

= Juan Larrea ( politician ) =

Juan Larrea ( June 24 , 1782 in Catalonia , Spain ? June 20 , 1847 in Buenos Aires ) was a Spanish businessman and politician in Buenos Aires during the early nineteenth century . He headed a military unit during the second British invasion of the Río de la Plata , and worked at the Buenos Aires Cabildo . He took part in the ill @-@ fated Mutiny of Álzaga . Larrea and Domingo Matheu were the only two Spanish @-@ born members of the Primera Junta , the first national government of Argentina .

He supported the secretary Mariano Moreno within the Junta , and was moved to the distant city of San Juan when the Morenists were removed from government . He returned as a deputy for Córdoba in the Assembly of Year XIII constituent assembly , promoting many resolutions . Together with Carlos María de Alvear , he organized the strategy for the downfall of the royalist stronghold in Montevideo , a threat to Buenos Aires during the Argentine War of Independence . Despite the victory , he faced political conflicts with admiral William Brown and an economic crisis , and was exiled from the country .

He moved to Bordeaux , France , but returned to Buenos Aires when his exile was lifted by the Oblivion law . He served as consul for a time , but his business declined and he committed suicide on June 20 , 1847 . He was the last surviving member of the Primera Junta .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life and Viceroyalty = = =

Juan Larrea was born on June 24 , 1782 , in the city of Mataró , Catalonia . His father was Martín Ramón de Larrea , who was in charge of customs operations in Mataró , and his mother was Tomasa Espeso . He studied mathematics and navigation , and focused his education towards a career in commerce . His father died in 1793 , so Larrea became the patriarch of the family . They moved to Buenos Aires , where he established a warehouse for wines , leather , and sugar . He traded with Peru , Upper Peru , Paraguay , Chile and colonial Brazil . By 1806 he was a well respected businessman , and a syndic of the Royal Consulate . He promoted the role of deputies from Buenos Aires at the Madrid court , to better the representation of the Brazilian viceroyalty and reduce the privileges of peninsular merchants .

Buenos Aires and other nearby cities faced the British invasions of the Río de la Plata in 1806 and 1807 . In the absence of reinforcements from Spain , viceroy Santiago de Liniers arranged that everyone in Buenos Aires capable of bearing arms should join the resistance against the second invasion . Larrea established the Legion of Catalan Volunteers with Jaime Nadal y Guarda , Jaime Lavallol and José Olaguer Reynals . Larrea was appointed captain of this military unit . The defense was successful , and the British were driven away from the viceroyalty .

Larrea 's business prospered , and in 1808 the Buenos Aires Cabildo appointed him to oversee a naval patrol to suppress shipments of contraband . This gave him an opportunity to put his nautical skills to use . He also participated in the secret meetings of patriots who promoted political change , and joined the 1809 Mutiny of Álzaga , which attempted to depose viceroy Liniers and replace him with a Junta . The mutiny failed , but the patriots continued to plot , and in 1810 the May Revolution succeeded in deposing the new viceroy . Larrea did not take part in the discussions at the open cabildo , but was appointed as member of the Primera Junta .

= = = Primera Junta = = =

Larrea 's prestige as an influential businessman promoted his appointment as member of the Primera Junta . However , as with the other members , the precise reasons for his inclusion are unclear . The Junta 's membership has been considered a balance between Carlotists and Alzaguists . Larrea resigned his wages from his position as Junta member , and organized the

resources for the upcoming war of independence . Together with Manuel de Sarratea he drafted a new code regulating business in Argentina , and he also secured the exile of former viceroy Baltasar Hidalgo de Cisneros by bribing the captain of the ship carrying him , the Dart , to avoid any landfall until reaching the Canary Islands on the far side of the Atlantic . He supported the execution of Liniers after the defeat of his counter @-@ revolution , and supported the secretary Mariano Moreno against the president Cornelio Saavedra . Larrea voted for the incorporation of deputies from other cities into the Junta , although he had previously indicated his opposition to the proposal . It was intended by Saavedra that this change would reduce Moreno 's influence within the Junta .

