

ANNEX 14

WILLIAM HENRY FLAYHART III

HISTORIA

DE

D. DIEGO DE ALVEAR Y PONCE DE LEÓN

BRIGADIER DE LA ARMADA

los servicios que prestara, los méritos que adquiriera

Y LAS OBRAS QUE ESCRIBIO

TODO SUFICIENTEMENTE DOCUMENTADO

FOR SU HIJA

DOÑA SABINA DE ALVEAR Y WARD

?



MADRID.—1891

IMPRESA DE D. LUIS AGUADO

8, *Pontejos*, 8

Tel. 697.

IX

RETURN OF DON DIEGO DE ALVEAR TO EUROPE AND CAPE SAINT MARIA NAVAL BATTLE

OCTOBER 5, 1804

By that time, a garrison of four frigates came from Lima (Peru) with monies [wealth] that should reinforce the other two frigates anchored in Montevideo and together they would sail to Europe; two of them, having either broken down around the Cape of Hornos or by previous order of the Viceroy (under whose orders they last sailed), only four of the remaining vessels were prepared and returned under the command of squadron leader Don Jose Bustamante y Guerra. Those vessels were the *Medea*, the *Fama*, the *Mercedes*, and the *Clara*. Having now received orders for his return, Alvear left with his entire family on the *Mercedes*. He later had to leave the *Mercedes* due to the sudden death of Don Tomas Urgate, squadron chief, second commander and major general of the division, with whom he was very close friends. Advised of the death and with great insistence, Alvear requested (much to the dismay of separating from his family), by rule of Naval law, to assume Urgate's command; thus granted, on August 6, three days before setting sail and having assumed command as squadron chief, he boarded the *Medea*, that was still flying the late General's insignia. He brought with him only one of his sons, Don Carlos, a fourteen year old military cadet in Buenos Aires at the time and who was later, as we have mentioned, the brilliant and celebrated General who greatly served his homeland, the Republic of Argentina. Don Carlos was a lively and mischievous, and he found it difficult to remain quiet in the tight quarters that he shared with his siblings and mother (who repeatedly requested that his father take him). This small act would later result in greater consequences as this fateful boarding of father and son would free them from the catastrophe that awaited the rest of the family thus sealing his historical fate as a tragic celebrity.

On August 9, 1804, the four frigates set sail from the port of Montevideo to Cadiz. The sail was pleasant, even though many suffered from fevers, especially on the *Medea*, brought on by the many squalls and heat waves that crossed their route. Suffering the most were the new

sailors, the mechanics, who daily maintained the cannons, armament, and other facilities as was necessary. General Jose Bustamante was also taken gravely ill during this time.

The vessels that were found had been assured neutrality as kept by Spain with France and England during the war in which these two countries were earnestly engaged. They had been sailing now for fifty-seven days and with great joy were able to make out the Iberian coast, anxious to arrive in Cadiz the following day (or, so they thought). As dawn broke that faithful day – October 5th! – a Danish vessel, under directions from London, confirmed that the fleet could pass peacefully; the weather was clear and calm with a fresh breeze; the coastline of Spain was the most beautiful they had ever seen, and at 6:15, they could make out the Monchique mountain range. There was a great deal of activity, happiness, and hopefulness among the crew. Oh!...How the young souls of the beautiful Alvear family rejoiced and played on that happy morning as their long, confined journey was coming to an end and they could see with their own eyes their beloved Spanish homeland, their true land of promise that they so longed for!...

Copy,
Gentlemen

The Lords Commrs. of His Majesty's Treasury having had under their Consideration a Memorial of Don Diego De Alvar. dated 26th June last, Major General and second in Command of the Squadron of Spanish Frigates lately captured, stating that his Wife, Seven Children, a Nephew & five Negro Servants together with all his valuable Baggage & Gold and Silver amounting to the sum of £12,000 Sterl^g, the produce of his Labor after a Residence of Twenty five Years in South America, were totally lost by the blowing up of the Mercedes Frigate; I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you that they are pleased in Consideration of the peculiar circumstances of Hardship of this case to grant to M^o. De Alvar the amount of the Loss sustained by him in consequence of the blowing up of the said Frigate upon satisfactory proof being produced by him to You of the amount of the same; That they have directed a Warrant to be prepared for issuing to him, the Sum of Six

Thousand



Thurs.

Thousand Pounds on account

I am
Gentlemen

Your most Obedt Servt

Signed W. Huskisson

Treasury Chambers }
10th Aug. 1805 }

