



## PROVING THAT ROBERT CAPA'S "FALLING SOLDIER" IS AUTHENTIC

by Richard Whelan

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The evidence surrounding Robert Capa's great photograph of a Spanish Loyalist militiaman collapsing into death, the so-called *Falling Soldier*, continues to refute all the allegations of fakery brought against it. In 1996 there came reason to hope that the allegations would finally stop altogether, as in that year the information was published that Spanish amateur historian Mario Brotóns Jordá had identified the man in the photograph as one Federico Borrell García, who had been killed in the battle at Cerro Muriano on September 5, 1936, the place and date of Capa's photograph. Alas, the controversy proved to have taken on a life of its own, perversely resistant to the preponderance of evidence in favor of the photograph's authenticity.

The latest doubts that can now be dispelled were raised in the past year by a writer named Alex Kershaw, who in his book about Capa relates that the director of the Spanish government's civil war archives in Salamanca denies both that Borrell's name is recorded in his archive and that Brotóns ever visited the archive. What Kershaw failed to take into account, however, is that Mario Brotóns had himself fought in the battle at Cerro Muriano on September 5, 1936, and therefore knew first-hand that Federico Borrell García was killed there that day.

The allegation that Capa's photograph was staged first surfaced in 1975, in a book entitled *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to Vietnam; The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, and Myth Maker* by Phillip Knightley, a British journalist. Knightley interviewed O.D. Gallagher, a South African-born journalist, who, as a correspondent for the London *Daily Express*, covered the Spanish Civil War first from the Nationalist (Franco) side and later from the Republican. Knightley wrote that Gallagher stated that "at one stage of the war he and Capa were sharing a hotel room," though no information is provided about where or when. Gallagher said that "there had been little action for several days, and Capa and others complained to the Republican officers that he could not get any pictures. Finally . . . a Republican officer told them he would detail some troops to go with Capa to some trenches nearby, and they would stage some manoeuvres for them to photograph."

Although Knightley made a great show of leaving no stone unturned, it is odd that he did not realize, or did not bother to point out, that when Capa's photograph was first published, late in September 1936, Gallagher was still covering the war from the Nationalist side - and yet Gallagher said that Republican officers had staged the manoeuvres for the photographers.

In 1978 Jorge Lewinski published in his book *The Camera at War* his own interview with O.D. Gallagher. This time Gallagher claimed that Franco's troops, not Republican ones, had staged the maneuvers:

I began in Spain with [*i.e.*, in] Hendaye in France, on the Spanish border by San Sebastián. Most of us reporters and photographers were there in a small shabby hotel. We went into Franco's Spain across the Irún River, when allowed by Franco's press officers in Burgos.... Once only the photographers were invited.... Capa told me of this occasion. They were given simulated battle scenes. Franco's troops were dressed in 'uniforms' and armed and they simulated attacks and defence. Smoke bombs were used to give atmosphere.

The glaring inconsistencies in Gallagher's accounts to Knightley and Lewinski should have discredited his testimony, thereby ending the controversy immediately. In any case, it is possible to document Capa's travels in Spain between the outbreak of the civil war and the first publication of his photograph; he was never anywhere within several hundred miles of San Sebastián. Furthermore, Capa would never have had anything to do with Franco's troops. A passionate anti-fascist, Capa covered the Spanish Civil War as a profoundly committed partisan for the Republican side. And, as a photographer who was by the summer of

1936 well known for his affiliation with several French leftist publications, he would never have been welcome in Franco-held territory except to be arrested - and would probably have been shot as a spy.

Perhaps Gallagher really did share a room near San Sebastián with some photographer who made pictures of posed exercises, but that photographer was certainly not Capa. Nearly forty years after the events, Gallagher's memory had clearly played a trick on him. There is no evidence that Gallagher and Capa ever met before January 1939, when they were both staying in the Hotel Majestic in Barcelona. On the night of January 24-25, as fascist troops entered the outskirts of the city, Capa photographed Gallagher and fellow-journalist Herbert Matthews writing and telephoning their last dispatches before the three of them left the beleaguered city together to drive north to the French border and safety.



