

Marshal William Carr Beresford and the Return to Portugal of the Portuguese Royal Family (1814-1830)

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The role played by Marshal William Carr Beresford in the Peninsular War or “Invasões Francesas” (1807-1814) has been the subject of a number of works; but his involvement in Portugal in the subsequent sixteen years has received much less attention.¹ This paper will look at the period 1814 -1830. Conceived during the coronavirus pandemic, with limited access to archives, this account does not pretend to answer all of the questions raised, but will hopefully act as a basis for further research and discussion on both sides of the Atlantic. To do so, it will look at Beresford’s relationship with Dom João, the Regency in Portugal, British policy and Beresford’s own ambitions.

At the conclusion of the war, following the battle of Toulouse (10 April 1814), the Portuguese army marched home from south west France under the command of General Carlos Lecor. That army had made a colossal contribution to the allied success. Its achievements were recognized by those in the British army and indeed by a number of French officers. Beresford for his part took leave and, for the first time in over five years, returned first to England and then to Ireland. Previously Sir William, he was now elevated to the peerage as

1 See Newitt & Robson, 2004; and Beresford, 2019.

Baron Beresford of Albuera and Dungarvan.² His stay with family and friends in the British Isles was however, brief. He returned to Portugal in August 1814, to resume command of the army. He did so with the support of the British government. Sanguine, as ever, he did not anticipate that he would remain long in Portugal. With the danger of French invasion gone, he knew he had lost his trump card in dealing with a recalcitrant Regency. He made it very clear that his objective was to ensure the safe return of the Portuguese royal family to Portugal and that had it not been for Dom João's anticipated return, Beresford himself would not have gone back to Portugal. He opined that if Dom João's ministers were of the same view as the Regency, it would be impossible for British officers in the Portuguese service to remain in Portugal unless it was for pleasure.³

Back in Lisbon, Beresford organized a victory parade for the army, stating in his *Ordem do Dia* on 27 August that he would forever recall the sacrifices they had made, noting they had proved themselves the equal of the best soldiers in Europe.⁴ The Marshal's sentiments were not reflected in the actions of the Regency. Burdened with huge debts, part of the peace dividend was the contraction of the army. This was combined with a reduction of the pay of those in the ranks, a decision which Beresford's Quartermaster General, Benjamin D'Urban, attributed to a desire by the Regents to reduce the army from the state of excellence achieved under Beresford to its 'former state of wretchedness and nonentity'. (D'Urban 1990, 330) Many soldiers spent the ensuing winter on short rations, with inadequate clothing in poorly furnished barracks.

The tactics pursued by the Regency on Beresford's return were designed to get rid of the Marshal, and to clear the army of those British officers who had joined the Portuguese army during the Peninsular war. Politicians such as Raimundo Nogueira and Miguel Forjaz who

2 Albuera to reflect the battle where the allied army was commanded by Beresford on 16 May 1811. Dungarvan was an important town in Beresford's home county of Waterford in Ireland.

3 Beresford to John Poo Beresford, 18 September 1814 (NYA, ZBA21/10.f.55). John Poo was Beresford's brother and was captain of the fleet sent to Rio to escort the Portuguese royal family home.

4 See *Ordens do Dia*, 27 de Agosto de 1814.

had previously supported Beresford now opposed him, while ironically the Principal Sousa on occasions supported his adversary during the Peninsular war. While Dom João enjoyed considerable support in Portugal, a growing radical movement threatened both absolutism and the stability of the nation. There were even rumours that some of the nobility might aspire to deliver the kingdom to become a province of Spain. Against this background, while those opposed to the Marshal in both Portugal and Brazil sought to sever him from Dom João's support, the Marshal repeatedly urged Dom João and his advisers of the desirability, indeed the necessity, of returning to Portugal.

The escape of Napoleon from Elba on 26 February 1815 and his triumphant return to France led the allies, then meeting in congress in Vienna, to declare him an outlaw and prepare again for war. Wellington, appointed to command the army assembling in the Low Countries, wrote immediately to Beresford seeking 12,000-14,000 Portuguese troops to join that force, a request that was endorsed by the Conde de Palmela (as he then was), the Portuguese envoy to the congress.⁵ Preparations were made for their dispatch on shipping sent to the Tagus by the British government. On the basis that sending the troops out of the kingdom required royal authority, the Regency refused to comply with Wellington's request and no Portuguese force participated at Waterloo, a factor which may well have contributed to a lack of British support for the return of Olivença to Portugal by virtue of the Treaty of Vienna.⁶ Beresford was devastated by the decision of the Regency, observing that he was doomed to be a spectator of the campaign and expressing his view 'I have been also quite disgusted with the refusal of these people to enter into the common cause of Europe'.⁷

5 See Wellington to Beresford, 24 March 1815; PRONI, D3030/4464. Wellington considered Palmela the ablest diplomat in Europe. Palmela was liberal in outlook but he and Beresford became not just correspondents, but friends who frequently corresponded, with Beresford acting as Palmela's eyes and ears in Portugal.

