

# Juanita Martinez - Mrs. Pat Garrett

*William A. Mills*

## A special contribution for the WWhA website

She was born Juanita Martinez. About 1879, at the young age of nineteen, she was married to Patrick Floyd Jarvis Garrett (1850-1908), the man who later became the legendary sheriff who shot Billy the Kid in July 1881. <sup>1</sup> Their marriage was short-lived, as Juanita died within a month after their nuptials.<sup>2</sup>

Juanita Martinez was born in May 1860 <sup>3</sup> in Taos County, New Mexico, the daughter of Antonio Domingo Martinez (1826-1900) and Maria Manuela Trujillo (1838-1870). Her parents had married on 12 December 1853. <sup>4</sup>

The 1860 federal census enumeration, 25 June 1860, shows that Juanita's family consisted of her father, Antonio Dom. Martinez (age 34, farmer), her mother Manuela Trujillo (age 26), her older sister Andrea (age 4), and Juanita (age 1/12). <sup>5</sup> Juanita was born sometime in May 1860, as she was only about a month old then.

Antonio Domingo Martinez was born in 1826 in Rio Arriba, New Mexico and died in 1900. <sup>6</sup> Maria Manuela Trujillo was born in 1838 in Rio Arriba, New Mexico and died on 5 April 1870 in Cimarron, New Mexico at the age of 32 - about a month before Juanita had turned ten-years-old.

The 1870 federal census enumeration, 1 August 1870, shows that Juanita's family consisted of her father, Antonio Martin [ez] (age 37, laborer), her older sister Andrea (age 14, keeping house), Juanita (age 8), her younger sister Mary M [Emilia] (age 5), and her younger brother Juan Jose (age 3). <sup>7</sup> Juanita's mother Maria Manuela Trujillo had died about four months earlier.

After the death of her mother, Juanita's father, Antonio, continued to reside in Taos County and worked as a farm laborer. <sup>8</sup> His son Juan (age 14) and also his brother Juan (age 37) resided with him in 1880. The siblings of Juanita Martinez were:

- Jose Vitor Alejandro Martinez (1854-1854)
- Maria Andrea Martinez (1855-1945)
- Marcelino Martinez (1858-1860)
- Emilia Martinez (1864-1942)
- Juan Jose Martinez (1867-1958)
- Maria Rita Martinez (1870-1870)

It has been alleged that Pat Garrett's first wife was named Juanita Gutierrez (born circa 1860) and that she was the sister of his second wife, Apolinaria Gutierrez (1860-1936). However, the federal census records for San Miguel County, New Mexico for the years 1860 and 1870 do not provide supporting documentation for that theory. There was no one named "Juanita" listed in the household of Apolinaria's parents during that time period.

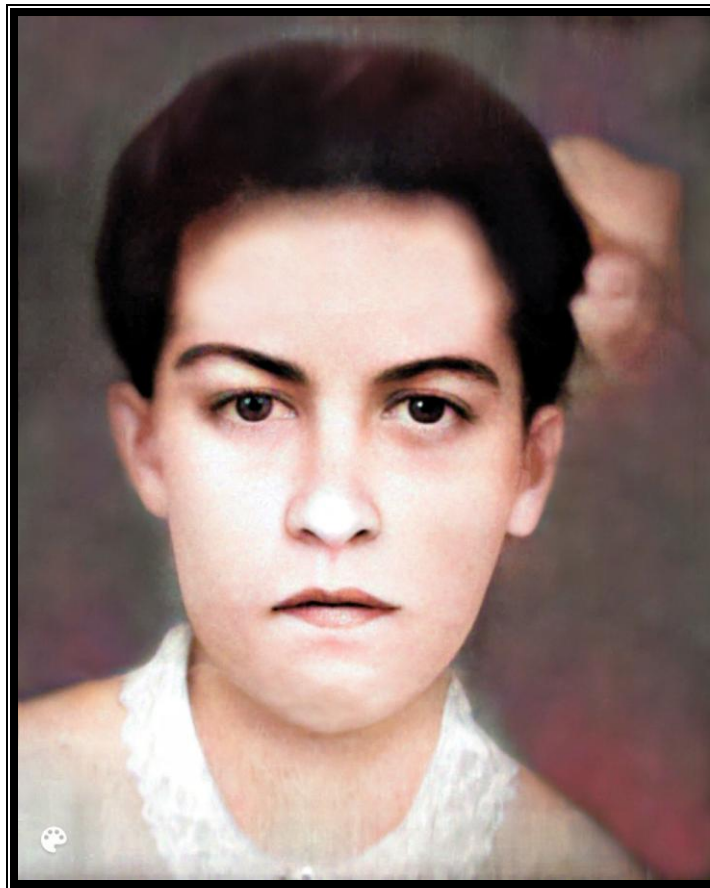
The 1860 federal census enumeration, 10 July 1860, shows that Apolinaria's family consisted of her father, Dolores (age 36, farmer), her mother Feliciana (age 19), her older sister Celsa (age 2), and Apolinaria (age 4/12). <sup>9</sup> Note that the tombstone for Apolinaria Gutierrez Garrett indicates "1861-1919", which is incorrect. If she was four months old during the 1860 federal census enumeration, then she was born sometime in March 1860.

