

Irish Migration Studies in Latin America

Society for Irish Latin American Studies

VOLUME 2 - NUMBER 5
November - December 2004



Juan Eduardo (Pío) Tyrrell c1920
(Marta Tyrrell collection)

Editor: Edmundo Murray
Associate Editor: Claire Healy

www.irlandeses.org
ISSN 1661-6065

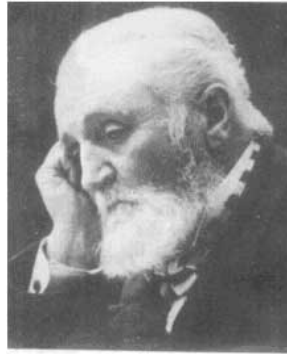
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Dr. John O'Dwyer Creaghe (1841-1920)
Irish-Argentine Anarchist

By Máirtín Ó Catháin



John Creaghe (1841-1920)
(Ephéméride anarchiste, <http://ytak.club.fr/fevrier3.html>)

Dr. John O'Dwyer Creaghe (or Juan, as he came to be known), was an Irish-born international revolutionary anarchist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. His name is most often associated with anarchism in England and Argentina, though he was also active in the United States in support of exiled Mexican anarchists, and died in Washington DC. He is a figure who encapsulates the diversity of the Irish in Argentina in a very idiosyncratic manner, who forsook ethnic for class alliance and helped pioneer a movement of critical importance to Argentine and South American labour history.

John O'Dwyer Creaghe was born to an old Limerick family in 1841 and after qualifying as a physician in 1865 at the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin, he took up his practice at Mitchelstown, County Cork the following year. He was fully licensed as a medical practitioner in 1869 from the King's and Queen's Colleges of Physicians in Ireland, and remained in practice at Mitchelstown until 1874 (1). Curiously perhaps, he does not appear to have been involved in any way with the Fenian movement, either in Dublin as a student or in Mitchelstown, though ongoing research may yet uncover a link with that movement.

In 1874, Creaghe emigrated to Buenos Aires, Argentina and quickly became a follower of anarchism. It is unclear how exactly this came about as anarchism was a very peripheral element in the labour movement in Argentina until the early twentieth century, and would have been almost completely non-existent in 1874. It's known, however, that the seminal anarchist thinker and activist, Errico Malatesta (1853-1932), lived in Argentina between 1885 and 1889, and it is likely that Creaghe became an anarchist at least in part under the Italian's influence. By 1890, Creaghe had re-located to Sheffield where he worked in a poor, working class district of the English city, populated by a great many Irish immigrants, having arrived there from Dublin the previous year. He soon involved himself with the local branch of the famous designer William Morris' Socialist League, but they broke away early in 1891 to form a specifically anarchist group in Sheffield. They made their first public appearance on May Day at the city's regular public speaking pitch, the Monolith and unfurled a banner with 'No God, No Master' written on it. A club and a newspaper soon followed, the *Sheffield Anarchist*, which was begun by Creaghe and Fred Charles, who the following year received a ten year sentence for his part in an anarchist bomb plot, which was largely the product of a French agent provocateur. The newspaper was caught up in this dynamite trial of the so-called 'Walsall Anarchists' and soon collapsed, though much of its bombastic tone, and Creaghe's personal activism, had presaged its demise. During the 'No Rent' agitation against landlords, he had taken a poker to local bailiffs attempting to restrain goods, a deed that won him considerable fame and support in working class districts

of Sheffield (2). Many anarchists, like Creaghe, were convinced revolution was at hand and their appeals to physical force – to expropriation for ‘the cause’ and attacks on policemen, bailiffs, landlords and magistrates were to increase in tandem with mounting hysteria from the authorities about the ‘anarchist menace’. In 1891 Creaghe wrote ‘give me Anarchists willing to die NOW if necessary for Anarchy, and if you can find me 15 or 20 to join me I promise you we will make an oppression of the enemy’ (3).