Robert Capa's photograph (*above*) shows O.D. Gallagher (*leaning over at far right*) and Herbert Matthews (*standing at far left*) at the Press Office in Barcelona on the night of January 24-25, 1939. In the Capa photograph at the left, Gallagher is telephoning his final dispatch before leaving the city together with Capa and Matthews. He is holding a candle, as the rapidly approaching fascist troops had cut the city's main power lines.

That a lapse of memory could cause Gallagher to be so wrong about Capa, in perfectly good faith, was dramatically demonstrated to me in my interview of World War II cartoonist Bill Mauldin, whose vigor inspired my confidence in his perfect recall. When he told me that he had been with Capa on the Roer river front in the spring of 1945, I said I was quite certain that Capa had been somewhere else at that time. Mauldin assailed my doubts by assuring me that he remembered so clearly being with Capa that he could even describe the photographs Capa made on the Roer front, which were published in *Life*. His descriptions were so precise that I recognized the photographs instantly when I looked them up in the magazine. They had, however, been made by George Silk, not by Capa, who was then covering the paratroopers who jumped east of the Rhine.

As soon as Phillip Knightley's book was published, in 1975, Cornell Capa asked several of the people who had been close friends of his brother during the Spanish Civil War to refute Gallagher's allegation. Among them was the distinguished journalist Martha Gellhorn. On a British television program with Knightley and Gallagher, Gellhorn spoke out vehemently in Capa's defense, stating that for a man of such great integrity to have faked a photograph was unthinkable. Afterward, Gellhorn wrote a letter to Cornell Capa in which she said, "O.D. Gallagher was there, and if anyone could SEE that man and believe a word he said, they'd be nuts."

When I began the research for my biography of Capa, very little concrete information existed about *The Falling Soldier*. In August 1936, a few weeks after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Capa went to Spain with Gerda Taro (his lover, and herself a tyro photojournalist) to cover the Republican government's resistance to General Francisco Franco's fascist rebels. *The Falling Soldier* was first published in the September 23, 1936, issue of the French magazine *Vu* (below), where it was reproduced with another, similar picture on the same page. The sub-head on the top of the page reads, "How they fell," but there is no mention of where or under what circumstances Capa had exposed his negatives.





Some writers have claimed that both *The Falling Soldier* and the photograph published in *Vu* directly below it - showing a man in a further state of collapse - show the same man. Careful examination, however, leaves no doubt that they show two different men who fell on almost precisely the same spot. Another photograph (*below is a detail*) shows the two men lined up with some of their comrades and waving their rifles. The man who was - minutes later - to become the “falling soldier” appears at the far left; the other is the third from the left.



