

The Barons de Sandeman

From a booklet kindly presented to Members of the Society by the Author¹.

By Malcolm Howe, G.C.M.W.



The Glas Sandeman siblings, c. 1847/48

William Glas Sandeman (1845-94) seated, created 1st Baron de Sandeman 1883, with his older brother & sister: Thomas Glas Sandeman (1837-1915) and Júlia de Brito Glas Sandeman b 1840

In the early 1980s, the Author carried out extensive research regarding the some 40 families of British descent or connections who were ennobled by Portuguese Monarchs from 1811 to 1910, during the hundred years before Portugal became a republic². Burke's Landed Gentry includes extensive details of the Sandemans, including the title

¹ Requests for copies of the 40 page booklet should be sent to library@bhspportugal.org.

² An article written by the Author entitled "From Wellington to Sandeman – a survey of the British ennobled by Portuguese Monarchs from 1811-1910" was published by the British Historical Society of Portugal in the Annual Report No. 13, of 1986.

and the addresses of living members. Hence the Author was able to make contact with Miss Betty Sandeman, who invited him to Ellel Grange, in his native Lancashire, she being the last of the family to live there. Her treasure house of archives was a major significant contribution to this fascinating story. The reader is taken on a remarkable journey spanning two centuries, starting in Scotland, moving on to London and Oporto, and ending in north Lancashire.

Just twelve weeks after Thomas Glas Sandeman (1789-1870) married in 1829 in Oporto, his wife's father, António Bernardo de Brito e Cunha, was condemned to death by the Absolutist regime of Dom Miguel. He had provided shelter for exiled Portuguese Liberals who had returned from England in the ship *Belfast* to lead a revolt that failed in May 1828. He was hanged in public, together with nine others likewise condemned, in the *Praça Nova*, eventually renamed *Praça da Liberdade*. His severed head was hoisted on a pole exhibited outside his house. Ermelinda Júlia Sandeman, his



daughter, told her children she never ever again walked across that square. He is commemorated with the other *Mártires da Liberdade* whose names are inscribed on the statue of Dom Pedro IV in Oporto.

Port was shipped in traditional oak casks called pipes and sold by the barrel. George Sandeman (1765-1841), uncle of Thomas Glas, started the wine importing business in the City of London in 1790, specialising in port and sherry, with £300 borrowed from his father Thomas Sandeman (1724-1805), a prosperous cabinet maker.

The *Glasites* were a small nonconformist sect founded in about 1730 in Scotland by John Glas, after he was deposed by the Church of Scotland. Its doctrine was spread by his son-in-law Robert Sandeman into England and America, where the members were called *Sandemanians*. Hence many Sandeman descendants have the forename of Glas.

In their religious practice, the *Glasites* aimed at strict conformity, governed by Elders, adopting a primitive version of Christianity, as understood by them. The sect not only attracted the relatively poor, but intellectuals as well. A prominent devotee was the distinguished scientist Michael Faraday (1791-1867), Fellow of the Royal Society, discoverer of electromagnetism, electrolysis and benzene, who became an Elder in London.

In all the actions of the church unanimity was considered to be necessary; if any members differed in opinion from the rest, they must either surrender judgment to that of the church, or be barred from its communion. At *Glasite* services, any member who “possessed the gift of edifying the brethren”, was allowed to speak. To join in prayer with anyone not a member of the denomination was prohibited.

The Lord’s Supper was observed weekly. Between the forenoon and afternoon services each Sunday a ‘love feast’ was held at which every member was required to be present. This took the form not of consecrated wafers or morsels of bread and sips of wine, as in other communions, but a relatively substantial meal, leading to the *Glasites*’ nickname of *Kail Kirk* from the abundance of Scotch broth that was served. This custom may have arisen, in part, both as a charitable response to the poverty of most members of the congregation and as a pragmatic response to the distances some members of the congregation had to travel in order to attend. The practice of washing one another’s feet was at one time observed and for a long time it was customary for all the brethren to receive new members, on admission, with a holy kiss. “Things strangled and blood” were rigorously abstained from, and *Glasites* disapproved of all lotteries and games of chance.

The last of the *Sandemanian* churches in America ceased to exist in 1890, the London meeting house finally closed in 1984, and the last Elder of the Church died in Edinburgh in 1999.

