

## William Charters: a British officer in the Portuguese Army

The author writes about his great-great-great-grandfather, William Charters, who came to the Iberian Peninsula as a lieutenant in 1809 under the command of Sir John Moore. When the British Army was evacuated after the Battle of La Coruña, Charters stayed and was deployed in 1809 in the Portuguese army until his retirement in 1826, when he had risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel. He married into an important family in Leiria, and the name Charters is now found widely in Leiria and the rest of Portugal. To place his ancestor's military history in context, the author begins the article by reproducing part of an article by Pedro de Avillez, which was published in the Society's 2014 Annual Report.<sup>1</sup>

*By Ricardo Charters-d'Azevedo<sup>2</sup>*

### Introduction

*“In December 1808, the Portuguese Prince Regent, through his Ambassador in London, requested urgent military help from Great Britain, its old ally, which was also facing dangerous aggression from the Napoleonic Empire. [...] The Portuguese Army needed to recruit young and experienced British lieutenants and captains to serve at company level, and also British majors, colonels and generals with battlefield experience to serve in the top echelons of its army. As the Court was far away in Brazil, an experienced senior officer with a good combat record was also needed to assume the overall command of the Army. [...] Between 1809 and 1814, over 350 British officers (English, Scottish, Irish, and Hanoverian) served in the Portuguese Army, which was a small percentage, when compared with the 6,000 total Portuguese officers' contingent. Almost all served with the Portuguese units that were integrated in Wellington's field army. Some served just for a few months, and others for the duration of the whole Peninsular War (1809-1814). [...] Beresford placed British officers interspersed with Portuguese officers, thus avoiding the preponderance of one of the two nationalities amongst the higher-ranking officers of a particular regiment. If the brigade commander was British, then the regiment commanders were Portuguese. If a colonel of one regiment was British, then the lieutenant colonel would be Portuguese, and vice-versa. One must say that the British officers that were chosen were normally able and dignified professionals which, together with the good quality of the mostly new and enthusiastic Portuguese officers, accounted for the great efficiency of the renewed Portuguese Army [...].”<sup>3</sup>*

[...] *“A system to attract British officers was established so that officers in Portuguese service would enlist at a level immediately above their rank in the British Army, and in some instances with double salary (British and Portuguese), and for some, an additional pay of “Bat, Baggage and Forage Money”. The possibility of serving in the Portuguese Army was tempting for young and ambitious officers, who had their promotions blocked in their original British regiments. Time of service was virtually the only form of promotion in the British Army. Promotions for vacancies only became available within each regiment with retirement, death in*

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<sup>1</sup> Avillez, Pedro - *British Officers in Portuguese Army Service (1809 - 1814)*. 41<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of BHSP, 2014, p. 55.

[https://www.bhsportugal.org/uploads/fotos\\_artigos/files/13\\_BRITISHOFFICERSINTHEPORTUGUESEARMY\\_Rev\\_2\\_6\\_final.pdf](https://www.bhsportugal.org/uploads/fotos_artigos/files/13_BRITISHOFFICERSINTHEPORTUGUESEARMY_Rev_2_6_final.pdf)

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<sup>3</sup> Avillez, *op cit*

action, or illness. These were not very frequent, despite the many campaigns. On the other hand, there was a tradition of purchasing promotions, but some of the younger officers did not have sufficient family income to permit this advance in their careers.”

“The novelty of volunteering for Portuguese service was, in the first place, that officers were offered a promotion above their rank. Initially, to encourage volunteers to serve in the Portuguese Army, British officers were promoted two posts above their rank and one in the British Army. Thus, a British captain became a major in the British Army and simultaneously a lieutenant-colonel in the Portuguese Army, or a major to a lieutenant-colonel in the British Army and simultaneous a colonel in the Portuguese Army, etc. Only twenty-four British officers benefitted from this double promotion [...]”.<sup>4</sup>

Lieutenant-Colonel William Charters, about whom we discuss below, is a good example of the British officers who served in the Portuguese army.

### William Charters

William Charters was born on 20 October 1783, in Berwick-upon-Tweed.<sup>5</sup> He was the son of Robert Charters and Barbara Middlemist, who came from Coldstream in Roxburghshire. They married in Berwick-upon-Tweed on 7 September 1776. Robert Charters, or Chartres, was a cooper who also owned a few boats and was involved with the fishing industry, which enabled him to export salmon in brine in barrels to London. He established his own business in 1780, a few years before William was born, and became a wealthy and respected man with all kinds of businesses. He married a second time in 1811 and died in 1818, leaving everything to his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife “while she was his widow”.

