

EXTRACT OF A JOURNAL OF A JOURNEY TO PORTUGAL  
IN 1804-1805  
BY LORD HOLLAND

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The following text is the earliest known – and perhaps the only surviving record (apart from correspondence) – of Lord Holland's first journey to Portugal in 1804-1805.<sup>1</sup> It is a transcription of an incomplete manuscript preserved in the Holland House Papers (British Library), in a volume containing miscellaneous documents relating to Portugal (Add. 51633). It consists of six loose manuscript folios dated 8 January 1805, in which Holland identifies the terrible dilemma facing Portugal: whether to stay true to her alliance with Britain, thus risking war with France, or to achieve some kind of accommodation with France, thus exposing her colonies to seizure by the British. Although incomplete, the text is extremely intense and reveals that Holland was capable of a high level of political analysis, combining remarkable intuition and impressive clarity of reasoning.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Richard Vassall-Fox (1773-1840), 3rd Baron of Holland and Holland of Foxley, English Whig politician, statesman and hispanophile. He was the grandson of Henry Fox, 1st Lord Holland, and his wife Lady Caroline Lennox, the eldest daughter of Charles Lennox, 2nd Duke of Richmond, a grandson of Charles II. Holland was the nephew of Charles James Fox, the famous Whig politician, who was responsible for his education. In 1797, Holland married Elizabeth Vassall (1771-1845), whose marriage to Sir Godfrey Webster had just been dissolved; Elizabeth was the daughter of Richard Vassall (1732-1795), who had extensive estates in Jamaica.

<sup>2</sup> The calligraphy, slightly oriented to the right, is occasionally difficult to read and with several words crossed out. The paper is of good quality and folded in half. Margins are about 5 cm in the right side and 0.5 cm in left and vice versa for the verse. The watermark 'I. PARSONS' proves that the paper was made in England, though the date

Holland's analysis seems to take the form of a political memorandum but it is possible that the pages were once part of a travel journal from which other entries have been removed. Like his wife, Elizabeth Vassall, Holland kept a travel journal, although some manuscripts have probably been lost. A volume survives for the period 19 September to 2 November 1802 and contains a detailed description of the Hollands' journey southwards from Paris to Spain (Add. 51860). The next known two volumes cover their journey to the Peninsula in 1808-1809. The first volume of this series starts on 20 December 1808, when the party arrived at Oporto, and ends on 26 January 1809, when they crossed the river Caia on their way to Seville (Add. 51862). The fact this book is entitled 'Continuation of Journal – 1808', suggests an earlier volume whose whereabouts are not known. The continuing volume ends on 11 July 1809, on the road to Lisbon near Vendas Novas, when the text ceases and the remaining pages are left blank (Add. 51861).<sup>3</sup> A Portuguese translation of the Hollands' journals for 1808-1809, including that of Dr John Allen, was published in 2011 as *Três diários de viagem em Portugal em 1808-1809*.<sup>4</sup>

The Hollands' first visit to Portugal began on 30 November 1804, when Holland and his party crossed the eastern border at Elvas on their way back from Madrid (Clarke and Sousa 73). Over two years earlier, Dr Vaughan had recommended that they should take their eldest son, Charles Richard,<sup>5</sup> to a warmer climate – advice the Hollands readily accepted (Holland, *Journal* 2: 149). The party included the Hollands' two children, Charles and the newborn Henry Edward, later fourth Lord Holland,<sup>6</sup> Dr John Allen,<sup>7</sup> a young Scottish physician recommended by

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1803 suggests it was acquired abroad (possibly in Spain) or sent from Britain.

<sup>3</sup> There is no obvious explanation for this interruption and Lady Holland's diary provides no clue. The fact that the first manuscript book of this set is entitled 'Continuation of Journal – 1808' (BL, HHP, MS Add. 51862), suggests an earlier volume whose whereabouts are not known.

<sup>4</sup> *Três diários de viagem em Portugal em 1808-1809* / Lord e Lady Holland e Dr. John Allen; transcr., trans., notes by José Baptista de Sousa; pref. John Clarke (Lisboa: Caleidoscópio / CETAPS, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Charles Richard Fox (1796-1873), army officer and archaeologist, natural son of Lord Holland with Elisabeth Vassall, born before their marriage.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Edward Fox (1802-1859), afterwards 4th Lord Holland, the son of Henry Richard Vassall Fox and his wife Elizabeth Vassall. He was born at Holland House on 7 March 1802 and died at Naples on 8 December 1859. Henry Edward married Mary Augusta Coventry (1812-1889), the daughter of George William Coventry, 8th Earl of Coventry, and Lady Mary Beauclerk, on 9 May 1833. The couple had no issue and the barony became extinct.