In 1790 the prestigious Factory House was completed in Oporto for the benefit of British merchants who had formed a trade association, which later became a gentlemen's club. Sandeman was among the exclusive twelve member firms.



The splendid premises sport two adjacent beautifully furnished spacious identical dining rooms, each with ample seating around long tables; one is for dining, after which the company assemble in the other to avoid food odours contaminating their enjoyment of tasting fine quality Port wine.

George Sandeman was the first merchant to ship a vintage port in 1790, bottled in 1792, sold under his own name; moreover he was the first importer to bottle the wine with the firm's own label. He was known as *Old Cauliflower*, from his white wig and eccentric appearance. He was a frequent guest at Wellington's dinner table during the Third French Invasion of 1809 to 1811.

George Sandeman considered that the 1797 was then the finest vintage port. General Calvert ordered two pipes to be shipped to England. He gave one to the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, since when it was styled the Duke of York's port. Cellars were established at Cabo Ruivo near Lisbon.

His nephew Thomas Glas Sandeman, born in Perth, Scotland, was appointed, aged 33, manager of the Oporto office in 1822.

In March 1833 the mercenary forces of Portuguese exiled Liberal invaders led by Dom Pedro, the deposed first Emperor of Brazil, were blockaded inside Oporto by the regular army of his brother, Dom Miguel, the reigning King of Portugal. The city was bombarded and the River Douro flowed crimson with Port wine. It was Thomas Glas Sandeman who reported the danger to the British Consul. About 27,000 pipes were destroyed, worth about £20 a pipe. Nevertheless, by the 1840s Sandeman were shipping some 1,500 pipes per year.

George Glas Sandeman (1793-1868), younger nephew of the founder became the second head, of the firm in 1841, rather than his elder brother, Thomas Glas, who managed the business in Oporto. George's son, Albert George Sandeman (1833-1923) was educated at Eton and joined his father's firm in about 1851. Aged 20, he went to work at the Oporto office in 1853, where a consequential feud ensued between Uncle Thomas and his nephew Albert, who succeeded his father as third head of the firm in 1868.

The firm was a main shipper of port from Portugal, and sought to achieve a comparable leadership in sherry, which accounted for over two-fifths of the wine drunk in Britain. Sandeman had 15 lodges in Vila Nova de Gaia, each containing 10,000 pipes on average, then worth £250,000. Albert's wife, Maria Carlota Perpétua de Moraes Sarmiento, whom he married in 1856, was the daughter of the Viscount da Torre de Moncorvo, the Portuguese envoy in London.



Albert Sandeman

Albert later became a director of the London Dock Company and later in 1866 a director of the Bank of England, the bank with which the firm had had an account since 1812, becoming the 100th Governor 46th Annual Report, ©2019 British Historical Society of Portugal

1895-97. A Justice of the Peace for Hertfordshire, he was appointed High Sheriff of Surrey for 1872-73. He also served as a Commissioner of Income Tax for the City of London and as President of the London Chamber of Commerce in 1898. His estate was valued at more than £85,732 in 1923.

His uncle, Thomas Glas, had left the firm, with no love lost between them, and founded his own rival business in 1856, which initially flourished, but eventually floundered.

Thomas ordered the construction of the magnificent Sandeman Palace, near the church of *São José das Taipas*. Work commenced in the 1830s, but was suspended in 1833, due to the blockade of Oporto, but resumed soon after. It was furnished with elegant interiors, the scene of numerous grand balls, but nowadays has been divided into 30 flats.



Sandeman Palace, *Campo dos Mártires da Pátria*, Oporto

Thomas Glas died in 1870, bequeathing his business to his elder son Thomas Glas, styled Thomas Glas senior (1837-1915), and his mansion in Oporto to his younger son William Glas (1845-94).

Ennobled by King Dom Luís, being created Baron de Sandeman for life by Decree of 8th March 1883, William Glas was rewarded ostensibly for opening to the public his gardens, which were planted with rare trees in the *Cordoraria*, *Campo dos Mártires da Pátria*. Subsequently, the following declaration was published in the Lisbon newspapers in March 1883 (translated):

“Senhor William Sandeman, who some days ago was rewarded by the Portuguese Government with the title of Baron de Sandeman, does not belong to, nor has anything in common with the important and respectable commercial house that, under the firm Sandeman, Sons & Co, operates in London, Lisbon, Oporto, and Jerez, of which the head is Senhor Albert George Sandeman, resident in London, married to a daughter of the late Viscount of Moncorvo, who was for many years our minister at the Court of St James.”



