

## A Brief History of William Graham Júnior & C.<sup>a</sup>

The importance of the port wine exporters, William & John Graham and Co, is well known. However, there was another Graham-family company that arguably made a greater contribution to the Portuguese economy, about which much less is known nowadays. William Graham Júnior & C.<sup>a</sup> played an important role in the economies of Lisbon and Porto through its trading activities and its ownership of factories in the textile and paper sectors.

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### Background

William Graham & Co. was founded in Glasgow in around 1784 by William Graham Senior, who came from Tamraver in Stirlingshire. Using hand-powered looms, the company manufactured textiles that were mainly sent to London. William Graham Junior, his second son, was born in Glasgow in 1786. As a young man, he worked briefly in London in St. Paul's Churchyard, which at the time was an important business centre, before returning to Glasgow to work for Campbell Rivers & Company, a shipping company. Soon after, he was invited by his father to be a partner in the family business. William Junior rapidly concluded that there was no future in continuing to use hand-powered equipment, which could not compete with steam-powered looms, and quickly established a new business, known as the Lancefield Spinning Company, which used the latest available technology.<sup>2</sup>

### The move to Portugal

According to different sources, William Junior was either sent by his father to Lisbon in 1809 or 1810, or he made the decision to go there on his own account. In Portugal he founded William Graham Junior and Company (William Graham Júnior & C.<sup>a</sup>) as a general trading company, which initially imported products from the Glasgow parent company, but later also exported Portuguese products such as textiles and canned sardines.<sup>3</sup> This move to Portugal marked the beginning of the expansion of Graham companies outside the United Kingdom, which later led to opening of businesses in Bombay and Calcutta in 1839 and 1863, respectively. William was assisted in this venture by his elder brother, James, who lived in Lisbon for several years. His youngest brother, Robert, also spent many years in Portugal. With family members helping to run the business, William was not tied to staying in Portugal the whole time and he often returned to Glasgow, where he was a member of the Corporation of the City of Glasgow until 1832 and also a magistrate.<sup>4</sup>

One of William's younger brothers, John, was a very dynamic individual, who is said to have established a Graham trading house in Leghorn (Livorno) in Italy at the age of fifteen. When Napoleon's incursions rendered British trade with Europe almost impossible, apart from with Portugal, John moved to Porto and established William & John Graham and Co in partnership with his brother. Similar to the company established by William in Lisbon, this was initially a general trading company and it only became one of Porto's leading port wine exporters by accident. The only way that one of its customers could repay a debt was in kind, in the form of 27 barrels of port. These were duly sent to Glasgow in 1820, which resulted in a reprimand to the brothers for having sent port rather than cash. However, the port proved easy to sell in Scotland and the brothers were then asked to supply further barrels, with port soon becoming the dominant part of their business. W. & J. Graham's wine business remained in the family's hands until 1970, when it was purchased by the Symington Family Estates.<sup>5,6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> With thanks to Mark Crathorne and Clive Gilbert.

<sup>2</sup> 100 Glasgow Men. *William Graham 1786-1856*.

[http://www.glasgowwestaddress.co.uk/100\\_Glasgow\\_Men/Graham\\_William.htm](http://www.glasgowwestaddress.co.uk/100_Glasgow_Men/Graham_William.htm)

<sup>3</sup> <https://conservasdeportugal.com/william-graham-jr-ca/>

<sup>4</sup> 100 Glasgow Men, *op cit*

<sup>5</sup> A. Forrester Zamith, 2001. *The Port Wine Guide*, Lisbon

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.grahams-port.com/heritage>



**William Graham Junior**



**John Graham**

William Graham Junior, who died in 1856, married twice. His eldest son, also William, lived in Scotland, where he represented Glasgow as a Member of Parliament from 1865 until 1884, and was known as a friend and patron of the Pre-Raphaelite artists Edward Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti.<sup>7, 8</sup> The second son, John, took over the management of the Lisbon business. William Graham Junior's brother, John, found his bride in Porto, marrying Elizabeth Henrietta Smith, daughter of Theophilus I. Smith, a port shipper, on 27 September 1826. Elizabeth died without having children and John later married a Miss Noble. They had three sons, all of whom worked for the family port wine business.<sup>9</sup>

