

ONCE UPON A TIME: THE OLD BLANDY'S WINE LODGE —PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS STRATEGIES IN MADEIRA (1811–1855)

ERA UMA VEZ O OLD BLANDY'S WINE LODGE — INVESTIMENTOS IMOBILIÁRIOS E ESTRATÉGIAS EMPRESARIAIS NA MADEIRA (1811–1855)

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the strategies of property management developed by John Blandy, a British citizen who founded a family company bearing his name, prospering as a wine shipper and general trader. The analysis of different kinds of sources from Portuguese archives made it possible to understand how this businessman of the early 1800s took advantage of real estate opportunities in Funchal (Madeira Island) throughout his life. His legacy provided the material conditions to ensure the continuity of the firm in the long term, including its historical headquarters in Rua de São Francisco, known today as the Old Blandy's Wine Lodge.

Keywords: Corporate history, Property management, John Blandy, Madeira wine, Funchal

RESUMO

Este artigo revisita os investimentos imobiliários de John Blandy, fundador de uma empresa bicentenária que leva seu nome. Na 1.^a metade do século 19, este cidadão britânico prosperou como exportador de vinho Madeira e comerciante em geral. A análise de diferentes tipos de fontes de arquivos portugueses permitiu compreender como soube aproveitar as oportunidades no porto do Funchal. A estratégia que levou a cabo ao longo da sua vida permitiu assegurar a continuidade da sua firma até hoje, destacando-se a aquisição do conjunto de prédios na esquina da Rua de São Francisco, onde se veio a instalar a histórica sede, conhecida como Old Blandy's Wine Lodge.

Palavras-Chave: História do empreendedorismo, Investimentos imobiliários, John Blandy, Vinho Madeira, Funchal

1. INTRODUCTION

Madeira is a small, mid-Atlantic island. Today, this autonomous region of Portugal is economically insignificant, tourism being its main source of revenue. It is hard to believe that within a few decades of its discovery around 1419, it became the first laboratory for globalization as we now know it. Sugar, and later wine, turned Funchal, the capital of the young colony, into the hub of a large commercial network that soon extended around the whole planet. From the beginning, this port attracted merchants from different nationalities. Among them were many British, who began arriving in the 17th century, rapidly forming the most influential and solid expatriate community. They took advantage of their privileged relations with the colonial empire of

their own nation to prosper as wine shippers and general traders, the two activities complementing each other. John Blandy was one of them. In 1811, he came to the island with his brother Thomas, founding a family company there. Madeira wine was now a commodity in great demand globally, from the 2nd half of the 18th century being sought after as a prestige item, reflecting a cosmopolitan taste. It would make the fortune of intermediaries, such as John, who acted as mediators between local owners of vineyards and the consumers scattered around the world.

The correspondence between members of the family gives us a good idea of Thomas's role abroad, close to customers and suppliers both. This paper proposes another insight into this successful partnership, focusing on how John

ensured from the “back office” the logistical conditions necessary to turn Funchal into the epicentre of the business model adopted. The purpose is to understand how his strategy of real estate investments set the course for the longevity of this family company, the only one owned by descendants of British shippers that continues to make Madeira wine today. After reviewing the facts from previous publications referring to the early days, the methodology adopted and the sources explored will be presented. The main results of the research, which contemplated the period between 1811 and 1855 (the year of John’s death), will be summarized next. Two periods will be distinguished in regard to property management. The early years, when the young businessman exclusively engaged in renting a changing set of storage spaces spread across the downtown, and the period after breaking up the partnership with his brother (1820). The strategy adopted by John after that, on his own and later with his son Charles Ridpath, resulted in the installation of the firm’s headquarters in the São Francisco quarter of Funchal, known today as the Old Blandy’s Wine Lodge. Finally, the importance of these facilities for the survival of the company after the oidium crisis in 1852 will be highlighted, along with its continuity up to the present, serving now as a tourist showroom of the Madeira Wine Company, which still ages wine in this bicentenary building. This case study reminds historians of the importance of considering not only the global but also the local scale to fully

understand the phenomenon of corporate internationalization in the long run.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

John Blandy (1873–1855) sojourned for the first time in Funchal in 1808, “on account of ill health”¹, as many foreigners did at this time (Silva, 1994; Câmara, 2002). He brought a letter of recommendation offering his accounting services, addressed to Newton, Gordon, Murdoch & Scott, one of the leading shippers of Madeira wine at this time (Hancock, 2009). The young man went back to his home country in 1810 and returned to the island the next year with his pregnant wife, Jenett Burden² (1784–1828). His two brothers, Thomas (1790–1849) and Georges (1800–1877), travelled with the couple, to start a family business together. There are contradictory versions about what happened next. The most consensual (Carnero Lorenzo et al., 2010; Binney, 2011)³ argues that the same year, John took up residence in a house located in the Rua de São Francisco, No 8, acquiring the adjacent cellar (No 10) which houses the Blandy’s Wine Lodge today⁴. The SIPA database mentions that it was only in 1836 that the municipality sold the facilities to him, which was previously occupied by Monteiros & de La Tuellière, a competing firm also engaged in the Madeira wine trade⁵. The history of this company began in 1775 with the marriage⁶ of the French Consul, Nicolao José Joaquim Sabouis da LaTuelliere⁷, and the daughter of Pedro Jorge Monteiro, one of the

¹ Cf. Binney, 2011. In the past, some authors have erroneously claimed that John Blandy came to Madeira for the first time as a soldier of the British garrison led by General Beresford, which occupied the island in 1807 (Clode, 1952; Blandy’s Company, 1961; Correia, 2005; Carnero Lorenzo et al., 2010). According to other versions, the dynasty’s founder arrived at Funchal for the first time in 1801 or 1802 and came back in 1808, instead of 1811, founding his own wine company the same year (Silva et al., 1921; Vieira, 2003).

² Elizabeth Blandy, the first child of the couple, who died on 17 July 1813, was baptized at the British Church of Funchal on the 22nd of August 1811. ABM, Instrumentos de descrição documental, No 40, 9 and 78. The son, Charles Ridpath Blandy was born in 1812, on the 19th of September (ABM, Instrumentos de descrição documental, No 40, 11).

³ These authors put the precise location of John’s home at Rua de São Francisco, No 8 (current door number). Cf. Correia, 2005.

⁴ Blandy’s Company, 5 and 7.

⁵ Rui Carita, Edifício da Madeira Wine, *SIPA database* (Direção-Geral do Património Cultural, 2011), record No 00006984,

http://www.monumentos.gov.pt/Site/APP_PagesUser/SIPA.aspx?id=6984. No document confirming this hypothesis is quoted by the record’s author. Like the Blandy’s company, this firm had several names through the end of the 18th century/early 19th century. The “Monteiros & Companhia” was founded in 1792 by Pedro José Monteiro, which first had a firm bearing his own name. In 1818, it switched to “Monteiros & de la Tuellière” (Cf. ABM, Notariais, 1154, 8v–9, 48v–49v, 87v–88; ABM, Notariais, 1161, 15–15v). It returned to “Monteiros & Companhia” after the death of Nicolau de la Tuellière in February 1820 (Cf. ABM, Notariais, 1163, 12–13, 15–16, 48–49, 50–51, 57–58, 97v–99). In 1836, it was extinguished in the face of increasing debts (Guerra, 1994).

⁶ ABM, PFUN10, Casamentos, liv. 61, 36v.

