

The City of Oporto at the End of the Nineteenth Century as Viewed by American Diplomats in Portugal

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THIS CHAPTER IS part of a wider project on diplomatic and commercial relations between Portugal and the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is based predominantly on American sources, the dispatches from United States ministers in Portugal and from American consuls in Lisbon and Oporto. These documents have been little studied by scholars and bring a new perspective to the situation.

Oporto was, and remains, the second most important city of Portugal, a bustling seaport as well as a prominent center for domestic and international trade. It was undoubtedly the major urban center of the north of Portugal and exerted a significant influence throughout that part of the country. By the end of the nineteenth century, Oporto had proportionally more trade and more industry than Lisbon, the capital. In fact, both cities controlled banking, commerce, and industry throughout the country.¹

The 1896 report of the United States consular agent of Oporto reported that the city had about 160,000 inhabitants, was healthy and situated on the banks of the river Douro, which was "navigable for ships until 18 feet draft of water." Larger vessels, however, had to anchor in the new harbor of Leixões. The principal industries were cotton and flour mills. Despite the significant economic role of the city, only three American citizens were residing there: a dentist, born in the United

¹A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal*, 2d. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 2:27.

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dedication and who always defended the interests of the United States. R. H. Kinchant, vice and deputy consul at Lisbon, when informing the Department of State of William Stüve's death, wrote that Stüve had "discharged with marked accuracy and judgement the duties of the important Agency in that city."¹¹ Consul William Stüve was succeeded in this post by his eldest son, who listed among his qualifications service between 1892 and 1894 as secretary of the Portuguese consul general in New York.¹²

During the almost thirty years in which William Stüve was representative of the United States at Oporto, the country functioned "under a stable two-party system known as *rotativismo*." In this system "the two major political parties rotated in office at fair regular intervals." During this period Portugal became highly centralized, with Lisbon becoming the major, and sometimes only, center for government, politics, and administration.¹³

Trade between the United States and Portugal was flourishing, and in 1879 the American consul in Lisbon stated that "by far the larger part of the importations in Portugal from the United States consist of wheat and corn."¹⁴ Statistics for the years 1873 to 1875, published in *Notes on Portugal*, show that the principal products imported from the United States were tobacco leaf, oil for lamps, tallow, and wheat. Articles exported to the United States were mainly salt, wines, cork, and gums.¹⁵

In 1881, Consul Diman reported that trade between the two countries had increased over the previous ten or fifteen years, yet the average value of exports from Portugal remained the same, while the value and volume of products imported from the United States increased. The year 1880 saw "a very decided increase in the exports from Lisbon and Oporto." The principal product exported through the Douro river was obviously port wine. Henry Diman writes that the value of port wine sent to the United States increased from \$62,436.33 in 1879 to \$95,826.73 in 1880. On the other hand, the volume of imports from the United States was extensive and was increasing every year, especially after 1865, when foreign cereals were allowed into the country. He also affirmed that the lack of regular

¹¹USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Consuls in Lisbon, Portugal, 1791-1906. Dispatch no. 170 from R. H. Kinchant, American vice and deputy consul to assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 22 October, 1905, T180, roll 11, microfilm.

¹²USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Consuls in Lisbon, Portugal, 1791-1906. Dispatch no. 170 from R. H. Kinchant, American vice and deputy consul to assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 22 October, 1905, T180, roll 11, microfilm.; see also Application for Office of William Stüve, dated Oporto, 1 January 1906.

¹³Douglas Wheeler, *Republican Portugal: A Political History 1910-1926* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 27.

¹⁴USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, vol. 2. Dispatch from Henry W. Diman, American consul, to Frederick W. Leward, assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 2 August 1879, 69.

¹⁵E. A. G., *Notes on Portugal* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Catholic Publishing, 1876), 121-22.