In 1892, Creaghe left Sheffield and travelled to Liverpool, London, Spain and finally, Argentina. Once there, he again gravitated towards the anarchists and began another publishing venture with *El Oprimido* (1893-97), which became *La Protesta Humana* (1897-1903), and then the hugely influential *La Protesta* (1903 to the present day). In each case, Creaghe invested considerable time, energy and money into these propagandist ventures which would eventually bear fruit in the form of the Federación Obrero Regional Argentina (FORA), the mighty anarcho-syndicalist union which won the hearts and loyalties of 20,000 Argentine workers by the time of the events of the ‘Tragic Week’ of 1919. Creaghe was also heavily involved in the Free School movement in Buenos Aires and was director of the Rationalist School in Luján, an anarchist educational experiment along the lines of those founded by the Spanish anarchist, Francisco Ferrer (1859-1909). He also rallied to the defence of a young Polish immigrant who killed the Chief of Police in Buenos Aires at an anarchist demonstration in 1909. At the same time, Creaghe worked on as a doctor from his base in Luján, Buenos Aires province, combining easily the roles of local physician and anarchist militant (4).

Despite the great impact Creaghe made towards the development and sustenance of the Argentine anarchist movement into the twentieth century, much has still to be uncovered, though the recent work of Juan Suriano has begun to re-assess the importance of Creaghe and the circle of pioneering anarchists in fin de siècle Buenos Aires (5).



Creaghe's house-cum-office in Luján (Mariano Moreno street)

Creaghe took off on his travels again in 1911, settling eventually in Los Angeles among Mexican anarchists. He took part in producing yet another influential anarchist newspaper, *La Regeneración*, and struck up a good friendship with the leading Mexican anarchist, Ricardo Flores Magón (1874-1922), who died in Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary in Kansas. He, along with Creaghe, was involved in the Baja California revolt of 1910 as well as giving support to the fragmented anarchist movement in Mexico in the years after the start of the Mexican revolution of 1910-14. Magón was informed of Creaghe's death in Washington DC on 19 February 1920 while in prison and wrote to a comrade in Washington of his sense of loss:

Por tu carta me he enterado de que nuestro viejo amigo Creaghe falleció el 19 de febrero último (El camarada doctor Juan Creaghe fue editor y uno de los fundadores del diario anarquista La Protesta de Buenos Aires, Argentina). Ahora está libre y descansando. Los últimos desafíos de este gran luchador por la libertad fueron de tal naturaleza que hacen a uno estremecerse. Él, que amó a la humanidad, fue blanco de todos los tratamientos inhumanos. Él, que soñó la libertad, fue privado de todos los privilegios humanos. Él, que luchó para que cada

criatura humana pudiera tener un hogar, no tenía un albergue propio. ¡El pobre viejo veterano de la lucha de clases!

Ahora está libre y descansa. La Muerte es la gran libertadora. Es un absurdo representar a la Muerte como una cosa terrible que inspira horror. Estoy cansado de ver a la Muerte pintada como un esqueleto humano, llevando en una mano una guadaña y en la otra un reloj de arena. Si yo fuera artista, representaría a la Muerte completamente diferente, como una bella doncella. Por ejemplo, en el acto de tirar una cortina que oculta una magnífica recámara, y con una dulce sonrisa en su faz amorosa ofreciendo la entrada a cada mortal. Nuestro querido Juan Creaghe es feliz ahora, como lo es el que goza de un sueño profundo'. (6)

Such was the regard held for Creaghe, a man whose controversial life of anarchist activism is only now beginning to emerge. It is a story which promises to hold much for the Irish in Argentina and indeed, for the Irish Diaspora in general.

Dr. Máirtín Ó Catháin

Magee College, University of Ulster, Derry/Londonderry

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS I

ALL ALIENS, in whatsoever class they travel, MUST be fully listed and the master or captain

S. S. *Vasari* sailing from *Buenos Aires 5-7*, *Fe*

NO	NAME IN FULL		Age	Sex	Married or Single	Calling or Occupation	Abilities	Nationality (Country of which citizen or subject)	Place of Birth	Last Permanent Residence	
	Family Name	Given Name								Country	City or Town
	<i>Creaghe</i>	<i>John</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Irish</i>	<i>Dublin</i>	<i>England</i>	<i>London</i>

Record of John Creaghe's arrival to New York in 1911 (Ellis Island Database)