<sup>7</sup> John Allen (1771-1843), Scottish physician and historian.

Sydney Smith and Lord Lauderdale (Smith 1: 30), William Howard<sup>8</sup> and the Rev. Matthew Marsh.<sup>9</sup> They left Kensington on 8 July 1802,<sup>10</sup> spending the summer in Paris where they were introduced to Napoleon himself (Holland, *Foreign Reminiscences* 191).<sup>11</sup> The party entered Spain on 7 November, remaining there for two years. On 14 November 1804, the Hollands left Madrid for Portugal, which they reached on 30 November, before embarking for England on 14 March 1805.

The visit began badly. On arriving at Estremoz on 2 December, Charlotte, Elizabeth's *femme de chambre*, fell ill. After a few days delay, the party resumed their journey to Lisbon leaving Allen behind to care for Charlotte.<sup>12</sup> By the time they reached Aldeia Galega (Montijo) on the south bank of the Tagus, on 7 December, almost everyone was ill, including Lady Holland, who '...had no courage to keep her notes of anything that occurred...' for a month and an half (Holland, *Spanish Journal* 183). On 11 December, after twenty-four hours quarantine in an open boat, the party finally arrived in Lisbon and settled in the Parish of Santa Isabel, in a house arranged for them by Henry Chamberlain, British Consul at Lisbon.<sup>13</sup> The Hollands remained in Lisbon until the end of January 1805, when they went to the famous baths at Caldas da Rainha. On 4 March, they went back to Lisbon to collect their children and then returned to Caldas da Rainha where they arrived ten days later. On 14 March, they embarked for England on the *Walsingham* packet (Holland, *Spanish Journal* 186).<sup>14</sup>

Holland's memorandum or journal was probably written during Lady Holland's illness when he was effectively confined

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<sup>8</sup> William Howard (1781-1843), the son of Frederick Howard (1748-1825), 5th Earl of Carlisle, and his wife, Lady Caroline Leveson-Gower (1753-1824).

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Marsh (†1840), chancellor and canon residentiary of Salisbury, son of Rev. Philemon Marsh and his wife, Mary Hornsey. He married on 8 September 1808 Margaret, daughter of Rev. Peter Billinger Brodie (see Burke 2: n. pag.).

<sup>10</sup> British Library, Holland House Papers (henceforward abbreviated to BL, HHP), MSS Dinner Books Add. 51950: 1799-1806, f. 97<sup>r</sup> (Thursday 8 July 1802).

<sup>11</sup> Following the signature of the Treaty of Amiens on 25 March 1802 there were many British visitors in France but the peace was short-lived and hostilities resumed in May 1803.

<sup>12</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland to Caroline Fox Add. 51737, f. 133<sup>r</sup> (2 Dec. 1804); the same to the same, f. 137<sup>r</sup> (10 Dec. 1804).

<sup>13</sup> Sir Henry Chamberlain (1773-1829), Consul General and Chargé d'Affaires at Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>14</sup> According to Lady Holland's journal, they reached Caldas da Rainha on 14 March, embarking thirteen hours later, at midnight, on the *Walsingham*. As a journey from Caldas to Lisbon would take not less than two days, it is likely that they had embarked at the nearest available harbour, which was the bay of São Martinho do Porto.

to his house in Lisbon. A particularly wet winter made travel of any sort unappealing and Holland's letters to his sister, Lady Caroline Fox, suggest anxiety and depression. As he admitted on 16 January 1805, Holland found it difficult to keep himself amused and passed most of his time reading, thinking and writing about Portugal.<sup>15</sup> Portugal was then facing one of most critical periods in her history, threatened by a formidable enemy, France, while her old Ally, Britain, seemed unable or unwilling to assist her, if not actually looking for an opportunity to seize her colonies.