States and who lived with his family in Oporto, and two Portuguese who had become naturalized Americans.²

The United States had diplomatic representation in Oporto from an early date. At first U.S. interests were represented by Portuguese merchants acting as deputy consuls,³ and after 1840 a U.S. citizen was appointed as consul-in-residence. In 1840, the first Luso-American Treaty of Commerce and Navigation was signed.⁴ Despite the prominent role of Oporto in the political and commercial life of Portugal, the United States maintained a resident consul in the city only until 1876.⁵ The consulate of Oporto was abolished because Congress failed to make an appropriation for the consular salary,⁶ and not because Oporto had become unimportant for American trade. Immediately after the abolition of this office, William Stüve, a German merchant living in Oporto since 1857⁷ and former American vice consul, was appointed consular agent at Oporto. This nomination was supported by Henry W. Diman, consul of the United States in Lisbon, and was later confirmed by the Department of State.⁸ William Stüve commenced his new duties on 22 October 1876, when he received the certificate of his nomination "as consular agent of the U.S. for Oporto." His allowance amounted to \$200 or \$300 annually, derived from consular fees.⁹

William Stüve served as consular agent until his death on 20 December 1905.¹⁰ His dispatches showed him to be a conscientious man who served with

²National Archives of the United States (hereafter USNA), American Consulate Oporto, Portugal, dispatches to the Department of State, 17 July 1865–May 1891, C8.1. Report from the Consular Agency in Oporto given by William Stüve, consular agent, dated Oporto, May 1896.

³Jorge Martins Ribeiro, *A Comunidade Britânica do Porto durante as Invasões francesas 1807–1811* (Porto: Fundação Eng. António de Almeida, 1990), 26.

⁴Jorge Martins Ribeiro, "The American presence in Oporto in the beginning of the 19th century," in *New Lights on the Peninsular War: International Congress on the Iberian Peninsula, Selected Papers 1780–1840*, ed. British Historical Society of Portugal (Lisbon: British Historical Society of Portugal, 1991), 298 and "Economia e politica no burgo portuense através da correspondência dos consules dos Estados Unidos no Porto (1841–1851)," *Revista da Faculdade de Letras—História* 9 (1992): 175, 179–82.

⁵USNA, American Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book (1870–1886), dispatch no. 30 from Henry W. Diman, United States consul at Lisbon, to John L. Cadwalader, assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 18 October 1876, pp. 40–41.

⁶USNA, American Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Special Instructions, vol. 75 (12 April 1873–22 December 1892). Dispatch no. 28 from John L. Cadwalader, acting secretary of state, to Henry W. Diman, United States consul at Lisbon, dated Washington, 10 November 1876.

⁷USNA, American Consulate Oporto, Portugal, Dispatches to the Department of State, 17 July 1865–May 1891, C8.1. Report from the Consular Agency in Oporto given by William Stüve, consular agent, dated Oporto, May 1896.

⁸USNA, American Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Special Instructions, vol. 75, 12 April 1873–22 December, 1892. Dispatch no. 28 from John L. Cadwalader, acting secretary of state to Henry W. Diman, United States consul at Lisbon, dated Washington, 10 November 1876.

⁹USNA, American Consulate, Oporto, Portugal, Dispatches to the Department of State, 17 July 1865–May 1896, C8.1. Dispatch no. 1 from William Stüve, consular agent at Oporto to John L. Cadwalader, acting secretary of state, dated Oporto, 27 October 1876.

¹⁰USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Consuls in Lisbon, Portugal, 1791–1906. Dispatch no. 170 from R. H. Kinchant, American vice and deputy consul to assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 22 October, 1905, T180, roll 11, microfilm.

communications between Portugal and the United States hindered the development of bilateral trade. In addition, many American products were imported into Portugal via England. These goods were more expensive, having been classified by Portuguese customs as being of English origin. Diman regretted that out of a total of 140 vessels arriving and of 116 ships cleared by United States ports only twelve were sailing under the American flag.¹⁶

The new consul general in Lisbon, John M. Francis, wrote in 1882 an extensive report on Portuguese agriculture that "the Port and Madeira wines still hold their place." Port wine was considered an article of superior quality, and the quantity exported to the United States in 1881 was worth \$110,382.87 and in 1882, \$113,006.27, a substantial increase since 1879.

As impressive as these numbers may sound, we must not forget that this trade was somewhat problematic. Much of the wine exported was sent first to London, where it was transhipped to the United States. Therefore, it did not appear in the Portuguese records as exported to North America.