### **William Graham Júnior & C.<sup>a</sup> in Lisbon and Loures**

It appears that the company remained primarily a trading company in Lisbon until 1880, when it bought a textile printing and dyeing factory, the *Fábrica de Estamparia e Tinturaria de Braço de Prata*, situated to the southeast of what is now Lisbon's airport in an area that attracted several British entrepreneurs because of its good communications. The factory, which had 128 employees in 1910, had 41 steam engines generating a total of 400hp, which was the most of any factory in Portugal, and was highly profitable, although the Portuguese industrial historian, Maria Filomena Mónica, suggests that this was mainly due to the high level of protection offered to domestic industries by the Portuguese government. However, the company concluded that further expansion into the manufacture of textiles would be best carried out in Porto. Accordingly, in the Lisbon area it decided to invest in a paper mill instead, and bought the Abelheira Paper Factory in the Loures District in August 1889 from the heirs of the Count of Tojal.<sup>10,11,12,13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Graham\\_\(Glasgow\\_MP\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Graham_(Glasgow_MP))

<sup>8</sup> The Friends of Glasgow Necropolis. *William Graham 1817 – 1885*. <https://www.glasgownecropolis.org/profiles/william-graham-1817-1885/>

<sup>9</sup> Sellers, Charles. 1899. *Oporto, Old and New*. The Wine and Spirit Gazette. Chap. XVIII  
<https://archive.org/details/cu31924085185100/mode/2up>

<sup>10</sup> FAPAJAL. *Um percurso com história*. <https://www.fapajal.pt/pt/historia-da-fapajal>

<sup>11</sup> Porto de Antanho, <http://portodeantanho.blogspot.com/2017/05/continuacao-6.html>

<sup>12</sup> Maria Filomena Mónica. *Capitalistas e industriais (1870-1914)*. *Análise Social*, vol. XXIII (99), 1987-5, 819-863.  
<http://analisesocial.ics.ul.pt/documentos/1223028371W4IFY9ix0Ky28XOI.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Pedro José Marto Neves. 2007. *Grandes Empresas Industriais de um País Pequeno: Portugal. Da Década de 1880 à 1ª Guerra Mundial*. <https://www.repository.utl.pt/bitstream/10400.5/525/1/Tese%20Pedro%20Neves.pdf>

This paper factory had an interesting history. After the 1755 earthquake, Augustinian monks moved from Lisbon to Tojal, just to the north of Loures, where the Augustinians already owned land. As this land was located next to the river Trancão, several water-powered factories were established, including a mill producing brown paper and other wrapping paper made from linen rags. Following Napoleon's decree in 1806 to close Portuguese ports to British shipping, the Abelheira mill, similar to many other factories at the time, experienced problems and was forced to close, to only reopen in 1833. Scarcely a year later, with the dissolution of the monasteries in 1834 at the end of the Portuguese Civil War, the assets of the Augustinians were seized and the paper mill and surrounding land were sold at public auction to João Gualberto de Oliveira, who was later to become the Count of Tojal. A wealthy and well-connected man, he entered the Portuguese Parliament in 1837, which begs the question as to whether the assets were purchased without a certain element of "sleaze". Tojal changed the system of paper production at Abelheira and started to produce high-quality writing and printing paper, winning an industry award at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851.<sup>14,15</sup>

The Count of Tojal died in 1852. He never married, although he did have two illegitimate daughters who he recognised. On his death, the factory was taken over by William Smith, who made improvements to it and turned it into the largest paper mill in the Lisbon District. Smith, who may have been the illegitimate son of King William IV, came to Portugal as the British Consul-General. He was originally married to Sarah Connop, who died in 1838. Several sources suggest that Smith later became the brother-in-law of the Count of Tojal, but alternative sources suggest that Smith was, in fact, the husband of Eugenia de Menezes, the illegitimate daughter of King D. João VI. William Smith and Sarah are buried in the British Cemetery in Lisbon.<sup>16,17,18</sup>