William Charters joined the army as an ensign on 9 July 1803, at the age of 20, being gazetted to the 26<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, a Scottish Infantry Regiment, known as the *Cameronians*. He was promoted on merit to lieutenant on 21 March 1805.<sup>6</sup> The 26<sup>th</sup> Foot was only in the Peninsular War for a short time and was part of Sir John Moore’s Army during the disastrous Campaign in Galicia in late 1808/early 1809. Moore was killed during the Battle of La Coruña and his army left the Iberian Peninsula shortly after the battle on 16 January 1809.<sup>7</sup> Charters was admitted to the Portuguese Army as a captain of the 11<sup>th</sup> Portuguese Infantry Regiment on 26 August 1809 (in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grenadiers Company) and was first deployed to Almeida. He fought in the Peninsular War from 1809 to 1812. On the basis of research conducted by Lionel Challis, who studied the records of 9,600 UK officers who were in the Peninsular War, Charters served at the battles of Redinha (12 March 1811), Bussaco (27 September 1810), and Albuera (16 May 1811), and also at the 2<sup>nd</sup> siege of Badajoz (22 April to 12 May, 1811).<sup>8</sup> He was promoted to major in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Portuguese Infantry Regiment on 30 August 1811. After the end of the Napoleonic Wars, in common with other British officers in the Portuguese army, he was put on half pay as from Christmas Day 1816, on instructions from the British War Office, after which he “*was able to continue only in the*

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<sup>4</sup> Avillez, *op cit*

<sup>5</sup> Charters-d’Azevedo, Ricardo. 2013. *William Charters um oficial inglês em Leiria no século XIX*. Leiria, Textiverso. [https://www.academia.edu/7848809/William\\_Charters\\_um\\_oficial\\_ingl%C3%AAs\\_em\\_LEIRIA\\_NO\\_S%C3%89CULO\\_XIX](https://www.academia.edu/7848809/William_Charters_um_oficial_ingl%C3%AAs_em_LEIRIA_NO_S%C3%89CULO_XIX)

<sup>6</sup> War Office (31/446).

<sup>7</sup> Carter, Thomas - *Historical Record of the Twenty-sixth or Cameronian Regiment*. London: W.O. Mitchel, 1867, p. 114 -115.

<sup>8</sup> Challis, Capt. Lionel S. *British Officers serving in the Portuguese Army, 1809-1814*. In *The Journal of Army Historical Research*, 1949, p. 50-60.

*service of the Portuguese Army*". His career progress was not based on purchasing his promotions as was customary; in other words, he was promoted on his own merit and did not "acquire" his new rank.



**Lieutenant: Cameronians (c. 1809)    Captain: Grenadeiros, 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regt. (1809/10)<sup>9</sup>**

There was, however, some compensation for those British officers who had seen their salaries halved.<sup>10</sup> In a letter dated 7 February 1817, Marshal William Carr Beresford, Commander-in-Chief of the Portuguese Army pointed out that these officers, including Captain "Chartres", had not been previously promoted as they had hoped, and he recommended them for promotion. On 1 August 1817, the War Office advised that they would be promoted, including Charters, who was proposed for promotion to major.

In the British Army List of 1817, Chartres appears in the section of officers in the service of the Portuguese and Spanish armies, having passed to a captain on half-pay from 25 December 1816, and a major on half-pay and *rank 4* on 4 September 1817.<sup>11</sup> He continues to appear in the same category in subsequent lists.<sup>12</sup> It was only in the 1826 edition of the lists that he appears in the "*Retirements and Resignations*" subsection of the "*Casualties since the last publication*" section.<sup>13</sup> He appears again in the 1835 edition as a major, on half-pay.

In the Portuguese Army, Charters was a captain to the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment from 16 August 1809, becoming effective on 16 May 1810.<sup>14</sup> He then became a captain of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grenadiers

<sup>9</sup> The author is grateful to Manuel A. Ribeiro Rodrigues for supplying the three military uniform illustrations.

<sup>10</sup> On British officers serving with the Portuguese troops, see António Alves Caetano, *Os Socorros Pecuniários Britânicos Destinados ao Exército Português 1809-1814*. Lisbon: Lusitânia, 2013, pages 183, 185, 187 and 190. In the lists presented the name appears already spelled as Charters.