Besides wine, cattle was also a major export from Oporto. The north of Portugal supplied the major quota of Portuguese cattle sold abroad. In 1882 this trade amounted to \$2,944,752. In the same year live cattle imports were valued at \$1,139,469 and the 2,781 cattle-on-the-hoof entering the country were worth \$773,764. The animals came from Spain, entered northern Portugal, and were intended to go to the coast for shipment. The American consul declared himself fully convinced that "three fourths of the exports of living cattle from Portugal" were to Great Britain.¹⁷

By 1883 it was reported that at Oporto there were usually about 4,000 tons of "steam coals" on hand. This knowledge was obviously important to steamship companies employed in the bilateral trade.¹⁸ It seems that Luso-American commerce continued to prosper during the next years. In the 1886 "annual report on the trade, commerce and navigation of Portugal" the deputy consul general at

¹⁶The consul also reproduces the total number of ships entered and cleared from the ports of Lisbon and Oporto in 1879:

	Lisbon		Oporto	
	steamers	sailing vessels	steamers	sailing vessels
ships entered	1,216	1,719	281	748
ships cleared	1,231	1,770	277	760

USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, vol. 2, Dispatch from Henry W. Diman, American consul, to John Hay, assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 3 March 1881, pp. 94-96.

¹⁷USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, vol. 2. Dispatch from John M. Francis, American consul general, to John Davis, assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 1883, pp. 211-12.

¹⁸USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, vol. 2. Dispatch from J. B. Wilbor, American vice deputy consul general to the assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 11 July 1883, p. 225.

Lisbon wrote "the commerce of Portugal exhibits an uniform and gradual increase" at the same time as products exported from the United States, such as grains, petroleum, and staves, were "fully maintained in quantity" and not threatened by competition.

Exports of wines of lower quality increased in volume, but quantities of the best port wine exported remained constant. Consul J. B. Wilbor stressed the excellent potential of Portugal for wine production. He noted that out of half of the uncultivated land of the country, about 50 percent of the soil was suitable for grapes and that an increase in production would be possible only if farmers had an assured market for their product. This condition was fulfilled because of the great demand for Portuguese wine in France, whose own vineyards were ravaged by the filoxera blight. This country was the final destination of all ordinary Portuguese table wines exported to continental Europe.¹⁹ Large quantities of cheap wines from Portugal were then exported to Bordeaux, where they were "improved" and then shipped to American markets as genuine Bordeaux wine. In this way French growers could supply the American market and diminish losses caused by the filoxera.²⁰ The United States deputy consul general at Lisbon was fully convinced that augmented production of Portuguese wines would create a larger demand for staves; nearly two-thirds of the staves imported by Portugal came from the United States.²¹

The promising upward trend of wine exports to France was not sustained. Portuguese growers, exhilarated by new market conditions in their favor, demanded high prices. French importers responded by buying wines from Spain and Italy, where they could get an equivalent product at lower cost.²²

During the 1880s a major structure was built near Oporto, the artificial harbor of Leixões, about four miles north from the entrance of the Douro, and was to become in the twentieth century the oceanic port for the city since modern larger vessels were no longer able to enter the river and anchor at the quays of downtown Oporto. Nevertheless, the first use of the new facilities was to give shelter to ships in bad weather. In 1887, when the United States consul general at Lisbon visited Leixões, the harbor was still under construction, which had begun three years before and was expected to be finished by the end of 1889. During this

¹⁹USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, vol. 2. Annual report on the trade, commerce, and navigation of Portugal from J. B. Wilbor, American vice deputy consul general, to James Porter, assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 3 February 1883.

²⁰USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, vol. 2. Dispatch from John M. Francis, American consul general, to John Davis, assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 1883, pp. 211-12.

²¹USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, vol. 2. Annual report on the trade, commerce, and navigation of Portugal from J. B. Wilbor, American vice deputy consul general, to James Porter, assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 3 February 1883.

²²USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book, 1886-1896, vol. 3. Dispatch from J. B. Wilbor, American vice deputy consul general, to assistant secretary of state, dated Lisbon, 1887, p. 60.

visit the diplomat was accompanied by the engineer in charge, and he learned accurate technical specifications about the breakwaters and the depth of the harbor. He estimated the cost of this structure at \$5,200.00.²³

Fourteen years later the provisional government of the Portuguese Republic wanted the "port works of Oporto" to be built "by American contractors or that American bankers raise a loan to that purpose."²⁴ The civil governor of Oporto supported this solution. Unfortunately none of the contractors contacted showed any interest in this enterprise. United States companies probably feared the unsettled conditions of Portugal. The country was in a state of unrest after a change of regime during the previous year while the republican governments were trying to implement reforms and normalize public life. But the Bureau of Trade Relations was of the opinion that the reason American companies did not respond was because of the great quantity of business they had in their own country.²⁵

The preceding description has focused on the economic and commercial questions that preoccupied United States diplomats. We now turn to political and social changes within Portugal that would be reflected in the country's policies and economic practices in the international arena.