6 See Article 105 of the Final Act (Treaty of Vienna) provided that the victorious powers would 'formally engage to use their utmost endeavours, by amicable means, to procure the retrocession of the said territories, in favour of Portugal. And the Powers declare, as far as depends upon them, that this arrangement shall take place as soon as possible'.

7 Beresford to Marquess of Abercorn, 2 June and 10 August 1815; PRONI, D623/A/244/1 & 5.

There were however other fault lines emerging in the Anglo-Portuguese relationship. One of these was Great Britain's attitude to slavery. In the decade after Waterloo however, it was the projected extension of Portuguese authority in South America at Spain's expense that was to become a thorny issue between the two powers; a point of friction exacerbated by the move to independence of Spanish colonies on that continent. In fact, even before Wellington's plea for Portuguese troops to be part of the allied force to counter Napoleon had been received, a force was being prepared for 'the Brazils' to participate in the invasion of the Banda Oriental del Uruguay ('Banda Oriental').⁸ In early 1816 some 5000 troops, the Royal Volunteer Division, under General Lecor arrived in Rio de Janeiro; and with others took part in the conquest of the Banda Oriental which in 1820 became part of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves.

In June 1815 the Regency refused to ratify Beresford's promotion of officers in the Portuguese army. Beresford's frustration with the Regency was now such that he was minded to leave Portuguese service; but he determined that before making a final decision, he would travel to Brazil to ascertain the views of Dom João.⁹ On 10 August he sailed for Rio de Janeiro on a Portuguese naval vessel, the *Fama*. His intention was that the visit would be of short duration, but it was to be September 1816 before he returned to Portugal.

In what has understandably been referred to as 'An odd alliance' Dom João and Beresford hit it off.¹⁰ Described by the British politician Thomas Creevey, M.P.¹¹ as a 'low-looking ruffian in his air, with damned bad manners, or rather none at all', (Maxwell, 1903) Beresford was far removed from the ideal of a smooth courtier. This however was counterbalanced by his perceived integrity and his disposition to call a spade a spade. No doubt his ability to maintain a

8 The Banda Oriental del Uruguay were the South American territories north of the Rio de la Plata and east of the Rio Uruguay. These comprise modern day Uruguay, as well as Rio Grande do Sul and portions of Santa Catarina, today part of Brazil.

9 Beresford to Wellington, 8 July 1815; Wellington Papers WP1/473/56.

10 See Costa, 2009.

11 Creevey was politically opposed to Beresford.

functioning army also played its part in Dom João's reciprocal loyalty to Beresford. Without the troops furnished by Beresford from Portugal, the invasion of the Banda Oriental might have been impossible, its success doubtful. On arrival in Brazil, Beresford was faced with a suggestion put forward by the Regency in Portugal that he be replaced as Commander-in-Chief by a German, with German officers replacing their British counterparts. Both Dom João and António Araújo, now Minister for the Marine and the Colonies, rejected the suggestion. Instead, Beresford's position was further enhanced in December 1815 when he was created Marshal-General of the armies of the Crown in both Europe and the Americas. In the same month one of Beresford's most trusted Portuguese advisors, Lieutenant-General António de Lemos Pereira de Lacerda, was created Visconde Juromenha. Beresford's star was in the ascendant. The promotions in the army blocked by the Regency in 1815 were approved by Dom João.¹² When Queen Maria died on 20 March 1816, Beresford was the only non-Portuguese selected as one of the pall bearers. However, the Court then went into a full year's mourning, and Beresford found it impossible to return to Portugal for a number of months. Meanwhile, the invasion of the Banda Oriental was heightening tensions with Spain.