Lord Holland's first political involvement with Portuguese issues had been in 1801, during the brief conflict later known as *Guerra das Laranjas* (the 'War of the Oranges').<sup>16</sup> A Franco-Spanish invasion of Portugal had already been envisaged under the terms of the Treaty of San Ildefonso of 1796. In 1800, France presented Portugal with a series of demands, including repudiation of the alliance with Britain. The Portuguese refused and, on 29 January 1801, France and Spain agreed to invade if Portugal still refused to close her ports to British ships. Following a formal declaration of war in March (*Gazeta de Madrid* 3 Mar. 1801: 228-230), on 20 May, a Spanish force under Manuel Godoy, the Prince of Peace, occupied Olivença and proceeded to over-run the Province of Alto Alentejo. On 6 June 1801 Portugal was forced to conclude a truce at Badajoz, agreeing to close her ports to British ships and to pay 20 million francs to the French Republic (Soriano 2: 388-490; id. 3: 468-470).<sup>17</sup> Although Napoleon wished to impose even harsher terms, Spain – guarantor of the Franco-Portuguese Treaty – was satisfied with the annexation of Olivença and there matters rested for the time being (Soriano 2: 396-397). A new Franco-Portuguese Treaty was signed at Madrid on 29 September 1801 whereby Portugal agreed to close her ports to Britain (*Collecção dos tratados* 4: [144]-151), although she was rescued from having to take this dangerous step by the conclusion of what was supposed to be a definitive peace between Britain and France – the Treaty of Amiens of 25 March 1802.

These events had major implications for Britain. Responses

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<sup>15</sup> BL, HHP, MS, Lord Holland to Caroline Fox, Add. 51737, f. 165<sup>v</sup> (16 Jan. 1805).

<sup>16</sup> The name 'War of Oranges' was coined after Godoy presented Queen Maria Luisa de Borbón a branch of orange tree taken from Elvas (see Montenegro 77; Vadillo 295).

<sup>17</sup> The treaty was signed by Lucien Bonapart, then French Minister to Madrid, and José Luis de Vasconcelos e Sousa (1740-1812), 6th Conde and 1st Marquês de Pombeiro. Although dated 6 June, it was actually signed on 8 June.

to Portuguese requests for assistance were disappointing. Lord Grenville, and later Lord Hawkesbury, merely promised not to oppose a bilateral Franco-Portuguese treaty ‘...except on the condition of excluding from the ports of Portugal the ships of war of his majesty, and even merchant vessels of his subjects.’<sup>18</sup> The issue was discussed in Parliament on 18 May 1801 when approval was given to Hawkesbury’s proposal for a subsidy of £300,000 to enable Portugal to maintain an army of twenty thousand men. Holland opposed the subsidy; while professing himself ready to assist ‘...our most ancient and faithful Ally...’, he considered the subsidy too small to have any military impact.<sup>19</sup> It would only encourage the French to invade and then take the money as reparations. In reality Hawkesbury’s proposal would simply vote subsidies ‘...into the pockets of General Bonaparte...’ (*id.*).

French pressure on Portugal, above all the demand that she close her ports to British shipping, intensified after Britain and France resumed their war in May 1803. The French Minister in Lisbon, Marshal Jean Lannes,<sup>20</sup> wanted to force Portugal to take the French side in the renewed war with Britain, displaying a harsh, even contemptuous attitude to the Regent, afterwards Dom João VI. The Regent tried to be conciliatory and managed to secure an agreement that Portugal could remain neutral in return for a payment of 16 million francs to the French, with a further reward of 1 million to Lannes for ‘his zeal and good services.’<sup>21</sup> The Regent’s policies had to reflect the fact that Britain was no more supportive than in 1801 and 1802 (Soriano 2: 546). Replying to a memorandum of 1 June 1803, addressed to the British Government by Domingos de Sousa Coutinho, Minister Plenipotentiary to London and the future Conde de

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<sup>18</sup> Hawkesbury, Dispatch to João de Almeida (June 1801), in Soriano, 3: 432; see also Grenville, Dispatch to the Portuguese Minister Plenipotentiary to London, José Luís de Vasconcelos e Sousa (18 Jan. 1801), qtd. in Soriano 2: 322-323.

<sup>19</sup> Holland, ‘[Answer to Lord Hobart’s address at the House of Lords upon his Majesty’s Message respecting the defence of Portugal (20 May 1801)]’. *The European Magazine and London Review* 39, (June 1801): 451.