Notes

- 1) *The Medical Register*: Printed and Published Under the Direction of the General Council of Medical Education and Registration of the United Kingdom, Pursuant to an Act Passed in the Year XXI and XXII Victoriae, CAP.XC, Entitled an Act to Regulate the Qualifications of Practitioners of Medicine and Surgery, 1896 (London, 1896), p.358, entry for John O'Dwyer Creaghe; and Thom's Directory (Dublin, 1866-74), Mitchelstown, County Cork entries.
- 2) Quali, John *The Slow Burning Fuse: the Lost History of the British Anarchists* (London, 1978), pp. 97, 101, 108; and Lane, Fintan *The Origins of Modern Irish Socialism 1881-1896* (Cork, 1997), p.159.
- 3) Shpayer, Haia *British Anarchism, 1881-1914: Reality and Appearance*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of London (1981), p.44 and footnote 1.
- 4) Nettlau, Max *A Short History of Anarchism* (London, 1996), pp. 264, 375.
- 5) Suriano, Juan *Anarquistas: Cultura y Política libertaria en Buenos Aires 1890-1910* (Buenos Aires, 2001).
- 6) From website
<http://www.antorcha.net/biblioteca_virtual/politica/epis/carta_gus_25_marzo_1920.html> accessed 16 October 2004.

The Black Frigate

By Eduardo C. Gerding



Admiral Brown's frigate Hercules and the Spanish Gobernadora.
Oil painting by Emilio Biggeri, 1966.
(Museo Naval de la Nación, Tigre)

Adapted from The Buenos Aires Herald 'Sunday-History' (24 October 2004), with kind permission of the editors.

The Origin

The origin of Argentine navy's first flagship has been a controversial issue and a motive for sharp remarks among well known historians. According to a Memorandum presented on 5 August 1817 by Lieutenant Colonel William Brown to the Lords of His Majesty Treasure, the *Hercules* had Russian origins. Brown confirmed such origin again in 1855 in a document requested by General Bartolomé Mitre which was translated into Spanish by General Tomás Guido.

The *Times* of London dated 21 December 1818 and 7 April 1819 published an official statement made by the Admiralty Court which began with this revealing statement: 'In the case of the ship *Hercules*, otherwise the *Duke of Palma* ...'. Whatever could have been the *Duke of Palma's* history it still waits to be revealed.

According to Sergei Klimovsky, Scientific Secretary of the Russian Central Naval Museum, the main Russian shipyards where such frigate could have been built in the 1800s were: *Okhta* Admiralty, *Saint Petersburg* and *Arkhangelsk* Admiralty, *Arkhangelsk*, *White Sea*. The vessels which could have been the *Duke of Palma* during her service in the Russian Navy probably were: 44-guns frigate *Speshny* (1800), *Arkhangelsk*, captured by the English on 20 September 1807 in Portsmouth; 38-guns frigate *Legky* (1800), *Arkhangelsk* passed to France on 27 September 1809; 60-guns ship-of-the line *Finland*, captured in 1790 from Sweden and sold in 1813 to England; 64-guns ship-of-the line *Retvizan*, captured in 1790 from Sweden and sold in 1813 to England.

The Acquisition

In December 1813, the Minister of War Juan Larrea signed an agreement with Boston-born Guillermo Pío White (Pedro Lezica's partner), by which the latter was to provide the means for a naval squad that could ensure success against the Spanish naval forces.

John Goodfellow sold the *Hercules*, her cargo (ninety tons of salt and sixty tons of charcoal), as well as her Russian papers, by \$25,000 of which \$12,500 were paid cash and the rest through a credit of \$12,500 from the custom house. Most likely, the *Hercules* arrived in Buenos Aires in about 1813 although there are

no documents availing this. On 4 January 1814 The first ship was officially incorporated to the navy under the command of Eliseo Smith.

Crew and Guns

The 149-men crew was composed of fourteen naval officers, eighty-seven soldiers and forty-two countrymen. This powerful 350-tons warship had thirty-eight meters length and 5,8 meters depth of hold. She had two decks. Admiral Brown's cabin was under the spar deck.

On the beginning the frigate was armed with four cannons of twenty-four, eight of eighteen, twelve of eight, six of six and six stone mortars. She was later armed with four long cannons of twenty-four, eight of eighteen, twelve of twelve, six of nine, six of six, and six stone mortars. This summed up forty-two pieces. By 1814-1815 the *Hercules* was lined up with copper in La Ensenada.