Beresford returned in September 1816 to Portugal without any member of the royal family. The primary focus of Dom João (King João VI since his mother's death) and his ministers was on expansion in South America. The lack of success in securing the return of Dom João to Portugal may have been mitigated, to some extent, by the arrival of the two Portuguese Princesses (Maria Isabel and Maria Francisca) in Cadiz to be married respectively to the King of Spain, Ferdinand VII, and his brother Don Carlos. However, Beresford was soon at loggerheads with the Regency again over arrears of pay to the army and an attempt to pay soldiers two thirds of their salary in paper money, contrary to an earlier agreement. Portugal was in

¹² See *Ordens do Dia*, Junho 1816, 20-23, printed a copy of officers promoted by order of Dom João, 12 October 1815.

a state of unrest and Beresford's position was becoming more difficult with the departure of senior aides such as Benjamin D'Urban and Robert Arbuthnot.¹³ Their position had become less financially attractive and more precarious with the decision that they must be paid by the Portuguese government. They returned to England. For his part Beresford was becoming seriously alarmed at the now evident turmoil in Portugal, and he wrote to Wellington, warning him of the growth of a pro-Spanish party and his concern that a conspiracy was developing to overthrow the King. Meanwhile, Spain enlisted Great Britain's help, protesting at the invasion of the Banda Oriental, resulting in Portugal being warned by its putative ally that unless it could give a satisfactory explanation, Portugal would be deemed to have forfeited its claim in respect of slaving vessels illegally seized by the British royal navy. Alarmed at the prospect of a Spanish offensive against Portugal, Beresford filled up the regiments of line with transfers from the militia. In the knowledge that in the event of an attack, and with British support lukewarm, Beresford set off on a tour of the Alentejo in February 1817 only to find that the fortresses were ill prepared for conflict.

Returning to Lisbon, Beresford became aware in April of rumours of an intended coup.¹⁴ His informant was an army officer whom he encouraged to insinuate himself with the suspected plotters. By 23 May he was convinced some attempt to overthrow the government was imminent. Having discussed the matter with a number of highly placed 'friends of the king' he informed the Regency. He requested ten days grace before any action was taken to further his enquiries, but this was denied. The Regency acted expeditiously. On 25 May thirty alleged conspirators were arrested. These included a substantial number of middle ranking army officers. At the top of the pyramid of those detained was General Gomes Freire de Andrade, a supporter of

13 Benjamin D'Urban had been Beresford's Quartermaster-General since 1809. Arbuthnot had served with Beresford even longer including at the Cape of Good Hope and Buenos Aires in 1806. He was Beresford's British Military Secretary. Antonio de Lemos Pereira de Lacerda was his Portuguese Military Secretary.

14 Beresford summarized developments in a memorandum dated 'Lisbon 31 May'. NYA, ZBA 21/10/75. He must have added to it later because it includes a reference to sentencing.

Napoleon during the French invasions. After a series of trials, twelve of the convicted were executed, a number sent to Portugal's African colonies and two were reportedly acquitted.¹⁵ The bodies of the executed, including Gomes Freire de Andrade, were subsequently burnt. Beresford played no part in the prosecution of the arrested persons, and on conviction unsuccessfully sought a deferment of the carrying out of the sentences, pending confirmation or commutation by Dom João. His request was refused by the Regency, just as they had refused his earlier request for time to investigate. Beresford suggested that there might well be others of greater political standing involved in what he felt was a plot not just to remove, and possibly assassinate him, but to replace Dom João with the Duke of Cadaval as a constitutional monarch.¹⁶ He was not convinced that Gomes Freire de Andrade was the head of the conspiracy, regarding him as a 'weak, vain, light headed person'.¹⁷ Notwithstanding the position he took, Beresford's name became inextricably linked with these events and he became increasingly unpopular with those who identified themselves as liberals.

Paradoxically, Beresford's position was temporarily strengthened by the events of 1817, and he may well have used the conspiracy to improve his own situation, by emphasizing the extent of the plot. The army remained loyal and for a while the Regency, driven by their own fears of a rising, supported rather than obstructed the Marshal. Beresford continued to enjoy the King's support; and his value to the crown was again evident when Portuguese trained troops put down a rebellion in Pernambuco in Brazil in the same year. Once again however, Beresford urged that Dom João return to Portugal, writing to Araújo (now Conde de Barca) 'If you wish the Crown to remain with the Braganças, D. João must return to Portugal.' (Paquette 2013, 103) Portugal was so

15 One of the acquitted was Verissimo António Ferreira da Costa, lieutenant-colonel in the 13th regiment of line until his dismissal by Beresford in 1813. The author of an attack on Beresford. See *Analyse das Ordens do Dia de Beresford ou Reflexões Criticas, e Filosoficas sobre a Disciplina do Exercito Portuguez desde a Sua Entrada até o fim de 1814*. (Lisbon: Impressao Regia, 1820).

16 Dom Nuno Caetano Alvares Pereira de Melo, Duke of Cadaval (1799-1837), a member of a cadet branch of the house of Bragança. As to whether members of the Regency were involved in the plot and the theory the intention was to remove Beresford, see Fuente 2011, 235-6.