Advertisement for, and part of, the Graham display at the 1934 Portuguese Colonial Exhibition in Porto<sup>19</sup>

Until 1899, the factory was managed by William's son, Astley Campbell Smith, although it is believed that the ownership rested with all of William Smith's heirs. In May of 1873, William Graham Júnior & C.<sup>a</sup> expressed an interest in purchasing the paper factory and contracted the British papermaking equipment manufacturers, Masson Scott & Co, to send out an expert to assess the value of the factory and to advise on its purchase. The expert's report covered such issues as the condition of the plant and

<sup>14</sup> FAPAJAL, *op cit*

<sup>15</sup> SIPA. *Fábrica de Papel de Abelheira*. [http://www.monumentos.gov.pt/Site/APP\\_PagesUser/SIPA.aspx?id=34925](http://www.monumentos.gov.pt/Site/APP_PagesUser/SIPA.aspx?id=34925)

<sup>16</sup> FAPAJAL, *op cit*

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ancestry.com/genealogy/records/william-smith-24-86ybpq>

<sup>18</sup> <http://pagfam.geneall.net/1431/pessoas.php?id=1021990>

<sup>19</sup> Ultramar. [http://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/Ultramar/N12/N12\\_master/JPG/Ultramar\\_N12\\_15Jul1934\\_0007.jpg](http://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/Ultramar/N12/N12_master/JPG/Ultramar_N12_15Jul1934_0007.jpg)

buildings, the inventory, the improvements required, the availability of raw materials, water, and energy, and also provided an estimation of the commercial value.

The resultant purchase of the factory from William Smith's heirs in August of 1899 was followed by William Graham Júnior & C.<sup>a</sup> carrying out a considerable investment in the factory, effectively doing a complete rebuilding and remodelling. Apart from continuing to use the river Trancão for energy, the new owners also started to use boreholes to obtain water for the manufacturing process, owing to the inadequate flow in the river and the impurities in the water. The Grahams also purchased the adjacent *Quinta* from the Smiths, which served as a residence for the family. Records indicate that John Almond was the manager of the mill from 1902 to 1910, and George Rackley from 1915 to 1918. In the 1930s, the managers of the mill were Gilbert Maxwell Graham and Severs Hildebrand Williams. Further investments in the factory continued up until the 1950s, when the factory was sold, as part of Grahams Trading Co. Ltd., to Camp Bird Ltd. It became part of the Champalimaud Group in 1967, and in 1973 it became the *Fábrica de Papel do Tojal, Lda.*, or FAPAJAL, which remains its name to this day. The mill currently produces paper tissue and employs 150 staff. The Graham family's *Quinta* has, however, sadly fallen into ruin.<sup>20,21,22,23</sup>



The Graham family's *Quinta* at São João de Tojal, Loures – now a ruin<sup>24</sup>

## Porto

After the relative success of the *Fábrica de Estamparia e Tinturaria de Braço de Prata* in Lisbon, and on concluding that further expansion of its textile business would be more profitable in Porto, William Graham Júnior & C.<sup>a</sup> founded one of Portugal's most important spinning, weaving, and dyeing factories, the Boavista Spinning and Fabric Factory. Later to become the *Fábrica de Fiação e Tecidos William & John Graham & Co*, it was locally known in Porto as the *Fábrica dos Ingleses* (despite the Graham family being Scottish!), and the area where it was situated was known either as 'Graham' or as 'Foco', after the name of a local cinema. The 10 hectares of land purchased by the company to construct the factory were close to what is now the Boavista Football Club, to the northwest of the centre of Porto. The factory was an immediate success and by 1905 it had 881 employees, which had risen to 1,500 by 1928, despite a fire that broke out on 12 May 1897, which nearly destroyed all the premises. The outbreak of World War II caused major difficulties for the factory, from which it never really recovered and it was closed in the 1950s, resulting in a significant impact on the people and economy of Porto. The land was later developed for housing.<sup>25,26,27</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> FAPAJAL, *op cit*