The 1870s and the 1880s were "followed by a deep political, economic and financial crisis" when republicanism and socialism became competing ideologies.²⁶ Fernando de Sousa writes that this crisis manifested itself in the period known as the Great Depression (1873-1896). Europe was flooded by agricultural products from America, Australia, and Africa, and consequently the price of cereals fell. Agriculture as well as industry suffered. Because the country had only rudimentary industrial development, the crisis in Portugal was mainly agricultural and commercial.

The last two decades of the century were also a period of great emigration to Brazil. Funds repatriated by these emigrants prevented the bankruptcy of the Portuguese State. But the proclamation in 1889 of the republic in Brazil and subsequent legislation of its provisional government slowed the flow of money to Portugal. The bankruptcy of the British company that had underwritten Portuguese finances precipitated the crisis, and whereas before 1889 Oporto had enjoyed an enviable industrial, commercial, and financial position, the city began

²³USNA, United States Consulate, Lisbon, Portugal, Dispatch Book 1886-1896, vol. 3. Dispatch no. 54 from Lewis to Alvey A. Adee, Asst. Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 November 1887, pp. 74-76.

²⁴USNA, Records of the Department of State Relating to International Affairs on Portugal, 1910-1929. Economic matters, dispatch from George Lollirard, Charge d'Affairs ad interim to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 28 November 1911, roll 11, microfilm.

²⁵USNA, Records of the Department of State Relating to International Affairs on Portugal, 1910-1929. Economic matters, dispatch from M. N. Davis of Department of State, Bureau Trade Relations, to Chandler Halls, third assistant secretary of state, dated Washington, 20 June 1911 and dispatch from Chandler Halls, third assistant secretary of state, to M. N. Davis, Bureau of Trade Relations, dated Washington, 22 June 1911, roll 16, microfilm.

²⁶Marques, *History of Portugal*, 72.

to show symptoms of the crisis that would shake all Portugal. Oporto fell prey to disorders that included confrontations between the police and the people, insults to the king, and worker strikes; in addition, prices of essential foodstuffs such as cereals, meat, olive oil, and potatoes increased. The nature of the crisis was mainly financial. Banks in Oporto had, in part, financed the construction of a railroad between Salamanca in Spain and Barca de Alva and Vilar Formoso, two villages near the Portuguese-Spanish border. This investment proved disastrous and these banks faced severe problems. Fernando de Sousa also wrote that the financial crisis of 1891–1892 was precipitated by the British ultimatum of 11 January 1890.²⁷ The English government forced Portugal to abandon a large part of its African empire, notably the large area between Angola and Mozambique that corresponds to today's Zambia and Zimbabwe.²⁸ Portuguese colonization and occupation of the region collided with the imperialism of Great Britain in the African continent. This led to a "popular national outcry" against such preeminence,²⁹ which tainted the prestige of the monarchy, and the king was accused of neglecting the overseas territories and jeopardizing the nation's interests.³⁰ As a consequence, some republicans planned armed conspiracies.³¹

The first Portuguese republican revolution took place in Oporto on 31 January 1891. According to Joel Serrão, this rebellion capped the deep national commotion caused by the British ultimatum and played an important role in the consolidation of power by the republicans, who succeeded in overthrowing the monarchy nineteen years later. The military uprising of 31 January 1891 ended on the same day with the defeat of the insurgents.³²

The United States representatives were concerned with economic matters and were more than mere economic agents of their country, but they were also attentive to political issues. The United States minister in Portugal and the consuls at Lisbon and Oporto were forced to take an interest in the trials following the suppression of the rebellion and went so far as to provide legal assistance to one of the insurgents, while at the same time advising Portuguese authorities of their doubts on the sentences to be issued by the special tribunal.

²⁷Fernando de Sousa, *O Porto e a Revolta do 31 de Janeiro* (Porto: Athena, 1977), 16–23.

²⁸A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *História de Portugal*, 4th ed. (Lisbon: Palas Editores, 1977), 2:108.

²⁹Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 41.

³⁰Marques, *History of Portugal*, 72.

³¹Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 41.