17 See NYA, ZBA 21/10/75.

calm in 1818 that Beresford travelled to England and Ireland, before going on to France to take part in a grand review of the army of occupation which was to leave northern France at the end of the year.¹⁸ He did not arrive back in Lisbon until February 1819. There he received a good reception, though he noted that the pay of the soldiers (with the exception those in Lisbon) was in arrears from January. In fact, prospects seemed so positive to the Marshal that he now applied to King George III for permission to take out Portuguese nationality, a licence for which was granted on 23 April.¹⁹ In early summer he made a tour of central and northern Portugal, during which he was well received by both troops and the clergy with whom he stayed on a number of occasions. In correspondence with his sister Harriet, he praised both the people of Portugal and the beauty of the countryside; but, even though the attitude of the Regency towards him gave no ground for complaint, he condemned the way it sought to run the country.²⁰ Arrears of army pay were now mounting again and the perceived abuses of the government annoyed him further. Beresford therefore proposed to travel once more to Rio de Janeiro to take leave of the King, before returning to Ireland. The optimism he had expressed in the earlier part of the year had clearly now dissipated to such an extent that he was intending to retire from the Portuguese service.

Beresford's wish to go to Brazil was put on hold by virtue of developments in Spain which caused him serious concern. An army intended to put down rebellion in South America mutinied while assembling in Cadiz. This was followed by revolts elsewhere against the absolutism of Ferdinand VII. The Marshal felt the system of government in Portugal was so like that of Spain that there existed a serious danger of a rising in Portugal. He wanted to resign, but Wellington, with misplaced optimism, urged him to stay on until the Spanish rebels were defeated.²¹ Beresford for his part sent Major Thomas

18 Elements from the armies of the allies had occupied northern France to ensure the peace of 1815 and to bolster the returning Bourbon dynasty in the shape of Louis XVIII.

19 See NA, FO 63/223.

20 'This would indeed be a paradise if there was a decent government'. Beresford to Harriet Beresford, 17 June 1819. Beresford family papers.

21 See Wellington to Beresford, 12 February 1820. WP1/640.

Bunbury to Cadiz to ascertain and report on developments. Bunbury, now with the Castro Marim Caçadores, had been in Cadiz in 1811 with the Portuguese 20th line regiment, so this choice was logical. The restoration in Spain of the liberal constitution of 1812 (*Constitución de Cadiz*) in early March 1820 alarmed Beresford as it did the monarchies of Europe. Further, he felt that the loss of her South American colonies would make it more likely Spain would turn her attention on Portugal. He felt it would take time for the liberals in Portugal to gain ground, and he sailed for Brazil in early April 1820.

Beresford took with him to Rio de Janeiro letters from the Regency seeking royal intervention in Portugal. Over the ensuing months relations with Dom João remained excellent. Yet despite Beresford's own views, forcefully expressed, that if the King did not return to Portugal, he would lose that kingdom, neither Dom João nor the Prince Royal, Dom Pedro, would consent to return there. Neither would Dom João accommodate Beresford's request to remove Forjaz from the Regency. Forjaz had been one of Beresford's most active supporters in the Regency during the Peninsular War, but subsequently they were frequently at loggerheads regarding army matters including its living conditions, arrears and deployment. Instead, the King promoted Beresford to Marshal-General 'a pessoa real' giving the Irishman the right to deal with Dom João directly, bypassing the Minister for War. Further he appointed Beresford to a seat on the Regency.

Beresford sailed for Lisbon on 13 August arriving in mid-October 1820. He took with him £80,000 to pay the army. It was too late. Revolution had broken out in Porto in August, and spread to Lisbon while he was on his return journey. It is likely that there was a recognition amongst those at the helm of the revolution that Beresford was someone who might rally conservative forces and endanger liberal aspirations. This concern, combined with a desire to remove British officers from the army, were important factors in the motivation of those who sought change. The Junta (Provisional do Supremo Governo do Reino) now in control refused to allow Beresford to land. He resigned his commission and travelled to England, as one Portuguese source put it, with nobility and dignity: 'o Marechal se resignou com nobreza, e com toda

a dignidade Inglesa'. (Araújo 1846, 58) He had spent eleven years at the helm of the Portuguese army. The six years since the conclusion of the Peninsular war had been difficult. His frustrations were with the Regency; he continued to admire the people. He had stayed on at the urging of the British government and Wellington. Though his command in Portugal had ended, his friendship with the King remained strong and Beresford was to have an intermittent involvement in Portuguese affairs for the next decade.