<sup>20</sup> Jean Lannes (1769-1809), 1st duc de Montebello, French Marshal and diplomat, son of Jean Lannes, a merchant, and Cécile Fouraignan. One of Napoleon’s true friends, he was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Lisbon on 14 November 1801, where he arrived from Madrid in March 1802. He remained in Portugal until July 1804, when he left for Paris to attend Napoleon’s coronation, never to return (see Soriano 2: 475, 584-585).

<sup>21</sup> ‘Projecto para o Tratado de neutralidade, de que trata a nota que se dirigiu ao General Lannes’. *Supplemento á collecção dos tratados* 14: 80.

Funchal,<sup>22</sup> Hawkesbury promised to respect Portuguese neutrality in the renewed war with France, but offered no guarantee of military assistance if the French invaded, at least not until Britain could secure her own dominions. Lack of British support forced Portugal to make further concessions to France. A pro-French party appeared at Court and Lannes persuaded the Regent to dismiss supposedly pro-British ministers and replace them with men more sympathetic to France.<sup>23</sup> The Regent and his wife, Dona Carlota Joaquina, agreed to be godparents to Lannes's child,<sup>24</sup> whose baptism was celebrated at the Royal Palace of Bemposta on 29 September 1803.<sup>25</sup> Lannes left for Paris in July 1804 to attend Napoleon's coronation as Emperor (Soriano 2: 584-591).

There was thus no French Ambassador in Portugal during the Hollands' visit. Lannes was expected to return and Holland predicted that he would then demand the exclusion of British ships from Portuguese ports and could even go so far as to require a '...declaration of war against England and the seizure of all British property.'<sup>26</sup> Holland's predictions proved accurate, although the demands did not come from Lannes, who, in the event, was never to return to Portugal. The new French Minister, Jean-Andoche Junot, arrived in April 1805, shortly after the Hollands left for England (Soriano 2: 584-591). Junot duly delivered Napoleon's proposal for a Franco-Portuguese alliance against Britain, which João rejected on the grounds that war with Britain would jeopardise Portugal's overseas possessions.

Holland wonders, whether in the face of French pressure, Portugal will find '...the means of resisting these demands? Or will she avail herself of them?'<sup>27</sup> Holland thinks Portugal will do

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<sup>22</sup> Domingos de Sousa Coutinho had been appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to London on 13 May 1803 (Santarém 18: 430).

<sup>23</sup> In August 1803, the Prince Regent accepted Lannes's demands for the removal of several ministers thought to be pro-British, including João de Almeida de Melo e Castro (1756-1814), 5th Conde das Galveias and Linhares, Foreign Minister and President of the Royal Treasury. They were replaced by Luís Pinto de Sousa Coutinho (1735-1804), 1st Visconde de Balsemão, and Luís de Vasconcelos e Sousa (1742-1809), 4th Conde de Figueiró, considered more compliant to France (Soriano 2: 543-544, 550-551, 567 et. seq.; Foy 2: 115-116).

<sup>24</sup> Jean-Ernest Lannes (1803-1882), baron de Montebello.

<sup>25</sup> João's 'kindness' to the French Envoy also involved a gift worth an estimated four thousand pounds (Soriano 2: 560-561).

<sup>26</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. MSS. 51633, f. 9<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. MSS. 51633, f. 9<sup>f</sup>.

neither. The choice between Britain and France is so difficult that, in reality, Portugal has no choice but to resort to evasion and equivocation: ‘...which in these unjust times necessarily form so great a part of a weak countries politics & which this court in particular has so often practised with success even on perilous occasions.’<sup>28</sup> Much depends on the abilities of Portugal’s rulers. Holland’s estimate of the Portuguese ruling class was never entirely favourable and, over the years, ranged from qualified approval to something approaching contempt. Perhaps the best summary is to be found in Holland’s *Foreign Reminiscences*: ‘...the leading men in Portugal are not deficient in character or knowledge... but they are full of little jealousies and artifices, and more cunning in their negotiations with powerful states than wise in the management of their own.’ (162).

