

HALB 8-1944

WHERE ENVOYS, AMBASSADORS, & MINISTERS
PLENIPOTENCIARY RESIDED.

A house of residence for an Envoy was largely a matter of pre-arrangement and usually secured through the intermediary of a court official or the local British consular representative; and hired houses appear to have been customary since there is no record of any purchased building for their habitation. The only suitable building for an Envoy was one such as a member of the Portuguese nobility would own or occupy, and be willing to lease to him, or even one of the several suburban villas belonging to the royal family, and temporarily vacant. Except for these there were few if any other dwellings of sufficient size and ornateness adequate to the rank of an Envoy of high category, who would bring with him a secretary and personal suite of servants, members of his family, and often accompanied by a chaplain. There was consequently an occasional change of residence and not all of these have been recorded in sufficient manner to identify them at this time. Some have since been demolished and new structures erected, while the earthquake of 1755 and the gradual extension of the city have considerably changed the former aspect of old Lisbon.

We can therefore cite but few of these former residences with any degree of accuracy. They are as follows:

1661 Sir Richard Fanshawe's time. He is stated to have occupied the «Quinta da Alegria», and subsequently, one of the Duke of Aveiro's at the «Esperança», (now the locality of the Avenida Presidente Wilson); and, at another period, one adjoining the «Becco do Carrasco» near the Poço dos Negros.

1688 John Methuen's time. This residence appears to have been a more palatial place, situate in the then countrified district north of the Rocio, and apparently at the top of the Rua

de Santa Marta, a street there being now known as the «Rua do Enviado da Inglaterra». This building contained a «Chapel» and it was here that the Rev. John Colbatch officiated as British protestant minister in the service of this Envoy, the chapel being open for religious service to the British protestant community in Lisbon. Colbatch refers very freely to his conflict with John Methuen, as set forth in his letter dated October 1696 to the Bishop of Salisbury. The Methuens, both father and son (Paul Methuen) held their diplomatic appointments over a period of twenty years, and the use of this same residence appears to have lasted beyond the recorded time of Lord Robert Stephen Fitzgerald's appointment as Minister Plenipotenciary (1802), Castilho's «Lisboa Antiga» states that British Envoys were not residing there in 1817.

1827 About this time a building in the «Largo da Biblioteca» appears to have been rented, and which is reported subsequently to have passed to the Lisbon «Gremio».

1833-1835 (circa). The old Building of the «Museu das Janelas Verdes» is given as the former residence of a British Envoy. This would coincide with the period of either Lord William Russell or Lord Howard de Walden.

1845 The present Embassy.

(With acknowledgements to Mrs Jayne for information supplied).

A. R. W.