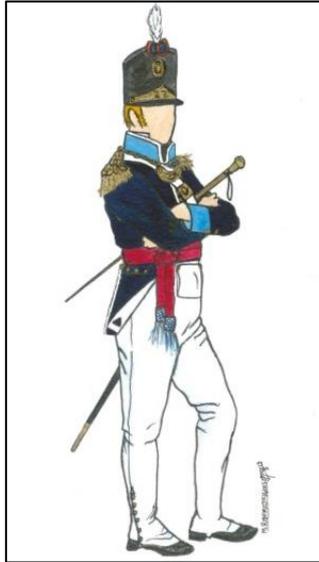
<sup>11</sup> "*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*", London, Blackwood & Murray, Vol II, 1818, p. 240, and "*The Royal Military Calendar or Army Service and Commission Book*" 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., London, A.J. Valpy, 1820, Vol. V, p. 344

<sup>12</sup> He only changed the spelling from "Chartres" to "Charters" in 1819. However, in many documents, such as his death certificate, it is still spelled as "Chartres".

<sup>13</sup> British Army List of 1817

<sup>14</sup> Patent signed in Rio de Janeiro by D. João, Prince Regent (future D. João VI) on November 21, 1810 (A.H.M., Cx. n.º 1872 e 1766).

Company of the same regiment from 11 February 1811,<sup>15</sup> and later a Major in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment (being stationed in Vila Real, and then Leiria)<sup>16</sup>. In 1819 he served in the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Braga.<sup>17</sup> He retired on 26 January 1826, after 22 years of service, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel of the Portuguese army, on a third of his last pay, which was later corrected to half-pay.<sup>18</sup> He was made a knight of the Order of the Tower and Sword (*Real Ordem Militar da Torre e Espada*) on 9 October 1834.<sup>19</sup>



**Major in 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment (1810/15).**

In an evaluation written during the first half of 1813, the Commanding Officer of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment in Almeida, Colonel Manuel António Cardoso, refers to Charters as “*knowledgeable of the Regulations and Orders of the Day and able to manoeuvre the Regiment well in the field, zealously fulfilling his military duties, having good military conduct*”. However, Charters’ health was not very good at the time and he was granted leave by the Lamego Health Board on 13 July 1813 to take the sulphurous waters of Caldas de Moledo during 20 days of leave.

On 1 July 1815, António de Lacerda Silveira, later the Colonel Commandant of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, declared that Charters had “*good physical disposition and bad health in recent times (he had fevers for 33 days and venereal for 62 days) but is currently re-established and capable for the whole service*”. However, Charters was also criticised in the same report, in a section headed “*civil conduct*”. He was “*more moderate than I have said in previous reports for having abstained from the spirits that explained why he did not treat well the inhabitants of the country and even some officials*”. Elsewhere in this commander's reports, he again alludes to military conduct: “*it is good if he abstains from these drinks, is not unaware of the manoeuvres and has desire for service*”. In the item “*application to studies*”, Silveira states that Charters “*has read books, I do not know if military, but I believe that his greatest application has been in history and novels*”. Later it is said in another report: “*He applies himself to the service and has a good desire for the*

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<sup>15</sup> Patent signed by D. João, Prince Regent (Rio de Janeiro, April 26, 1813)

<sup>16</sup> Patent signed in Rio de Janeiro by D. João, Prince Regent (3 March 1814), at the proposal of Marshal Conde de Trancoso, A.H.M. (Portuguese Military History Archive), Cx. n.º 1872 e 1766.

<sup>17</sup> Portuguese army post that later became known as “Major”.

<sup>18</sup> Patent signed by D. Maria II, on 19 April 1838, in Lisbon.

<sup>19</sup> A.H.M., Cx. n.º 1872 e 1766.