Guillermo Pío White (1770-1842)

The Combat of Martín García

On 10 March 1814 the *Hercules*, joined by the *Julieta*, the *Tortugas*, the *Fortunata* and the felucca *San Luis*, faced the strong Spanish naval fleet commanded by Captain Jacinto de Romarate. The Spanish armada had six war ships, brigs, gunboats and a land battery with four cannons. There was a fierce combat after which the *Hercules* was stranded. American-born officer Benjamin Franklin Seaver, commander of the *Julieta*, was killed in action. The *Hercules* defended herself until 12 March at 10 AM. As a result of this combat Commander Elias Smith, Lieutenant Robert Stacy and forty-five sailors were killed by grapeshot. There were about fifty wounded, which imposed a heavy task for the surgeon Bernard Campbell. The flagship received no less than eighty-two cannon blows and was repaired in the same war zone. Plumb plates were placed under the water line and the hull covered with leathers and tar. Henceforth it was nicknamed as 'the Black Frigate'. Richard Baxter, an English-born officer, was appointed as the new commander. On 17 March 1814 Brown attacked the island Martín García together with the *Julieta* and the *Zephir*. The *Hercules* engaged in combat with the Spanish warships *Esperanza* and *Carmen*.

A land attack was organized and at that moment William Brown ordered the fife and the drum to play 'Saint Patrick's Day in the Morning', which acted as a real booster among the troops.

On 20 April 1814 Montevideo was blocked by Argentine forces. There were no other major engagements until 14 May, when a combat started but the sea conditions stopped a full attack.

The Combat of Bucco

On 16 May 1814 the *Hercules*, the *Belfast*, the *Zephir* and the small coasting schooner *Itatí*, backed by the *Agreeable*, engaged in fight with the Spanish warships *Neptuno*, *San José* and *La Paloma* in front of Bucco. On 17 May, during the persecution, Admiral Brown received a cannon shot which broke one of his legs. The Spanish warship *Maria* was seized and brought to Buenos Aires just like *Neptuno*, *Paloma* and *San José*. The *Mercurio* was chased up to the very port of Montevideo. By June 1814 the Spanish crown had lost Montevideo.

The *Hercules* returned to Buenos Aires leaving Captain Russell to command the blockade of Montevideo. On 23 June 1814 Montevideo surrendered as well as the whole Spanish squad.

On August 1814, the Argentine fleet was auctioned but the *Hercules* was bestowed to Admiral Brown by the government of United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata.

The frigate was then lined up with copper and armed with twenty-nine cannons of twenty-four, twelve and eight pounds. The letter of marque was issued on 1 September 1815. She departed from Buenos Aires on 15 September 1815 commanded by Michael Brown, since William Brown was not to get involved in privateer actions. Notwithstanding, once in the River Plate William Brown took the command, his second in chief being David Chitty. Michael Brown took command of the *Trinidad*.

The *Hercules* navigated around Cape Horn and in front of Chiloé the Argentines seized the schooner *Mercedes*. Later, in front of Morro Quemado, they captured the frigate *Gobernadora*, which was sailing from Guayaquil to Lima. On 16 January 1816 the brig *San Pablo* was captured and became Brown's hospital ship. On 18 January, they captured a pilot's boat and the following day, a *místico* (small coasting vessel) that was sailing from Pisco was sunk.

On 20 January the Argentine naval forces arrived to Callao and, on 21 January they started bombarding the castles of Rimac. During twenty days the biggest Spanish stronghold was blocked by five ships waving the flag of Buenos Aires.

On 21 January the frigate *Fuente Hermosa* was sunk. On 23 January, after a fierce combat, the frigate *Consecuencia* was captured when sailing from Cadiz. Among the passengers was brigadier Juan M. Mendiburu. The *Consecuencia* became later *La Argentina*, which was to be commanded by French naval officer Hipólito Bouchard. On 25 January the warship *La Candelaria* was captured.