But Holland’s assessment has some positive features. However Portugal responds to Napoleon’s demands, he thinks an immediate invasion is unlikely:

...the apprehensions of contagion the length of the march & the famine which extends along the frontier of Portugal at this moment would deter the French from undertaking such an enterprize till next years harvest is over & which might afford some hope of furnishing their soldiers with provisions without the expense & trouble of bringing every loaf they eat some hundreds of miles on the backs of mules.<sup>29</sup>

While Holland is unimpressed with ‘...the present disorganised and dispirited [Portuguese] army...’,<sup>30</sup> he believes that, if the French do invade, they will not make an easy conquest. Provided the government does not fall into ‘...sudden and incurable panics...’<sup>31</sup> – sadly a serious possibility – Lisbon should remain fairly safe, largely because the invaders would have to contend with ‘...the natural defences of a barren frontier, a burning sun and a savage peasantry....’<sup>32</sup> But Holland never suggests that the Portuguese can defeat the French on their own; some foreign military assistance will be needed, although not very much. At the end of 1804/beginning of 1805, Holland thinks in terms of

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<sup>28</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. MSS. 51633, f. 14<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 11<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 9<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 9<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 9<sup>r</sup>.

'...a very trifling additional force of English or Russian troops...';<sup>33</sup> noting that '...Russia & England were cordially united....'<sup>34</sup>

One of the features of Holland's analysis, now and later, is his readiness, perhaps natural in an essentially 'opposition' politician, to blame the British government for some of the problems facing Portugal. It must be said that Holland is not entirely consistent; sometimes he criticises the British government for too much involvement in Portuguese affairs and sometimes for too little. In January 1805, the charge is one of lack of commitment:

They complain that we have never made any specifick offer of money or troops in case of a rupture with France; they add that we do not explicitly tell them whether we consider the preservation of Portugal as an object secondary [to] none but that of our European possessions.<sup>35</sup>

Holland had predicted that some time would elapse before France applied serious pressure on Portugal. In this he was proved right, although for rather different reasons than those advanced in Holland's memorandum. Time and again, Portugal's fate was affected by developments on the other side of Europe. Prussian preparations for war forced Napoleon to postpone his plans for Spain and Portugal and to recall troops on their way to Bayonne. But Portugal's respite was short lived. Prussia was rapidly defeated and, since any hopes of defeating Britain at sea had ended at Trafalgar, Napoleon determined on economic warfare. On 21 November 1806, the Emperor issued the Berlin Decrees, intended to bring Britain to its knees by closing all of Europe to its exports. Russia agreed to join what became known as the Continental System under the terms of the Treaty of Tilsit of 7 July 1807, thus removing the possibility of Anglo-Russian collaboration in defence of Portugal envisaged in Holland's memorandum. Only three European states, Denmark, Sweden and Portugal, now remained outside the System. If Napoleon's plans were to have any chance of success these powers had to be persuaded, or if necessary, forced to join. Of course, the construction of the Continental System meant that Britain would seek to find other outlets for its exports – and Brazil was perhaps the

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<sup>33</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 9<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 14<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 12<sup>v</sup>; see also Soriano 2: 550.

most attractive target. In other words Portugal faced one of the most acute crises in her history, a crisis remarkably similar to the one predicted in Holland's memorandum.

Subsequent events also followed Holland's predictions. On 12 August 1807, the French Chargé d'Affaires, Maximilien de Rayneval,<sup>36</sup> demanded that Portugal close its ports to British ships by 1 September, detain all British residents and seize their property and agree to the transfer of the Portuguese Navy to Spain and France. As Holland had foreseen in 1805, Portugal attempted to follow an evasive policy. Thus when Portugal accepted the French ultimatum and declared war on Britain on 20 October 1807, this was followed by a secret treaty with Britain agreeing to transfer the Portuguese Capital to Brazil and to British occupation of Madeira.<sup>37</sup> But Napoleon had already decided on an invasion of Portugal and on 27 October the Franco-Spanish Treaty of Fontainebleau was concluded to that end.

Even before the treaty was signed, a French force in Spain, commanded by Junot, was making its way to the frontier, crossing into Portugal on 19 November. Thereafter events moved with remarkable speed and Junot was able to take Lisbon – with a force of only 1,500 men – on 30 November 1807 (Oman 1:26). The rapid advance seems to invalidate Holland's prediction that invasion would prove difficult, but things were not what they seemed and, in reality, the French position was precarious. As Holland had insisted, events were to show that, with some foreign support, the invaders could be defeated after all. Junot had made such haste in his advance on Lisbon – so much so that his men were exhausted and almost starving – because he wished

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<sup>36</sup> Maximilien Gérard (1778-1836), comte de Rayneval, French diplomat, was entrusted with the mission of communicating to the Portuguese Government the French ultimatum demanding that Portugal join the Continental System. Rayneval died at San Ildefonso, Spain, on 17 de August 1836.

