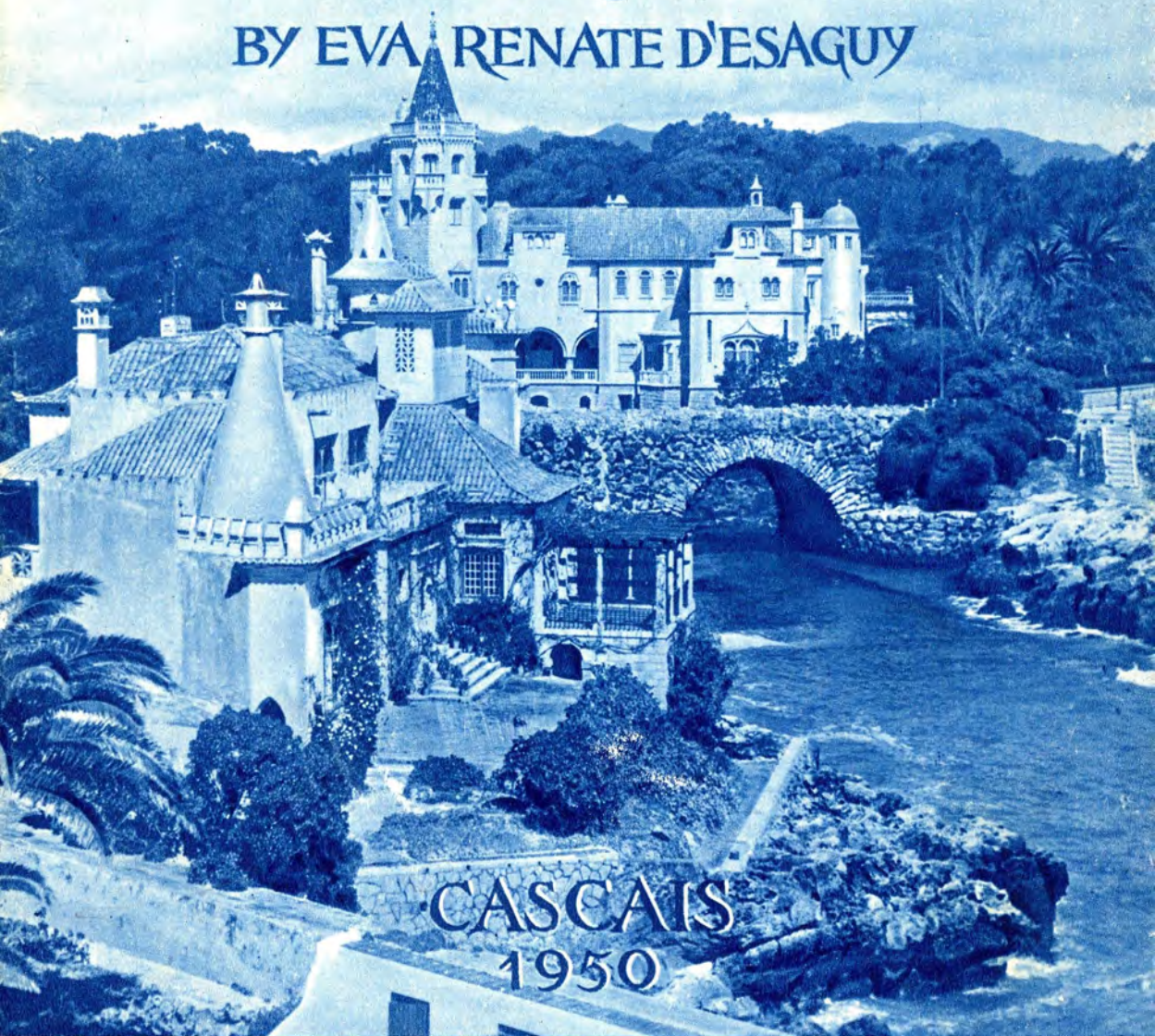




CASCAIS

TOWN OF KINGS AND FISHERMEN

BY EVA RENATE D'ESAGUY



CASCAIS
1950

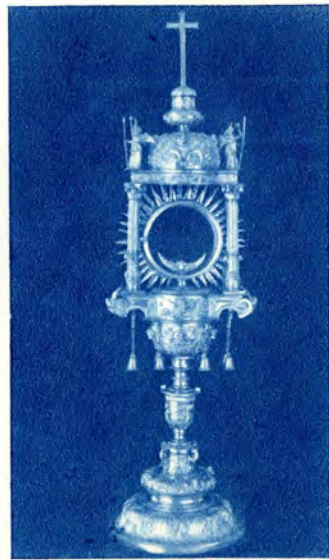
PORTUGAL



Count of Castro Guimarães Museum and Library on the road from the Citadel to Bôca do Inferno.



