

# THE ENGLISH BAKERIES, SACAVÉM AND ... FERNANDO PESSOA

Clive Gilbert



One of the items produced in the early years of the Fábrica de Loiça de Sacavém is a ceramic biscuit jar, pictured above, with the inscription *Padarias Inglezas*. I have always wondered about this bakery that for many years occupied a shop in the Rua Cais do Tojo, at the bottom of Avenida Dom Carlos I in the Santos area of Lisbon.

Then one day I came across some information online about the existence of not just one bakery but two! Apparently, a Mary Ann Broomfield had opened the original Cais do Tojo shop on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1898 and, as a result of its success, she opened a second bakery in the Largo de S. Julião, 19, close to the Largo do Município and near to the Terreiro do Paço. She registered the first as *Padaria Ingleza* but also under the name of 'English Bakery'. After the second shop was opened, the name was changed to *Padarias Inglezas*. The shops attracted many Lisbon residents and in fact became quite fashionable. One of its more famous habitués however was the famous Portuguese author,

poet, literary critic, translator, publisher and philosopher, Fernando Pessoa. Here, he used to meet with his beloved Ophélia.

Fernando Pessoa wrote to her on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1920 thus: Dearest little Nininha, I shall be in the Conde Barão waiting for you from 8 to 8.30. You can see from where I'm writing this by the note paper and Osório will do me the favour of taking this to your sister's house.

So, I'll be at the Conde Barão but in the comfort of the *Padaria Inglesa* between the times I've mentioned which I think will be convenient for you.

In another letter written on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1920 Ophélia replied: My Nininho: I waited for you today from 4.55 pm until 6.00 pm and not a glimpse of you did I catch. Nor did you show any interest in fixing a time and place for us to talk to each other tomorrow... I shall also be at the Cais do Tojo at the *Padaria Inglesa* at 8 pm.

The second shop was located in a Pombaline building in the Largo S. Julião, 19, as previously mentioned. Later on, it was to become a branch of the Banco Borges & Irmaõ, bought in turn by the BPI bank in 1991.

We aren't sure what was actually made at these shops, but in an advertisement that appeared in the *Gazeta de Coimbra* in 1927 of the *Leitaria Conimbricense* mention was made of the sale of cakes from Lisbon's well-known *Padaria Inglesa*.

The question now arises as to who was Mary Ann Broomfield? Apart from the fact that it appears she was born in the UK little else is known about her.

*Clive Gilbert is Chairman of The British Historical Society of Portugal. He has lived in Portugal all his life and was CEO of Fábrica de Loiça de Sacavém. Currently, he leads battlefield tours for BHS Tours and is representative in Portugal for the Ministry of Information of the Sultanate of Oman.*