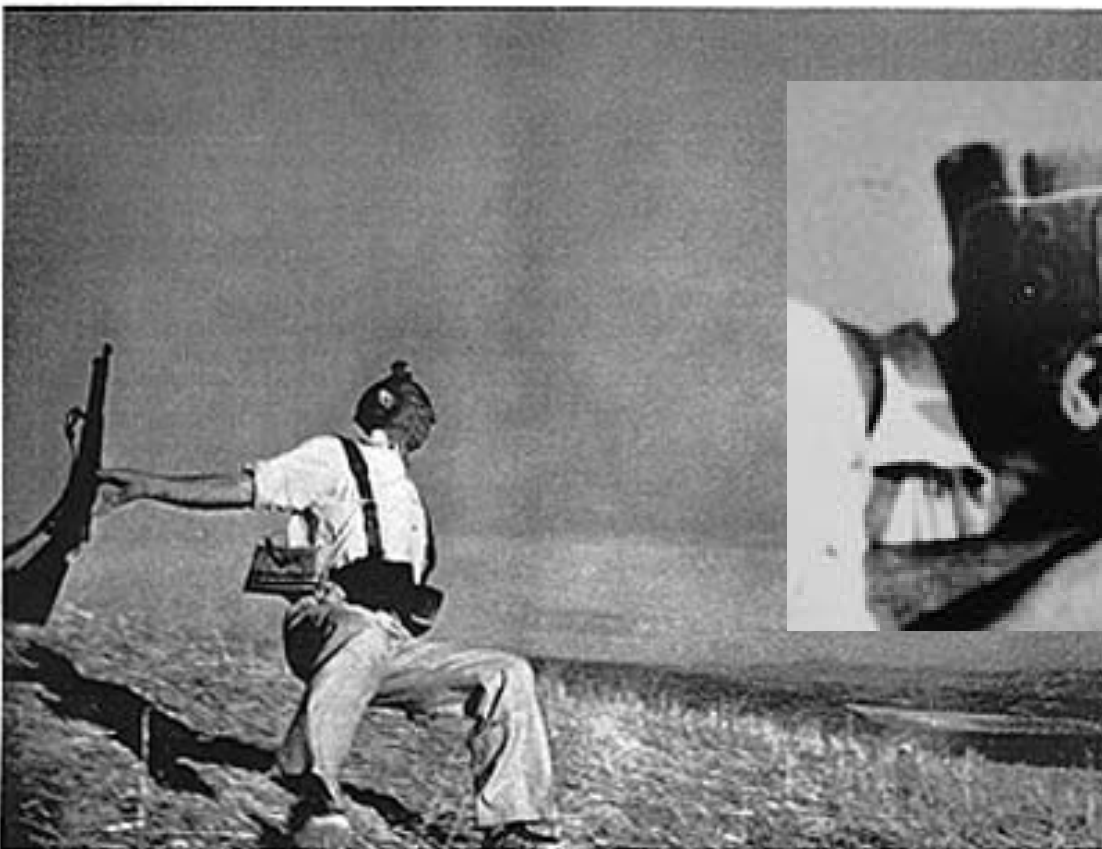
When *The Falling Soldier* was published in the July 12, 1937, issue of *Life* magazine, the caption stated, "Robert Capa's camera catches a Spanish soldier the instant he is dropped by a bullet through the head in front of Córdoba." The claim that the man had been shot in the head was evidently supplied by a *Life* editor who mistook the thrown-back tassel on the man's cap for a piece of his skull being blown off.

Over the following years and decades, during Capa's life and for twenty years after his death, the photograph was widely published without any questions ever being raised about its reliability as an unposed document.

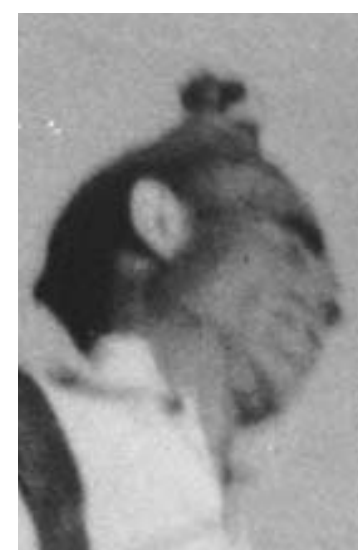
# LIFE

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ROBERT CAPA'S CAMERA CATCHES A SPANISH SOLDIER THE INSTANT HE IS DROPPED BY A BULLET THROUGH THE HEAD IN FRONT OF CÓRDOBA.



## DEATH IN SPAIN: THE CIVIL WAR HAS TAKEN 500,000 LIVES IN ONE YEAR

On July 17 the Spanish Civil War will be one year old. In that time it has brought death to 500,000 Spaniards, has shattered such ancient cities as Madrid, Toledo, Bilbao, Leon and Huesca, has kept Europe in a state of jitter. When the war started, most U. S. citizens looked on the Republic as a half-way, irresponsible, senseless war that had turned on its honorable father. A year of war has taught the U. S. more of Spain.