The gardens of Sandeman Palace, *Campo dos Mártires da Pátria*, Oporto

After William Glas died unmarried, a Decree was issued on 28th November, 1895 by King Dom Carlos, allowing William's brother, Thomas Glas senior, to hold the title for life as 2nd Baron de Sandeman.

However, Thomas Glas senior had suffered heavy business losses during 1891 and consequently his firm was wound up in 1892, and thus he was unable to afford the fees for the necessary Charter to confirm the title. Hence, albeit technically he had the right to be the second baron, Thomas Glas senior could not be styled in Portugal with the dignity of Baron de Sandeman. His firm was never able to compete successfully with the original one, which took over his failed business at the turn of the century, with yet more acrimony.

His son, Thomas Glas Sandeman junior, JP (1877-1965), Honorary Major, The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, married Margaret (Daisy) Helena (1877-1945) in 1907, the only daughter of George Theophilus Robert Preston JP (1834-91), and granddaughter of distillery owner, William Preston, Mayor of Liverpool (1858-59), Justice of the Peace, and later Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1865.

Margaret inherited Ellel Grange estate, near Lancaster, which had been bought by her grandfather, Alderman William Preston, in 1856, whose purported ancestors had once owned the manor of Ellel.



Ellel Grange, north Lancashire – inherited by Thomas Glas junior's wife

The mansion was constructed in 1857 to the design of William Weightman of Liverpool, in the similar style of Queen Victoria's Osborne House built between 1845 and 1851 on the Isle of Wight. The house is grandly Italianate, with beautiful sandstone ashlar, two towers and a conservatory. The interior is arranged around a large entrance hall with pink Shap granite columns, which was furnished mainly by Gillows of Lancaster, established c. 1730, famous for making high quality classical mahogany furniture.



The impoverished Thomas Glas senior had left Portugal to live in the County Club, Westgate-on-Sea, near Margate, Kent, but still owned some Port which he had the temerity to try to sell to his prosperous son.

He was determined to have the title renewed, at the expense of his now wealthy son, after the birth of his grandson Thomas Neil Preston



Thomas Glas senior, 1837-1915

Glas Sandeman on 7th January 1909. Moreover, he was under the impression that it would be possible to have the barony renewed for two lives. Accordingly, the Decree was published in the Government Gazette on 22nd April, 1909, citing the surname as Sandemann and subsequently published again with the correct spelling of Sandeman on 23rd April.

He wrote to his son regarding the 1883 publication of the barony:

“This declaration, published in almost all the newspapers of the capital, naturally makes us ponder. It appears, at first sight, that I salute the better and more truthful interpretation, that Senhor Sandeman of London is afraid to be a baron. There he will have his reasons and may be they are of the worst. - Did you ever see such an exhibition of mean spite and envy. My poor brother, who never did him any harm, gets this petty gratuitous insult! He is a very fine bird! (in Portuguese:) White or black, a pig is always a pig”.

He was amused that the despised Albert George Sandeman, when honoured with the rank of *Cavaleiro*, i.e., Knight of the Order of Conception of Our Lady of Vila Viçosa, had his visiting cards printed by mistake *Cavalheiro* - which means merely Gentleman. Thomas Glas senior was determined that the Charter should record his maternal grandfather’s sacrifice and accordingly the text commenced:

“Dom Manuel, by the Grace of God, King of Portugal and the Algarves, I make known to those who may see that attending to the qualities and circumstances of Thomas Glas Sandeman junior, and wanting to give to him an authentic testimony of My Royal Benevolence for his person and in consideration of his ancestry and being the nephew of the first Baron de Sandeman, William Glas Sandeman, and descendant of the meritorious António Bernardo de Brito e Cunha, who lost his life by dedication to the Constitutional Throne, I see fit to bestow him the reward of renewal of the title of Baron de Sandeman for two lives.”