⁷ The French sources refer to Nicolas Jacques Philippe Anicet de la Tuellière as consul in Madeira from 1757 to 1793 (Mézin, 1998; Lucio, 2019).

most important wine shippers of Funchal¹. The bonds would be reinforced in 1807 by the marriage² of the consul's son, named Nicolao de LaTuelliere after his father³, and the granddaughter of Pedro Jorge Monteiro, Ana Carlota Monteiro. Upon the death of her husband in 1820⁴, this lady would marry Luís de Ornelas e Vasconcelos⁵. According to the SIPA record, the firm's wine store [located in the Beco Joaquim Sanches?] in front of Rua de São Francisco already existed in 1778, the property being registered by the Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Funchal, subject to the payment of a *foro*. The database mentions that a facility of this kind was also located in the Beco Joaquim Sanches⁶, which was sold in 1822 by the sister of Ana Carlota Monteiro and her husband, Inácio Castelbranco Sampaio, to Manuel José de Oliveira⁷. It is not clear if it is the same building and if it had been previously owned by Nicolao de LaTuelliere, who already had his residence at Rua de São Francisco in 1817, where he died three years later⁸. Furthermore, in accordance with the SIPA record cited above, Luís de Ornelas e Vasconcelos had an office in this street in 1821⁹. His company would be "Monteiros & de La Tuellière", referred to by the same source as the previous owner of "The Old Blandy's Wine Lodge", sold by the municipality of Funchal to the Blandy family in 1836. According to another version, based on a contract deposited in the regional archives¹⁰,

John disposed of the wine store through a public auction in 1838. Others believe that it was Charles Ridpath Blandy (1812–1879), and not his father, who made the purchase in 1840¹¹.

The uncertainty about the early history of the historical headquarters of the bicentenary company is due in part to the lack of information on the first years of its existence. Until now, the private correspondence exchanged between members of the family has been the main source of available information on this period¹². A letter, dated 17 April 1811, brought by Thomas back to England, suggests that Madeira wine was already the backbone of their partnership, initially targeting London, but soon looking for opportunities in America and West Indies, which had been the most important markets of the island producers since the 17th century (Vieira, 2015). Further letters reveal that they often used the wine to pay for acquisitions of another kinds of goods (brandy, gin, cheese, butter, and tableware from Holland, cod from Newfoundland; potatoes, herring, lard, bacon, beef and cotton wear from England, tableware from China, etc.) to be sent back to Funchal. They also purchased flour and wheat from the English ports to sell in the West Indies, the general trading profitably complementing the wine shipping. From this point of view, the new company followed the same commercial strategy previously adopted by the English expatriates based in Madeira (Liddel, 2014;

¹ AHU CU Madeira-CA, Cx.4,D.628–630; AHU CU Madeira-CA, Cx.5,D.708–711. Cf. Guerra, 1994.

² ABM, PFUN10, Casamentos, liv.62, 251v.

³ ABM, PFUN08, Batismos, liv.105, 10v. Some scholars occasionally confuse this individual, born in 1779, with the consul, his father, also called Nicolao. He is referred to as a merchant, son of the French consul, and not as the French consul himself in a document of the 1810s. ABM, Notariais, 1161, 96v–97v. However, the "Memorandum of Characters" sent by W. C. Beresford to Lord Castlereagh in 1807, mentions the nephew of M. Monteiro—Mons. de la Tuelliere—as French Consul (Newitt, 1999).

⁴ ABM, PFUN10, Óbitos, liv.21, 45v. Cf. Guerra, 1994.

⁵ ABM, PFUN10, Casamentos, liv.63, 230. Cf. Guerra, 1994.

⁶ The Beco Joaquim Sanches is an alley located on the south side of the Rua da Carreira, giving access to the back of the Old Blandy's Wine Lodge; this was not the case in the 19th century according to maps of Funchal from this period. It probably owes its name to Joaquim José Sanches de Baena Henriques (1770–...?), a cavalry officer who fought in the Napoleonic wars. AHM, DIV/1/14, Cx. 235, doc. 22. Cf. Sousa, 1887. The main access to his

property was by the Rua de São Francisco, this nobleman being referred to by some authors as a resident of this street in the 1790s (Loja, 1986). Cf. ABM, Notariais, 1298, 106v–108. This military man had a sister, Maria da Piedade de Baena Henriques, married to José Aleixo Falcão de Mello van Zeller (Felgueiras, 1940). The name of her husband is always given as the owner of Rua de São Francisco, No 2, in the 1810 register of *décima*, and Nicolau de La Tuelliere as lessor of the house in 1818 and 1819. ANTT, PJRFF, 541, 75; ANTT, PJRFF, 542, 55; ANTT, PJRFF, 543, 65; ANTT, PJRFF, 544, 77v; ANTT, PJRFF, 545, 43; ANTT, PJRFF, 546, 43; ANTT, PJRFF, 547, 43v.

⁷ The source of the SIPA database is probably (Guerra, 1994).

⁸ ABM, PFUN10, Óbitos, liv.21, 45v. Cf. Guerra, 1994.

⁹ Again, the source of the SIPA database is probably (Guerra, 1994).

¹⁰ ABM, Notariais, 2907, 172v–173v.

¹¹ "The Blandy Family", The Madeira wine company website. <https://www.madeirawinecompany.com/about-us/the-blandy-family.html>

¹² Binney, 2011.

Mutch, 2016). Robert Blandy (1799–1850) now helped his brother John to run the operations from the island. Although the business was going well, a further letter, written by Anna (1792–1879) to Thomas in the spring of 1820, mentions the unilateral severing of the society by John. In 1822, the rejected partner was already established in the United States of America, later becoming a prominent member of the Newark community (Hessey, 2021). During the early years, the Blandy brothers built a global operation. Although the main commodity was wine, from the beginning, they tended to diversify their sources of income, a practice continued during the next two hundred years (Carnero Lorenzo et al., 2010). Despite the precious information revealed by all these letters, the data available does not provide an understanding of the strategy of real estate investments implemented by John after his arrival at Funchal, nor does it solve the enigma of the foundation of the Lodge. The purpose of this paper is to fill this gap.

3. METHODOLOGY

Currently, the fourth industrial revolution is triggering important improvements in business practices. Innovations not only transform production, but also introduce substantial changes in the entire value chain, including the property management sector (BEOS, 2014). Success stories such as McDonald's (Lashley et al., 2007), which reveal how real estate investment matters have been employed in the long-term expansion of companies, are well known (Weiss, 1989). However, early case studies have not yet received the attention they deserve. As a matter of fact, changes of the amplitude we are witnessing today also occurred during the first industrial revolution, i.e., in the period 1750–1760 and the second quarter of the next century (Mohajan, 2019). According to Krumm, 2001, before the introduction of the steam engine and other innovative technologies, there was no need for specific accommodations, a part of residential buildings being used for productive purpose or facilities were installed in the back garden of the owner's house. The growth in the scale of the activity eventually required large

constructions dedicated exclusively to the hosting of workspaces, which in turn, increased the interest of entrepreneurs in real estate. Although this kind of investment was already fully integrated in corporate strategies at the beginning of the 20th century, the buying of properties to house production activities was still a personal initiative of the founders of the early large companies and their successors.

This paper reports on the property management and business strategies employed by the British merchant John Blandy (1811–1855), who founded the global company that bears his name. This commercial house engaged in Madeira wine shipping and general trade, operating from the mid-Atlantic harbour of Funchal. This paper is based on a specific case study that enables us to measure the extent to which real estate might have contributed, in practice, to the success of entrepreneurs during the first industrial revolution, and the impact this had on their companies in the long run. This research is based on the analysis of a large and varied set of archival documents, most of which had never been studied before. To track the real estate investments in Funchal, several kinds of documents deposited at the Regional Archives of Madeira (ABM) and the National Archives of Torre do Tombo (ANTT) were consulted:

- 1- Contracts and other kinds of private acts recorded by the notaries of the city deposited at the ABM¹. This search identified transactions directly or indirectly involving not only John Blandy and his relatives, but also the Monteiros & de La Tuellière and their holders, too. The sale deeds of this period usually mention the surrounding properties, ordered by cardinal directions and the names of their owners, and sometimes even previous contracts related to the transaction registered. This kind of information was crucial in establishing the relationships between the eclectic set of documents consulted.
- 2- *Décima* records (Funchal series), from 1811 to 1855, deposited at the ANTT and the ABM². The *décima* was a tax created in 1641 by the Portuguese crown, inspired on the ecclesiastical *dízima* (Braga, 2002–2003). Books, annually updated, registered the value paid for each property, classified

¹ ABM, "Notariais" collection.

² ANTT, PJRFF — Provedoria e Junta da Real Fazenda do Funchal, 19: Receita da décima 1809/1819; ABM, CMF, 686–692.

by parish, street and even door number, following the same order they are in the street¹. The name of the tenants and proprietors² are also listed³, detailing the residence where they live and other kinds of spaces rented⁴. The search focusing on the *freguesia* of Sé⁵ between 1811 and 1819 was exhaustively carried out and extended to other parishes when judged relevant.