<sup>37</sup> On 22 October, a secret Anglo-Portuguese convention was signed in London between Canning and the Portuguese Minister, Domingos de Sousa Coutinho. The Convention stipulated that Britain would occupy the Isle of Madeira temporarily and send a fleet to the Tagus under the Admiral Sidney Smith in order to stop the Russian fleet entering the port of Lisbon, to prevent the capture of any Portuguese ship by the French Navy and, above all, to rescue the royal family if and when necessary. But Canning rejected with disdain the plan proposed by Sousa Coutinho of a 'nominal war' against Britain, on the grounds that this would bring all neutral powers on the side of France ('Convenção secreta entre o Principe Regente o Senhor Dom João e Jorge III Rei da Gran-Bretanha, sobre a transferencia para o Brazil da sede da Monarchia Portugueza, e occupação temporária da Ilha da Madeira pelas tropas britannicas, assignada em Londres a 22 de Outubro de 1807, e ratificada por parte de Portugal em 8 de Novembro e pela da Gran-Bretanha em 19 de Dezembro do dito anno (22 Oct. 1807)'. *Collecção dos tratados* 4, pp. [236]-253; see also Temperley 80; Martinez 219-220).

to prevent the escape of the Prince Regent and his Court. In this he failed, though by a slender margin. On 29 November, the day before Junot's arrival, the Regent, accompanied by as many as 15,000 followers, had completed his departure – with British assistance – and was now on his way to Brazil.

Unfortunately Holland's analysis breaks off at this point, while assessing British attitudes to Portugal and the possibility of a joint Anglo-Russian response to a French invasion.<sup>38</sup> Sadly, the whereabouts of the later folios are not known.

### **Lord Holland's Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract**

January 8<sup>th</sup> Lisbon 1805

Lasnes [*sic*]<sup>39</sup> is expected here every day & if his presence at all times disconcerts the court & alarms the inhabitants it may easily be imagined that his arrival at this critical conjuncture produces the greatest consternation – This is not diminished by the report of his bringing with him Sebastiani<sup>40</sup> – so well known for his correspondence from Egypt & his talents as an engineer – His first demand will be the exclusion of British ships from this & all other Portuguese ports – it may possibly extend to the declaration of war against England & the seizure of all British property – His means of enforcing these demands or any other the French government may make are menaces of an immediate invasion & the completion of a treaty often sketched out but never actually signed of putting Spain in possession of Portugal in return for Catalonia & the Provinces north of the Ebro the ancient boundary according to French Historians of the Empire of Charlemagne – I need not waste time in pointing out the consequences of war between Portugal & England to both countries – to the former it is every thing but annihilation & to the latter as far as I am able to judge infinitely more prejudicial in a political view & less perhaps in a commercial one than it has been generally supposed – Has Portugal the means of resisting these demands? – or will she avail herself of them? – The question of

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<sup>38</sup> BL, HHP, MS Lord Holland Portuguese Journal (1805): Extract, Add. 51633, f. 14<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> Lannes, occasionally referred to as *Lasnes* in English texts (cf. Busk 261).

<sup>40</sup> Horace François Bastien Sébastiani de La Porta (1771-1851), French officer, diplomat and politician. Born at La Porta, Corsica, son of a tailor and nephew of Louis Sébastini de La Porta, a Roman Catholic priest and later bishop of Ajaccio.