<sup>21</sup> SIPA, *op cit*

<sup>22</sup> Museus de Loures. *A Secular História do Fabrico nas Terras de S. Julião Do Tojal, no Concelho de Loures*  
<https://pages.facebook.com/503911423450844/photos/pcb.1104689930039654/1104689820039665/?type=3&source=49>

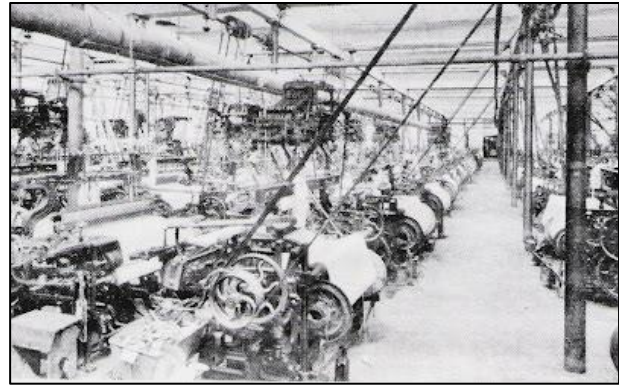
<sup>23</sup> Appi Ticcih Portugal. <https://www.facebook.com/appi.ticcihportugal/posts/3977427785645483>

<sup>24</sup> Palácio Quinta de Abelheira

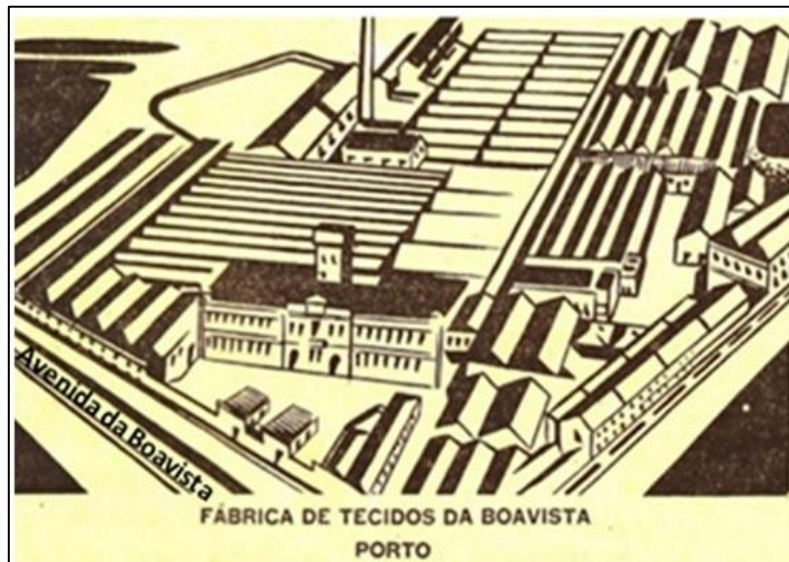
<sup>25</sup> Porto de Antanho, *op cit*

<sup>26</sup> Maria José e Rui Cunha. *Costa aos nossas dias- Bairro da Boavista*. <http://portoarc.blogspot.com/2013/01/>

<sup>27</sup> Requerimento inicial do procedimento de classificação de bens imóveis Parque Residencial da Boavista (Porto).  
[https://www.academia.edu/36734695/Requerimento\\_inicial\\_do\\_procedimento\\_de\\_classifica%C3%A7%C3%A3o\\_de\\_bens\\_im%C3%B3veis\\_PARQUE\\_RESIDENCIAL\\_DA\\_BOAVISTA\\_Porto](https://www.academia.edu/36734695/Requerimento_inicial_do_procedimento_de_classifica%C3%A7%C3%A3o_de_bens_im%C3%B3veis_PARQUE_RESIDENCIAL_DA_BOAVISTA_Porto)