The ruling classes of Spain were probably the world's worst bosses—less spendable, arrogant, vain, ignorant, selfish and incompetent. Some 50,000 landlords owned 20% of the land. They did not give their field hands modern machinery or their land modern irrigation. They refused to rent second-hand tools for free to the peasants for fear of giving the peasants dangerous ideas of ownership. The land was only about 45% cultivated and much of it was idle. And Spain's natural resources, among the greatest in Europe, lay almost entirely unexploited. The aristocracy of Spain was still living on the interest on wealth brought home from the Americas by the gold fleets in the 16th Century.

To the 50,000 landlords, add 45,000 Army officers, more than twice the total of British Army officers. There was one officer for every six privates, one general for every 1,000 men. For every 40 spent on soldiers' pay, food, barracks, ammunition, averaged \$100 in pay—47% of the national budget. The national law made officers unaccounted. Just for paying a policeman of the weak Civil Guard, an American got six months in jail in 1933.

Add to the 45,000 landlords and officers, 300,000 clergy, the most top-heavy Church hierarchy in the world, next to Tibet. These also were paid by the State. The Church, with its enormous wealth, naturally took a capitalist's position. It was up to its neck in politics. Evaresta were told that to vote against the Government was usually a mortal sin. The Church was in charge of Spanish education. Result: the Spanish people were 45% illiterate. The reason for the civil war was simply that the people of Spain had fed their bosses for ignorant incompetence and the bosses had refused to be fed.

For a new movie of the Spanish war from the Government side, turn page.



Some of Phillip Knightley's attack was based on a layout in the June 1972 issue of the magazine *Fotografia Italiana*, which published *The Falling Soldier* and three frames from the sequence of photographs that immediately preceded it. Unfortunately, the magazine had – purely for reasons of graphic design – published the photographs in reverse order, so that *The Falling Soldier* appeared to begin the sequence and to be followed by images of the soldiers shooting, jumping across a gully, and, finally, standing and brandishing their rifles. The author of the text published in the magazine, Piero Berengo Gardin, states, as Knightley reports, that “he has resisted the temptation to conclude that the ‘moment of death’ soldier looks to be the same one ‘still alive’ at the left in the posed group photograph.” What could possibly be more absurd than raising doubts on the basis of an erroneous layout made nearly forty years after Capa's photograph?

In an article published in the London newspaper *Night & Day* (July 5, 1998) Knightley states that he has repeatedly asked that Cornell Capa or Magnum “release the roll of film on which the two ‘moments of death’ appear so that we could see the whole sequence of shots.” He then complains that his requests have not been met. Knightley clearly implies that the negatives must support his allegations. That is nonsense.

In fact, the roll of film was cut into snippets by Capa's Paris darkroom man, Csiki Weiss, soon after he had developed the roll. Some of the snippets are single frames, others are groups of two or three frames. That was the normal practice in Capa's darkroom, for some publications insisted on making halftone plates from original negatives. The film strips were accordingly cut to give a publication the frame it needed, while keeping the other negatives available for other publications. It is important to remember that Capa's pictures were thought of simply as news pictures with a brief period of timely interest, after which they would be considered stale news. We may be quite certain that no one at the time guessed that one of the images on the roll would turn out to be one of the most famous photographs of the twentieth century.

One of the publications that borrowed the negatives of the two 'moment of death' photographs evidently never returned them; they have not been seen since the 1930s. All modern prints of *The Falling Soldier* have been made from a copy negative of the vintage print in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, in New York. That was the only vintage print of that image known until a second surfaced in Spain during the 1980s. That second print is now in the Spanish government's Civil War Archive in Salamanca (*below*).





While I was working on my biography of Capa (which was published in 1985), I was able to piece together numerous bits of evidence to determine that Capa had made his photograph during the battle at Cerro Muriano that began on September 5, 1936. Nevertheless, the controversy raged on until a fantastic breakthrough occurred in August 1996, when I received a telephone call from Rita Grosvenor, a British journalist based in Spain. Ms. Grosvenor told me that a Spaniard named Mario Brotóns Jordá had identified the man in Capa's photograph as one Federico Borrell García, who had been killed in battle at Cerro Muriano on September 5, 1936. Grosvenor's article would be published in the London *Observer* on Sunday, September 1, 1996, to mark the sixtieth anniversary of Capa's photograph and of Borrell's death.