- 3- Lists of the *estufas* tax collected at Funchal, deposited at the ANTT⁶. In the 1790s, a merchant of the city invented a revolutionary technique enabling an acceleration of the winemaking process, heating it artificially for a few months (Vasconcelos, 1835; Vieira, 1991; Vieira, 2003; Câmara, 2002). The *estufa* was the name given to the facilities dedicated to this operation, which even today is a unique particularity of Madeira wine. Soon, this very lucrative improvement was taxed by the Portuguese government⁷, annually registering the value paid by owners or tenants of the *estufas*, located by streets.
- 4- Archives of the Funchal delegation of the *Fazenda Nacional* (National Treasury) deposited at the ABM⁸. By the Decree dated 28 May 1834, the monastic communities were extinguished, and their respective properties were incorporated into what was called *Próprios da Fazenda Nacional*, which managed all this patrimony. A significant part was sold at public auction over the next few years, with other real estate disposed of by the Portuguese government (Silveira, 1980).

The research strategy adopted can be described as an attempt to link the eclectic information related to Blandy's and to Monteiros & de La Tuellière, gathered from these different collections, not only establishing chronological but also spatial

relationships between them. The purpose of cross-referencing these different kinds of data is to evaluate the veracity of the different narratives about the origin of the Blandy's Lodge as well as to better understand the role of corporate property management in fostering the success of the business strategy of this commercial house in the early stage. The following presents a summary of the main results of this approach. Properties acquired by John for residential purposes were also considered to evaluate the veracity of the São Francisco facilities being used simultaneously as the office, warehouse and home of the founder during the early times.

4. FINDINGS

The search in the collections presented above substantially adds to the knowledge of John Blandy's property management practices during the first decades of the company's existence. In the first place, it reveals a major shift in strategy around 1821, after he had already severed his partnership with Thomas. After renting facilities in different downtown areas (mostly the Funchal parish of Sé), the founder began buying adjacent properties in the São Francisco quarter, progressively constituting the plot where the "Old" Wine Lodge stands today.

4.1. THE "RENTING" PERIOD (1811–1821)

The 1811 book, referring to the *décima* collected at the parish of Sé, is unfortunately lost. However, the year after John's arrival, we find an entry mentioning "John Blandy" as the tenant of the house of one floor and a "*loge*"

¹ *Regimento das décimas*, Título III.2. Cf. *Collecção das leis, decretos, e alvarás, que comprehendem o feliz reinado del Rei Fidelissimo D. José o I [- da Rainha N. Senhora D. Maria I] desde o anno de 1750 até o de 1760 [etc.]*. Tomo II (Lisbon, Antonio Rodrigues Galhardo, 1793), 10–11. In the following pages, the numbering recorded in *décima* books will be used to identify the properties mentioned by other sources instead of the current door numbers. Several documents analysed within the framework of this study suggest that not only the name of streets but also the "*números de polícia*" changed regularly over the last two centuries. The current identification system was only decreed by the Funchal municipality in 1842. From that point, the rule would be to order buildings on each side from south to north, and from east to west, even number on the right side and uneven on the left side. Houses and *lojas* sharing walls would be distinguished by a letter after the door number. ABM, *Jornais*, O Defensor, 139, 27/08/1842. So, the "*números de polícia*" mentioned by later documents are practically useless in

identifying buildings before this year. On the other hand, some of the constructions existing today at the locations referred on the following pages were drastically reshaped or even reconstructed from scratch after the first half of the 19th century.

² Excepting, however, the properties of owners who were church officials, which were not registered in the *décima* books. Título II.2. Cf. *Collecção das leis* ..., 6–7.

³ Título III.2. Cf. *Collecção das leis* ..., 10–11.

⁴ Título III.8. Cf. *Collecção das leis* ..., 12.

⁵ Previous studies show that most of wine shippers in the early period of the Madeira wine trade were installed in the parish of Sé. Cf. Hancock, 2009.

⁶ ANTT, PJRFF, 441.

⁷ ABM, *Jornais*, Diário de Notícias, 3509, 18/09/1888, 1.

⁸ ABM, RFFUN AT-DRAF fund. The treatment of this collection is currently in progress, so the archivist references indicated below are not definitive.

located in Rua da Igrejinha¹, No 6. He also rented the “*loge*” of house No 2². The word “*loge*” or “*loja*” is used in this period to refer to one-storey constructions or the ground floor of buildings, as a rule, used for housing commercial establishments³. Both contracts were renewed in 1813, 1814 and 1816⁴, the 1815 book being lost. While “*João Blandy*” is still indicated as “*inquilino*” in 1813, after that, it is “*João e Thomas Blandy*”⁵, suggesting that the firm, and not John personally, undertook both rents. According to the property description repeated every year, house No 2 seems to be one of the 18th-century merchant homes, typical of Funchal, with a “*loge*” at the level of the street and the living parts upstairs (Lyall, 1827; Hancock, 2009). The residential space of the building may have been eventually occupied by Robert and/or Georges⁶, who are not mentioned as renters in any book of the *décima* series, or alternatively by offices of the company. John and his wife were probably installed almost immediately after their arrival in a house of one floor and “*loge*”, with a garden, located in Rua dos Aranhas, No 36⁷, in the parish of S. Pedro close the walls of the city. The contract, signed on February 13, 1811⁸ by John Blandy only,

was valid for three years⁹. Robert Wallas, a Scottish shipper, and later owner of the Torreão flour mill (Mayson, 2015), was listed as a witness¹⁰. On the 8th of May 1813, this businessman¹¹ let John take his position as lessor of the Quinta Deão in the Santa Luzia parish, for the next 9 years. The original contract signed by this merchant a year before¹², leaves no doubt that this is the villa, located in the Santa Luzia parish, in the surroundings of Funchal, later owned by the British consul and merchant, Georges Stoddart. It was one of the first erected by shippers, reflecting the architectural taste of the British (Matos, 2016). The villa was still not finished in July 1812¹³. The proprietor, Henrique Correa de Vilhena Henriques¹⁴, another well-known wine trader, was obliged to build some missing elements, freeing the renter to do other works on his own¹⁵.

In July 1816¹⁶, John rented the house in Rua da Capitão¹⁷, No 8/9, previously occupied by its owner Manuel José de Oliveira. This building, closer to the waterfront, had two floors, a store (downstairs?) and a tower (“*torre*”), at the time a feature exclusive to the richest houses, providing a lookout for the arrivals of boats, an

¹ Rua da Igrejinha is the ancient name of the Rua da Carreira section near Rua das Pretas. *Exposição Virtual Ruas do Funchal* (Museu de Fotografia da Madeira — Atelier Vicente's, Funchal, 2016), 12.

² ANTT,PJRFF,541,70v.

³ Cf. “LOGE e LOGEA” in (Constâncio, 1838). This variant of the Portuguese “*loja*” seems to appear in the 19th century. Indeed, the dictionaries of Bluteau and Moraes da Silva only contemplated “*loja*”. Cf. “*Loja*” in (Bluteau, 1716) and (Silva, 1789). “*Loge*” brings the English word “*lodge*” to mind. Noel Cossart (1984) argues that it was used exclusively in the past by the British to refer to the wine cellars of Porto, and only more recently to those in Madeira, also.

⁴ ANTT,PJRFF,542,51v; ANTT,PJRFF,543,61v–62; ANTT,PJRFF,544,72.

⁵ In the 1814 book, we also find a reference to the top floor of a house rented by a certain “Miss Blandy” (a sister of John?), located at Rua das Pretas, No 21; ANTT,PJRFF,543,62v. This street converged with the Rua da Igrejinha from the S. Pedro church according the 1804 Oudinot map of Funchal.

⁶ Later, Georges Blandy would leave Madeira for Brazil to look for fortune on his own (Binney, 2011).

⁷ ANTT,PJRFF,538,14.

⁸ ABM,Notariais,2263,132v–134.

⁹ However, there is no mention of the Beco dos Aranhas, No 36 still being rented in the 1812 register of *décima*. ANTT,PJRFF,539,13.