The dyeing section (left) and looms (right) at the Graham factory at Boavista, Porto



Engraving of the Graham factory at Boavista, Porto

### Grahams Trading Company Limited

In 1924 it was decided to consolidate most of the companies owned by Grahams into one, to be known as the Grahams Trading Company Limited, with its registered office in London. This included the factories in Lisbon and Porto, as well as the other businesses outside the UK and Portugal, although the businesses continued to trade under their original names. In 1957, a majority stake in Grahams Trading Company Ltd was sold to Camp Bird Ltd, an international prospecting company for gold and other precious metals that took its name from the Camp Bird goldmine in Colorado. In addition, Austrian shareholders invested in the company in 1964, reducing the Graham shareholding to just 7.5%.<sup>28</sup>

### Impact on the British community

As they employed a large number of British staff, the various Graham companies inevitably had an impact outside the factory gates, including on the British community.

- Archibald Turner arrived in Lisbon in 1824 as an employee of William Graham Junior, and later became a partner in the company. Turner purchased the *Dos Alfinetes* quinta in the Chelas area of Lisbon, that had at one time been used as a summer residence for the company's staff. Concerned about the level of illiteracy amongst children in Lisbon, Turner converted some outbuildings into a school for boys and accommodation for a teacher. In nearby Beata António,

<sup>28</sup> Aim25. *William Graham Junior and Company*. [https://aim25.com/cgi-bin/vcdf/detail?coll\\_id=16849&inst\\_id=118&nv1=browse&nv2=repos](https://aim25.com/cgi-bin/vcdf/detail?coll_id=16849&inst_id=118&nv1=browse&nv2=repos)

he converted a disused chapel into a school for girls. He died in 1880 and in his will left trust funds for the Chelas Schools to be continued.<sup>29</sup>

- Some of William Graham Junior's British employees were said to have taken part in the first competitive association football match between British and Portuguese players, which took place in Lisbon in 1889.<sup>30</sup>
- During the First World War, several Graham's employees from Lisbon enlisted in the British Army and fought on the Western Front, including Lieutenant W. R. Johnston of The Kings Liverpool Regiment (mentioned in despatches) and A/Sergt. V. C. Ryder, of The Royal Bucks Hussars, both of whom were wounded in action.
- The Boavista factory became an important social centre for the British community in Porto.
- Mrs Gertrude Turner (née Hickie), wife of a Graham's manager, Cecil Turner, was one of the early promoters of the Lisbon Ladies Club. She was the Club's secretary from its inception in 1922 until 1934.<sup>31</sup>
- Miss Hickie was also the editor of a short-lived magazine aimed at the British community, called *The Lisbon Rag*.<sup>32</sup>
- In the 1960s, the textile factory at Braço de Prata still had enough British employees to put out a cricket team, although it may not have been a full eleven. Among the companies it played was the *Fábrica de Loíça de Sacavém*, or Sacavém Ceramics Factory.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Miss E. M. Moore. 1939. *The Chelas Schools: A Private British Initiative*. Historical Association Annual Report 3 <https://www.bhspportugal.org/library/articles/the-chelas-schools-a-private-british-initiative>

<sup>30</sup> Andrew Shepherd. 2020. *The British impact on the development of sport in Portugal*. BHSP Annual Report 47. <https://www.bhspportugal.org/library/articles/the-british-impact-on-the-development-of-sport-in-portugal>

<sup>31</sup> d'Arcy Orders. 1992. The Lisbon Ladies Club. BHSP Annual Report 19. <https://www.bhspportugal.org/library/articles/the-lisbon-ladies-club>

<sup>32</sup> d'Arcy Orders. 1996. *English Language Newspapers*. BHSP Annual Report 23 <https://www.bhspportugal.org/library/articles/english-language-newspapers>

<sup>33</sup> Clive Gilbert, *pers. comm.*