The story of how Brotóns made his discovery is a fascinating one. Born in the village of Alcoy, near the city of Alicante, in southeastern Spain, Brotóns had himself joined the local Loyalist militia, the Columna Alcoyana, at the age of fourteen - and was himself a combatant in the battle at Cerro Muriano on September 5, 1936. When Brotóns's friend Ricard Bañó, a young Alcoy historian, mentioned to him, about 1991, that he had read (in my biography of Capa) that Capa's photograph might have been made during the battle at Cerro Muriano, Brotóns began his research. He knew that the man in the photograph must have belonged to the militia regiment from Alcoy, for the distinctive cartridge cases the man is wearing had been specially designed by the commander of the Columna Alcoyana and made by the leather craftsmen in Alcoy. No one in any of the other Loyalist units participating in the battle at Cerro Muriano would have worn such cartridge cases.

I subsequently wrote that Brotóns "discovered in the Spanish government archives in Salamanca and Madrid that only one member of the Alcoy militia had been killed at Cerro Muriano on September 5, 1936 - Federico Borrell García." I based that assertion on Grosvenor's statement, in her *Observer* article, that Brotóns "began a painstaking search through local records in Alcoy and military archives in Madrid and Salamanca." That statement turns out to be a very natural misinterpretation of what Brotóns (who had died earlier that year) had written in his account of how he had identified the man in the photograph. "And then came the most convincing proof," he wrote. "This was that both in the Salamanca archives and in those of Madrid was registered only one single death, with the name well known to all of us [who had been in the Alcoy militia] of Federico Borrell García." Brotóns never stated that he had visited those archives himself.

Alex Kershaw, in his book about Capa, compounding the error that Grosvenor and I had made, states that Brotóns "wrote that he found his evidence in the Spanish Civil War archives in Salamanca and military archives in Ávila, near Madrid". Mr. Kershaw then said that Miguel Angel Jaramillo, director of the official Spanish Civil War Archive (Archivo General de la Guerra Civil Española), in Salamanca, told him that the name Federico Borrell did not appear in any document there, and that there was no record of Mario Brotóns's having visited the archive.

Mr. Kershaw also wrote that Manuel Melgar, a curator of the military archives in Ávila, “says there is no trace of Federico Borrell in his archive either”. That is completely irrelevant, since Brotóns never mentioned Ávila. When Brotóns wrote of archives in Madrid, he was referring to the Archivo del Servicio Historico Militar (S.H.M.) of the Ministry of Defense, in Madrid.

I could not possibly have unraveled the dilemma presented by Señor Jaramillo’s assertions without the invaluable collaboration of Dr. Catherine Coleman, the curator of photographs at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, in Madrid. It was she who contacted Brotóns’s son, who is a teacher, and was told by him that his father, in fact, had not visited the Salamanca and Madrid archives himself. He said that Brotóns had obtained his information about the documents in the archives from Francisco Moreno Gómez, the author of the definitive book about the Spanish Civil War in the Córdoba region [*La Guerra Civil en Córdoba (1936-1939)*; first edition 1985, second edition 1986].

In any case, Brotóns did not need any document to inform him that Federico Borrell García, of the Alcoy militia, was killed in the battle at Cerro Muriano on September 5, 1936, for Brotóns — who was himself a member of that militia and a combatant in that battle - already knew that fact perfectly well from his own experience. When Brotóns showed Capa’s photograph to the widow of Federico’s younger brother, Everisto, she confirmed the identification. A comparison of a family photograph of Federico (below left) and the man at the far left of the lineup shows the same high forehead, large ears, heavy eyebrows, downturned lower lip, and pronouncedly jutting chin.



