

Brigadier General

Enrique Torroella



*Brigadier General
Enrique Torroella Romaguera*

My Great-Grandfather Enrique Torroella Romaguera

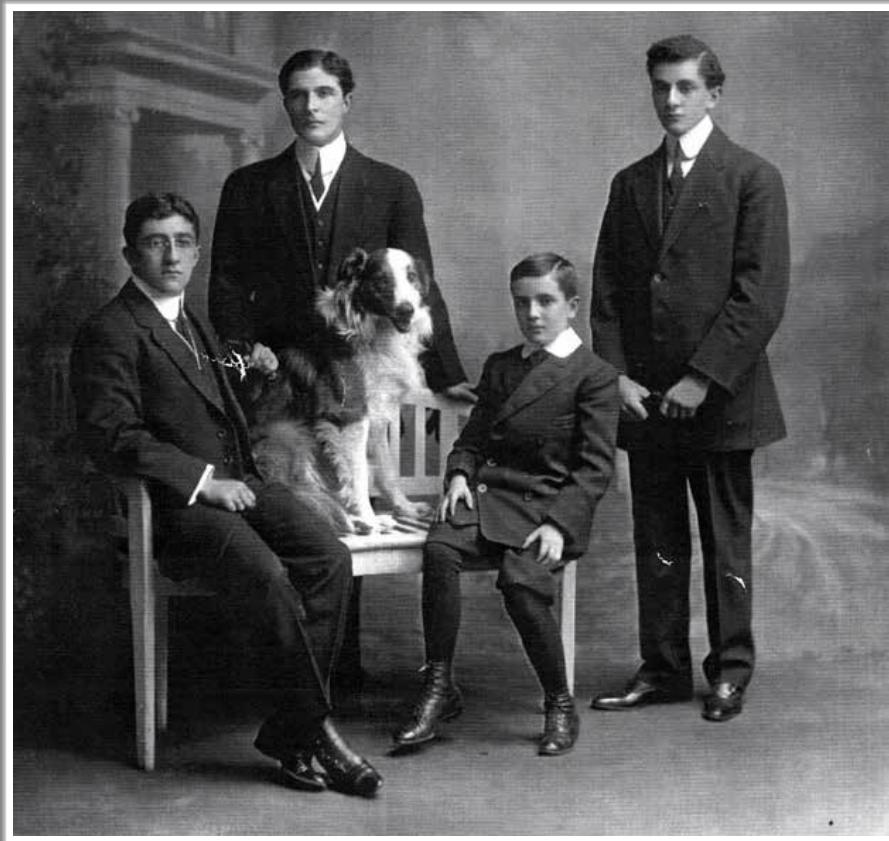
Our DNA contains physiological, morphological and biochemical information inherited from our ancestors, which in turn, we will bequeath to our descendants. But what about the aspects of the personality or the important decisions made by our predecessors and still maintained by our generation? Our interest in obtaining more information on the lives of our ancestors will increase our awareness of where we come from and give us a different perspective. This is what occurred to me when I explored the life of my great-grandfather, Enrique Torroella Romaguera.



Left: He was named Chief of the National Defense Secretariat's Presidential Guard.

Dowen: Emelina Estrada
Morales..