¹⁰ Further contracts suggest a close relationship between John Blandy and Robert Wallas, one of them also involving

his associate Thomas Hudson. ABM,Notariais,1141,104–105v; ABM,Notariais,1159,117–118v. In his testament, John mentions Robert as being his friend. ABM,ADFUN,9,2v–4.

¹¹ ABM,Notariais,2119,8v–9v. In the 1812 and 1813 *décima* registers, Robert Wallas already occupied a house at Travessa da Sé, No 4, in the Sé parish. ANTT,PJRFF,541,49v; ANTT,PJRFF,542,37v. The latter is rented in name of his company Thomas Hudson [&] Wallas in 1814. Cf. ANTT,PJRFF,543,47v; ANTT,PJRFF,544,70v; ANTT,PJRFF,545,39.

¹² ABM,Notariais,2699,50v–52.

¹³ The contract proves that the construction of the Quinta Deão started before 1812 and was not built in the next decade as some scholars believe. Cf. Matos, 2016.

¹⁴ Some scholars argue that the Quinta Deão was built by the British consul and wine shipper, Henry Veitch. Cf. Matos, 2016.

¹⁵ John Blandy could have lived only one year at the Quinta Deão. Indeed, Henrique Correa de Vilhena Henriques sold a “*quinta*” to John Keir in 1814, on August 8th, inherited from the deacon (Deão) António Correia de Bettencourt and Jorge Correia Athouguia Netto. There is no mention in the contract of a lessor. ABM, Notariais,1142,75–77v.

¹⁶ ANTT,PJRFF,544,67v.

¹⁷ At this time, the Rua da Capitão referred to the section of Rua das Murças between the Largo da Sé and Avenida Zarco. Rui Santos, “Ruas da cidade do Funchal (continuação)”, *Jornal da Madeira* 18831 (7/03/1993),2. This property was rented in the name of John & Thomas Blandy.

extra certainly of great value to a shipper (Purdy, 1861). “João Blandy” and “João e Thomas Blandy” would be referred to alternatively as tenants of this property until 1819¹. In 1816, the firm also occupied a store (“granel”) in Rua do Cotife, No 2², close to Rua do Capitão³. The same year, John rented another one in Rua das Pretas No 16, close to the company’s facilities in Rua da Igreja, the contract not being renewed a year later⁴. He also leased a “loge” at No 11 of Rua dos Pintos, a street starting at the other end of Rua da Igreja, later renewing the contract for only one more year⁵. In 1817, “João Blandy” occupied a store of two floors and a “loge” located at Largo do Chafariz, No 13⁶. This is the first time that he chose a space in the area surrounding the S. Francisco Convent⁷. In 1818, the firm rented another “loge” at Rua das Pretas, No 3⁸, and three years later, John subleased a warehouse (“granel”) of one floor located at No 27 of Rua do Sabão⁹, another street converging with Rua do Cotife. And last,

but not least, in 1819, the company occupied the largest space ever, a warehouse of 4 floors with a ground-floor store, on the other side of the Ribeira de Santa Luzia, at Rua das Medinas, No 1¹⁰. At this time, nothing hinted that the São Francisco quarter would host the headquarters of the firm for the next decade and beyond.

4.2. THE “BUYING” PERIOD (1821–1839)

According to Marcus Binney, John formally ended the partnership with his brother Thomas around the spring 1820¹¹. One year later, the entrepreneur, as the sole purchaser, bought the storehouse at Rua do Cotife, No 2, rented by their company since 1816 from its lessor, João Anglin. According the *décima* register¹², the space was no longer occupied by the firm in 1855, when John died, being rented at that time to Manuel José da Silveira. The building would finally be sold in 1878 by his son, Charles Ridpath Blandy¹³. In 1825, John made another important investment, this time in the Santa Luzia parish, where he probably lived

¹ ANTT,PJRFF,545,37v; ANTT,PJRFF,546,37v; ANTT,PJRFF,547,38v.

² ANTT,PJRFF,544,62; ANTT,PJRFF,545,34v; ANTT,PJRFF,546,35; ANTT,PJRFF,547,35v. This building of two floors was located on the south side of Rua do Cotife. ABM,Notariais,1168,89–91v. An 1830 contract referring to the adjacent warehouse belonging to Phelps & Co makes it possible to locate the Blandy’s facilities more precisely as being the second building next to the corner of the street with Rua do Sabão. ABM,Notariais,1305,72v–76. In 1878, the warehouse had another entry by Rua das Murças, being simultaneously identified at this time by the “*números de polícia*” No 7 (Rua do Cotife) and No 74–75 (Rua das Murças). ABM,Notariais,2508,35v–36. This back access already existed in 1855. ABM,CMF,691,337v–338.

³ Rua do Cotife is the ancient name of the section of Rua da Sé, between Rua João Gago and Rua do Sabão. ABM,Notariais,2508,35v–36. Rui Santos, “Crónica de Domingo”, *Jornal da Madeira*, 18844 (21/03/1993),2.

⁴ ANTT,PJRFF,544,74v; ANTT,PJRFF,545,41.

⁵ ANTT,PJRFF,544,76v; ANTT,PJRFF,545,42.

⁶ The contract was renewed in 1818 by “João e Thomas Blandy” and in 1819 by “João Blandy” alone; ANTT,PJRFF,545,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,546,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,547,39v. The square known at this time as the “*Largo do Chafariz*” was a mall around a fountain (“*Chafariz*” or “*Fonte*”), which corresponds today to the middle section of the Avenida Arriaga. It had several names through time: “*Largo do Chafariz*”, “*Largo de S. Francisco*”, “*Praça Real*”, “*Passeio Público*”, “*Praça da Constituição*”, “*Praça da República*”. ABM,CMF,Vereações,1370,60. Cf. Silva et al., 1921; Silva et al., 1922. The fountain was dismantled in 1826, and reassembled, twelve years later, in the new “*Largo do Chafariz*”, close to the cathedral. ABM,CMF,Vereações,1370,123. Cf. Silva et al., 1922.

⁷ The convent of São Francisco was abandoned in 1834, when the extinction of the monastic communities was

decreed. The ruins of this Franciscan establishment and the adjacent church were removed before 1880, to make room for the municipal park of Funchal since then. Cf. Silva et al., 1921; Silva et al., 1922; fig. 19 in (Aragão, 1987). The Blandy’s Lodge, located on the opposite side of Rua de São Francisco, occupied part of the monastery according to oral tradition (SIPA database, record No 00006984). However, even the oldest map of Funchal (c. 1570) located the area occupied by the monks exclusively on the west side of the street. Cf. Planta I and II in (Aragão, 1987). None of the documents consulted within the framework of this study identify this ecclesiastical institution as the owner of buildings on the east side of the Rua de São Francisco, lay people living there at least since 1548. ABM,PFUN10,Casamentos,liv.46,117. According to the notarial act of 1838, one of the plots occupied by the Blandy headquarters corresponds to the house of Manuel Fernandes Camacho, sold to the Santa Casa da Misericórdia in 1640, south of the gardens belonging to Alvaro Vaes da Costa. ABM,Notariais,2907,172v–173v.

⁸ The contract was not renewed the next year. ANTT,PJRFF,546,40v.

⁹ ABM,Notariais,1167,106v–108v. John Blandy renewed the contract March 29, 1825. ABM,Notariais,1289,31v–32v.

¹⁰ ANTT,PJRFF,547,6. This street, between Rua da Cadeia Velha and Rua do Ribeirinho de Baixo (Silva et al., 1922) is currently named Rua Dr. Fernão de Ornellas.

¹¹ In the spring 1818, “John and Thomas Blandy” loaned money to two peasants from Câmara de Lobos. That is, in the current state of knowledge, the last act of the company before being dissolved. ABM,Notariais,1155,88v–89v,93v–94v. On August 4, 1821, João Blandy already was the sole signer of the contract of sub-lease for the warehouse located at Rua do Sabão No 27. ABM,Notariais,1167,106–108v.

¹² ABM,CMF,691,337v–338.