A romantic entanglement also cemented Beresford's connection with Portugal. António Lemos Pereira de Lacerda was Beresford's Portuguese military secretary from 1809 to 1820. Created Visconde Juromenha in 1815, in 1802 he had married Dona Maria da Luz Willoughby da Silveira. Juromenha was a close confidant of Beresford both before and during the Marshal's affair with his wife. Such was the relationship that they lived, happily it would seem, as a *ménage a trois* in the Palácio da Ega (now the Arquivo Ultramarino, at Calçada da Boa-Hora, Junqueira), which Dom João had given the Marshal following its confiscation from the Count of Ega, a French supporter.²² From the relationship of the Marshal with Maria were born at least two children which he acknowledged. The first was a boy, Guilherme (1812). Secondly Maria Effigenia (1816). Beresford fathered at least one other child while in Portugal, Maria of mother '*incognita*' (1818). This was probably Maria Guilhermina. In financial terms, at least, Beresford was to prove a supportive father, though Guilherme was ultimately cut out of Beresford's Will, apparently because the Marshal did not approve of the marriage his son made.²³

Fourteen years after his departure, in July 1821, Dom João returned to Portugal, having named his eldest son, Dom Pedro, Regent of Brazil. A year later Dom Pedro was to claim independence for Brazil. Dom João for his part was forced to adopt a liberal constitution for

22 It was at the Palácio de Ega, otherwise known as the Patio de Saldanha, that Beresford often held confidential meetings including on 22 May 1817 when trying to determine what steps to take regarding the rumour of a plot and imminent coup. Prior to being given to Beresford it had been used as a military hospital.

23 Will of Viscount Beresford proved February 1824. (NA, PROB 10/7449/2) Guilherme was later known as William Lemos Willoughby.

Portugal in 1822. The country was however divided with Francisco Silveira, Conde de Amarante declaring for an absolute monarchy in early 1823. A more serious development was the raising of the standard of absolutism in May 1823 by Dom Miguel, Dom João's second surviving son, at his mother's (Queen Carlota) instigation; in what became known as the *Vilafrancada*. Dom João initially cooperated with his son, but in April 1824 Dom Miguel led a revolt during which his father was captured at the Bemposta palace before being rescued by intervention of the diplomatic corps.

Marshal Beresford meanwhile, now Viscount Beresford of Beresford in addition to his other British, Irish and Portuguese titles, and Lieutenant-General of Ordnance in the United Kingdom, in July 1823 indicated to George Canning, the Foreign Secretary, his intention to return to Portugal. Canning, already distracted by the turmoil in Spain, suggested Beresford wait until the British Minister to Portugal, Edward Thornton, reported on the state of affairs. Beresford did in fact delay the visit, because of the death of General Sir Denis Pack at Beresford's London House on 23 July. Pack had served with distinction in both the British and Portuguese armies in the Peninsular War. By arrangement Beresford's visit to Portugal that October was styled private, but his nearness to the Portuguese King was quickly demonstrated when he was granted an audience the day after his arrival in Lisbon. A private visit it may have been, but within days Beresford was reporting to Wellington on the state of the Portuguese army and in particular its loss of discipline. Thornton for his part reported to Canning that the King was anxious to involve Beresford in royal service and spoke of him resuming command of the Portuguese army. Dom João realized however that Beresford and the Conde de Suberra, then Minister for War and the Navy, would find it difficult to work together and once again Beresford prepared to return home.²⁴ Then Dom Miguel acted, effectively taking the King prisoner at the Bemposta palace on 30 April 1824. Beresford, having received a report

24 The Conde de Suberra was attempting to persuade Dom João to enter a continental alliance at this time, an object not to the liking of Great Britain.

of the King's palace being attacked, proceeded there from his own residence, arriving at 8 a.m. Initially, he was denied admittance by the sentries on Dom Miguel's orders. After discussion, an order was given by Dom Miguel permitting Beresford to join Dom João. He found the King in 'the deepest state of affliction and of very strong alarm'. He begged Beresford not to leave him. Beresford remained and an hour later the Queen arrived leaving Beresford in no doubt she was 'at the bottom of this business'. The only minister with the King was the Desembargador Leite. When the diplomatic corps arrived, led by the French Ambassador, Hyde de Neuville; they found the King with Beresford in conference. The Infante, Dom Miguel arrived and promised to submit to authority and obey the King's orders, following which the King, Isabel Maria and Beresford appeared on the balcony to the enthusiastic reaction of the soldiers. In the immediate aftermath of these events Beresford wrote to Wellington, telling the Duke he was being pressed to take the war department and command of the army, but Beresford said he would wait on developments as this was not the time for such a decision.²⁵

The awaited developments were not to Beresford's liking. Even though Dom Miguel had professed allegiance to his father, there were those who felt Dom João was still in danger. These included Suberra and Palmela. Against Beresford's advice Dom João was persuaded to go on board the Royal Navy vessel Windsor Castle for his personal safety. He spent several nights there and indeed held a ball on one occasion. The reason Beresford advised Dom João against going on board was that he felt the King still enjoyed the support of the people and that any such move would be seen as a sign of weakness. He was very upset with Palmela's alliance with others on this point and their friendship does not appear to have ever recovered. Dom Miguel for his part visited his father on board the Windsor Castle and was detained before being sent into exile in France.²⁶

25 See Beresford to Wellington, 5 May 1824, WP1/792/4.

26 Dom Miguel showed considerable spirit. He refused to go to France on a British warship and as a compromise was sent to Brest on a Portuguese frigate accompanied by both a British and French vessel.

