

Westminster Abbey



A Wreathlaying Ceremony
at the Grave of Admiral Lord Cochrane
10th Earl of Dundonald on Chilean Navy Day



Friday 22nd May 2026
6.30 pm

ADMIRAL LORD COCHRANE

Admiral Thomas Alexander Cochrane, 10th Earl of Dundonald, was born on 14th December 1775 in Annesfield, South Lanarkshire, Scotland.

He had a remarkable career as a naval officer and politician. After serving with distinction in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic Wars, he had a short (and somewhat turbulent) political career, before accepting a commission in the Chilean Navy in 1817. This was to mark the beginning of a second distinguished naval career. In 1818, he arrived in Valparaíso to command the First National Squadron and to give the Chilean Navy its definitive professional structure. Under his command, the National Squadron defeated Spanish forces in a series of brilliant actions between 1819 and 1822, consolidating Chile's independence from Spain and transporting General José de San Martín's liberating army (composed of 4430 Chileans and Argentineans) to Peru to neutralise the remnants of Spanish colonial power on the Pacific coast.

Cochrane went on to lead the Brazilian Navy in the war of independence against Portugal, and later served as an Admiral in the Greek Navy. In 1831, he succeeded his father as the 10th Earl of Dundonald and returned to Britain, and during his final years of service, from 1848 to 1851 he commanded the North America and West Indies station. He died in 1860 at the age of eighty-five and was accorded a grand state funeral. To this day the Chilean Navy honours and remembers its founder, buried here in Westminster Abbey.

His name is celebrated everywhere in Chile; from a small southern town to several outstanding beauty spots in Chilean Patagonia—Lake Cochrane, Mount Cochrane, and the River Cochrane—and almost all towns and cities boast a street or a square named after him. Throughout its history, one of the Chilean Navy's principal warships has always borne the name Almirante Cochrane. As Admiral Lord Cochrane's monument proclaims, he 'achieved a name illustrious throughout the world for courage, patriotism and chivalry.'

CHILEAN NAVY DAY

Each year, on the 21st May, Chileans celebrate the country's naval heritage and in particular, the Battle of Iquique, an early and highly significant engagement in the War of the Pacific (1879–1884), fought between Chile and a Bolivian-Peruvian alliance.

On that day in 1879, Captain Arturo Prat was in command of the *Esmeralda*, a small wooden corvette built twenty-five years earlier in a Thames dockyard. With a sister vessel of lighter construction, the schooner *Covadonga* commanded by Captain Carlos Condell, the *Esmeralda* had been tasked with the blockade of Iquique, at that time a Peruvian port city, while the main fleet sailed north to engage the enemy fleet.

On the morning of 21st May, 1879, the *Esmeralda* and *Covadonga* were confronted by a far superior enemy force, namely two Peruvian ironclads, the monitor *Huáscar* and the frigate *Independencia*. In the first few hours of the battle, Prat's skilled manoeuvres prevented the *Esmeralda* from being blasted out of the water by the *Huáscar*, but she was also being fired upon from the Peruvian forts on land.

Her engine damaged by the *Huáscar*'s guns, the *Esmeralda* was virtually immobilised and she was rammed three times by the Peruvian monitor until defeat became inevitable. In a last daring display of heroism, Captain Prat leaped heroically from his own ship on to the deck of the *Huáscar* and fought at close quarters until losing his life. The old corvette finally sank, and most of its crew, refusing to surrender, paid the ultimate sacrifice.

This powerful example of heroism, together with the loyalty and admiration which Captain Arturo Prat inspired in his men, live on to this day in Chile's naval traditions and heritage.

THE ARMADA DE CHILE

The Chilean Navy today is the same institution that Cochrane and Prat helped to create and shape. A navy which holds fast to its principles and values and which incorporates the latest technology while maintaining the traditions of its glorious past. A navy made up of nearly 26,000 men and women who demonstrate the highest degree of commitment, dedication, loyalty and professionalism in the performance of their vital duties.

At sea, the Chilean Navy constitutes a deterrent security force that provides support for our nation's foreign policy and peace of mind to our fellow citizens, looks after Chile's interests at sea and contributes to national development in all its maritime aspects.