Two famous XVIIIth century silver gilt Monstrances.





The Castro Guimarães Palace.

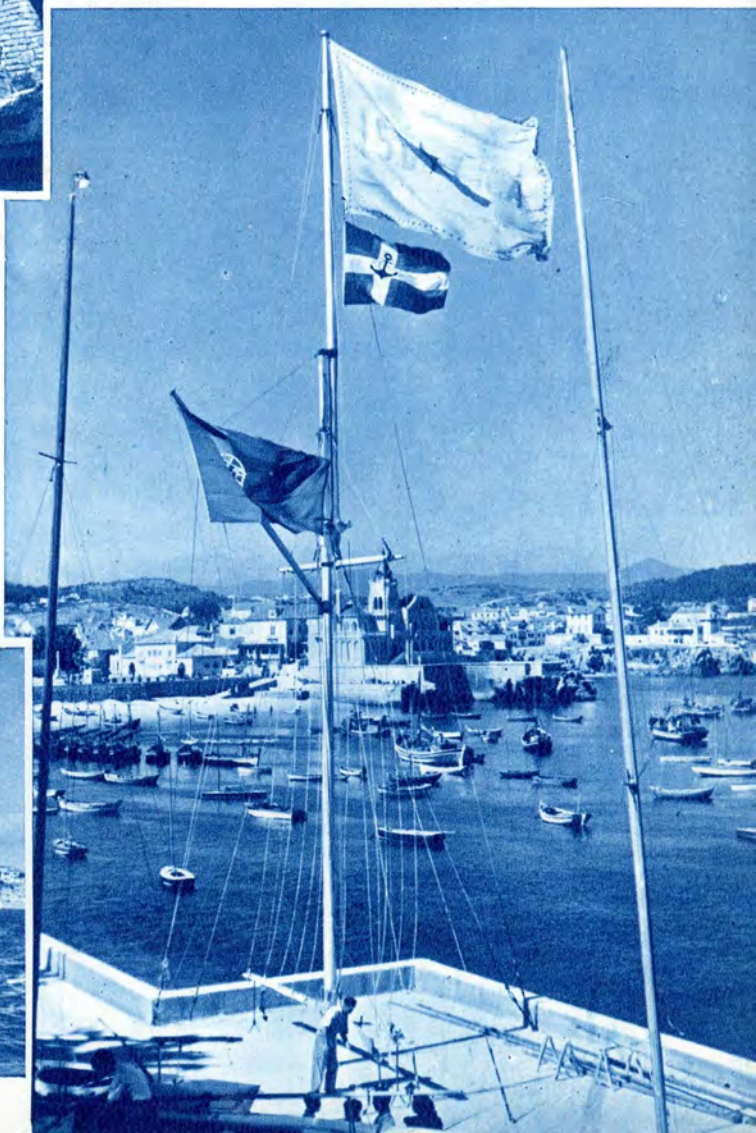


Cascais Bay.



Cascais Yacht Club.

Regattas at Cascais.





Roller-skating Hockey Ring.



*«Happy as a King»: Umberto of Savoy
at Guincho Beach.*



A Cascais fishing spot.



CASCAIS

TOWN OF KINGS AND FISHERMEN

«Cascais?» you are asked outside Portugal, and you hasten to explain: «A small town west of Estoril», because everybody has heard of the fashionable, ultra modern sea resort on the «Portuguese Riviera». Needless to say, your information which has well served its purpose is, strictly speaking, incorrect, since Estoril is really part of Cascais or a sort of suburb and belongs to its municipality. And whereas Cascais is an old established town, Estoril is a child of the 20th century, and with its comfortable up-to-date villas, its first class hotels, its Casino, its luxurious shops in the «Arcadas» and its smart restaurant on the beach, it is international in character rather than Portuguese. Cascais, on the other hand, now overshadowed by this child prodigy to which it has given birth, has a charm and picturesque beauty which is as thoroughly Portuguese as the history of the town itself, which has played its part as a fortress, a fishing village and the residence of many a Portuguese king and nobleman.