In the first edition of his book *Retazos de una época de inquietudes* (a history of the village of Alcoy, evidently self-published in the late 1980s), Brotóns neither reproduced nor mentioned Capa's famous photograph, though he described the death of Federico Borrell García. The second edition, printed for him in 1995 by the local printer in Alcoy, seems to be an unaltered reprinting of the 414-page first edition, to which Brotóns appended a 112-page section dealing with the nine murders committed at the *Círculo Industrial* in Alcoy on February 23, 1937. The information about his identification of Borrell as the man in Capa's photograph is given on a separate sheet, printed front and back, folded and inserted unattached into each copy of the second edition. The reason is that to have incorporated the new information into the body of the old text would have meant resetting, or at least renumbering, hundreds of pages for the new edition.

In Chapter VII of the book Brotóns tells the story of the Alcoy regiment in Andalucía during September 1936, and he recounts that Borrell was a 24-year-old millworker from Alcoy. He was one of about fifty militiamen who had arrived at Cerro Muriano on the morning of September 5 to reinforce the *Columna Alcoyana's* front line. That afternoon Borrell and his comrades were on the hill known as *La Loma de las Malagueñas*, defending the Murcia artillery regiment, which was behind the Alcoy infantry, when enemy troops infiltrated behind the Loyalist lines and began firing at them from behind as well as from in front, hoping to squeeze the Loyalists in a vise. It was about five o'clock when Borrell was fatally shot. That time accords with the long shadows in Capa's photograph.



Mario Brotóns Jordá with *La Loma de las Malagueñas* in the background, early 1990s.

In his July 1998 article Phillip Knightley denied the importance of Brotóns's discovery and stated, "The famous photograph is almost certainly a fake - Capa posed it." He went on to argue fatuously, "Federico could have posed for the photograph before he was killed."

To provide a definitive refutation of that absurd suggestion, I turned to an expert whom I had met in Memphis, Tennessee, in a master class that was open not only to university students but also to qualified members of the public. One of the latter was Captain Robert L. Franks, the chief homicide detective of the Memphis Police Department and a talented sculptor and photographer. When I asked him, in September 2000, whether he would be willing to give me a reading of the two 'moment of death' photographs as if they were evidence in a murder case, he very kindly acceded to my request.

In his analysis he said that the first thing that struck him as odd about *The Falling Soldier* was that the man "had been standing flat footed when he was shot. He clearly was not in stride when he was shot." He went on to write, "Was this picture posed? I think not, based on the human reflex response. You will notice that the soldier's left hand, which is partially showing under his left leg, is in a semi-closed position. If the fall was, in fact, staged the hand would be open to catch his fall (simply a self-preservation reflex to keep from getting hurt)."

Capt. Franks told me in conversation that the fact that the fingers are somewhat curled toward the palm clearly indicates that the man's muscles have gone limp and that he is already dead. It is nearly impossible for any conscious person to resist the reflex impulse to brace his fall by flexing his hand strongly backward at the wrist and extending his fingers out straight. It would never occur to anyone but an expert - and certainly not to a simple Spanish soldier - that such a detail would prove decisive.



The disturbing fact of the soldier's flat-footedness, along with the equally disturbing inference that the man was carrying his rifle in a way suggesting that he did not expect to use it soon, led me to reconsider the story that Hansel Mieth, who had become a *Life* staff photographer in the late 1930s, wrote to me in a letter dated March 19, 1982. She said that Capa, very upset, had once told her about the situation in which he had made his famous photograph. "They were fooling around," he said. "We all were fooling around. We felt good. There was no shooting. They came running down the slope. I ran too and knippeded."

"Did you tell them to stage an attack?" asked Mieth.

"Hell no. We were all happy. A little crazy, maybe."

"And then?"

"Then, suddenly it was the real thing. I didn't hear the firing - not at first."

"Where were you?"

"Out there, a little ahead and to the side of them."