³²Joel Serrão, "Revolta de 31 Janeiro de 1891," in *Dicionário de História de Portugal* (1979). For more detailed information of the events of the military uprising of 31 January 1891 see Fernando de Sousa, *O Porto e a Revolta do 31 de Janeiro*, Basílio Teles, *Do ultimatum ao 31 de Janeiro* (Porto, 1905), Heliodoro Salgado, *A insurreição de Janeiro* (Porto: Empresa Literária Typográfica, 1894) and João Chagas, *História da revolta do Porto de 31 de Janeiro de 1891* (Lisboa: Empresa Democrática de Portugal, 1901).

On 4 February, the United States consular agent at Oporto sent a report to J. B. Wilbor, vice consul general at Lisbon, that the revolt of three regiments was "caused by instigation of some republicans, or better call them socialists because it seems that they had intention to practice the greatest excesses after succeeding."³³ It is interesting that this respectable German merchant considered the socialists worse than republicans and capable of the greatest atrocities. Basilio Teles, writer and republican theoretician, wrote that the republican ringleaders neither tried to seduce the proletariat of Oporto nor did they seek the support of the Socialist Party for the revolution. Fernando de Sousa also asserts that this political organization did not participate in the rebellion. At this time the party already had inside itself the germs of the dissent which would lead to the division in 1892 of the Portuguese socialist and worker movement. The socialists considered the republican bourgeois as corrupt as the monarchists.³⁴

Consul William Stüve also reported that the rapid suppression of the insurrection was attributable to the municipal guard's remaining faithful to the monarchy and because there were no high officers among the rebels. Fighting in the streets of Oporto only lasted a few hours. Twenty persons were killed, and between seventy and eighty were wounded.³⁵ Minister Wilbor, some days later in a letter to Washington, stated that most of the dead and wounded, which he estimated at sixty to seventy, were rebel soldiers.³⁶

Immediately after the suppression of this military uprising, the government enacted repressive measures. A state of siege was declared, martial law was proclaimed in the city, and hundreds of persons—soldiers and civilians alike—were taken prisoner.³⁷ Four hundred eighty rebels were arrested and brought before a martial court held on board vessels anchored in the harbor of Leixões.³⁸

³³USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, to J. B. Wilbor, United States Vice consul general at Lisbon, dated Oporto, 4 February 1891. Copy enclosed in the dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

³⁴Sousa, *O Porto e a Revolta do 31 de Janeiro*, 39.

³⁵USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, to J. B. Wilbor, United States vice consul general at Lisbon, dated Oporto, 4 February, 1891. Copy enclosed in the dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

³⁶USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

³⁷USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891 and copy enclosed in the mentioned dispatch of the letter from William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto to J. B. Wilbor, United States Vice consul general at Lisbon, dated Oporto, 4 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

³⁸Sousa, *O Porto e a Revolta do 31 de Janeiro*, 16, 36-37.

These events were noted with a certain indifference by the United States representatives in Portugal. In fact, the minister was more concerned with African questions that involved American interests and with bilateral trade between the two countries than with this aborted rebellion. Given the limited effects of the uprising beyond Oporto, such reaction is not surprising.³⁹

The diplomats were forced to take an interest in the trials of the rebels. One of the insurgents, Joaquim Thomas de Brito, claimed to be a naturalized American citizen, and "applied to the consular agent of the United States at Oporto for protection." The minister immediately took all necessary steps to ensure him official protection. The minister requested a more detailed report from the consular agent at Oporto,⁴⁰ and addressed a note to the Portuguese Foreign Office, calling attention to this arrest and asking for more information. At the same time, the minister reminded the Lisbon government of all the rights Joaquim de Brito enjoyed as an American citizen living in Portugal.⁴¹ He also transmitted to the Portuguese authorities his reservations about the legality of any sentence pronounced against an American citizen by any specialized tribunal. Since this was no ordinary trial, the minister requested that the consular representative in Oporto be allowed to attend the proceedings and the trial.⁴² Nevertheless, he declared himself ready to cooperate "so far as might be necessary, with His Majesty's government in enforcing the laws of the Land against any citizen of the United States who might be found guilty of violating the same." Although these words are probably just polite formal expressions, they really show the desire of the American diplomat not to involve himself in Portuguese internal politics. He wrote to the State Department that the accused deserved punishment for violating the laws of the country, but he repeated that Joaquim de Brito could be prosecuted only "within the regularly con-