The actual date of the foundation of Cascais is unknown. It is certain, however, that it is very old and that at the time of the Romans it was already a place of some importance and known by the name of Cascale, of which the actual Cascais, formerly written Cascaes, is a derivation.

The early days of the Portuguese monarchy find Cascais a township which in 1159 received its charter from D. Afonso I. Up to 1364 it belonged to the council of Sintra,

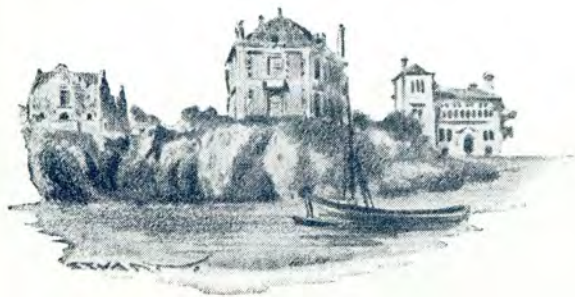
but in a letter signed by D. Pedro I on June 7 of that year it became a self-governing Municipality, paying the King two hundred Pounds annually in taxes. If one remembers that Cascais in 1527 counted 172 homes, and that in 1364 its population must have been a great deal less, it means that for the privilege of having its own municipality the head of each family had to pay the King about two Pounds every year, a rather impressive sum in those days.

The fortifications of Cascais were almost all built or rebuilt during the reign of D. João IV, D. Afonso VI and D. Pedro II. Most important of these fortifications is the Citadel of Cascais, once headquarters of the famous Nineteenth Infantry Regiment, and containing the Governor's Palace, which served as royal palace from 1871 till 1910 and later as summer residence to the President of the Republic.

In 1580 Cascais was attacked by the Duke of Alba, the infamous general of Phillip II of Spain, who landed with a considerable army. History tells us that the two thousand soldiers of Cascais courageously offered resistance to the more than twenty thousand invaders, but that a traitor opened the gate of the fortress when the battle had lasted but two hours, and thus let the Spaniards in. The valiant Captain D. Diogo de Menezes, governor of the fortress, was captured and a few days later he died on the gallows thus becoming the first Portuguese victim of the cruel

usurper. Having occupied the fortress, Alba's soldiers proceeded to pillage the whole town.

Most Portuguese noblemen sold out to Castile, but a few remained loyal to Portugal, amongst them the King, D. António I, Prior of the Crato, who although illegitimate was none the less a direct descendant of D. João I, and therefore felt that he had a better right to the crown of Portugal than the Spaniard. He and his four thousand men were beaten at Alcantara on August 25, 1580, but D. António was able to escape and fled to France. Nine years later he made a pact with Queen Elizabeth of England whereby he agreed that Portugal should become a British colony. In return he received twelve thousand men and a competent fleet led by Sir John Norris with which to fight the Spaniard. The British landed in Ericeira and Peniche, relying on D. António's promise that all Portugal would rise to their assistance the moment they set foot on Portuguese soil. They proceeded to besiege Lisbon, but the Portuguese people, informed of D. António's pact with England, did not come forward to help them. The auxiliary army therefore lifted the siege a few days later and retreated towards the sea. The Spaniard Villafañá was at that time Governor of Cascais. He was told that Lisbon had surrendered to D. António and immediately handed Cascais over to the British without a fight. The latter then proceeded to pillage the town while D. António looked on and dared not interfere. They loaded their boats with the booty they had plundered, and accompanied by the shamefaced King set sail for England, while Villafañá was executed by Phillip II.



In the Restoration of December 1, 1640, when Portugal finally shook off the Spanish yoke, Cascais played a more heroic part, and on December 19th of that year intrepid Martin Afonso de Mello was made Governor of Cascais and ordered to repair the fortifications. On November 19th, 1643, D. João IV made D. Alvaro Pires de Castro, 6th Count of Monsanto, the first Marquis of Cascais. The palace of the Lords of Cascais was completely destroyed by the earthquake of 1755. In 1643 a law was published obliging the Governor of Santarem, Torres Vedras and Tomar to come to the assistance of Cascais should the latter be attacked. The great wall of the Citadel on the west side was built at that time as shows the stone in the arch below the Portuguese coat of arms, which reads: «His most gracious and powerful Majesty, D. João IV, may God watch over him, ordered D. António Luis de Menezes, Count of Cantanhede, being the Governor of this town, to build these fortifications in the year 1645».

In 1808, after the Convention of Sintra, the British garrison under Admiral Cotton occupied the Citadel of Cascais for some time as well as the fortress of S. Julião.

