

MONTROYA, MIKE

?-May 23, 1929

Mike Montoya, Mexican, found dead this morning and thought to have died from drinking "canned heat" was at three o'clock today, after The Times went to press, pronounced murdered. A part of a knife blade was found in the back of his skull. The presses were stopped to report the murder.

Mike Montoya, a Mexican who lived in a shack in the southeast part of town, near the stockyards, died this morning, Thursday, about 2 o'clock from the effects of drinking canned heat. Sheriff Waln and Coroner H.G. Watson made an investigation together with County Attorney O.O. Natwick, but very little could be learned of the details. Sheriff Waln arrested five Mexicans and is holding them for investigation.

According to information learned this morning, Montoya together with another Mexican had stayed all night at the shack and it is understood that Montoya was the only one drinking the poisonous liquor. Montoya, together with his mother and a brother came here about two months ago from Colorado and were intending to work in the beets.

During a search of the premises, Sheriff Waln dug up a deck of playing cards and poker chips, which had been buried near the shack that morning. In a cellar, which was filled with straw, he found two cans of Indian hemp which contained a large quantity of seeds. He also found about 20 empty tobacco cans. It is thought the hemp was to have been planted soon and the empty cans were being accumulated to contain the dope when it was harvested. Five empty canned heat cans were found that had been used that night and several others that appeared to be older. A pop bottle was found that contained a small amount of the liquor that Montoya had been drinking.

Mike Montoya, who was reported as being a victim of canned heat, on last Thursday, came to his death as a result of a knife being driven into his brain. This was disclosed when the officers became suspicious of the cause of his death and ordered a post-mortem examination made. During the examination, it was found that a knife blade had been driven thru the skull about one inch and entered the brain. The stomach was taken out and the examination of it was made to determine if his death could be caused by poisonous contents, but it was found that his stomach was free of anything of that nature. It was impossible to discover the knife wound on his head and if the post-mortem had not been made, it is very likely the crime would not have been discovered.

According to information brought out at the coroner's inquest Saturday, Mike Montoya, his mother and brother Eugene, together with Felix Anchondo came here the first part of April from Denver and were working beets on the Muleshoe ranch west of Wheatland. On Tuesday night preceding the death, Mike, Eugene and Felix came to Wheatland, and went to a Mexican shack located in the southeast part of town. They purchased some whiskey and had been drinking. Mike and Felix went outside, leaving Eugene in the shack. During their stay outside, Felix stated, Mike became angry and wanted to start a fight. Felix did not want to fight with his friend and drew an old rusty pocket knife from his pocket and said he tried to keep Mike away from him. Felix went