the defence of Portugal has been so often discussed that one can neither say or hear any thing new about it. Reasonable people here, who have the means of judging & much interest in the question seem to think that even with the present disorganized and dispirited army a very trifling additional force of English or Russian troops joined to the natural defences of a barren frontier a burning sun & a savage peasantry would enable them at all times to protect Lisbon if the Government were not liable to sudden & incurable panics – But whether this speculation is well or ill founded I know that persons whose opinions ought to have weight think there is no necessity for taking so hasty a decision as the French are expected to demand of them – Exclusive of their notions upon the general practicability of resistance to an enemy they think that were they to defy the French (which is however a line of policy they are very far from recommending for their country) the apprehensions of contagion the length of the march & the famine which extends along the frontier of Portugal at this moment would deter the French from undertaking such an enterprize till next years harvest is over & which might [afford some]<sup>41</sup> hope of furnishing their soldiers with provisions without the expense & trouble of bringing every loaf they eat some hundreds of miles on the backs of mules – They seem to think that if the French were actually on the frontier & no army whatsoever between them & Lisbon nothing could or would be demanded more disastrous than a war with England & that by waiting till they are there before they comply with such a demand they can lose nothing while by gaining time they take the chance of accidents at a moment that any change of affairs in England France or Spain or even a war in the North would at any rate facilitate their negotiations with France & might even possibly extricate them entirely from their present embarrassments – At the same time the views of our government alarm them, they seem or they affect to distrust our will to assist them & they do not disguise their ill humour at the little compunction we have felt in exposing them to their present dreadful alternative: – they complain that we have never made any specifick offer of money or troops in case of a rupture with France; they add that we do not explicitly tell them whether we consider the preservation of Portugal as an object secondary to none but that of our European possessions. Our conduct of last war is deeply engraved on their memories when after having

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<sup>41</sup> The words 'afford some' are crossed out in the original MS.

defeated their endeavours of making peace with France we kept our troops & fitted out our expeditions here while Portugal was in a state of security, we withdrew all our forces & sent them on distant schemes of conquest & acquisitions which we were pleased to call diversions in their favour when Gen.<sup>1</sup> Le Clerc<sup>42</sup> was at Valladolid & the P of the Peace at Badajoz

They [*sic*] apprehension that Pitt is dazzled with the splendour and [?] allure of the plunder of South American conquests – makes a deep impression – The consequences of such projects to Portugal must be dreadful for obvious reasons. But their wishes rarely seem to mislead their judgement and their hopes more than their judgement when they imagine that an implied promise of forbearance on our part in that quarter of the world would purchase an equal forbearance with regard to them from Spain even during the continuance of wars heard not Their arguments on their head are very ingenious & would perhaps be conclusive did not the instability of the Prince of the peace's character render all engagements implied or exprest with Spain precarious & the timidity of it enable the French at any time to insist in the violation of them –

Perhaps they would more willingly have recourse to Russia with the politics of whose court they ought to be intimately acquainted as the Sec.<sup>ry</sup> of State for foreign affairs here is but lately returned from his legation at Petersburg<sup>43</sup> – There does exist a treaty between the two countries & the preservation of Portugal, by negotiation if the disputes between Russia & France are amicably adjusted or the defence of it by auxiliary forces if they are followed by an open rupture seem to be within the line of policy which Alexander has chalked out for himself – From the prevalence of these opinions among those with whom I have conversed & who I really believe speak what they think I imagine their advice (if asked) would be to fight off the demands of the French by occasionally pleading commercial inconveniences at

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<sup>42</sup> Charles Victoire Emmanuel Leclerc (1772-1802), French general, husband of Pauline Bonaparte, Napoleon's sister. He was sent to Spain in 1801 at the head of an auxiliary army.

<sup>43</sup> D. António de Araújo e Azevedo (1754-1817), 1st and only Conde da Barca, Portuguese diplomat and statesman, the son of António Pereira Pinto de Araújo e Azevedo and Maria Francisca de Araújo e Azevedo. Araújo was Minister Extraordinary to The Hague, Minister Plenipotentiary to the French Republic and Russia (St Petersburg), from whence he was recalled in 1804 to take the Foreign Ministry. Lord Holland notes that Araújo '(...) was all along suspected of promoting the designs of the French, and was certainly in secret correspondence with them, though possibly, and indeed probably, with the somewhat less criminal design of deceiving them (...) (Holland, *Further Memoirs* 9).

the moment & occasionally assuming the appearance of firmness – In short by all those subterfuges which in these unjust times necessarily form so great a part of a weak countries politics & which this court in particular has so often practised with success even on perilous occasions – In the meanwhile they would ascertain the views of our Cabinet & the extent as well as nature of the assistance we were disposed to afford them, if Russia & England were cordially united they might perhaps join the confederacy & trust to their assistance for protection – If Russia reject [remain]<sup>44</sup> aloof from our connexion [*sic*] they would labour hard to get their neutrality included in the list of items which...

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<sup>44</sup> The word 'remained' is crossed out in the original manuscript.

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