By a decree of December 3, 1808, the Infantry Regiment of Cascais was founded and named the 19th Regiment. In the battle of Bussaco, September 27th 1810, five companies of this regiment under the French emigrant, Colonel Bean, led a furious bayonet charge against Massena's soldiers and contributed towards the final victory. According to Wellington the 19th Regiment showed itself a model of courage and discipline all through the campaign in Spain as well as in France. Cascais, duly proud of its 19th Regiment, observed until recently the 30th of August as Municipal Holiday in memory of the day on which the 19th Regiment returned to Cascais from the Peninsular War in 1814. Only lately, and

after it was proved by Dr. Fausto do Amaral Figueiredo that the Regiment could not possibly have returned to Cascais on that day, having only reached Lisbon on September 2nd of that year (see: *Gazetta de Lisboa* N.º 208, of September 3, 1814), the Municipal Holiday of Cascais was changed to June 7th in commemoration of the day in 1364 on which Cascais became a self-governing municipality.

In the fortress is the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Victoria. The statue of S. António from this chapel always accompanied the brave 19th Regiment during the whole Peninsular War. It is said that at one time S. António was made prisoner by the French together with the baggage train, but the 19th Regiment liberated him, and thereafter carried him always in full view of the entire company on a white mule. On a corner of the fortress is an inscription referring to S. António of Cascais, who before being sainted was admitted into the 2nd Infantry Regiment at Lagos, Algarve, in 1668, and attained the rank of captain in 1683. On the triumphant return of the 19th Regiment from the Peninsular War S. António was promoted to be a lieutenant-colonel, and his statue was decorated with the Cross of the Campaign of the Peninsular War. In 1920 the Municipal Council erected the above mentioned plaque chronicling the Saint's military career.

Near the Citadel is a small monument of an eagle with outspread wings commemorating the flight of Admiral Gago Coutinho and Commander Sacadura Cabral from Portugal to Brazil in 1922. Less certain than the exploits of these is one by a certain Afonso Sanches, a native of Cascais, who according to João Cardoso da Costa (see: *Memorias Historicas de J. C. C. Chorographia Brazileira*), was the first man to discover America in 1482, and before Americo Vespucio, Columbus, Cada-

mosto etc. ever landed there. According to Costa's version Sanches was sailing to the East Indies when a storm swept him onto the shores of North America. On his return he reached Madeira completely exhausted from the hardships of his trip, with only three or four sailors, and they died soon after their arrival in Madeira. He died in the house of his friend Christopher Columbus, a Genovese seafarer who had married and established himself in Madeira. And according to this version, it was with the help of the sea log of this Afonso Sanches that Columbus «rediscovered» America in 1492.

Some years later it was from the parapets of the Citadel of Cascais that the return of Vasco da Gama and his fifty five fellow survivors was greeted with joy, when they came home from their courageous trip, which in the last years of the 15th century had taken them to found Calecut, and had shown the world the sea way to the Orient.

The fortress of Cascais has always played an important part in Portugal's history, but the town itself threatened to become a rather desolate place in the beginning of the 19th century, when it looked for a while as if it would never recover from the terrible destructions of the earthquake, the latter coming on top of the various pillagings it had suffered. What gave most life to the town then were the three convents and the fact that it was headquarters of the 19th Regiment. When the latter was dissolved together with the whole Royal Army after



its capitulation at Evora-Monte in 1834, Cascais suffered a serious blow, and for a time it looked as if it would never recover. Instead of being rebuilt the palaces which had once housed Portugal's foremost nobility were torn down completely and were sold as building material. But like Carthago a new Cascais was to rise from the ruins of the old one. The first step towards its revival was to build a decent road between Cascais and Lisbon, and in 1859 the then director of Public Works Joaquim Antonio Vellez Barreiros, Viscount of Nossa Senhora da Luz, began to build a road to Oeiras, finished in 1864, which proved a veritable artery for the life of Cascais. Around the same time a road was completed connecting Cascais and Sintra. And with these forerunners of the marginal road and the electric train, the beaches of Cascais became more accessible and fashionable, and the doomed town woke up to a new life and prosperity.

The train service was inaugurated September 30th 1889 when the trains went as far as Pedrouços, from where later there was a connection with Alcantara Terra leading to the Rossio. In 1895 the station of Cais do Sodré was completed. At the same time there were people who preferred to avail themselves of the daily steamer service which would bring them out from Lisbon in the morning and would take them home at night. In a way it seems a pity that this service has been discontinued in our time.