¹³ ABM,Notariais,2508,35v–36.

with his family in 1813. On the 4th of June, he bought a villa, still in construction, owned by another wine merchant, João Brício Accioly. The location of this property, in front of the “*Caminho do Monte*” and the fact it was served by the “*levada de Santa Luzia*”¹ suggests it was the Quinta de Santa Luzia², which is still owned today by the Blandy family. Downtown, in the same period, John began investing in the São Francisco quarter of Funchal. As explained above, John & Thomas Blandy had already rented a warehouse located at Largo do Chafariz, No 13 since 1817³. The contract was renewed until 1829, the facilities being occupied by J. H. March & Co afterwards⁴. However, beginning in 1824, John adopted a long-term strategy that consisted of acquiring adjacent properties always in his own name, progressively forming a single plot, joining the Largo do Chafariz from the south to the east side of Rua de São Francisco⁵, the very space where the “Old” Blandy’s Wine Lodge stands today. The cross-referencing of different kinds of documents helped establish the timeline of the process of the acquisitions:

- 1- **1824, April 5:** “João” Blandy bought a

property from the *Capitão* José Furtado de Mendonça Tello da Câmara and his wife, inherited from Francisco de José de Macedo and his consort⁶. It is described as a house (1 floor?) and 3 “*lojas*” (one vacant in 1819, another leased to a carpenter and the last to José Paes [d’Amaral]⁷). In 1821, the *Capitão* had sold him a shed or one-storey house⁸ belonging to his property, which was located on the west side of the “*beco*” in front of the “*chafariz*”⁹. One year later, José Furtado also rented to this governor’s servant, a piece of land with a size of 578 “*palmas*”, belonging to the same property¹⁰. The house, probably reshaped, is referred to as being the home of António Paes in 1824, where his widow still lived in 1839, when John was repaid the money he had loaned to her in 1834¹¹. On 5 April 1824, “João” Blandy also bought a warehouse from António de Jesus, again in the “*Beco do Teatro*”, that previously belonged to José Furtado¹². This appears to be one of the “*loges*” identified by the *décima* books as part of the Largo do Chafariz, No 8¹³.

- 2- **1827, 14 November:** the firm Scott, Loughnan & Penfolds sold John Blandy¹⁴ the ground house they bought from Bernardino José da Silva in 1802¹⁵. The *décima* register mentions this “*armazém*” owned by this competitor company, located

¹ ABM,Notariais,1290,56–58v. The contract does not mention the property explicitly as being the “*Quinta de Santa Luzia*”. At this period, this name and alternatively “*Quinta de Santa Luzia Velha*” could have been used to sometimes designate the Quinta Deão, rented earlier by John Blandy. ABM, Notariais,1142,75–77v.

² However, the characteristic shape of the residential building is already represented in the Oudinot map of Funchal, surveyed in 1804. It suggests a long interruption of the building project.

³ ANTT,PJRFF,545,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,546,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,547,39v. The *décima* register mentions Nicolao Tello [Homem] de Menezes as the owner of the house (Largo do Chafariz, No 14) and the storage facility (No 13). He was the husband of Juliana Leonor da Cunha. ABM,PFUN10,Casamentos,liv.18,41v–42. This lady is referred to as the owner of the property confronting on the west with the warehouses of António José Monteiro in the Beco Joaquim Sanches. The house was occupied by John Howard March in 1836–1838, according to the testimony of Edwards Wells Watkinson. Cf. Blandy, 1971. David Hancock (2009) published a sketch of the property, based on the description of this author: p. 33–34 (Fig. 1.7), p. 441 (note 102). Vasco Guterre da Cunha is the brother of Juliana Leonor da Cunha (Castello Branco, 1838). In 1839, he was the owner of the adjacent building to the east of the Teatro do Bom Gosto, the last acquisition of John Blandy in the São Francisco quarter. ABM,Notariais,3237,67v–69v.

⁴ ABM,Notariais,1301,134v–135v.

⁵ The east side of the Rua de São Francisco belongs to the Sé parish and the west side to the S. Pedro parish, despite the confusion between them in the 1819 *décima* register. ANTT,PJRFF,530,38v. Cf. ANTT,PJRFF,535,49.

⁶ ABM,Notariais,1286,2–4v; ANTT,PJRFF,676,99v. As the ground where the building stands was subject to the payment of “*foro*” to the Santa Casa da Misericórdia, John regularized the situation with this ecclesiastical institution one month later. ABM,Notariais,2856,132–133v. From 1812 to 1817, Largo do Chafariz, No 8 already belongs to the heirs of Francisco de José de Macedo; ANTT,PJRFF,541,48v; ANTT,PJRFF,542,36v; ANTT,PJRFF,543,46; ANTT,PJRFF,544,69; ANTT,PJRFF,545,38v. After 1818, this property was owned by José Furtado, the same person referred to in the 1824 deed of sale. ANTT,PJRFF,546,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,547,39.

⁷ ANTT,PJRFF,547,39.

⁸ ABM,Notariais,2868,49–51v; ANTT,PJRFF,676,8.

⁹ It is the “*Beco do Teatro do Bom Gosto*”, mentioned further.

¹⁰ ABM,Notariais,2870,121v–122v,128–128v.

¹¹ ABM,Notariais,3237,39–39v.

¹² ABM,Notariais,1286,5–6v; ANTT,PJRFF,676,101. As the ground where the building stands was subject to the payment of “*foro*” to the Santa Casa da Misericórdia, John had to regularize the situation with this ecclesiastical institution as registered one month later. ABM,Notariais,2856,131–132.

¹³ ANTT,PJRFF,541,48v; ANTT,PJRFF,542,36v; ANTT,PJRFF,543,46; ANTT,PJRFF,544,69; ANTT,PJRFF,545,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,546,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,547,39.

¹⁴ ABM,Notariais,1298,106v–108.

¹⁵ ABM,Notariais,1095,8v–9; ABM,Notariais,1098,69v–70.

- at Rua de São Francisco, No 3¹.
- 3- **1829, 16 July:** João Blandy bought the one-storey house and “*lojas*” from João Antônio da Costa, bounding on the north and east with properties he already owned². According the *décima* register, “*João Antônio*” was the owner of the property at Rua de São Francisco, No 4/5³.
 - 4- **1838, 21 May:** the Fábrica da Sé releases João Blandy from paying the *foro* owed to the Funchal diocese for a building in front of the São Francisco church, disposed of earlier in a public auction of the Fazenda Real⁴. According to this document, the buyer took possession on the 9th of May. That was the only contract related to a plot currently occupied by the Old Blandy’s Wine Lodge known until today. The author found several other documents related to this acquisition, including a notarial act dated 9th May attesting that on that precise day, “*João Blandy*” took possession of the house that corresponds to No 1 of the Praça da Constituição, the new name of the Largo do Chafariz. This property, measuring 1240 “*palmas*”, was sold to him within the framework of a public auction by the Fazenda Nacional, previously belonging to Raimundo Ferreira de Aguiar⁵. The name of this individual appeared in the 1818 and 1819 books of the *décima* registration as the owner of Largo do Chafariz, No 7 (a one-storey house with “*loge*”) ⁶.
 - 5- **1839, July 5:** Deed of possession⁷ given to “*João*” Blandy of a building located in Rua de São Francisco, composed of houses and an adjoining warehouse, that belonged earlier to Nicolao Maria Passalacqua. The *décima* books from 1812 to 1819⁸ refer to this nobleman as the owner of a 2-storey house and “*loge(s?)*” (No 6) and a one-storey warehouse and “*loge*” (No 7). Despite being executed by the Fazenda Nacional in 1826 or 1827⁹, it was only in 1839 that John had the opportunity to acquire the property at a public auction¹⁰.
 - 6- **1839, October 23:** “*João*” Blandy bought the “*Theatro do Bom Gosto*” from the Morgado João da Câmara Carvalhal Esmeraldo, the 1st Count of Carvalhal¹¹, taking possession a week later¹². The plot was bounded on the north by the property of the heirs of Pedro Jorge Monteiro and on the west by a property which belonged to the buyer (Largo do Chafariz, No 8, acquired by John in 1824). The contract mentions the Count’s grandmother, Isabel Maria da Câmara Leme, as the previous owner. The name of this lady is referred to as the holder of No 9 (house with two floors (or only one?) and two “*loges*”), No 10 and No 11 (both “*grande loge*” also described as “*granel e loge*”) in the *décima* register from 1812 to 1814¹³. In 1816, the three plots belonged then to “*João de Carvalhal*”, specifying that the “*casa*”¹⁴ of No 9 was being used as a “*theatro*”¹⁵.