*perfection of the Rules of Procedure, which would be useful if this was always the case". In his final judgment, the commander states that "this officer if he was always able to moderate, would be very good, but easily loses his head, even if he drinks little wine, and cannot entirely abstain from it and in this state is a nuisance to the comrades and inhabitants of the country, through the bad way in which he treats them; I hope, however, that by continuing to be moderate he will not fail to be useful in service".<sup>20</sup>*

In the half-yearly registers at the beginning of 1816, after he had married in 1815, it is mentioned that Charters had been condemned to 121 days in prison the previous year. He was also tried on 23 February 1820, and sentenced to 100 days without pay. In the report written by the Colonel Commandant of the Regiment, it is said that these sentences were "*out of lack of respect for his superiors, having attacked the lieutenant colonel who was entirely unarmed; while having, himself, a sword and pistol; disobeying the orders that the Colonel Commandant gave him*". Such a situation, which nowadays would be called insubordination, led him to be presented before the "War Board". This may have been seen by him as a means to leave the Army, as he was very critical of the organisation of the Portuguese Army. Furthermore, he had managed to connect through marriage with some of Leiria's most important families. Perhaps, feeling in a safe, economic, and social position, he felt free to take risks in terms of his behaviour in the Army the year he got married.

It should also be noted that, in the personal archives kept in the Portuguese Military Historical Archive, there is a letter dated 1820, addressed to the Portuguese King by the widow Vitoria Margarida de Mesquita, with a shop in Porto, in which she complained of a debt of "*116\$210 réis in metal that Guilherme Charters, Lieutenant Colonel of the 2nd Battalion of the 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment, had owed her since April 17, 1819, for ties, and other items that went to the battalion and other orders belonging to the same person for which amount she held him responsible*".<sup>21</sup>

### **The marriage of William Charters to Ana Bárbara Soares Barbosa**

Charters was baptised in Leiria by the Catholic Church on 3 July 1815<sup>22,23</sup> in order that he could marry Ana Bárbara Soares Barbosa<sup>24</sup> the next day in the Cathedral of Leiria.<sup>25</sup> Barbosa (1788<sup>26</sup> - 22 August 1868<sup>27</sup>) was the daughter of Luís Soares Barbosa, of Ansião in Leiria district, a doctor, and of Joana Tomasia de Ceia Fortes, and the niece of two priests, both of whom were professors at the University of Coimbra, who, as we will see later, insisted that the already baptised Charters be baptised again by the Catholic Church.

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<sup>20</sup> Report for the first half of 1815 (A.H.M., Cx. No. 1872 and 1766).

<sup>21</sup> A.H.M., Cx. No. 1766.

<sup>22</sup> AD Leiria, Paróquia da Sé de Leiria, Batismos, 1812-1815, fls. 80-80v.

<sup>23</sup> He had been baptised on 20 October 1783, at Golden Square Presbyterian Church in Berwick-upon-Tweed. This church was destroyed in 1920 to build an access road to a bridge.

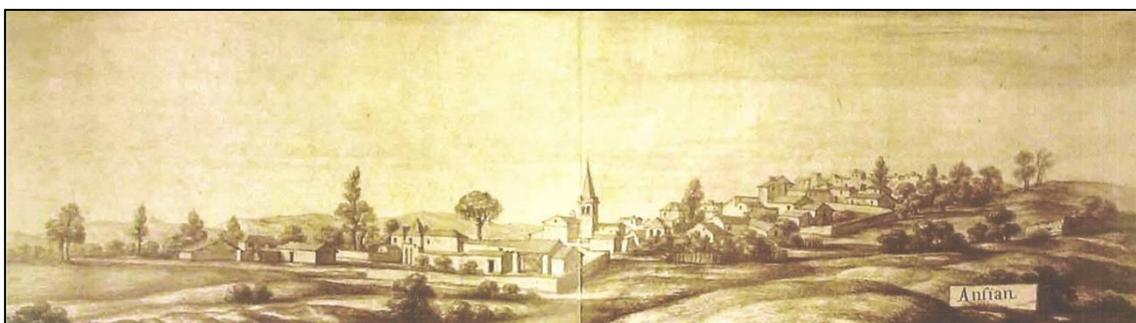
<sup>24</sup> AD Leiria, Paróquia da Sé de Leiria, Casamentos, 1810-1821, fl. 38.

<sup>25</sup> In a work coordinated by Afonso Zúquete, *Nobreza de Portugal e do Brasil*. Lisbon: Ed. Zairol, 2000, (Vol. III, p. 352), she is referred to as Ana Bárbara Gutierrez Barbosa Soares de Ceia. However, both in her marriage record and in her children's baptism records, she is referred to as Ana Bárbara Soares Barbosa.

<sup>26</sup> She was from Leiria, which explains our lack of knowledge of the exact date of birth, given the destruction of parish register books during the French invasions.

<sup>27</sup> AD Leiria, Paróquia da Sé de Leiria, Óbitos, 1866-1874, fl. 48, n.º 96.

