

THE UNITED STATES, PLAINTIFF, VS. MATEO CARIÑO ET AL., DEFENDANTS.

G. R. No. 4158. March 20, 1908

Ponente: CARSON, J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-4158/>

CARSON, J.:

About midnight of the 24th of April, 1907, Mateo Cariño, Gabriel Valenzuela, Daniel de Guzman, Jose Valenzuela, Isidro Valenzuela, and Narciso Centeno, the defendants, all armed with bolos, forced their way into the house of Francisco Darapisa in the barrio of Manaoag, Pangasinan. They were accompanied by several others who did not enter the house. On entering, these defendants ordered Darapisa to lie face down on the floor. This he refused to do, and when they attacked him he seized his bolo and wounded one of the party in the breast, but was forced to flee through the window, pursued by the band. His wife, who was in the room when her husband was attacked, escaped to a neighbor's house near by, where she remained until the robbers, who later returned to the house, had finally taken their departure.

When she returned she found that they had rifled her trunk and taken P7 therefrom, and the neighbors who accompanied her found the dead body of her husband in a canebrake some 30 yards away.

On the body there were fourteen wounds, inflicted with sharp instruments, one half of which were of a fatal character, some of these latter being stabs in the body and others cuts on the side of the head.

The crime thus committed was that of robo con homicidio (robbery with homicide), marked with the aggravating circumstances that it was committed by an "armed band" at night and in the dwelling house of the victim, and there being no extenuating circumstances the trial court properly and necessarily imposed the death sentence upon the perpetrators, except in the case of Narciso Centeno who was sentenced to cadena perpetua (life imprisonment) and did not appeal. The record as to the others is before us en consulta.

Counsel for the defense relies upon the alleged failure of the prosecution to prove the identity of the defendants with the perpetrators of the crime with which they are charged. We think, however, that the evidence of record sustains the findings of the trial court and establishes the guilt of the accused beyond a reasonable doubt.

The widow of the murdered man, who appears from her testimony to be an intelligent woman, identified each and all of the defendants as members of the band who entered her house on the night of the robbery, stating that while she did not know any of them prior thereto, she saw them distinctly by the light of a lamp, and that their faces were so distinctly impressed upon her memory that she could not be mistaken. When the defense, with the permission of the court, and without the knowledge of the witness, withdrew one of the defendants, and substituted in his stead another prisoner from the provincial jail, dressed in similar clothing and resembling in height, weight, and general appearance the defendant who was withdrawn, she promptly recognized the newcomer and pointed him out among the other prisoners. This, while by no means conclusive, was at least indicative of the alertness of mind and intelligence of the witness, which appears to have strongly impressed the trial judge.

Narciso Centeno, who, with others, was arrested on suspicion, confessed his guilt and gave the names of the other defendants as some of those who took part in the commission of the crime, but the trial court properly declined to consider the evidence as to this confession, except as against Centeno himself.

Two witnesses testified that at daybreak the morning after the night when the crime was committed they saw Isidro Valenzuela and Daniel de Guzman, two of the accused, carrying something in a hammock in the road, and another testified that he later saw these same persons carrying Mateo Cariño (who was identified by the widow as the robber who was wounded by her husband) in a hammock into the house of Gabriel Valenzuela. Mateo Cariño was later found in this house, rolled in a blanket, with a fresh wound in his breast such as would be inflicted with a bolo. He tried to prevent his captors from opening the blanket to examine the wound, and when he could not conceal it any longer, stated that it had been caused by a bamboo with which he had cut himself the day before.

The bolo of the deceased was found concealed in the grass near the house of Gabriel Valenzuela, and three other bolos, smeared with fresh blood, and a spear with a short handle were found concealed in a corner of the back yard of Jose Valenzuela.

The widow of the deceased testified that the robbers were dressed in a black police uniform, except one who wore white trousers, and it was proven that the defendants had been at one time members of the rural guards, whose uniform is of a darkblue color.

The evidence in support of the alibi set up by the defense is not convincing and is insufficient to raise a reasonable doubt as to the falsity of the allegations of the accused.

The evidence introduced by the prosecution tends to corroborate the testimony of the widow of the deceased as to the identity of the accused with the robbers who committed the crime, and we think there is enough in the record to sustain the findings of the trial court on this point.

The judgment of conviction and the sentence of the trial court should be, and are hereby, affirmed with the costs of this instance against the defendants.

Arellano, C. J., Torres, Mapa, Johnson, Willard, and Tracey, JJ., concur.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.