The 1870 federal census enumeration, 13 August, 1870, shows that Apolinaria's family consisted of her father, Jose D. Gutierrez (age 42, farm laborer), her mother Feliciana (age 28, house keeper), her older sister Celsa (age 13), Apolinaria (age 12). <sup>10</sup> Note that Apolinaria was actually ten and a half years old during this federal census enumeration. She was born about March 1860.

To add further evidence that Juanita Martinez was the first wife of Pat Garrett, instead of someone named “Juanita Gutierrez”, the following is quoted from Paulita Maxwell Jaramillo (ca 1864-1929) in the 1926 book, *The Saga of Billy the Kid* by Walter Noble Burns.<sup>11</sup> Paulita was the younger sister of Pete Maxwell, who resided in the home where Billy the Kid was shot by Pat Garrett.<sup>12</sup> Paulita was then recollecting a period of her life from over forty years earlier.

Juanita Martinez, [Pat] Garrett's first wife, and Apolinaria Gutierrez, his second, were sparkling young women, who had the charm of gaiety and light-heartedness and were always surrounded by admirers at our dances. Juanita was the sister of Don Juan Jose Martinez, who still lives in new Fort Sumner. Everyone loved her and mourned for her when an unkind fate changed her bridal gown into a shroud, three weeks after her wedding. Garrett was more fortunate in his second love affair. Soon after his marriage to Apolinaria Gutierrez, he moved to Roswell and I saw little more of him or his wife, but I always understood they were very happy together.

Note that Juanita Martinez’s brother Juan Jose Martinez (1867-1958) lived to the age of ninety-one-years. One of Juanita and Jose’s siblings was Emilia Martinez Casaus (1864-1941) - and within a period of a century and a half, her family has preserved an original portrait of Juanita Martinez, taken about 1876 when she was in the prime of her teenage years. Juanita strikes an amazing pose that magnifies her natural beauty.



**Juanita Martinez. Photo of original ca 1876 portrait (Courtesy of Renette Day)**

Although Juanita Martinez and Pat Garrett didn’t have any children, her sister Emilia Martinez did. And within that family, for many generations, there is a story about Juanita’s short-lived marriage to Pat Garrett and how she died at such a young age during her late teens.<sup>13</sup>

On 15 July 1881 *The Lincoln County Leader* [New Mexico] reported:

Sheriff Pat Garrett, elected by the people of Lincoln County on his personal promise that he would rid this area of cattle rustlers and horse thieves, and fight it out with Billy the Kid, kept his promise last night, July 14, 1881, when he killed The Kid in Pete Maxwell's bedroom outside Fort Sumner. Maxwell, the eyewitness, is the son of the late Lucian B. Maxwell, former owner of the spacious Beaubien-Miranda land grant, known as the Maxwell Land Grant. <sup>14</sup>

Just a little past his 21st birthday, The Kid was buried in a borrowed white shirt, much too large for him, in a thrown together wooden coffin made by a village handyman. He lies in the same cemetery alongside Tom Folliard, Charlie Bowdre, Lucien Maxwell and Juanita Garrett, bride of Pat Garrett.”