There was a slightly less public angle to Beresford's visit to Portugal in 1823-24. He was pursuing a claim for arrears of pay and pension for himself and other officers who had served in the Portuguese army and were dismissed in 1820. While progress on this front was slow, the King ordered that Beresford receive his Marshal's pay of 16 contos *per annum*. In addition, Beresford was now at loggerheads with the Conde de Ega who, having been rehabilitated and returned to Portugal, was seeking to recover the Palácio de Ega. Ultimately Beresford vacated the property for financial compensation.

Returning to England in 1824, Beresford initially expressed interest in the position of Commander-in-Chief in India, but when Wellington sounded him out he declined, indicating his wish to pursue the claims he and his friends had in Portugal. Great Britain was now involved in trying to resolve the unwillingness of the Portuguese crown to recognize Brazilian independence, and to that end sent Charles Stuart as Envoy Extraordinary to Portugal in 1825. He was experienced as he had served in that capacity between 1810 and 1814. He was successful in his mission, concluding a recognition of Brazilian independence on terms acceptable to Dom João, who rewarded him with the title of Count of Machico.²⁷ Stuart had a good relationship with both Wellington and Beresford.²⁸ Before he sailed for Portugal, Beresford asked him to intercede with the government there on the pensions issue, and to try to secure the release of the Conde and Contessa de Juromenha, who had been banished to the Algarve in June 1824.²⁹ Those, including the Juromenhas, who had been exiled to different parts of the kingdom for their political opinions were allowed to return to Lisbon in late 1825.

Dom João VI died on 10 March 1826. Beresford had lost a supporter and friend. However, the passing of the King did not terminate

27 Created additionally Marquess of Angra by D. Maria II in 1826.

28 Stuart's daughter, Louisa Anne, later married Henry Beresford, 3rd Marquis of Waterford.

29 The Visconde and Viscondessa de Juromenha were banished to Silves without being told their crime. It was in all probability because they opposed Suberra and were identified with Beresford. See Beresford to Wellington, 26 June 1824. WP1/794/16. The Viscondessa was again effectively banished when sent to a convent following the liberals capture of Lisbon in 1833. She was later allowed to leave the convent. See Sousa 2018, 174.

Beresford's involvement in Portugal. The King's eldest son, Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, having assumed the title of King of Portugal (Dom Pedro I of Brazil and Dom Pedro IV of Portugal) announced his abdication on the basis that his daughter Maria da Glória would succeed him when she came of age. Meanwhile she was to be betrothed to Dom João's second son, Dom Miguel, who would take an oath to uphold the Constitutional Charter introduced by Dom Pedro.

Initially Isabel Maria, daughter of Dom João VI acted as Regent, having been appointed to preside over a Council of Regency by Dom João shortly before his death. Dom João had not indicated for whom she was to act as Regent, but with Dom Pedro now ruler of Brazil, his brother Dom Miguel was a claimant to the throne of Portugal. During her Regency Isabel Maria and her Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dom Francisco de Almeida, sought the return of Beresford to command the Portuguese army. The request was made in September 1826. Canning, then British Minister for Foreign Affairs, referred the matter to Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister. Wellington was consulted, and he suggested that if Beresford went to Portugal, he should only do so as Commander-in-Chief and not hold any position in cabinet. He doubted Beresford could achieve the objective of disciplining the army under a constitutional government. Liverpool determined, however, that Beresford should not be bound by any particular requirements and that Beresford should go to Portugal and decide for himself whether he wished to re-enter Portuguese service. Beresford travelled to Lisbon in November 1826. At a meeting with the Infanta, Isabel Maria, he insisted that he would not have to report to the Minister for War and that he would need a few British officers to undertake the task. While this request was being considered the situation rapidly deteriorated in Portugal with a Miguelista rising in the Algarve and a Miguelista invasion of Trás-os-Montes from Spain. Beresford told Wellington that in these circumstances he felt it unwise to take command of the army. Portugal, he said was in a state of anarchy.³⁰