Charters' three sisters-in-law were married to rich and influential men: the wealthy Councillor, José de Faria Gomes de Oliveira, who said “*Whose is Leiria? - From the Hospital and Faria!*”; a professor of medicine at Coimbra University, Dr. Aureliano Pereira Frazão de Aguiar; and André Lúcio Ferreira Simões, who would go on to become one of the few industrialists of Leiria in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, establishing a pottery in a part of the abandoned Convent of S. Francisco in 1857. His mother-in-law was the daughter of the doctor, Manuel de Matos. In turn, Matos was the brother-in-law of José da Cunha Ceia.



**Ansião, according to *Viaje de Cosme de Medicis por España e Portugal (1668-1669)*, designed by Pier Maria Baldi**

A professed knight of the Order of Christ, José da Cunha Ceia was the father of Cristóvão da Cunha Pinto do Rego (who took the habit of the Order of Christ in 1800) and of the Captain of Militias, Honorato da Cunha Pinto do Rego Ceia Trigueiros, who was the father of Dr. Venâncio Pinto do Rego Ceia Trigueiros, First Baron of Porto de Mós<sup>28</sup> and the owner of the Herdade do Esporão in Reguengos de Monsaraz, which nowadays is a well-known wine producer. A friend of António Bernardo da Costa Cabral, 1<sup>st</sup> Count and 1<sup>st</sup> Marquis of Tomar,<sup>29</sup> the Baron was actively involved in national politics, having been a member of parliament and was later made a *Par do Reino* (Peer of the Realm) by Royal Charter of 1842. The Baron of Porto de Mós was one of the 40 largest taxpayers in the municipality of Leiria in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>30</sup>



**The Baron of Porto de Mós in the regalia of *Par do Reino***

<sup>28</sup> The title was given to him by D. Maria II on 12 August 1845.

<sup>29</sup> See <https://www.bhspportugal.org/library/articles/the-marquesa-de-tomar>

<sup>30</sup> On the genealogy of the families mentioned in this communication, see also: <http://www.familiasdeleiria.com>

Dr. Luís Soares Barbosa, Charters's father-in-law, had studied medicine in Coimbra and became a doctor in 1767. He was a corresponding member of the Vaccine Institute of the Portuguese Royal Academy of Sciences and a Royal Professor of Philosophy and published several works. In 1785, he was appointed a doctor in Leiria. He had two notable brothers, one of whom was Fr. Dr. António Soares Barbosa, who was a professor of logic at the College of Arts at the Faculty of Philosophy at Coimbra,<sup>31</sup> and director of the Faculty of Philosophy, as well as being the founder of the Royal Academy of Sciences in 1779.<sup>32</sup> A forerunner of the Enlightenment movement in Portugal, the Royal Academy contributed significantly to the change of mentality that took place in the country, replacing the Old Regime with the Contemporary Age. He wrote many works, some of which were published in the *Memórias* of the Royal Academy of Sciences. The other brother, Fr. Doctor Jerónimo Soares Barbosa, was a professor of Rhetoric and Poetics at the University of Coimbra until 1790. In 1789, he became a corresponding member of the Royal Academy of Sciences of Lisbon.<sup>33</sup> A philologist, humanist and Latinist, his main work was the *Philosophical Grammar of the Portuguese Language*, which was only published six years after his death and is rightly considered to have been the most complete grammatical exhibition of the Portuguese language published until that time, still being used by foreign universities for Portuguese studies.

### **The children of William Charters and Ana Bárbara Soares Barbosa**

William Charters and his wife had five children: Roberto, Maria Isabel, Joana Tomásia, Bárbara Rita and Jerónimo.

1. **Roberto Charters** was born in Braga, having been baptised on 20 October 1818, in the Church of Our Lady of Mercy. William intended that he would become a landowner and farmer, as can be seen from his will,<sup>34</sup> but Roberto enrolled in law on 31 October 1839 at the University of Coimbra, a few months before his father died, graduating in July 1843. First officer of the General Secretariat of the Civil Government of Leiria from December 1847, he married, Maria Emilia de Faria, who had been twice widowed. She had an appreciable fortune, not only from her father, but also from her husbands. She died in October 1860, at the age of 80. Roberto Charters became captain of the National Battalion of Leiria.<sup>35</sup> The colonel of the Battalion was José Maria Crespo, his brother-in-law. By decree of May 1864, he was appointed a member of the Leiria District Council for the 1864-1865 biennium. Roberto Charters died on 14 March 1873, in Leiria, at the age of 54.
2. **Maria Isabel Charters** was born in Leiria on 12 July 1821. She married the future 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount of S. Sebastião, José Maria Henriques d'Azevedo, on 30 October 1843. She died on 11 October 1898, aged 77, having had the following children: Júlia;