**Juanita's new memorial marker, Fort Sumner Cemetery  
(Picture courtesy of David Minton)**

During June and July 2021, Renette Day, Juanita's 2nd great grand niece, went through the process of applying for permission from the village of Fort Sumner, New Mexico Council to have a grave marker installed for Juanita Martinez Garrett. That was no easy task, as documented proof was required in order to have the application approved. After providing sufficient evidence (see previous details from the *Lincoln County Leader* of July 1881), permission was granted. Afterwards, Renette and her mother wasted no time in traveling to Fort Sumner in preparation to have the site of Juanita's grave site marked. Renette, her mother and cousins, Louise Espinosa Shaffer and Edna Sena Baca met with Fort Sumner Mayor Louie Gallegos to select the place for the new marker. Fort Sumner Concrete and Monuments was contracted to design Juanita's new marker - which was installed on 25 September 2021.

What initially began as a quest to document family information derived from conversations about Juanita Martinez Garrett with Renette Day's grandmother, Alice Casaus Sena several decades ago, has now

culminated in a \$1,500 stone monument (underwritten by several proud family members and the Wild West History Association) that now stands in the old Fort Sumner cemetery as a testament to memorialize Juanita. The many visitors to that historic cemetery will now be able to see what Juanita looked like, as her visage is now “etched in stone“. They will also now know that Juanita Martinez was **indeed** married to famed sheriff Pat Garrett.

Juanita's grave was marked on 25 September 2021 by members of the Martinez and Garrett families and the Wild West History Association. Some 80+ members of the families, WWHHA members, historians and local citizens gathered for the memorial dedication.

Approximately thirty years after Juanita died, about 1879, Pat Garrett's life ended violently in 1908. He was shot and killed at the age of 57 on 29 February 1908 near his ranch northwest of Las Cruces, New Mexico. To this day, many details of his death are a mystery - though a great deal of speculation has transpired over the past 113 years.

## Endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> As of 2021, the marriage record for Patrick Floyd Jarvis Garrett and Juanita Martinez has not been located. It is thought to have been performed in the Fort Sumner, New Mexico area.

<sup>2</sup> Family lore suggests that Juanita Martinez Garrett died within a month of her marriage to Pat Garrett - about 1878.

<sup>3</sup> According to the 1860 federal census enumeration, which indicated that Juanita Martinez was 1/12 years - about a month old on 25 June 1860.

<sup>4</sup> Nuestra Senora De Guadalupe-Catholic, Taos, New Mexico, 12 December 1853 – Antonio Domingo Martines with Maria Manuela Trugillo, residents of Purisima Concepcion. Sponsors: Gabriel Santete and Maria de la Crus Valdes.

<sup>5</sup> 1860 federal census, Taos Territory of New Mexico, Precinct of Placita de Luceros, page 69, line 36.

<sup>6</sup> Family information for approximate death date of 1900.

<sup>7</sup> 1870 federal census, Colfax Territory of New Mexico, Precinct No. 3, P.O. Elizabeth City, page 24, line 25.

<sup>8</sup> 1880 federal census, Taos Territory of New Mexico, Precinct No. 4, Placita, page 55-B, line 10.

<sup>9</sup> 1860 federal census, San Miguel County, Territory of New Mexico, page 219, line 17.

<sup>10</sup> 1870 federal census, Puerto De Luna, San Miguel County, Territory of New Mexico, page 16, line 28.

<sup>11</sup> *The Saga of Billy the Kid*, by Walter Noble Burns, 1926, page 186. A Belle of Old Fort Sumner, quoting Paulita Maxwell Jaramillo, about 1923.

<sup>12</sup> Billy the Kid was shot by Sheriff Pat Garrett in the dark bedroom of Pete Maxwell, late at night on 14 July 1881 in Fort Sumner, New Mexico.

<sup>13</sup> *A Short Story - Juanita Martinez Garrett* - by Renette Day. Juanita Martinez Garrett was her 2nd great-granddaughter and the sister to her 2nd great grandmother, Emilia Martinez Casaus (1864-1942).

<sup>14</sup> 15 July 1881, *The Lincoln County Leader*, New Mexico, by John Gerald Griffin.

William A. Mills is a regular contributor to WWHHA publications. A resident of Georgia, "Billy" has accomplished a great deal of research on Billy the Kid, the Ringo Family, O.C. Hanks, Milt Joyce and other Wild West characters and events.