When Thomas Glas senior received the draft text, he objected to his son being described as the grandson (*neto* in Portuguese) of his maternal grandfather, rather than great-grandson (*bisneto*), which in fact he was. He was apparently unaware that *neto* can be also used as a generic term in Portuguese with the meaning of descendant. Likewise, the Portuguese for grandparents (*avós*) can also mean ancestors. In the words of praise of the Portuguese National Anthem, *egrégios avós* mean *remarkable forebears*, rather than “fantastic grandparents”!

In 1909, *The Nobilities of Europe* was published in London, limited to 250 copies, edited by the Marquis de Ruvigny. This work was particularly informative on Portuguese titles and this acknowledgment was printed:

“The Editor is greatly indebted to Mr T. Glas Sandeman for the loan of his valuable collection of heraldic and genealogical works, without which the preparation of this article would have been impossible.”

The collection was eventually sent to Ellet Grange, and after Thomas Glas senior’s son died in 1965, there was no one there who could understand Portuguese. The family magnanimously decided to give the books to the Portuguese Embassy in London. However, unfortunately their subsequent whereabouts are unknown.

The majority of Portuguese titles of nobility were granted only for the life of the recipient, with relatively few being granted for more than one life. Nevertheless, the title could be renewed for the direct heir. Before the law relating to the rights of primogeniture and entails was abolished in 1863, it had not been necessary to obtain a Warrant for the verification of the second life. Renewals up until then were only granted to the heir, and subsequently to arbitrary descendants. To renew a title, the applicant had to be related (even if only by marriage), be of good standing, and afford to pay the considerable fees. Since 1834, it was extremely rare for a title to be granted for two lives, none since 1867. This was probably a consequence of the Liberals winning the Civil War and the reconstitution of the Chamber of Peers. The monarch was frequently asked by ministers to create new nobles who served for life, in order to gain control of the Upper Chamber. This process became amusingly known as “a baking of peers”. Between 1834 and 1910, there were 43 parliamentary elections during 76 years of political instability. In the 1840 elections, only 9% of the population were entitled to vote, with less than 6% voting. The population of Portugal in 1910 was almost six million, of whom about 85% were dependent on agriculture; most peasants were illiterate.

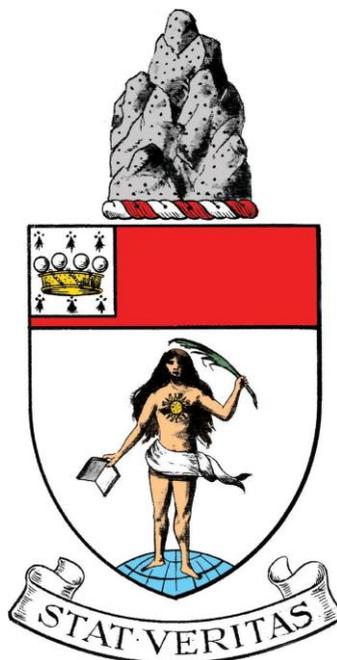
Thomas Glas senior was troubled by the expense, particularly so as he had no contingency for the fees to pay for a Warrant assigning the second life. The fees had to be paid by 22nd June, within three months of the decree being published. The total cost was considerably more than a good annual salary in 1909, being equivalent in today's values to the purchase of a fine quality car. It is thus understandable why scarcely any of those others of British nationality with Portuguese titles for life had their titles renewed and extended. The two precious documents signed by the King duly arrived separately at Ellet Grange, carefully rolled inside tin cylinders for protection on the journey from Lisbon by land and sea, and franked with Portuguese Postage Stamps.

Thomas Glas senior then began the complex, lengthy, slow process of having his son's title recognised in the United Kingdom, which starts in the Home Office and ends, after approval, with a Royal Licence granted by the King. Practically none of the other British subjects ennobled by Portuguese monarchs had applied for such a Royal Licence. Time dragged on, and unfortunately George V, who succeeded on 6th May 1910, was disinclined to recognise foreign titles, in contrast to his father, Edward VII. Thomas was very upset and considered that his son had every right to call himself Baron de Sandeman, stressing how important the family was in Portugal and wishing that he had taken Portuguese nationality. However, the Portuguese Republic was declared on 5th October 1910, and the King, Manuel II, was forced into exile. Accordingly, the application could not proceed in any case. On that same day, Thomas wrote a sad letter from the County Club in Westgate-on-Sea to his son in a clear hand and refreshing style, expressing his bitter disappointment³.

