who were in a car. It was dark and I couldn't see the faces, but I saw the car. This tip that George had not gone to bed, as he had said he was going to—was verified when the owner of a dance hall told the sheriff that the missing man had stopped in his place around eleven-thirty, but had left by himself. The sheriff could find no one who had seen George Silva after that.

Montoya organized parties to explore the countryside. He put out circulars and queried police departments all over the country. More than a week passed, and still no trace of the missing man.

"Here's a man known to half the people in this county, who walks out of a dance hall and disappears without a single person seeing him," he muttered to a deputy. "Where did he go? Why didn't he take his car?"

"He could have taken someone else's car," the deputy reminded him. "But whose? We've checked every one of his friends—all except Bill Smith."

"I forgot," he said. "I'll send a wire to Detroit."

The reply to Montoya's telegram to the Detroit police came the next day: "Smith arrived Detroit October ninth to visit sweetheart. She admits he swindled her out of two hundred and fifty dollars but refuses to sign complaint. His present whereabouts unknown."

"Well, I guess that's that," the sheriff exclaimed. "He reached Detroit the very day George disappeared. Even if that

Smith was picked up by police on the week before Thursday. Breaking down after more than an hour of questioning from Assistant District Attorney J. J. McQuinn, chief of Police Paul Overmyer and Captain E. C. Chaffin, Smith confessed to the fatal shooting, which he said was the aftermath of a quarrel over a check he had given Silva.

Smith and Travis later, awaiting a verdict in the city justice court chambers, and some one laughing as he talked, showed as a stenographer took down his words and said that he would stand civilly.

Smith's story was that he shot Silva in a pistol battle on the highway, about seven miles northwest of Bernalillo, December 9.

Martinez Montoya, Bernalillo county deputy sheriff, reported Saturday night that he had been unable to find any tracks near the body. No attempt had been made to cover the body, which lay on the high road, close to the edge of the body. One shoe was on the ground and the other was still on the foot. The shoe was a pair of black oxford shoes and the other was a pair of black oxford shoes. The shoe was a pair of black oxford shoes and the other was a pair of black oxford shoes. The shoe was a pair of black oxford shoes and the other was a pair of black oxford shoes.

Clippings mounted



Denise Silva with clippings



Felix with David F. Garcia



Felix, Denise and David



Clippings, context



Trophies



Vacation pictures



Saloon office



Más y más



Silva's, street view