³⁹USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891, and copy enclosed in the mentioned dispatch of the letter from William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, to J. B. Wilbor, United States Vice consul general at Lisbon, dated Oporto, 4 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁴⁰USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891, and copy enclosed in the mentioned dispatch of the letter from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, dated Lisbon, 5 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁴¹USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891, and copy enclosed in the mentioned dispatch of the letter from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to J. Vicente Barboza du Bocage, Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated Lisbon, 5 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁴²USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891 and copy enclosed in the mentioned dispatch of the letter from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to J. Vicente Barboza du Bocage, Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated Lisbon, 6 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

stituted lines of a judicial administration."⁴³ William Stüve also declared himself convinced of this man's culpability and fully agreed that he should suffer the consequences of his actions.⁴⁴

There were, however, doubts as to the legitimacy of claims by this insurgent to American citizenship. Joaquim Thomas de Brito had been born in Portugal, had emigrated to the United States in 1862, had been naturalized in Brooklyn, had worked as a clerk in New York until 1870, and had spent two years in Brazil; he returned to North America, and finally went back to Portugal in 1879. There he held public office and the minister stated that "he had represented himself as a Portuguese subject." Documents issued by the office of the civil governor of Oporto show that he was registered as elector and eligible for election in Vila Nova de Gaia, where he had held an official post. By having accepted and discharged official duties, Joaquim de Brito had renounced his American citizenship and had resumed his Portuguese one.⁴⁵ In the meeting between the Portuguese foreign minister and Minister George Batcheller, the former assured the latter that, regardless of the outcome of the investigation and of the trial, the death penalty would almost certainly not be enforced. Instead, the court would opt for exile,⁴⁶ and this punishment did not seem to be regarded as excessive by the diplomat. In fact, two factors prevented the enforcement of capital punishment. Portugal had abolished the death penalty for political offenses in 1852, and for other crimes in 1867.⁴⁷ In addition, the government feared that it would face a hostile public opinion if the sentences were severe.⁴⁸

The request made by Minister Batcheller to have William Stüve present at the trials was not granted by the government of Lisbon on the grounds that Joaquim Thomas de Brito was not an American citizen but a Portuguese subject. The civil

⁴³USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁴⁴USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, to J. B. Wilbor, United States vice consul general at Lisbon, dated Oporto, 4 February, 1891. Copy enclosed in the Dispatch from Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February, 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁴⁵USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February, 1891, and copies enclosed in the mentioned dispatch of certificates of Governo Civil do Porto, 3^a. Repartição, from the Interim Civil Governor Joaquim Taibner de Moraes to William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, dated Oporto, 6 February, 1891, and from Junta Geral do Districto do Porto, dated Oporto, 6 February, 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁴⁶USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, to J. B. Wilbor, United States vice consul general at Lisbon, dated Oporto, 4 February, 1891. Copy enclosed in the dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 18 February, 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁴⁷Ruy d'Abreu Torres, "Pena de Morte," in *Dicionário de História de Portugal* (1979).

⁴⁸Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 41.

code determined that any person who had lost his or her Portuguese nationality by naturalization in another country, reassumed his or her former citizenship as soon as he or she returned to Portugal and took up "legal abode." Joaquim de Brito's name did not appear in any of the records for foreigners living in Vila Nova de Gaia, where he resided and, as we have seen, enjoyed privileges and had discharged duties reserved exclusively for Portuguese citizens.⁴⁹

To support their decision, the Portuguese authorities produced documents that proved their position.⁵⁰ Despite Portugal's initial refusal, William Stüve was allowed to attend de Brito's trials.⁵¹ Although the minister and Stüve were fully convinced of this man's culpability—both had doubts of his right to claim United States nationality—they took every necessary step to secure a fair trial for the prisoner as an American.⁵² The diplomats got deeply involved with these events, no doubt because it was a matter of principle. The prisoner, until proof to the contrary was obtained, was to be treated as a United States citizen. Furthermore, they did not want to create a bad precedent by acting prematurely in not giving the appropriate juridical and legal assistance to this insurgent until his claims to citizenship were validated or rejected by competent authorities. Finally, a telegram sent from Washington on 18 March 1891, and signed by Secretary of State James Blaine, informed George Batcheller that Joaquim Thomas de Brito had lost his American citizenship and was not entitled to the protection of the government of the United States. Joaquim Thomas de Brito, however, was acquitted.⁵³

⁴⁹USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790–1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 25 February 1891, and copy enclosed in the mentioned dispatch of the letter from J. Barboza du Bocage, Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated Lisbon, 12 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁵⁰USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790–1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 25 February 1891, inclosing copies of certificates issued by Administração do Concelho de Gaia, dated Vila Nova de Gaia, 14 February 1891; by António Rodrigues Ribeiro dos Santos, Secretary of the Town Hall of Vila Nova de Gaia, 14 February 1891; by Governo Civil do Districto do Porto, 3a. Repartição, from Joaquim Talbner de Moraes, Interim Civil Governor to William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, dated Oporto, 6 February 1891, and by Junta Geral do Districto do Porto, dated Oporto, 14 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁵¹USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790–1906. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 25 February 1891, and letter enclosed in the mentioned dispatch from William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, to J. B. Wilbor, United States vice consul general at Lisbon, dated Oporto, 22 February 1891, roll 35, microfilm.