30 See Beresford to Sir John Poo Beresford, 9 December 1826. BL, Add MS 40, 390.

The British government responded quickly to the developing situation. On foot of a request by the Portuguese government, six thousand troops were sent to Lisbon, arriving just before Christmas 1826 under General William Henry Clinton. Beresford agreed to assume temporary command of the Portuguese army; even though his request for independence from the Minister for War and for the employment of some British officers had been rejected. He reasoned his temporary acceptance would enable the Anglo-Portuguese forces to act together, and he claimed it would also be in the British interest to defeat the insurgents. He made it clear that he was doing so only for so long as active operations were required.³¹ This course of action was approved by the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Lord Liverpool, though it was contrary to the British government's intentions and Clinton's original instructions which provided that the British force was sent to Portugal solely on the basis that it might repel an invasion, and it was not intended to battle internal rebellion. If it was to act in conjunction with Portuguese forces, the British government wanted to ensure an independent command, unless the entire Anglo-Portuguese force was subject to a British general. Placing Beresford under the Minister for War would fetter his discretion, though it would seem from Liverpool's approval of Beresford taking the appointment on that basis, that he regarded it as the best that could be achieved and he felt Beresford would still not allow the British troops to be used to counter insurgency.³² In the event, Beresford's appointment to command the Portuguese army did not proceed and he returned to England, arriving in Plymouth on 26 February 1827.³³ This may well have been because of the success of the Conde de Villa Flor in repulsing a corps which entered Portugal from Spain. Clinton's force remained in Portugal until April 1828.

Meanwhile, back in England Beresford maintained a finger on the pulse of events in Portugal. He corresponded with various parties there and kept both Liverpool and Wellington informed of developments. In late summer, he cautioned against encouraging Palmela,

31 See Beresford to Wellington, 1 January 1827, WP1/879/2.

32 See Liverpool to Beresford, 23 January 1827, WP1/908/1.

33 See Beresford to Wellington, 26 February 1827, WP1/883/16.

then Portuguese ambassador in London, to go back to Portugal as, he and Suberra had been the cause of Dom Miguel's earlier banishment by Dom João in 1824. He expected such a move to put Palmela on a collision course with Dom Miguel who he suspected was on the point of going to Portugal.³⁴ He advised that if Dom Miguel was appointed Regent it was likely he would be proclaimed king.³⁵

1828 was a year of change in both Great Britain and Portugal. On 24 January Wellington became Prime Minister and appointed Beresford Master-General of Ordnance, still at that time a cabinet position. Dom Miguel, having agreed to take an oath to support the Constitutional Charter and act as Regent on his betrothal to Maria da Glória, returned to Portugal in February. He took the oath on 26 February, but within months he had rejected the terms of his appointment and was declared King. Only Spain, The Holy See and the USA recognized Dom Miguel as King. Towards the end of the year Maria da Glória arrived in England from Brazil. She stayed at Laleham House outside London while in England. She was well received, spent Christmas with the royal family at Windsor, but internal misgivings meant the British government was slow to recognise Maria da Glória as Queen of Portugal. Beresford visited her while she was at Laleham house and reportedly professed allegiance to her.³⁶ On its face a surprising act from one who was deeply conservative, but notwithstanding Wellington's preference for Dom Miguel, based on the Duke's dislike of liberalism, Beresford apparently had his own doubts. That the arrival of Maria da Glória in England was a matter of public interest is of no doubt. In December, the parliamentary record suggested the government recognized Maria as Queen, but de facto it continued to support Dom Miguel. The perceived duplicity of the British government was the subject of press comment and caricature.³⁷ (Fig1)

34 See Beresford to Wellington, 8 August 1827 and anonymous memorandum from Portugal sent by Beresford to Wellington 20 August 1827, WP1/895/19 and WP1/910/13.

35 See Beresford to Wellington, 5 September 1827, WP1/897/4.

36 See Lady Holland to Charles Richard Fox, 1 June 1829. *Apud* Ilchester 1946, 104.

37 One such caricature was drawn by the Dublin artist, John Doyle (1797-1868). His pen name was 'H.B.' In the caricature shown here, King George IV is shown welcoming the nine-year-old Queen Maria II of Portugal. Present also are the Duke of Wellington, Lord Aberdeen (Foreign Minister) and Marshal Viscount Beresford. George IV is quoted saying 'Say no more, England expects every man will do his duty'.



Fig.1 “A Political Riddle. George IV, Maria da Gloria, the Duke of Wellington, Earl of Aberdeen and Marshal Viscount Beresford” by John Doyle, 1829 (author’s collection).

The experience for her must have been humiliating. Lord Aberdeen, then Foreign Secretary, told the Marquis de Barbacena that he thought the government would send Beresford to Portugal to persuade Dom Miguel to resume his position as Regent, apologise to Dom Pedro and ask for the hand in marriage of Maria da Glória.³⁸ Eventually having travelled to Vienna, Maria da Glória returned in 1829 to Brazil.