Beyond that, Capa told Mieth only that the episode haunted him badly. He implied that he felt at least partially responsible for the man's death - a feeling that he naturally did not wish to make public, and so he altered various details in his several accounts of the circumstances in which he had made his photograph.





Taking all of the foregoing into consideration, I shall now put forward my hypothesis of Robert Capa's experience on the afternoon of September 5, 1936, during the battle at Cerro Muriano.

Capa encountered a group of militiamen (and at least one militiawoman) from several units - Francisco Borrell García among them - in what was at that moment a quiet sector. Having decided to play around a bit for the benefit of Capa's camera, the men began by standing in a line and brandishing their rifles. Then, with Capa running beside them, they jumped across a shallow gully and hugged the ground at the top of its far side, aiming and firing their rifles - thereby, presumably, attracting the enemy's attention. I have always assumed that they next continued their forward advance, running down the exposed hillside. I now realize that that assumption is incorrect. What actually must have happened is that at least two of the men - including Borrell - turned around and climbed back up the side of the gully that had been behind them when they pretended to fire. In Capa's two photographs of the soldiers crossing the gully, we can clearly see, in the upper left corner of each picture, upstanding stalks of grass like those in the two 'moment of death' photographs.



Once Borrell had climbed out of the gully, he evidently stood up, back no more than a pace or two from the edge of the gully and facing down the hillside, so that Capa (who had remained in the gully) could photograph him. Just as Capa was about to press his shutter release, a hidden enemy machinegun opened fire.





The arrow points to approximately where Borrell must have been standing when he was shot. The cross indicates where Capa was evidently hugging the side of the gully.

Borrell died instantly and went limp while still on his feet, as Capa's photograph shows. As soon as he had fallen to the ground, comrades must have dragged his body immediately back into the gully. That would explain why his corpse is not visible in the other picture. Indeed, Capt. Franks concluded that the man in *The Falling Soldier* was the first to be shot. He wrote, "I base this upon the cloud formation that seems to be tighter in [*The Falling Soldier*] and more dissipated in the [other] picture. The second soldier's photograph is in focus, which indicates to me that Robert Capa had time to attend to the settings on his camera between the two shots."

As for the other soldier, Capt. Franks wrote that the photograph of him "indicates to me that the soldier was on his knees, leaning back with his buttock resting on the heels of his feet, the rifle being held in his right hand and the rifle muzzle pointing up and slightly to the rear. As the soldier was thrown back by a bullet, gravity took over pulling the weight of the barrel towards the ground." He had presumably been standing to Borrell's right, outside the left edge of the photograph, when the gunfire began. He must then have dropped to his knees, both to protect himself and to help move Borrell's body into the gully – which would explain why the photograph shows him on the same spot as where Borrell had been. This second man was evidently picking his rifle up from the ground when he was shot.





In closing, I would like to consider briefly several questions asked by Mr. Kershaw. “Why,” he wrote, “had none of Borrell’s relatives recognized him in the preceding sixty years when [Capa’s photograph] appeared countless times in magazines, newspapers and on television?” For nearly forty of those sixty years Spain had been ruled by Franco, whose government did not exactly encourage the publication of photographs honoring the Loyalists. Even long after Franco’s death, which occurred in 1975, the civil war was dealt with circumspectly by the Spanish media, lest reawakened bitter memories disrupt the process of political reconstruction. As for books, no Spanish-language trade book of Capa’s photographs was published until 1996; and it seems unlikely that exhibition catalogs, scholarly books, or foreign-language books found their way to the still - even today - quite remote village of Alcoy.