1816 - The Attack to Guayaquil

On 29 January 1816 Admiral Brown set sail in the *Trinidad* for Guayaquil, and on 18 February he attacked the batteries of Punta Piedras, which he captured after a long struggle. Brown captured the schooner *Carmen* and attacked the battery Elizalde. Then he attacked de San Carlos castle but the *Trinidad* got stranded as a consequence of the quick ebb of the Guayas river.

As a result of this, Brown was captured by the Spanish forces but was rescued by the gallant action of the *Consecuencia* and the *Hercules*. Miguel Brown and Chitty took part in the exchange of prisoners. Our forces released the Spanish prisoners and their mail and set free the *Candelaria*, the *Gobernadora*, a *místico* and two small vessels. The *Trinidad* was lost and William Brown returned to the *Hercules*.

Scurvy Aboard

The *Hercules* set sails to the Galapagos islands where the prizes were shared out. Admiral Brown obtained the *Halcon* and Bouchard the *Consecuencia*, the pilot's boat *Carmen* went to Pedro Dautant. The *Hercules* and the *Halcon* navigated then to Colombia in a painful journey as most of the crew was suffering of scurvy. A fifty-five men crew departed on June 1816 from San Buenaventura, visited the Isle of Pascua and then sailed around Cape Horn. They had to feed themselves mostly of turtle, maize and rum. The cargo was lightened in the Gulf of Penas and then they set sailed to the Falkland/Malvinas Islands. A maelstrom forced them to stop in Brazil near the Cabo Frío. In this last place they met the British brig *Jane*, which updated them on the last political news at the River Plate.

Trouble in Barbados

On 25 September 1818, William Brown, following his officer's advice entered in Carlisle Bay near Barbuda, located in the middle of the Leeward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean. According to the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1816, Vol. 11, p. 552) and the *Times* (22 April 1818) this was what happened thereafter. The 'Black Frigate' was mounting at that time twenty-two guns and had a fifty-six-men crew, with a valuable cargo of quicksilver, silks, steel, dry goods and spice estimated on one million dollars, which was the produce of plundered towns and vessels in the Pacific Ocean

The *Hercules* was seized a day or two later but released upon Brown consenting to accompany captain Sterling from the sloop of war HMS *Brazen* to Antigua and report to the Admiral there. She was seized a second time while at sea under the Navigation Laws, and condemned on 13 November by the Vice Admiralty court of Antigua.

In 1817 an appeal was made to the high court of Admiralty in England. Also, a claim was brought by John Garcias, Esq. on behalf of his Catholic Majesty Ferdinand VII. The seizer refused to give an issue to the libel in this claim until the issue between him and William Brown was disposed of, on the ground that the King of Spain was no party to the original proceedings, and it would only embarrass the question; i.e., the sentence of the court should be reversed. The different claimants might settle their disputes *inter se*, with which the seizer could have nothing to do. Sir William Scott said it was impossible for the court to receive any claim for the independent government of Buenos Aires, which had never been recognized by the British government. Therefore there was no reason whatever for refusing to answer the claim on behalf of the Spanish government, that he had no hesitation in directing an issue to be given to the libel as prayed.

Eventually the claimants withdrew, and in December 1820 the court made a decree in Brown's favour. Brown and his men were released but they lost the frigate and the cargo.

The Black Frigate's Final Days

Two hypotheses were made about the final days of the Black Frigate:

- 1) According to the *Courier* of London (4 April 1817) the ship was auctioned in Antigua and became part of Venezuelan Admiral Brion's fleet. This story was reproduced by *Le Moniteur Universel* of Paris (10 April 1817).
- 2) According to the *Evening Post* of New York (5 August 1818) the *Hercules* arrived to Havana from Antigua and was sold there.

Conclusion

There have been at least twenty drawings of the *Hercules* painted by renowned artists like commodore José Murature, Eduardo De Martino (a former Austrian naval officer) and captain Emilio Biggeri. This is an evidence of the appreciation for this ship among naval officers. On May 1970, the Argentine Navy received a Type 42-Class frigate named *Hercules* (D-1) built at Barrow-in-Furness (UK).