The proposal prevailed , and the Primera Junta became the Junta Grande by incorporating the new deputies . The resignation and death of Mariano Moreno did not reduce the conflicts between Morenists and Saavedrists . A rebellion on behalf of Saavedrism ensued , on 5 and 6 April 1811 , aiming at the resignation of all remaining Morenists , including Larrea . Larrea was accused of joining factions and risking public security , and was deposed . Taken prisoner , he was moved to the nearby city of Luján , and then to the distant San Juan .

= = = Return to politics = = =

Larrea resumed business activities in San Juan , avoiding politics until 1812 . The Revolution of October 8 , 1812 returned the Morenists to power , and so Larrea could return to Buenos Aires . He returned as a deputy for Córdoba to the Assembly of Year XIII constituent assembly .

In the assembly , Larrea promoted a customs law which taxed most imports , but made exceptions for machines , scientific tools , books , weapons and military supplies . He organized a local mint , and the supply of the Army of the North . The presidency of the assembly rotated , and Larrea presided from April 30 to June 1 , 1813 . During this time the Assembly outlawed torture and repealed all noble titles , and also chose the official Argentine National Anthem .

Larrea served briefly in the Second Triumvirate , replacing José Julián Pérez as finance minister , until the Assembly replaced the Triumvirate with the Supreme Director , an office placing the powers of head of state in the hands of one person . Gervasio Antonio de Posadas was chosen as the first Supreme Director . Posadas was concerned about Montevideo , a nearby city which had been under royalist control since the beginning of the war , and a constant threat to Buenos Aires . Carlos María de Alvear complemented the existing siege of Montevideo with a naval blockade , in which Larrea 's expertise was instrumental . Alvear developed the military strategy , and Larrea took care of the financial aspects . Larrea drafted a report of the nature , costs and strength of the proposed navy , and the captains and sailors that were required , and planned to negotiate with the American William White . Larrea also appointed the Irish admiral William Brown to lead the attack . The royalist forces in Montevideo were finally defeated in June , 1814 .

Larrea did not get on well with Brown , who blamed him for disagreements and supply shortages , and even for discontent among the sailors . Buenos Aires did not have a naval tradition , and therefore most of the people involved in the naval campaign were foreigners . As a result , their commitment to the war was often limited . After the capture of Montevideo , Larrea instructed Brown to report directly to the minister of war , and not correspond with himself . Nevertheless , the disagreements continued . Due to the economic crisis caused by the war , Larrea sold the captured ships , decommissioned the navy and sold off the government 's own ships , but the sailors complained that they had not received their wages , their reward for the military victory nor their percentage of the sale of the captured ships . Larrea and White were blamed for this . Larrea resigned by the end of the year , after signing an order for the creation of an infantry and a cavalry regiment for the Army of the Andes . Larrea blamed White for the unresolved dispute over the sailors ' wages , declaring that he had arranged that White would organize the payment of the wages . Alvear resigned in 1815 after the mutiny of Álvarez Thomas , and all the members of his administration were put on trial . Larrea was accused of abuse of power , administrative fraud and stealing from the national treasury . All his properties were confiscated , and he was exiled .

= = = Exile and return = = =

After his exile , Larrea moved to Bordeaux in France , and did business with some of his old associates . He continued correspondence with Bernardino Rivadavia , and in 1818 he moved to Montevideo , under Brazilian control at that time , and strengthened his contacts in Buenos Aires from there . He was finally able to return to Buenos Aires in 1822 due to the oblivion law .

Once he returned to Buenos Aires , Larrea avoided political activities and concentrated on business activities . He established a mailing service between Buenos Aires and Le Havre ( France ) , but the venture failed . He then worked in animal husbandry , both in Buenos Aires and in Montevideo . He was appointed consul of the United Provinces by governor Manuel Dorrego , and moved back to Bordeaux to strengthen commerce with France .

He resigned as consul in 1830 , shortly after the first appointment of Juan Manuel de Rosas as governor , and returned to private business once more . His business began to fail , and he lived at various times in Montevideo , Colonia del Sacramento and Bordeaux , before returning again to Buenos Aires . He committed suicide on June 20 , 1847 . He was the last surviving member of the Primera Junta .