¹ ANTT,PJRFF,541,75; ANTT,PJRFF,542,55;
ANTT,PJRFF,543,65; ANTT,PJRFF,544,77v;
ANTT,PJRFF,545,43; ANTT,PJRFF,546,43;
ANTT,PJRFF,547,43v.

² ABM,Notariais,1302,57v–59. The contract mentions that the house was in very bad shape and should be demolished to be rebuilt.

³ ANTT,PJRFF,541,75; ANTT,PJRFF,542,55;
ANTT,PJRFF,543,65–65v; ANTT,PJRFF,544,78;
ANTT,PJRFF,545,43; ANTT,PJRFF,546,43;
ANTT,PJRFF,547,43v. The 1816 and 1819 books mention “*José Antônio da Silva*” and not “*da Costa*” as the owner of Rua de São Francisco, No 4/5. However, the confrontation with the property of Nicolau Maria Passalacqua (Rua de São Francisco, No 6/7) in the contract leaves no doubt that it is the same individual. He had been the owner of this property since 1797. ABM,Notariais,2065,66–67v.

⁴ ABM,Notariais,2907,172v–173v; ANTT, Cabido da Sé do Funchal,liv.11,108v.

⁵ ABM,Governo Civil,394,19–20; ABM,2RFFUN — ATDRAF,2386,41 (Preliminary archives reference). João [José] Correia [Camacho] was the previous owner of No 7, as recorded in the *décima* book of 1812 (ANTT,PJRFF,541,48; ANTT,PJRFF,542,36v; ANTT,PJRFF,543,46; ANTT,PJRFF,544,69; ANTT,PJRFF,545,38) and an accounting book of the Funchal Diocese referring to the same period (ANTT,Cabido da Sé do Funchal,liv.11,6,77).

⁶ ANTT,PJRFF,546,38; ANTT,PJRFF,547,39.

⁷ ABM,Governo Civil, 393,97–97v.

⁸ ANTT,PJRFF,541,75v; ANTT,PJRFF,542,55;
ANTT,PJRFF,543,65v; ANTT,PJRFF,544,78;

ANTT,PJRFF,545,43; ANTT,PJRFF,546,43;
ANTT,PJRFF,547,43v.

⁹ 2RFFUN — ATDRAF, 2386,0v–1; 2RFFUN — ATDRAF, 2387,10v–11; 2RFFUN — ATDRAF, 2388,16. Preliminary archivist reference.

¹⁰ ABM,2RFFUN — ATDRAF,2357,12v. Preliminary archivist reference.

¹¹ The Count of Carvalhal was one of the richest landlords of Madeira (Newitt, 1999). He was also the administrator of several *morgados* (Guerra, 1994).

¹² ABM,Notariais,3237,67v–69v,80.

¹³ ANTT,PJRFF,541,48v; ANTT,PJRFF,542,36v;
ANTT,PJRFF,543,46–46v.

¹⁴ The 1839 contract mentions an “*armazém*” instead of a “*casa*”.

¹⁵ ANTT,PJRFF,544,69. The 1817, 1818 and 1819 *décima* books also refer to the Morgado as owner of the Largo do Chafariz, No 9 (mentioning again the theatrical function of the house in 1818), No 10 and No 11; ANTT,PJRFF,545,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,546,38v; ANTT,PJRFF,547,39v. A private theatre with this name is mentioned by several sources of this period, smaller than the “*Theatro Grande*” located in front of the property (Largo da Fortaleza, No 1), which was disposed of in 1818. ANTT,PJRFF,544,68; ANTT,PJRFF,546,38; ABM,Notariais,1154,130–133; ABM,Jornais,A Chronica,09/02/1839,50,2; ABM,Jornais,A Chronica,15/06/1839,68,4; Melo, 1986. And so, the Beco do Teatro do Bom Gosto gave access to the Count’s property (as the Largo do Chafariz had already been

In 1855, when John died, the *décima* records listed the tax paid by his heirs for a set of adjacent properties located in Rua de São Francisco/Praça da Constituição, the new name of the “*Largo do Chafariz*”¹. In the last months of his life, he also owed the tax on the rent of the top floor of Praça da Constituição, No 22². This building was located in other parts of the square, and its precise location and year of acquisition cannot be determined today. In regard to the Lodge, the first photographs of this area captured between 1865 and the 1880s³ already show most of the buildings that belong to the Blandy’s *adega* today. The pre-existent constructions had consequently been drastically reshaped or even fully built after 1839⁴.

5. DISCUSSION

The analysis of the real estate investments of the founder of the Blandy’s company is difficult to reconcile with previous narratives about this figure, the early days of his firm and the origins of the historical headquarters. The *décima* register from 1812 to 1819 never mentions any living space rented or owned by John in Rua de São Francisco, nor in Largo do Chafariz⁵, the current location of the “Old” Wine Lodge.

On the contrary, the historical data presented above suggests that he probably first occupied a house with a garden in Rua dos Aranhas, which he rented in the beginning of 1811. Soon afterwards, he moved to Quinta Deão, a villa outside the city walls in the Santa Luzia parish, not far from the Quinta de Santa Luzia, another property that he probably bought in 1825, which still belongs to the family. From this point of view, the young man shared the lifestyle of this class of entrepreneurs, who “all have mansions in the city, but they commonly live with their families in the country houses in the neighbourhood of it” as stated by Alfred Lyall two years later⁶. At the end of his life, however, John probably occasionally stayed at the headquarters of the firm, spending time outside the walls of the city whenever he could, as mentioned in a personal letter he wrote in the 1840s (Binney, 2011)⁷.

According to the set of new facts presented above, John did not own, nor rent, any of the properties which form the plot where the “Old” Wine Lodge stands today until 1824. In fact, the process of acquisitions was only completed in 1839⁸, with his son Charles Ridpath (1812–1879) as an associate of the firm “*João Blandy & Filho*”⁹. The timing of the successive

closed by a door in 1843, there being no exit at the other end as already reported in 1824). ABM,Jornais,O Imparcial,06/01/1843,122,2; ANTT,PJRF,676,99v. This alley is not represented in the oldest map of Funchal (c. 1570), appearing for the first time in the Captain Skinner map of Funchal (1775) as the Beco Joaquim Sanches. Cf. Planta I, VII in (Aragão, 1987). Thus, the popular belief of this being one of the most ancient streets of Funchal is unfounded. Cf. SIPA database, record No 00006984. The alley is currently the main entry of the Old Blandy’s Wine Lodge, being closed by a monumental door.

¹ ABM,CMF,691,412v–413.

² ABM,CMF,691,418v–419.

³ ABM,VIC,Cx.4,13; ABM,VIC,Cx.25,5; ABM,VIC,Cx.101,24.

⁴ The south wing of the Lodge, front of the Avenida Arriaga, was almost totally rebuilt in the early 1940s. ABM,CMFUN,B-A,2,42,146; ABM,CMFUN,B-A,2,44,193v.

⁵ The only storage facilities located in this area, rented by John from 1817, do not belong to the set of properties where the Old Blandy’s Wine Lodge stands today, as mentioned above.

⁶ Lyall, 1827, p. 19.

⁷ A notarial act from 1839 mentioned John Blandy as an inhabitant of the Santa Luzia parish. ABM,Notariais,3237,67v–69v. That was where he died according to the opening act of his testament. ABM,ADFUN,9,2v–4. His grandson John Burden still resided in the Santa Luzia parish in 1875. ABM,Notariais,1214,33–35v. However, an annulled contract registered in October 1840 refers to John, this

time, as an inhabitant of Rua de São Francisco. Just a few days later the definitive contract indicates that his son Charles Ridpath lives in Rua da Carreira. ABM,Notariais,1223,1–2, 8–9. Notarial acts, from May 1844 onwards, indicate that Charles moved to Rua de São Francisco after 1840. ABM,Notariais,1232,80–81; ABM,Notariais,1240,37–38; ABM,Notariais,1252,107v–108v,110v–111v; ABM,Notariais,1253,16v–19v.