Argentina lacks an original man-o-war like the HMS *Victory* berthed in No. 2 Dock, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, or even a replica like the Dutch East Indiaman *Amsterdam* at the Scheepvaart Museum in Amsterdam. However, there's John Joseph O'Hara's project in Foxford, county Mayo, by which a real size replica of the *Hercules* would be built and installed in a dry dock near river Moy. J.J. O'Hara, owner of a supermarket in Foxford, is the President and founder of the 'Foxford Admiral Brown Society'. Many Irish-Argentine societies are supporting this project, as did Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland 1990-1997.

From the misty depths of history, the story of the Black Frigate touches our deep feelings and continues inspiring the best traditions among worldwide seafaring lovers.

* Dr. Eduardo C. Gerding. Received his high school diploma in 1967 from the Cardinal Newman College, a Christian Brothers' school in Buenos Aires. He graduated as Medicine Doctor (1974) in the Jesuit Universidad del Salvador. Retired from the Navy as Lieutenant Commander, former chief of Gastroenterology at the Buenos Aires Naval Hospital. Works at the Health Division of the Argentine Naval Hydrographical Service. Life Member of the US Naval Institute. His ancestor Eduard Gerding of the Kingdom of Hanover arrived in Argentina in 1830, and was a partner of William MacCann and one of the founders of 'The Strangers Club', the oldest club in South America.

Dr. Eduardo C. Gerding

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Robert Gore (1810-1854), naval officer and diplomatist

By Edmundo Murray



Robert Gore (1810-1854)
(Alfred, Count D'Orsay, ca. 1840)

Gore, Robert (1810-1854), naval officer and diplomatist, was born in Saunders Court, near the town of Crossabeg in Artramon parish, County Wexford, the fourth son of Colonel William J. Gore (1767-1836) and Caroline Pym-Hale (d.1853). Robert Gore's brother was the fourth Earl of Arran, Philip Yorke Gore (1801-1884). The family lived in a ten-bedroom house with an estate covering eighty acres of land.

On 4 September 1823 Robert Gore entered the Royal Navy and in 1832 was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. From 1832 to 1834 Gore sailed in the *Melville* and the *Andromache* under Admiral Henry Ducie Chads. Robert Gore saw action in combat with Malay pirates, and for this reason on 15 July 1837 he was presented with a sword by grateful British merchants and agents in Bombay. On 9 May 1839 Gore was promoted to commander and was put in charge of the *Serpent* at the West India station. He became MP for New Ross, County Wexford. The MP declared himself to be 'a cordial supporter of the Melbourne ministry, the only government that ever endeavored to do justice to Ireland'. Gore was an 'advocate for free trade and abolition of monopolies'. He insisted that 'Ireland should be placed on an equal footing with England and Scotland' (Stenton 1976). Robert Gore returned home to Ireland in 1841. On 23 October 1846 he was appointed chargé d'affaires at Montevideo, Uruguay. His most important intervention in the River Plate was in March 1848, when he successfully put an end to the Buenos Aires blockade that had been implemented by British and French forces since 1845. On 29 August 1851 Gore was appointed British consul at Buenos Aires.

Robert Gore is remembered in the River Plate for saving the life of Buenos Aires governor and totalitarian Argentine leader Juan Manuel de Rosas after the Battle of Caseros, and for facilitating his subsequent exile in Southampton, England. When he arrived home on the afternoon of 4 February 1852, Gore found Rosas sleeping in his bed. He spoke to Admiral Henderson, who consented to accommodate Rosas on the *Locust*. Rosas' daughter Manuelita disguised herself as a sailor, and on the night of 8 February 1852 the family fled Buenos Aires. British merchants in Buenos Aires, who had a poor relationship with the consul, accused Gore of the receipt of a sum of money in return for aiding Rosas. After the fall of Rosas, in January 1853, Robert Gore was expelled from Buenos Aires when he alleged that arms and ammunitions were being distributed among British subjects. He returned to Montevideo.

Travelling from Uruguay, Robert Gore met with General Justo José de Urquiza in Entre Ríos province, who told him of his plans to develop Argentina, to open its rivers to the commerce of all nations, and to attract 'Saxon', that is, English-speaking, immigrants. In the conflict between Buenos Aires and the Argentine Confederation that ensued after the Battle of Caseros, Gore was perceived as a friend of the provinces. Robert Gore died on 4 August 1854 in Montevideo.

Edmundo Murray

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