William Sandeman of Luncarty (1722-90), elder brother of the Thomas who had made the loan in 1790 of £300 to set up the business, recorded his coat of arms in the Public Register of Scotland by the authority of the Lord Lyon King of Arms on 18th April 1780.

³ Now in the possession of a private collector in North Carolina, USA

On the shield is the allegory of a female figure representing Naked Truth, standing on the Earth and surrounded by a border of the Stars of Heaven. In her right hand is the open book of the Word of God, on her bosom shines the Light of the Gospel. Flowing from her head is a white veil which signifies the Garment of Righteousness and her left arm is raised, flourishing the Palm of Peace. This evangelical display may relate to the doctrine of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians in Chapter 6 verse 14: *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness.* The crest is the Rock of Saint Peter,



signifying the Christian Church, and the motto *Stat Veritas* means *Truth endures*. At that time allegorical figures related to the classical education of those days were sometimes featured in heraldry. The *Glasite/Sandemanian* Sect's fervent religious belief was reflected in this armorial display, possibly interpreted during tub thumping sermons, especially for the benefit of the illiterate in the congregations.

Thomas Glas senior was keen to have this coat of arms with a baron's coronet painted on carriage panels, but as the Royal Licence application was unsuccessful in 1910, the augmentation was consequently not granted. Nevertheless, visiting cards were printed with the title in Portuguese, although unfortunately with the tilde above the o, the wrong letter, rather than the correct *Barão*. The 3rd Baron de Sandeman, together with his Baroness Daisy, went to pay their respects to the exiled King Manuel living in Twickenham. Thomas Glas senior, 2nd Baron manqué, duly enquired whether they had signed the Visitors' Book with their Portuguese titles!

Ellel Grange was sold following the death of Thomas Neil Preston Glas Sandeman, 4th Baron de Sandeman, on 23rd January, 1979. The bachelor brother bequeathed his estate, valued at £105,206, to his spinster sister Betty, who had to sell the house where she had previously



lived in all her life to pay death duties. Miss Sandeman then moved to a modern apartment constructed inside the old Stables. A Grade II Listed Building, the house was then run as a health farm for six years before it became Ellel Ministries, a Christian healing centre.

Betty Sandeman carefully preserved in her new home the correspondence from her grandfather, the family portraits and documents signed by King Manuel, still in the tin canisters within which they were posted from Lisbon in 1909. She and her siblings had so much wanted to visit Portugal, particularly to meet their Portuguese relatives, but never did, as their father would not allow them to. Presumably he wished keep the book closed on that chapter of his young life in Portugal. When asked if she knew how her parents met, Betty responded jokingly saying it was a case of drink marrying drink! Apparently her brother never used his title!



Betty Sandeman: top - her father and his sisters; below - with her siblings

Epilogue

Sandeman remained a family business until it was bought by the drinks company Seagram, in 1979. All the same, the bicentenary of the enterprise was celebrated in style in 1990. In 2001 the operation was sold to Sogrape Vinhos. George Thomas David Sandeman, four times great-grandson of the founder, educated at Ampleforth, sat on the Board.



The firm's distinctive silhouette of 'The Don', on the labels of bottles of Port and Sherry, of a man jauntily sporting a Portuguese cloak and a wide brimmed Spanish *sombrero* was designed in 1928 by the Scottish artist, George Massiot Brown. In order to gain the commission, he pretended that he was French, due to France's good reputation for stylish advertisements, and duly signed the job tender as G. Massiot!