⁸ The same year, John also invested in a plot located in the municipality of Santa Cruz. ABM,Notariais,3237,25–26v.

⁹ A contract with a vineyard owner already referred to the company “*João Blandy & Filho*” in July 1835. ABM,Notariais,1205,56–57. Two notarial acts, dated March and April 1837, also involved “*Joaõ[John] Blandy & Son*”. ABM,Notariais,2924,68v–69,77v. The same happens in 1840 and 1847 contracts. ABM,Notariais,1223,1–2, 8–9; ABM,Notariais,1240,6v–7,37–38. In 1852, the firm is then called “*João Blandy e Filhos*”, suggesting the inclusion of another(s) son(s) as an associate of the company. ABM,Notariais,1252,107–108v,109–110v,110v–111v; ABM,Notariais,1253,16v–19v. One of the 1852 acts mentions Charles Ridpath not only as an associate, but also as director of the company. ABM,Notariais,1252,112–112v. The name of the firm was already “*Blandy Irmãos e C.ª*” in a notarial act signed by John Burden Blandy, the grandson of the founder, in 1875. ABM,Notariais,1214,33v–35v. In the last years of his life, John founded another company named “*Os Exclusivos*”, this time without his elder son. The existence of this firm is documented by an 1848 contract, the founder engaging to

purchases certainly depended mostly on opportunities, rare in a period when most properties were still inalienable, in the hands of a few *morgados* (Sousa, 2020). Any attempt at real estate management was, from this point of view, subject to auto-organization, which encompasses the Madeira wine business in general from the 17th century to the early 19th century (Hancock, 2003).

The hypothesis that the “Old” Wine Lodge already existed previously as a whole, being occupied by another shipping company, Monteiros & LaTuellèrie, does not stand up under the analysis of the documents consulted. Neither does the hypothesis of its having been sold by the Funchal municipality to the Blandy family in 1836. From 1812 to 1819, the *décima* books effectively register a warehouse of one floor with a “loge” and cooperage (“*tanoaria*”) at “Beco do Sanches, No 1”¹. This building, leased to the “*Monteiros & Co*”, was then owned by António José Monteiro, son of Pedro Jorge Monteiro² and father of Ana Carlota Monteiro³. It is probably the same plot bought by Pedro Jorge Monteiro in 1806, located on the east side of Beco Joaquim Sanches, occupied at that time by a single-storey house. At least in one point, the SIPA database is right: in 1822, Maria Monteiro and her husband, Inácio Castelbranco Sampaio, sold to Manuel José de Oliveira their fraction of this property, inherited from António José Monteiro. The shared property was now occupied by two warehouses⁴. However, Luis Ornellas Vasconcelos continued to own his part, as did Elvira Monteiro, another daughter of António José Monteiro. In fact, on 23 March 1839, Manuel José Oliveira and the two heirs rented the facilities to John H. March & Co.⁵, a competitor of the Blandy’s. It is this plot that it is referred to as a property of Pedro Jorge

Monteiro’s heirs, bounded on the north the Teatro do Bom Gosto (Largo do Chafariz, No 9), in the deed of purchase made by the 1st Count of Carvalhal to John Blandy in 1839, on October 23⁶. So, despite what the SIPA database claims, the facilities previously occupied by Monteiros & LaTuellèrie could not have been sold to John Blandy by the municipality of Funchal, three years earlier. In fact, the Lodge was not acquired, as a whole, by John at all. It is, on the contrary, the result of a long-term strategy of property management, depending mostly on the set of random buying opportunities undertaken during the 1st half of the 19th century, despite a clear intention of concentrating the whole operation there.

In the early days of the “*João e Thomas Blandy*”, John rented facilities in different locations, most of them close to the waterfront, the set of facilities leased by him changing constantly. The reason for such inconstancy is hard to deduce only from the documentation consulted. However, in his analysis of the family correspondence, Marcus Binney (2011) mentions a relevant fact: the company often used wine at the beginning to pay for other goods bought by Thomas in European ports to be sold, not only in Madeira, but also in America. The asynchronous cadence of commodity arrivals and departures at the port, with sometimes long waiting periods between the moment of acquisition and expedition soon made the storage management the backbone of the business.

Producing Madeira wine itself also required more and more room each passing year. Beginning with the American Revolution, shippers began to age the wine before boarding (Hancock, 1998). Prior to this time, they often shipped it just a few days after it was

renew for more 3 years the renting of the top floor of a house near the cathedral. It was located right at the corner of the Rua João Távira and the Rua do Aljube and just a few blocks from the São Francisco headquarters. ABM,Notariais,1244,30v–31v.

¹ ANTT,PJRFF,541,74v; ANTT,PJRFF,542,54v; ANTT,PJRFF,543,65. The next registers mention the heirs of António José Monteiro as owners, and Monteiro & Co (1817) and later Monteiros & de la Tuellèrie (1818, 1819) as renters. ANTT,PJRFF,544,77; ANTT,PJRFF,545,42v; ANTT,PJRFF,546,42v; ANTT,PJRFF,547,43.

² ABM,PSVC03, Casamentos,liv.7,84v. This individual is probably the “Dr Monteiro” to referred by the

“Memorandum of Characters” in 1807 and not, as Newitt (1999) argued before, João António Monteiro, who was a teacher at the University of Coimbra. Cf. Guerra, 1994.

³ ABM,PFUN10,Batismos,liv.31,70v.

⁴ ABM,Notariais,1170,8–11. Cf. Guerra, 1994.

⁵ ABM,Notariais,3215,105–107v.

⁶ The rent contract between John H. March & Co. and the heirs of Pedro Jorge Monteiro, concluded on March 23, 1839, referred explicitly to the Teatro do Bom Gosto as the building facing the new “*armazém*” constructed by this company according to the arrangement agreed previously with the owners. ABM,Notariais,3215,105–107v.

delivered by producers from the country vineyards, by land or by sea. Now, merchants also looked for buildings to install the stoves needed to accelerate the process to respond to a growing demand and reduce the storage costs at the same time. However, John seems to have adopted this innovation later than his competitors. Indeed, the tax records relative to this kind of facility mention his name only once in 1825, when he rented an “*estufa*” located in Rua de Santa Maria, owned by Christovão Esmeraldo, for just three months¹. The search in the *Notariais* collections of the ABM, only identified one 3-year lease contract for two “*estufas*” by “*João Blandy e Filho*” in 1840. These facilities stood facing the sea, close to the bridge known as Ponte de S. Lázaro, just 300 metres from the São Francisco quarter². From 1852 onwards, the firm administrated another stove, again located in the São Lázaro area³. The confirmation of the delay in adopting the new technique requires further research in the Blandy’s archives. To be sure, the company would have needed more space than their competitors to age the Madeira wine naturally, similar to the current *canteiro* method, instead of heating it. It produces a superior quality, the best wines being those kept higher for a while, up close to the roof. The 4-storey warehouse rented in 1819, at Rua das Medinas, No 1, could possibly have already had this purpose. The remodelling of the preexisting set of buildings at the Rua de São Francisco/Avenida Arriaga corner, after 1839, could also have been motivated, at least in part, by the increasing need for higher storage for a long period of time. After 1852, “*John Blandy e Filhos*” also administered a lime factory and owned a small stove near the “*estufa*” of São Lázaro and had exclusive access to the calcareous rock from a quarry located in Porto Santo⁴. Now the firm was able to produce the raw material needed to start the building project of its new headquarters, only a few hundred metres from the São Francisco quarter.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The interest of historians in the Madeira wine trade has increased significantly in recent decades, boosted by the societal need to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of globalization that has shaped today’s world. The role of transatlantic correspondence for the rise of a planetary market for this commodity had been highlighted earlier by scholars. Based on the case study of the Blandy’s company, this paper reveals the “back office” side of the business strategies that made it possible to create extended networks across the oceans in the early 1800s. Three years before John’s death, the firm he created faced its most devastating crisis, caused by the oidium plague from America, which provoked a quick decline, already facing the decrease in exports a decade before (Câmara, 2002; Vieira, 2003). The prosperous elite of Madeira wine shippers was now the victim of the globalization they helped intensify. The facilities in Rua de São Francisco had an essential role in the survival of the Blandy’s company in the rainy days. Henry Vizetelly, who visited the *adega* in the 1880s, described it as a “veritable vineous museum”. According to this author, Charles Ridpath Blandy aged there around 5,000 pipes of the best vintages harvested before the 1852 disaster, guaranteeing the continuity of the family business (Vizetelly, 1880). The cellar, located close to the seacoast, still has exceptional conditions to mature wine by the *canteiro* method. Even after the installation of a brand new, high-tech winery, at Caniçal, the Lodge continues to be the place where the premium vintages of the Madeira Wine Company are aged. The development of the tourism industry during the late 20th century considerably increased the real estate value in the historical centre of Funchal. It would be unthinkable for a winemaker today to create facilities of this size from scratch in this area, turning the Old Blandy’s Wine Lodge priceless. The numerous holidaymakers who visit this charming place represent an additional opportunity for sales, and at the same time turning them into ambassadors of the product in their own

