EVERYTHING was quiet in the First National Bank of Arcadia, California, as the noon hour was drawing to a close on April 5, 1922. No customers were there. The president of the bank, Mr. Dunham, was standing at the teller’s window checking some slips. Cashier Hatterscheid and Bookkeeper Stover were in the cages working on their accounts. Miss Montgomery, another bookkeeper, was due back from lunch in a few minutes. Suddenly bank routine was interrupted by a crisp command—“I mean business.” The speaker was standing at the teller’s window of Mr. Dunham, who understood the real meaning of the words when he glanced up and saw the barrel of a pistol pointed at him. Two other bandits carrying guns were covering Hatterscheid and Stover. They, with Mr. Dunham, were ordered to lie down in a row on the floor, face down. While one bandit stood guard over them, the other two began their work. At this moment Miss Montgomery appeared and was immediately ordered to join the others. A customer (Marshall Dessem) entered the bank and was promptly ordered to join the ranks on the floor.

In some haste and rather awkwardly, the bandits rifled the money drawer and the safe. They addressed remarks to each other occasionally, using perfect English. The whole proceeding took but a few minutes. The loot was stuck into two canvas bags, whereupon the three bandits quickly retreated through the front door of the bank and entered a Chevrolet touring car, in which a fourth man had been waiting at the curb. Mr. Dunham immediately notified the police and reported that the robbers had taken about $2,800 in currency and silver, $3,720 in bonds, and $2,700 in American Express travelers’ checks. None of the bandits wore a mask.

The countryside was immediately warned by the police siren at Monrovia, a few miles east of Arcadia, that criminals were being hunted. A few minutes later Virgil Barlow, a farmer living several miles south of Arcadia, saw a Chev-
rolet speed by his place, plunge into a washout, and disappear. Barlow got into his own car and went to look for the Chevrolet. He found that it had been driven about three-quarters of a mile farther on and was standing unoccupied across the bridge on Chicago Park Island in the San Gabriel River.

When the car passed his farm he had seen four or five men in it, and he decided that they might be the men sought by the police who had sounded the siren. He notified the police at once, and Constable James L. Quipple was sent to investigate.

He discovered that the radiator of the Chevrolet was still warm. The license plates had been torn off, and on the rear seat were a number of paper wrappers, used for wrapping coins. It was found that the car had been stolen. Neither Barlow nor Quipple could find a trace of the recent occupants.

An hour after the holdup four Mexicans were arrested while driving through San Gabriel Valley toward Los Angeles in a Ford. Five guns were found on them, and in the back seat were two canvas sacks. The Mexicans at first gave aliases, but were finally identified as Faustino Rivera, Broulio Galindo, José Hernandez, and Salvador Mendival. They said they had rented the Ford in Los Angeles that morning and were in San Gabriel to pick oranges. The revolvers, they said, were for rabbit shooting.

The police doubted their story and took them at once to the bank at Arcadia, lined them up in front of the bank's employees, and asked if they were the robbers who had been there an hour before.

Dunham and Marshall Dessem, the customer who had entered the bank during the holdup, could identify only Rivera. Hatterscheid identified Rivera and Galindo. Miss Montgomery was positive about Galindo, and Stover said he recognized Galindo and Hernandez. None of them identified Mendival, so it was supposed that he was the man who had stayed outside in the car. He was partially identified by G. A. Cane, a telephone-company employee, who was working near by. Cane said Mendival's complexion resembled that
of the man he saw sitting in the Chevrolet. The Mexicans' car was examined by the bank employees, and Hatterscheid claimed that he found a silver dollar on the back seat.

On further police investigation, it was discovered that Galindo and Hernandez had been previously convicted of felonies; and several days after the holdup a scarfpin was taken from Galindo and identified by Miss Montgomery as one she had seen on one of the bandits.

In May the four were indicted, and on September 27 three of them were brought to trial—Rivera having died in jail. It was the theory of the prosecution that the Mexicans had used the Chevrolet to escape from the bank, driven it to the island, where the Ford had been left, changed cars, and started back to Los Angeles to return the Ford, which they actually had rented the morning of the robbery. The two sacks found in the car were partially identified as those used by the robbers, as were two men's caps and the five guns.

The defense could find but one alibi witness, and he testified that Galindo was in San Gabriel at the time of the robbery. Several character witnesses testified for Mendival. The prosecution was unable to explain how it was possible for these men who had to testify through an interpreter to use such fluent English as described and quoted by the bank employees. Neither was any attempt made to explain what became of the loot, though the defendants were captured within forty-five minutes of the holdup.

