

MIGUEL GRAU

KNIGHT OF THE SEAS



Omar Carrillo



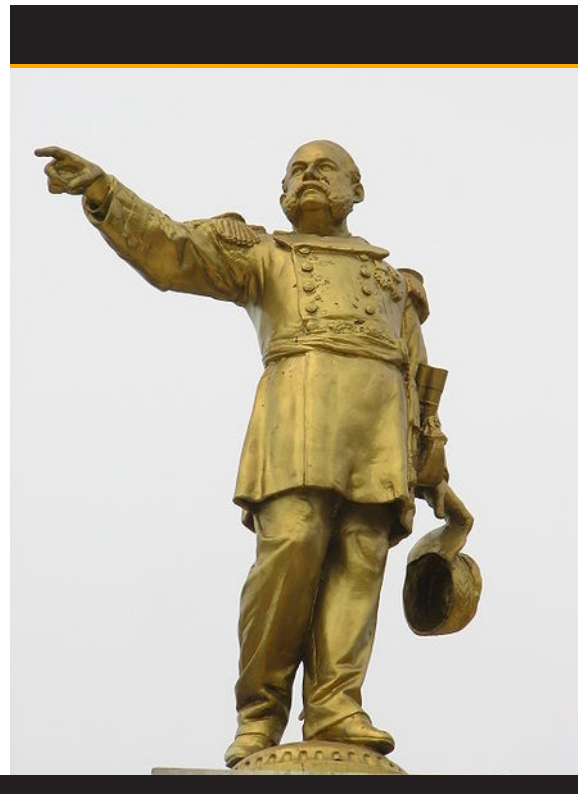
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Miguel Grau Seminario was a man committed to his time, country and values. He was honest and loyal to his principles, defender of the constitutional order and enemy of dictatorships.

The Knight of the Seas was always in the line of affirmation of the moral norms and traditions of the republic. In the darkest hours of the country, he was the symbol of Peru, with honor and glory.

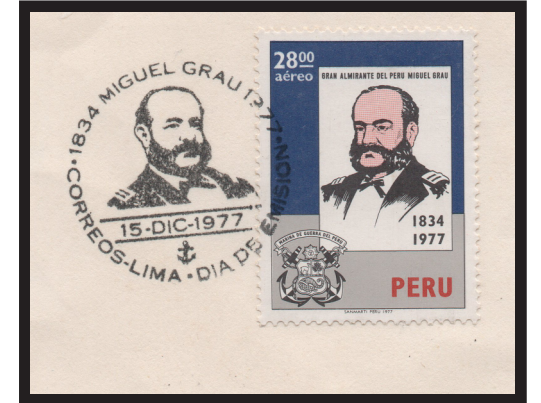
His immortal legacy as a sailor, congressman and family man make him the quintessential Peruvian hero.



A.- NAVY CAREER

Born on Piura in 1834, as an incredibly early age (9) sailed as merchant marine for 10 years when he wants to become an officer of the Peruvian Navy, where he entered and developed an outstanding professional reputation.

He left the navy for a brief time to be elected as a congressperson and returned early in 1879.



B.- SPANISH-SOUTH AMERICAN WAR



During this war Chile and Peru joined in a bi-national fleet against Spanish attempts to reclaim their American colonies.

He fought at the victorious Naval Combat of Abtao, commanding "Unión" corvette.



C.- WAR OF THE PACIFIC (1879-1884)



When the War of the Pacific between Chile against Bolivia and Peru began on 5 April 1879, Miguel Grau was aboard of the ironclad "Huáscar", as its captain and the Commander of the Navy.

C.1.- BATTLE OF IQUIQUE

At the Battle of Iquique, after Huáscar sank the Chilean corvette Esmeralda by ramming her, Grau ordered the rescue of the surviving crew from the waters.

After the battle, Grau wrote his condolences to the widow of the captain of the Esmeralda, Cmdr. Arturo Prat, returning his sword and personal effects.

These and other gestures earned him the nickname of "El Caballero de los Mares" (Knight of the Seas) from his Chilean opponents, acknowledging an extraordinary sense of chivalry and his gentlemanly behaviour, combined with his highly efficient and brave combat career.



C.2.- BATTLE OF ANGAMOS

In an impressive display of naval mastery, Grau played an important role by interdicting Chilean lines of communication and supply, damaging, capturing or destroying several enemy vessels, and bombarding port installations.



Grau's Huáscar became famed for moving stealthily, striking by surprise and then disappearing. These actions put off a Chilean invasion by sea for six months.

He was killed in combat and his ship was capture after suffering severe casualties in the close-range artillery duel alone vs 4 best vessels of Chilean fleet in Angamos Battle on 8 October 1879.



D.- LEGACY



After Grau's death news, he was immediately recognized as one of the great heroes of this conflict.

Since then, Peruvian Navy became to name the flagships under his name, also he's called in a ceremonial role-call each October 8th.



The peruvian congress preserves his congressman chair of 1878 in the middle of the session room and role-call him daily on list.

In the year 2000, Miguel Grau was recognized as the "Peruvian of the Millennium" by popular vote for his love for Peru and his personal virtues that inspire peruvians of yesterday and today, because incarnates the essence of Peru.