⁵²*Ibid.* and letter from George S. Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to William Stüve, United States consular agent at Oporto, dated Lisbon, 23 February 1891.

⁵³USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790–1906. Telegram from James G. Blaine, Secretary of State, to George S. Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, dated Washington, 18 March 1891, and *Revolta Militar no Porto em 31 de Janeiro de 1891. Os Conselhos de Guerra e respectivas sentenças. Relatorios publicados pelo Commercio do Porto* (Porto: Typographia do Commercio do Porto, 1891), 459.

After the uprising, 480 men were arrested but only two officers, seven civilians, twenty-two sergeants and 237 corporals and soldiers were convicted. Some were sentenced up to twenty years of exile and others to eighteen months of imprisonment,⁵⁴ and as the Portuguese foreign minister had assured George Batcheller, no prisoner was sentenced to death. In 1892, to commemorate the presentation of the Golden Rose by Pope Leo XIII to Queen D. Maria Amélia of Bragança, the king promulgated "a decree of amnesty to many political prisoners including the subalterns and privates" who had taken part in the revolt of 31 January.⁵⁵

Although this uprising was easily and promptly suppressed, other plots took place in subsequent years, until the final triumph of the republicans in 1910. The rotativist system began to disintegrate, especially after 1890, and personal and factional disputes broke out between monarchist politicians.⁵⁶

During the political turmoil that swept the country, Oporto continued trading with the United States, importing wheat, cotton, staves, petroleum, pitchpine timber, and other articles, which in 1895 amounted to \$1,683,000. In the same year, exports were worth \$221,500, and consisted mainly of port wine, crude argols, and cork.⁵⁷ In 1896, port wine shipped from Oporto to America was valued at \$108,517.29 and from Lisbon at \$2,764.72.⁵⁸ During the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, the displays of Portuguese wines were very successful, and they were highly appreciated by the American public. In 1897, in Washington, a commercial agreement was concluded between the two countries, and in 1899 a new agreement on wines and brandies was signed.⁵⁹

⁵⁴Sousa, *O Porto e a Revolta do 31 de Janeiro*, 16.

⁵⁵USNA, *Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906*. Dispatch from George Batcheller, United States Minister at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 8 July 1891, roll 36, microfilm.

⁵⁶Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 44.

⁵⁷Statistics for the year 1895:

Importation in Oporto from the United States	Exportation from Oporto to the United States
Wheat..... \$750,000	Port Wine.....\$126,000
Cotton..... \$505,000	Crude Argols.....\$80,000
Staves..... \$180,000	Cork Wood.....\$11,500
Petroleum..... \$55,000	Sundries..... \$4,000
Pitchpine..... \$38,000	Total.....\$221,500
Sundries..... \$55,000	
Total..... \$1,683,000	

See USNA, American Consulate Oporto, Portugal, *Dispatches to the Department of State*, 7 July, 1865-May 1891, C8.1. Report from the Consular Agency in Oporto given by William Stüve, consular agent, dated Oporto, May 1896.

⁵⁸USNA, American Consulate Lisbon, *Special Instructions*, vol. 77, 8 April, 1896-2 April, 1902, *Statement of exportation of Port Wine to the United States by William Stüve*, dated Oporto, 31 December 1896.

⁵⁹Joaquim Verissimo Serrão. *História de Portugal* (Lisbon: Editorial Verbo, 1988), 10:303.