The church is served by a hearing loop. Users should turn the hearing aid to the setting marked T.

Members of the congregation are requested kindly to refrain from using private cameras, video, or sound recording equipment. Please ensure that mobile telephones and other electronic devices are switched off.

The service is conducted by The Venerable Jennifer Adams-Massmann, Canon in Residence.

The organ is played by Paul Greally, Assistant Organist.

Mr Francisco Bartolucci, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Chile, and Captain Sven Barckhahn, Defence Attaché of Chile in the United Kingdom and Head of the Chilean Naval Mission in London, are received by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. Presentations are made.

Vice Admiral Robert Pedre CB, representing The First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, is received. Presentations are made.

The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Karen Scarborough, is received by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. All stand as she is conducted to her seat, and then sit.

ORDER OF SERVICE

All remain seated. The Venerable Jennifer Adams-Massmann, Canon in Residence, gives the Welcome

All stand. From the Great West Door, a Royal Marines bugler sounds a bugle call

The organist plays Oración de la Gran Retreta during which wreaths are borne in procession from the west end of the church to the grave of Admiral Lord Cochrane

The wreaths are laid at the foot of the grave by Vice Admiral Robert Pedre CB, representing The First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, and Captain Sven Barckhahn, Head of Naval Mission and Defence Attaché

The Last Post is sounded

Silence is kept

Reveille is sounded

All sit. Commodore The Honourable Michael Cochrane OBE reads the Psalm

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious :
and his mercy endureth for ever.

Let them give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed :
and delivered from the hand of the enemy;

and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west :
from the north, and from the south.

They went astray in the wilderness out of the way :
and found no city to dwell in;

hungry and thirsty :
their soul fainted in them.

So they cried unto the Lord in their trouble :
and he delivered them from their distress.

He led them forth by the right way :

that they might go to the city where they dwelt.
O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness :
and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men.
For he satisfieth the empty soul :
and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

They that go down to the sea in ships :
and occupy their business in great waters;
these men see the works of the Lord :
and his wonders in the deep.

For at his word the stormy wind ariseth :
which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep :
their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man :
and are at their wits' end.

So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble :
he delivereth them out of their distress.

For he maketh the storm to cease :
so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad, because they are at rest :
and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness :
and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!
That they would exalt him also in the congregation of the people :
and praise him in the seat of the elders!

Psalm 107: 1–9, 23–32

All remain seated as The Grand Star of Military Merit is awarded to Captain Sven Barckhahn, Defence Attaché of Chile in the United Kingdom and Head of the Chilean Naval Mission in London, in recognition of 30 years of service. The medal is presented by Mr Francisco Bartolucci, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Chile, together with Rear Admiral Sigfrido Ramírez, Director of Maritime Safety and Operations, Chile

All kneel or remain seated. The Canon in Residence leads the Prayers

Let us pray.

O GOD, who art the lover of justice and peace: give thy grace, we humbly beseech thee, to those who now guide the councils of our two nations; and lead them by thy Holy Spirit, that by word and deed they may promote thy glory, and set forth peace and goodwill among men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O ETERNAL Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the sea: be pleased to receive into thy protection all those who go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters. Preserve them both in body and soul; prosper their labours with good success: in all times of danger, be their defence, and bring them unto the haven where they would be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

ETERNAL God, fount and source of all authority and wisdom, hear our prayers for Charles our King and for the President of the Republic of Chile. Grant them grace as symbols of loyalty and unity for all their people: inspire their governments with vision, understanding, and integrity; give to the nations' legislatures and judiciaries wisdom and skill, imagination, and energy; that all may live in peace and harmony, truth, and prosperity; we ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us pray, each in our own language, the prayer that our Saviour Christ hath taught us:

Padre nuestro, que estás en el cielo...

OUR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

All stand. The Canon in Residence gives the Blessing

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

All remain standing. The organist plays

Brazas a Ceñir

Luis Mella Toro (1904–79)

Anthem of the Chilean Navy