The three men denied any knowledge of the crime and stuck to the story of their innocent excursion to San Gabriel to pick oranges. Just before the case was given to the jury, Galindo, through the interpreter, told the court:

This is an outrage that the people of the bank and the community want to do to us. It is an outrage, an injustice, because we haven't done anything. They have caught us with some weapons; we have delivered them to the officers; they have found some bags that were in the automobile. They have found these bags in the automobile, they have returned those bags, those sacks to us that we might put them into our pockets. And when they arrived at the bank they took us inside and they placed the weapons out in front of us so that they could be seen, and they asked a young lady there and a young man, who was also there, if we were the parties concerned,
and the young lady began to look at us and said that I resembled some one; that I resembled—that I had a white face and that I looked like the man that was there, and then one of the policemen, a fat man who testified here yesterday, was standing at the side and nodded to her in an affirmative way so that she might say that it was I who was there. This is really an injustice. We haven't committed any crime. That is all.

The jury found all three guilty, and on November 6 Galindo and Hernandez were sentenced to from one year to life and taken to Folsom. On November 9 Mendival was sent to San Quentin for a term of one to ten years.

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Soon after the trial a Mr. Jack Thomas appeared at the office of the Deputy District Attorney, Mr. Burke, and informed him that the Mexicans had had nothing to do with the Arcadia holdup, and he named as the guilty men Frank Sullivan, W. F. McMahon, Tom Gray, and Eddie Burns. He told the Deputy District Attorney that he knew these men and that they had told him that they were the actual bandits.

Almost simultaneously, these four men happened to be arrested in Los Angeles on a liquor charge. It was then found that Sullivan had used a United States bond for the purchase of liquor and that this bond was one of those taken from the Arcadia bank in the holdup. Six hundred dollars in travelers’ checks stolen from the bank were found buried at a ranch in Artesia. This had been done by Tom Gray. Gradually a complete chain of evidence was forged by the authorities linking these four men with the Arcadia crime, although there was a time early in the investigation when they were released for lack of evidence.

Finally, however, the story was unraveled, and in 1924 the four were indicted, together with E. S. McCardia and Sam Fair, who were also indirectly involved. A former Los Angeles policeman, Hubert Kittle, and David McGregor were indicted for receiving stolen goods in connection with the disposal of the travelers’ checks under a forged name. Kittle committed suicide before the trial. The others were convicted.
As soon as the indictments against the real criminals had been brought in, the District Attorney and Sheriff Treager, who always suspected that a mistake had been made and continued the investigation, took steps to bring about a governor's pardon for the Mexicans. On May 2, 1924, Mendival was pardoned. Hernandez was pardoned May 26, and Galindo, on September 30. They had served practically two years for a crime of which they were innocent. They received no compensation.

What became of Galindo and Hernandez is not known. Mendival, who had always had a good record, discovered that the position he held before his arrest had been taken by someone else. When he entered prison he had left behind him a wife and a young baby in the little house he was buying on the instalment plan. When he returned they had vanished, apparently driven from their home by poverty.

This is another case of circumstantial evidence supported by mistaken identification by the victims. The obvious facts which pointed to the complete innocence of the men were apparently disregarded by the police, the prosecution, and the jury, namely, that the men spoke no English, whereas the robbers spoke perfect English; that they were in a Ford car, and not in a Chevrolet; and that the loot was not found on them one-half hour after the crime. Those who commit robbery or theft usually have the money on them, if caught immediately, or prove to have changed their normal habits of spending, if apprehended later. The identification was misguided, as it so often is, by preconceptions and assumptions and by the keen desire to avenge a crime and fasten it upon someone who might plausibly have been guilty. There is some indication that the police were not disinterested or impartial. The fact that two of the men had been in the toils of the law before undoubtedly counted heavily against them. There were so many palpable and avoidable slips in the administration of justice in this case, however, that the state should have offered an indemnity even without a petition. Mendival's life seems to have been ruined by the
ghastly episode. So far as can be discovered, no indemnity
was requested under the California law from the State Board
of Control.

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   May 15, 1922.
2. Reporter’s transcript of the trial testimony, borrowed through
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   fendant Salvador Mendival.
4. Certified copies of the Commitments of Broulio Galindo and Sal-
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   Richardson to Salvador Mendival on May 2, 1924; to José Her-
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7. Correspondence with Franklin Padan, Esq., Chief Deputy Pub-
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