

In Málaga, in different jails, they lived the same length of time that it took González Moreno to send a messenger to Madrid, General Narváez. He returned on the 10th December with an execution order given by the decadent and bloodthirsty Fernando VII, who wrote with his own hand: "Execute them all. I, the King".

At 11:30 am on the 11th December 1831 on the Málaga beaches of San Andrés, in front of the Carmen district, they were all executed without exception, including the Englishman Robert Boyd and a young cabin boy from the boat. Flores Calderón and Fernández Golfín also perished along with other soldiers and sailors. Torrijos was denied his last request which was to give the order to open fire and die without their eyes covered.

Their bodies were buried in the San Miguel cemetery, except for Robert Boyd who went to the recently inaugurated English cemetery, until 1842, when the city council of Málaga built on popular demand a funeral monument (an obelisk) which was erected in their honour in Plaza Riego, today Plaza de la Merced, in front of the native house of the painter Pablo Ruiz Picasso, under which they all rest. A cross also commemorates the place of his death, now a promenade.

The Governor González Moreno, who from then on was known as "The executioner of Málaga" received for his treason a promotion to General Lieutenant and the post of Captain-General of Granada. When the Carlista war broke out he died assassinated by army volunteers in 1839.

The sacrifice of Torrijos and his comrades was not in vain and they were remembered constantly in the following years for after the death of King Fernando VII in 1833, the liberals obtained the power and the widow of Torrijos, D<sup>a</sup> Luisa Carlota Sáenz de Viniegra was honoured with the title of Countess of Torrijos. His death, and the death of Mariana Pineda, was one of the last caused by the absolutism in Andalusia.

## **JOSE MARÍA TORRIJOS**

### **1791-1831**



# GENERAL TORRIJOS

General Torrijos, although from Madrid, is tied to Andalusia for his many activities here. From Andalusia he revived the fight for freedom against the despotic king Fernando VII. It was in Andalusia where he died, in Málaga, executed by those he fought against.

Jose María de Torrijos y Uriarte was born in Madrid the 20th March, 1791. He came from a noble family and joined the army very young, first as a pageboy for King Carlos IV at ten years old and when he was thirteen he achieved the title of captain of the Ultonian regiment, though he couldn't exert it due to his young age. In 1808, he enrolled in the Academy of Alcalá de Henáres, where he was surprised by the Independence war, fighting bravely from the beginning against the French. He was promoted to colonel in 1813 and married Luisa Sáenz de Viniegra in Badajoz. He obtained all types of military decorations and a proposition from the Duke of Wellington for Brigadier, which materialised at the end of the war, a war where he fought under the orders of his future executioner, Captain Vicente González Moreno.

The re-establishment of absolutism annulled the constitution of 1812 and because of this he joined the Liberal Party and refused to leave for América to fight against the Independentists. Andalusia was vital for any attempted rebellion, the troops being concentrated here ready to leave for América where the colonies were fighting against the Spanish. In 1817, Torrijos participated in the attempted rebellion of General Lacy to raise the army in Andalusia and because of this was taken to prison, first to the Castle of Santa Bárbara in Alicante and later to the Santo Oficio prison in Murcia.

With the victorious rebellion of Riego in 1820 he was set free and the Liberal Triennium named him commissioner of war at the beginning of 1823, directing the resistance against the "One hundred thousand children of San Luis" the French army being sent by the European powers to replace the absolutists in the Spanish government.

After being defeated in Cartagena, Torrijos and his wife were forced to flee to Marseilles and from there to England (1824), where he contacted with the rest of the liberals in exile.

In England he formed a friendship with John Sterling, a well known landowner who presented him to Robert Boyd, ex\_official of the English army

in India who had fought in the Greek Independence war. Boyd, a romantic like Torrijos, committed himself to help him recover the freedom in Spain through his good name and fortune .

With the support of the "Apostles of Cambridge", a radical society of exiled liberal Spaniards in England, and commissioned by the "Board of directors of the Spanish Uprising", they arrived in Gibraltar in September 1830, disembarking on the 9th, meeting with old collaborators such as the ex\_president of the Spanish parliament, Manuel Flores Calderón, the ex\_minister of war, Francisco Fernández Golfín and other important military figures. After deciding that a rebellion of the army against the absolutist government would be hard to achieve, they attempted a raid on Algeciras on the 24th October and another on the 11th November. As both of them failed, Torrijos was forced to hide in boats anchored in Gibraltar.

At the end of January 1831 they took action against La Linea of which they took hold, but this initial success failed again faced with Algeciras. At the end of February another attempted rebellion cost the life of Colonel Manzanares.

Seeing it impossible to act in the Gibraltar region because of the extreme vigilance, Torrijos received with high spirits the secret letters of a "very confidential" friend, with the nickname of Viriato he informed him that the best place to disembark was Vélez Málaga, and that with the presence of the Málaga troops first, and later those of all Andalusia, they would rebel against the King Fernando VII.. In fact this was a trap planned by his old comrade-in-arms and now Governor of Málaga Vicente González Moreno, who under the name of "Viriato" took advantage of Torrijos's impatience and planned his capture.

On the 30th November 1831 they left Gibraltar in various hulls only to find they had been deceived when they reached the point of Calaburras and found the Neptune ship waiting for them. Because of this they were forced to disembark in Mijas Costa (Charcón beach) and flee inland. First they arrived in Mijas where they received several gunshots from the armed military forces and then crossed the mountains to Alhaurín de la Torre where they had the same welcome. After being persecuted by the infantry they found refuge in a farmhouse belonging to the Count of Mollina, with an ancient Arab tower near the old road to Cártama. Once there, surrounded by the troops sent by González Moreno and after taking both generals, he was forced to surrender along with his 52 men on the 5th December, being captured and sent to Málaga.