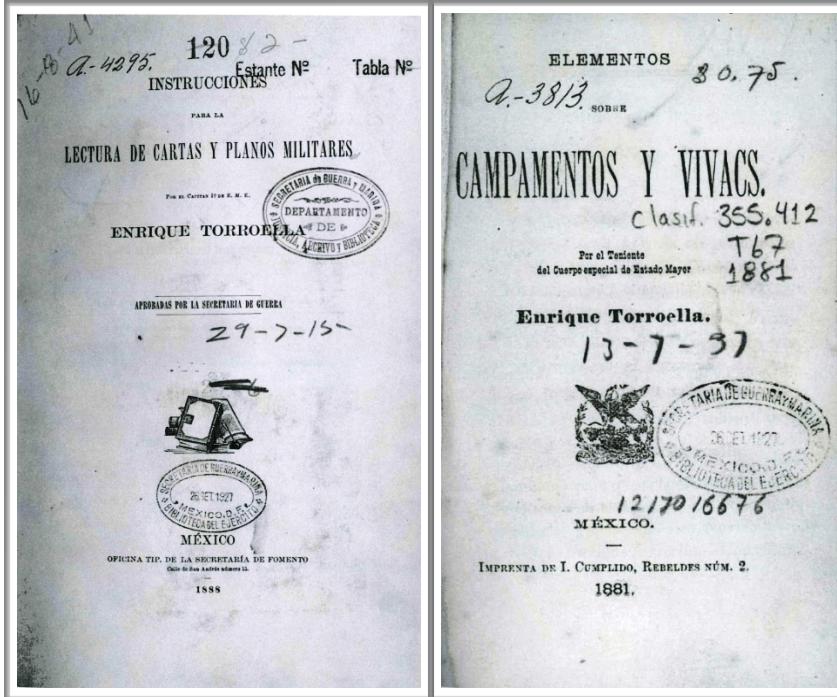
Right: Julio, Mario, Enrique and Juan Luis Torroella Estrada..



In 1876, he married Emelina Estrada Morales, also a Cuban, with whom he had five children: Mario, Julio, Jerónimo, Juan Luis, Margarita and Enrique. His wife Emelina passed away in 1901..

He was the third son of Juan Torroella Plá y Adela Romaguera de las Cuevas. His elder brothers were Alfredo and Fernando. Enrique was born on August 6, 1853, in Havana Cuba, at that time considered one of the crown jewels of the Spanish Empire. However, by 1868, the first War of Independence broke out; the first of many battles to secure the island's independence from Spain.

He spent his free time writing. Two of his books were published: "Elementos sobre Campamentos y Vivacs" (Facts about Encampments and Bivouacs), a treatise on camping during military campaigns and "Instrucciones para la lectura de cartas y planos militares".(Instructions on How to Read Military Maps and Charts.



and on December 4, 1879, as a student Second Lieutenant, he obtained the degree of Military Engineer. He was subsequently appointed Lieutenant to the Presidential Guard and assigned to the National Engineers' Battalion.

Later on, he was transferred to the Comisión Geográfica Exploradora (National Exploration Commission) in Nuevo León and Tamaulipas, with the rank of Second Captain. He conducted numerous activities in the environs of Matamoros by measuring and examining the Mexican - American border region. He was then promoted to Captain.

It was around this time when he joined the Federal District's Military Commander's staff, a post that allowed him to live with his wife and be present at the birth of his first-born son. He was then appointed Military Attaché to the Mexican Legation in Central America.

In 1871, a dramatic episode changed my great-grandfather's life. The Spanish rulers executed eight students falsely accused of desecrating the tomb of Spanish journalist Gonzalo de Castañón.

In view of the country's situation and because my great-grandfather was a rather reckless patriot, his father decided to send him to Mexico, where in 1871 he was admitted to the School of Engineering in the Colegio Militar (Military Academy). He turned out to be an outstanding student

By 1892, he taught the class on Presidential Guard Services at the Colegio Militar's School of Engineering, and after several years as a professor, he became the Academy's Assistant Director, after which he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

In 1909, the then President of Mexico, Gen. Porfirio Díaz, named him Brigadier General of the Presidential Guard. His performance was so efficient, dedicated and loyal, that prior to "Porfirio Díaz" fall from power, interim president Francisco León de la Barra appointed him Chief of the Presidential Guard, and also granted him Mexican citizenship. Furthermore, President Francisco I. Madero, who trusted him implicitly, reinstated him as Chief of the National Defense Secretariat's Presidential Guard.

He retired after 51 years of service. Although already in retirement, he was willing to fight for Mexico's sovereignty when the United States attacked Veracruz in 1914, during the administration of Victoriano Huerta, whom he regarded as a traitor to military principles. In the words of Flora Padilla de Ituarte, "For Torroella, the dignity and well-being of the Mexican people had priority over his relationship with the current president and his personal problems."

Enrique Torroella Romaguera, passed away on January 15, 1928, surrounded by his children and his second wife Mercedes.