One might better ask why Brotóns - who, as a historian, knew Capa’s photograph - had never recognized the man in it as Borrell. He wrote that he had vaguely - little more than subconsciously - recognized the terrain in the picture, but “out of stupidity” (“por torpeza”) had never focused his attention on the photograph before Bañó’s remark. And once he did focus on the photograph, why didn’t he recognize Borrell immediately? Brotóns was fourteen years old in 1936, and therefore was necessarily quite peripheral to the Columna Alcoyana, which, in any case, was somewhat dispersed during its time on the Córdoba front. By September 5 Brotóns had been near Cerro Muriano for several days, but Borrell was one of the fifty men who didn’t arrive at Cerro Muriano until the morning of the 5th. It is therefore not very surprising that Brotóns - in 1991, fifty-five years after the event - didn’t recognize Borrell with absolute certainty in Capa’s strangely angled and slightly out of focus photograph.



Mario Brotóns Jordá as a fourteen-year-old militiaman.

“Crucially,” asks Mr. Kershaw, “why was Federico’s body never found?” Brotóns’s son told Dr. Coleman that during the civil war news took about two months to reach Alcoy. There was obviously no way that Borrell’s body could have been returned to his native village. He was presumably buried in a hastily dug grave, with some very simple marker, near where he fell. There was more fighting at Cerro Muriano the next day. His grave could have been obliterated then, or later, when the town fell into the hands of the Francoists, who had little respect for the Loyalist dead.

Dr. Coleman also discussed with Señor Jaramillo the question of why the archives have no documentation of Borrell’s death. The men of the Alcoy militia were mostly members of the anarchist Confederación Nacional del Trabajo. Señor Jaramillo said that “the anarchist milicianos were not exactly keen on bureaucracy.” Too, he said, September 5 was in the early days of the war - in other words, before record-keeping procedures were well established.

I believe that the evidence overwhelmingly proves *The Falling Soldier* to be a photograph of Federico Borrell García at the moment of his death during the battle at Cerro Muriano on September 5, 1936. May the slanderous controversy that has plagued Robert Capa’s reputation for more than twenty-five years come now, at last, to an end with a verdict decisively in favor of Capa’s integrity. Even the dead should have a right to be considered innocent unless they are proven - beyond any reasonable doubt - to be guilty. Such solid evidence as there is all supports the authenticity of Capa’s great photograph. It is time to let both Capa and Borrell rest in peace, and to acclaim *The Falling Soldier* once again as an unquestioned masterpiece of photojournalism and as perhaps the greatest war photograph ever made.

José Manuel Susperregui The location of Robert Capa's josemanuel.susperregui@gmail.com Associate Professor. If the sole object of this study were to find out whether the photograph was authentic or staged, it would suffice to closely observe its first edition, in which two dead soldiers appear on two different photographs with the same framing. July 12, 1937 19 ISSN 2386-7876 © 2016 Communication & Society 29(2), 17-43 Susperregui, J.M. The location of Robert Capa's Falling Soldier There is no mention whatsoever of the second soldier in these statements by Robert Capa nor did he mention him ten years later at the time of an interview he gave to WNBC in New York. He thus proved that the meaning of the photo changed according to how it was But new evidence now claims to prove once and for all that the camera does lie - and Robert Capa's famous Falling Soldier was faked. Now compare the hillside in Capa's final image to the hillside in the modern day image above, taken outside Espejo the hillsides appear to be the same, apparently proving that Capa's Falling Soldier was taken outside Espejo, not near Cerro Muriano as Capa claimed. In an editorial El Periodico claimed that his staging of the Falling Soldier was more than cancelled out by the countless authentic photographs he took throughout his dangerous career, dismissing his 'youthful peccadillo'. Capa died in 1954 when he stepped on a land-mine in Indo-China. Robert Capa's camera catches a Spanish soldier the instant he is dropped by a bullet through the head in front of Cordoba. Here, seven decades after the end of the Spanish Civil War, when Generalissimo Francisco Franco's Nationalists conquered Madrid after a three-year siege, LIFE.com commemorates Capa's photograph not as an iconic visual document, but as a single picture, published three-quarters of a century ago on page 19 of a weekly magazine that, at the time, had not yet celebrated its first year in print. Today, "Falling Soldier" is regarded as one of the 20th century's indispensable photographs. Ben Cosgrove is the Editor of LIFE.com.