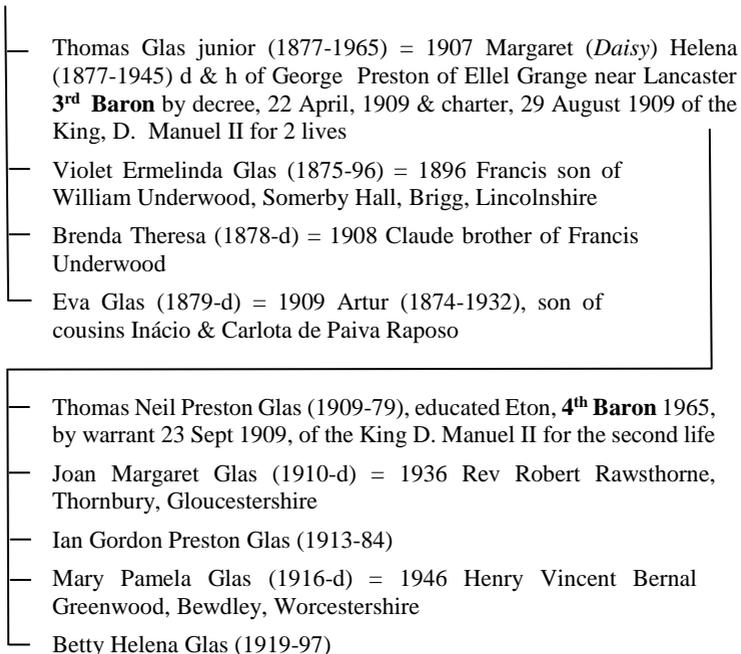
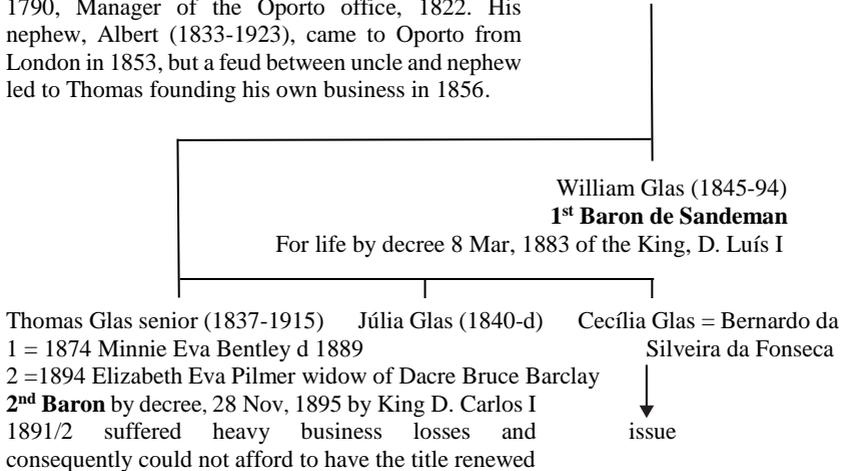
The firm was famed for notable vintage ports e.g.: the 1815 Waterloo; the 1911 Coronation of George V; the 1935 Silver Jubilee of George V; the 1977 and the next subsequently declared vintage, the 1985. Antony Kyrke-Smith, whose late father was the Sandeman representative in the North of England, celebrated his 60th birthday quaffing a decanted the 1955 Vintage Sandeman Port bottled in 1957, almost as old as himself!

After Betty Sandeman died in 1997, it is understood that her literary treasure house of family archives was sold and bought by a private collector in North Carolina, USA.



The Sandeman Family Tree

Thomas Glas **Sandeman** (1789-1870) b Perth, = 19 Feb, 1829 Ermelinda Júlia Scotland, son of John Glas Sandeman = his cousin (1805-75) d of António Helen, sister of his uncle George Sandeman, (1765-1841) founder of the Wine Firm of **Sandeman** in 1790, Manager of the Oporto office, 1822. His nephew, Albert (1833-1923), came to Oporto from London in 1853, but a feud between uncle and nephew led to Thomas founding his own business in 1856. Bernardo de Brito e Cunha, executed 7 May, 1829.



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Anthony Kyrke-Smith

Craig William Brown

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Longstanding Member Malcolm Howe, GCMW, has written prolific articles for the British Historical Society of Portugal over many years since 1986. He is a knight of the Order of St. Michael of the Wing, which is believed to have been founded in 1171 by the First King of Portugal, D. Afonso Henriques. It was revived in its current form in 1981 and recognised by the Royal House of Braganza in 1986. Malcolm is the author of the following books relating to the history of Portugal: The Braganza Story: a visit to the Royal Pantheon of Portugal published in 1999 by the Society, with the preface by the late Paulo Lowndes Marques, O.B.E., Chairman; Portugal's Perplexing Panels: the meaning of a medieval masterpiece, published in 2001, with copies donated to the Society for each member, and; Dom Manuel II The last King of Portugal: His Life and Reign published in 2009, and the Barons de Sandeman in 2019.