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<sup>31</sup> During the reform of the University of Coimbra, the Course of Rational and Moral Philosophy was created, and the Marquis of Pombal appointed António Soares Barbosa as proprietor of the 1st year. *Nova Enciclopédia Larousse*, Círculo de Leitores, 1997, vol. 3, p. 889.

<sup>32</sup> Mentioned as a retired professor of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Coimbra in the Almanach for the Anno de 1798, published in Lisbon (p. 431-450).

<sup>33</sup> Promoted to the rank of free member of the same Academy on 30 November 1803.

<sup>34</sup> The draft of the will belonged to General Guilherme Charters Henriques de Azevedo, his grandson, who gave it to his niece Maria Teresa, who accompanied him until his death. She gave it, in the 1960s, to her sister Maria Amelia, mother of Arq. José Manuel Charters Monteiro Conceição, who has now made it available. The document has no date or signature, being, of course, before 1839, the date of Charters death, at which time his son, Roberto, would have been less than 21 years old.

<sup>35</sup> A.H.M, Master's Book, Officers' List, A-16-9-16

Amélia; Ana Barbara; Maria Isabel; Vitória; Luís, former civil governor of Leiria and general director of the *Junta do Crédito Público*; Guilherme, official under the orders of Kings Carlos I and Manuel II, administrator of the House of Bragança and, later, a general; José Maria; and Roberto (the author's great-great grandfather), both civil engineers.

3. **Joana Tomásia Charters** was born in Leiria on 27 July 1823. She died at the age of six.
4. **Barbara Rita Charters** was born on 25 January 1827. She married José Maria Crespo on 28 July 1843. Crespo was a knight of the Order of Christ, senator for the constituency of Leiria (1840) and later colonel in the National Battalion of Leiria. Her children were José, Venâncio, Júlia and Joana (who was later Baroness of Vale da Mata)
5. **Jerónimo Charters** was born on 6 January 1830. He lived for less than a year.

The three children of Charters who did not die as children made very good marriages. It is unsurprising that we find them or their husbands on the list of the 40 largest taxpayers in the municipality of Leiria. These details are important because they confirm that Charters became an important part of the local society, leading to his descendants having had great influence in the city of Leiria. Following his marriage, social and economic activities became more important than the military, and this hastened his departure from the army, particularly as the Peninsular War, his reason for coming to Portugal in the first place, had long since ended.

### **The business of William Charters**

In addition to being in the military, Charters sought to develop other businesses. In his dossier, found in the Portuguese Military Historical Archive (A.H.M.), there is an undated document in which, with great informality, Charters informs the Duke of Terceira<sup>36</sup> of the “*great inconvenience that is suffering from the lack of some carpenters, masons and blacksmiths*” to work on his farm and “*asks the favour to immediately give off eight English individuals*”, whose names were on an attached list. The list included sergeants and soldiers that were imprisoned in the Castle of S. Jorge and in the Convent of Xabregas, both in Lisbon. This indicates that the document is from the time of the extinction of religious orders (1834). In fact, Charters insists on the same subject on 9 October 1834, in a more formal tone, stating that he was “*owner of a considerable portion of land at the environments of Leiria*” and wished to “*bring to him some English soldiers (from those who have not yet been discharged)*”, which he considered reasonable given “*the imminent advantage that will result to Portugal by the introduction of the farming system existing in England*”. On the other hand, he also argued: “*the so-called soldiers are not serving Portugal or themselves*”.<sup>37</sup> An agreement was made with 33 soldiers on 11 December 1834, with Charters leasing them some land. However, it appears the arrangement did not go well. In his file in the Portuguese Military Historical Archive there are references to “*English men living in Leiria on public charity*”.

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<sup>36</sup> The Duke of Terceira (1792–1860) began his long and brilliant military career on the stages of the Peninsular War between 1807 and 1814, where he won almost all his promotions, serving as an aide to Beresford and Wellington.

<sup>37</sup> A.H.M., Cx. n. 1872 and 1766.