¹ ANTT, JPRFF, 441, 73.

² ABM, Notariais, 1223, 1–2, 8–9.

³ ABM, Notariais, 1252, 110v–111v.

⁴

ABM, Notariais, 1252, 109v–112v;
ABM, Notariais, 1253, 16v–19v.

countries. From this point of view, the descendants of John Blandy owe to their ancestor the vision of gradually assembling a large plot close to the waterfront. This case study should call the historians' attention to less obvious aspects of corporate strategies of internationalization, such as property management and real estate investments. It also invites them to amplify the scale of analysis from global to local.

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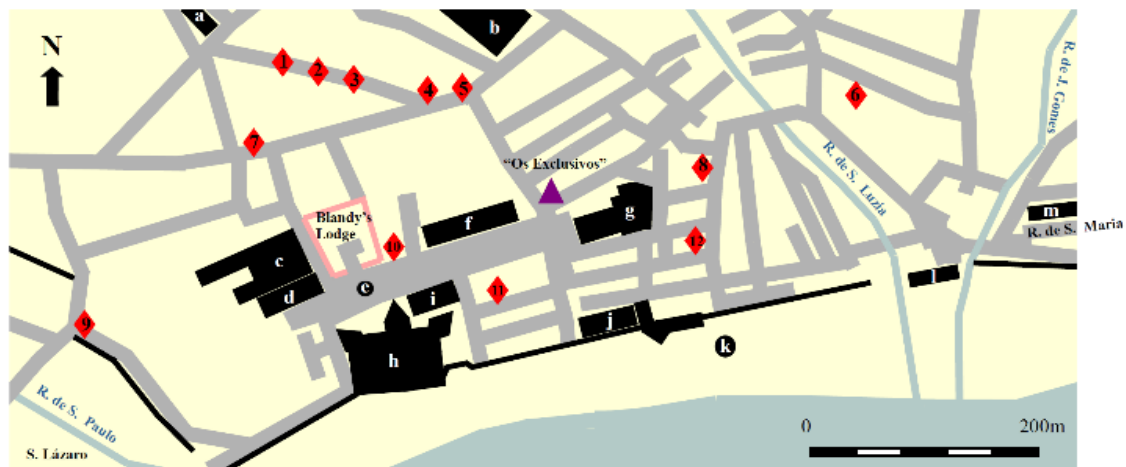
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FIGURES

Figure 1 - Localization of properties in downtown Funchal, rented by John Blandy (1811–1821) on a map based on the 1804 Oudinot survey of the city

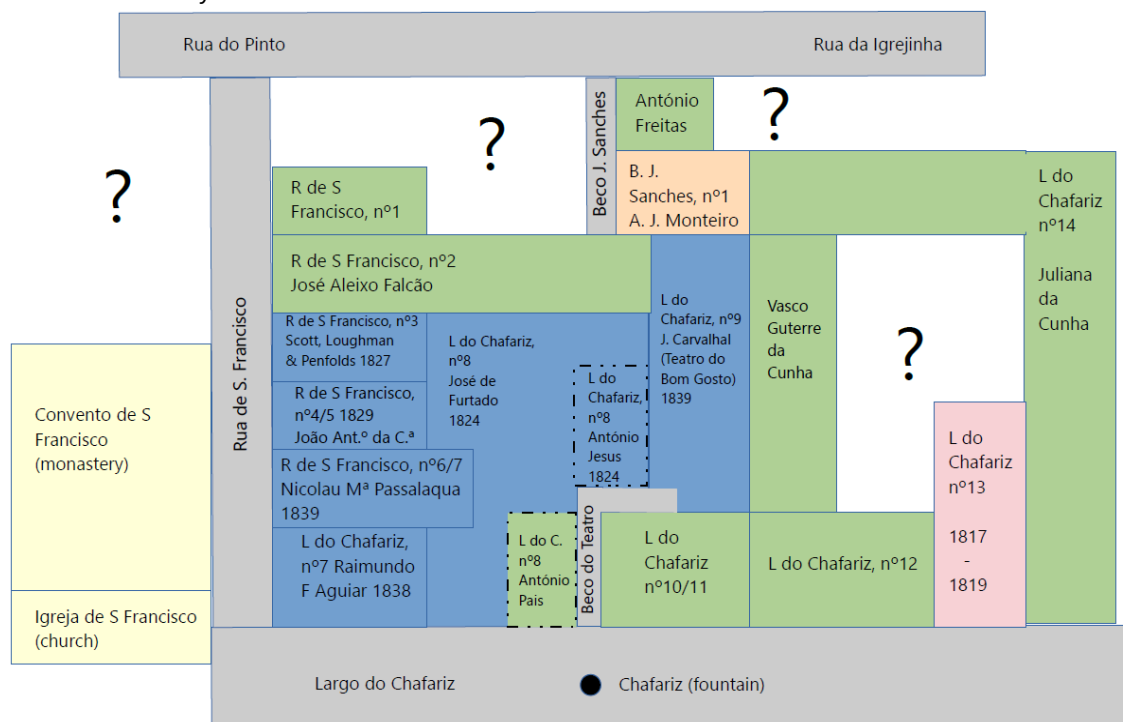


- 1- Rua das Pretas, nº3 (1818)
- 2- Rua das Pretas, nº16 (1816)
- 3- Rua das Pretas, nº21 (1814; rented by miss Blandy)
- 4- Rua da Igrejinha, nº6 (1812, 1813, 1814, 1815?, 1816)
- 5- Rua da Igrejinha, nº2 (1812, 1813, 1814, 1815?, 1816)
- 6- Rua das Medinas, nº1 (1819)
- 7- Rua do Pinto, nº11 (1816, 1817)
- 8- Rua do Sabão, nº27 (sulocation: 1821)
- 9- Rua dos Aranhas, nº36 (1811)
- 10- Largo do Chafariz, nº13 (1817, 1818, 1819, ...?, 1829)
- 11- Rua do Capitão, nº8-9 (1816, 1817, 1818, 1819)
- 12- Rua do Cotife, nº12 (1816, 1817, 1818, 1819; acquired in 1821)

- a- Church of S. Pedro
- b- College of Jesuits
- c- Convent of S. Francisco
- d- Church of S. Francisco
- e- Fountain (Chafariz)
- f- Hospital
- g- Cathedral
- h- Fortress of S. Lourenço
- i- Great Theater (Teatro Grande)
- j- Custom House (Alfândega)
- k- Banger Pillar (Pilar de Banger)
- l- Fortress of the Pelourinho
- m- Church of Santa Maria

Source: Developed by the author

Figure 2 - Schematic plan of the plots acquired by John Blandy (1824–1839) in the São Francisco quarter, based on the analysis of archival sources



Source: Developed by the author

PROCEDIMENTOS ÉTICOS

Conflito de interesses: Nada a declarar. **Financiamento:** Artigo com o apoio da FCT, através do projeto UIDB/04470/2020. **Revisão por pares:** Dupla revisão anónima por pares.



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