Before the close of the century, the city would experience even dramatic moments. Oporto was struck by the bubonic plague in 1899. The bacillus that caused the plague was imported from Bombay.⁶⁰ The epidemic began in August 1899. The first dispatches sent to Washington on 12 August stated "about thirty cases have been reported, many of them fatal." The United States consul at Lisbon, on the same date affirmed that, although he had not received official news, the municipal authorities of Oporto were "taking active sanitary measures of a precautionary character."⁶¹ The city was isolated by containment measures, which greatly irritated its inhabitants, who as Maria Emilia Cor-deiro Ferreira wrote, feared the economic repercussions more than the illness itself.⁶²

The plague also struck the famous physician Professor Câmara Pestana, Director of the Institute of Bacteriology, who had been in Oporto "studying the nature and symptoms of the plague."⁶³ An American surgeon from the Marine Hospital Service, Fairfax Irwin, was also in Oporto to investigate the origin of the plague.⁶⁴

Rumors that two cases had appeared in Lisbon were discredited by a telegram of 21 August 1899 sent by Consul Jacob S. Thieriot. He informed Washington that the Portuguese authorities maintained that the plague was confined to Oporto⁶⁵ and reported that between 4 June and 6 September 1899, fifty-eight persons had been struck by the illness and twenty-five had died.⁶⁶ In the end, out of 320 victims of the plague, only 112 died.⁶⁷ The sanitary restrictions put in force during the months the plague ravaged the city were suspended by the decree of 6 February 1900.⁶⁸

⁶⁰Maria Emilia Cordeiro Ferreira, "Epidemias," in *Dicionário de História de Portugal* (1979).

⁶¹USNA, Dispatches from the United States Consuls in Lisbon, 1791-1906, Dispatch from J. B. Wilbor, to the Department of State, dated Lisbon, 12 August 1899, Roll 11, microfilm and Consulate of United States Lisbon, Portugal, dispatch no. 45 from J. B. Wilbor to the Department of State, dated Lisbon, 12 August 1899, pp. 124-25.

⁶²Maria Emilia Cordeiro Ferreira, "Epidemias," in *Dicionário de História de Portugal* (1979).

⁶³USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatches from Jacob S. Thieriot, United States consul at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 14, 16, 17 and 21 November 1899, roll 38, microfilm. These documents are signed by Jacob S. Thieriot as United States Chargé d'Affaires in Lisbon.

⁶⁴USNA, American consulate Lisbon, Portugal, Special Instructions, vol. 77, 8 April, 1896-2 April 1902, dispatch from Alvey A. Adee, Second assistant secretary of state, to Jacob S. Thieriot, dated Lisbon, 28 October 1899.

⁶⁵USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Telegram sent by Jacob S. Thieriot, American consul at Lisbon, to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 21 August 1899, roll 38, microfilm.

⁶⁶USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from Jacob S. Thieriot, United States consul at Lisbon to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, August 21 1899, roll 38, microfilm.

⁶⁷Maria Emilia Cordeiro Ferreira, "Epidemias."

⁶⁸USNA, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906. Dispatch from John Irwin to the Secretary of State, dated Lisbon, 8 February 1900.

The representatives of the United States in Oporto fully recognized the importance of that city. We have seen that it occupied an important place in the trade between the two countries, and that the abolition of the American consulate in the city in 1876 had nothing to do with diminished importance, but was due to financial considerations. (History was to repeat itself. In February 1991, the American authorities once again closed the consulate at Oporto.)

As we have seen, the United States had a German merchant acting as consular agent for almost thirty years, who discharged his duties satisfactorily. Being an important industrial, commercial, and financial center, the city was hit by the crisis that struck Portugal and the world towards the end of the nineteenth century. It was the backdrop to the first republican revolution, not surprisingly, because, since 1820, Oporto had been involved in all the major "democratic movements" important to the consolidation of constitutional monarchy in Portugal. And it is important to stress that this rebellion was influenced by the city's longstanding revolutionary tradition.⁶⁹

United States diplomats did not consider this military uprising either very relevant or very menacing, as can be seen by the tone of their dispatches. They were more concerned with other issues, such as bilateral trade and African questions involving the Portuguese colonies. They became interested in the trials of the rebels not by choice, but because one of the insurgents asked for consular protection, claiming to be an American citizen. As long as it had not determined whether he was entitled to have official assistance, the United States representatives did all in their power to help this man and secure him a fair trial.

It was important for the United States to have diplomatic representation in Oporto in order to ensure the smooth running of the trade between the two countries and to keep the American authorities informed of the significant political and economic occurrences in the city. Although it never seriously rivaled Lisbon, Oporto contributed significantly to diplomatic and commercial relations between Portugal and the United States.

⁶⁹Sousa, *O Porto e a Revolta do 31 de Janeiro*, 50.