*“If I could be sure that all my successors would be as excellent men as my son, I would not make a will, unless I declare him my sole and universal heir, because I am sure he would do just what I would have explained to him was my will. But as this is insufficient and even my son, who is now such an excellent man, can turn to other misfortunes, I have decided to leave my possessions as follows:*

*I leave the use of all that I own or can in any way possess to my son Roberto Charters. But he cannot enter into the administration of anything until he has reached 25 full years of age [by that time Roberto was 20 or 21 years old]; has attended the University for at least four years and has been approved in the exams; has a sufficient knowledge of Chemistry and Botany to be a good farmer and cultivate with advantage the farms and that he has been two years in England, or for the better to say, in Great Britain, to learn to speak and write the English language as an Englishman he is”.*

As can be seen, William Charters wanted his only male son to have a thorough education, so that he would be a large rural owner, able to monetize the land he was going to inherit. In other words, Charters projected onto his son what he, himself, had wished to be, trying to make sure that his son – unlike himself – would have all the requisites for it. Hence, also, the concern with an excellent mastery of the English language, not least because Charters saw his son Roberto as an Englishman, even though he was born in Portugal. In the end, as we discussed above, Roberto studied law and, despite having also been a landowner, became a more urban and cosmopolitan man than his father.

### **William Charters’ sister**

William Charters was not the only Charters to abandon Berwick-upon-Tweed to settle in Portugal. His sister, Elizabeth Charters,<sup>40</sup> who married Richard Shortney in Berwick-upon-Tweed in 1805, settled in the Leiria region with six of her seven children: Anne Mary, Margareth, Thomas, Elizabeth, Robert, and Richard. All this happened before May 1823,<sup>41</sup> almost certainly on the advice of her brother. Barbara,<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth’s eldest daughter, did not move to Portugal, having already married.

Richard Shortney, Elizabeth Charters’ husband, died before 1825 although the exact date is unknown.<sup>43</sup> We could assume that he passed away before Elizabeth and her family came to Portugal, and that was the main reason why she established her residence near her brother. Elizabeth and her children moved into a property in Regueira de Pontes,<sup>44</sup> in Leiria. One can imagine the social and religious pressure that was exerted on this Anglican family in such a small locality. This pressure forced all family members to be baptised into the Catholic Church, which they did on the same day, on 9 September 1830. We remember that William had already received Catholic baptism in 1815. Their baptism, with the consequent change of first names, was not done in Regueira de Pontes, but in the Church of S. Lourenço de Carvide (Leiria).

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<sup>40</sup> Born on 12 March 1786, in Berwick-upon-Tweed and died on November 5, 1856, in Regueira de Pontes (A.D.L., Regueira de Pontes Parish, Death, 1852-1894, fl. 11v.).

<sup>41</sup> ADLeiria, 2nd Office of Leiria (Luís Franco Vidal), Note, L.º 12, fls. 63-63v., May 11, 1823.

<sup>42</sup> She was born on 11 March 1816 in Berwick-upon-Tweed.

<sup>43</sup> In a deed made in 1825, his wife already appears as a widow.

<sup>44</sup> ADLeiria, 2nd Office of Leiria (Luís Franco Vidal), Note, L.º 12, fls. 63-63v.

Despite being related to the family of William Charters, the family of Elizabeth did not develop close relationships with them, particularly after the death of William. They ended up with little social and economic role in the region and, in fact, appear to have experienced financial difficulties. The three girls did not marry, possibly for lack of a dowry. According to an obituary, Robert “*spent the spring of his life struggling with adversity: he was a clerk in some offices, became accountant of the hospital in November 1853 and treasurer of the District of Leiria in June 1859*”.<sup>45</sup> His brother, Richard, called himself “*Lord*”. He had a very adventurous life, with stories of some natural children that he never formally recognized. The sisters remained on the farm left to them by their mother, barely leaving Regueira de Pontes. Some help was given to them by the William’s sons because we found a deed in 1880 that refers to the obligation of the heirs of Dr. Roberto Charters to continue to give 50,000 réis to his nieces, Isabel and Margarida. Today the name Shortney does not exist in Portugal, as Richard’s recognised children were named Charters, thus associating themselves with the social success of William and his descendants.

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**The author at Robert Charters' tombstone (father of William) at the cemetery of The Holy Trinity and St Mary church at Berwick-upon-Tweed**

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<sup>45</sup> *Correspondência de Leiria*, n.º 25, 18 April 1875, p. 2, col. 3.