The link between Wellington and Beresford remained strong. Beresford was ill in the early part of 1830 and spent much time at a German spa. Wellington wished to send him back to Portugal as

38 The Marquis de Barbacena, Felisberto Caldeira Brant, was a general in the Brazilian army, but also a diplomat who accompanied Maria da Glória to England.

ambassador, and offered him the post on 24 October.³⁹ Beresford replied saying he was surprised by the offer as he was now involved in other matters but would see Wellington the following week and let him know his decision. In November, probably before Beresford had made his decision, the Tory government fell. Wellington ceased to be Prime Minister and the proposal was not renewed by the incoming Whig government of Lord Grey. The new administration was overt in its support for Dom Pedro and Maria da Glória, though Wellington expressed the view that support for them would not make her Queen. Instead, he advocated recognition of Dom Miguel.⁴⁰ During the years of Dom Miguel's rule, Beresford and Wellington were frequently in contact on the subject of Portugal including the defence of the country against French attack. In July 1832, forces loyal to Pedro and Maria da Glória sailed from Terceira Island in the Azores and landed north of Porto. After a sanguinary civil war, Dom Miguel eventually conceded defeat by the Concession of Evoramonte signed on 26 May 1834. Abandoning his claim to the throne he went into exile.

When Wellington sought to form a further government in 1834, he again offered Beresford the position of Master-General of the Ordnance, but ultimately Sir Robert Peel became Prime Minister and he appointed Sir George Murray, another soldier who had served as Wellington's Quartermaster-General in Portugal in the Peninsular War. Beresford's involvement with Portuguese affairs was at an end. Indeed, recently married to his cousin, Louisa, he bowed out of politics substantially, though retaining the Governorship of Jersey and an interest in Irish parliamentary elections. Beresford did continue to enjoy his Portuguese pension awarded him by Dom João, the Prince and King whom he had supported, and who had supported him, throughout the Peninsular War and afterwards until his own death in 1826.

Beresford has been represented in many accounts as the autocratic ruler of Portugal from 1814 to 1820. A more realistic interpretation would be to see his role as that of a faithful servant and devoted friend

39 See Wellington to Beresford, 24 October 1830, WP1/1148/48.

40 See Wellington, draft memorandum, 30 August 1831, WP1/1207/8. Draft speech post September 1831, WP1/1209/6.

to Dom João. Beresford no doubt also represented the British interest and its commercial aims, and from time to time this gave rise to a conflict of interest. The British government sought stability and influence in Portugal. For Beresford, security would be achieved through the return of Dom João to Portugal immediately after the conclusion of the Peninsular War, an aim he was not able to achieve. Conservative in many areas himself, though he supported Catholic relief in Ireland, his rapport with Dom João was arguably a fairly natural alliance. It offered both parties advantages. Dom João maintained his authority in Lisbon, while Beresford exercised a degree of power he would not have had as a Lieutenant-General at home. Without being a member of the Regency Council, he did enjoy access to it. For the most part, he must have enjoyed his Portuguese experience post the end of the war, for had he not done so, he would in all probability have resigned, and, on returning home, been appointed to the governorship of one of Britain's more prestigious colonies.

Beresford's primary achievement in Portugal had been the rebuilding of the Portuguese army, beginning in 1809, and rendering it one of the finest in Europe. In doing so, while he stressed discipline and training, he sought to ensure loyalty to the crown. His advancement of officers on merit rather than social status brought to the fore men who would later challenge the absolutist way of rule he himself supported in Portugal. Castigated for his authoritarian approach to Portuguese affairs, it was explicable in circumstances where the royal family, to which he owed allegiance, refused to return to Portugal, which in turn was ruled by a divided nobility. While Beresford despaired of the political scheming and ineffective government in Portugal, it was conflict over military matters which divided him from the Regency. Clothing, pay, armament and preparedness were his watchwords, and after the war the government of Portugal, not unnaturally, wished to curb the power and avoid the expense (including the cost of British officers) of a large standing army. There lay the seeds of dissension. In the words of Virgil however, Beresford might have claimed with respect to the first quarter of the nineteenth century in Portugal *et quorum pars magna fui*.

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I) Manuscript sources (and abbreviations)

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 NA National Archives, Kew, London
 NAM National Army Museum, London.
 Unpublished manuscript of Harold V. Livermore: Life of Beresford.
 NYA North Yorkshire Archives, Northallerton
 PRONI Public Record Office Northern Ireland
 WP Wellington Papers, University of Southampton

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