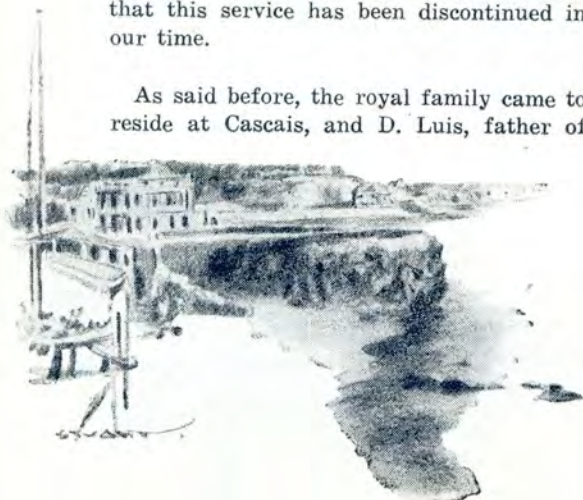
As said before, the royal family came to reside at Cascais, and D. Luis, father of

D. Carlos, actually died in the Citadel of Cascais in 1889. Near the Fishermen's Beach a column surmounted with the coat of arms of the Braganças has been erected in memory of the visit of Queen Maria II and D. Pedro de Bragança to Cascais.

The old house which serves to-day as Town Hall used to belong to the Count of Guarda. It is one of the most interesting buildings of Cascais not so much because of its architecture, but because of the remarkable tiles which adorn its front. The figures on it represent various saints, such as S. Sebastião, S. António, S. Marçal, S. Mateus, S. Marcos, S. Jerónimo, S. Lucas, and S. João.

In a higher part of the town is the Theater of Gil Vicente, in the Nazareth Street, which was built in 1868 and belongs to the Theatrical Society of Cascais. It seats five hundred people and the orchestra (plateia) can be changed in twenty minutes into a ball room.

The earthquake of November 1, 1755, which wrought havoc in Lisbon, also caused great damage to Cascais and demolished many houses, as the one of the Marquis of Cascais, churches, chapels and other important buildings. A tidal wave carried away the boats at anchor in the bay and tossed them on the top of the Poço Velho, highest point of the town. More than three hundred persons from Cascais perished in the earthquake, but those who took refuge in the chapel of Nossa Senhora da Conceição dos Innocentes, standing on a small peninsula east of the town, were saved, although this spot should have been one of the first to be covered by the waves. In memory of this miracle there is a yearly thanksgiving procession to Nossa Senhora da Conceição dos Innocentes in Cascais. Another yearly procession is in honour of Queen Saint Isabel, wife of D. Diniz. Formerly it was compul-



sory that at least one person of each household attend the procession. In the official statute it says: «It should be known that of every house one person must be present or if he defaults shall be made to pay fifty reis to the Public prosecutor, and those representing each household should not be boys or young girls, but men or women. And the men shall wear their cloaks and the women their mantles.»

Another procession is held in honour of Nossa Senhora da Guia, whose quaint little chapel stands on the road from Cascais to Guincho, next to the lighthouse which was built two hundred years later in 1761. The lighthouse used to receive from the king a barrel of olive oil each year, but the light was only lit between November and March. The rocky coast stretching from Cascais to Cabo da Roca, the westernmost tip of Europe, is interspersed with lighthouses to give due warning to the passing ships.

Cascais formerly had two parochial churches, but the one of the Resurrection was destroyed in the earthquake. The remaining one, Church of Nossa Senhora da Assunção, is near the Citadel and the former Carmelite Convent. Its entrance is in the style King Manuel (Manuelino). Its nave measuring 35 meters is adorned by beautiful tiles dating back to 1748, and older ones from 1720 can be found in the sacristy. The ceiling was painted by the famous Portuguese José Malhoa, and there are panels by Josefa de Obidos and Pedro Alexandrino.

Not far is the Church of S. Pedro Gonçalves, better known as the Church of the Navigators or the Men of the Sea (*Homens do Mar*), so called because the fishermen before going out at night used to go there to hear Mass. It is of octagonal shape, very solidly built with a double wall, and did not suffer during the earthquake. It

remained unfinished, however, and the two towers have only lately been added.

There is a third church, the one of the Misericórdia of Cascais on a small hidden square not far from the station. It was built after 1751 but never quite finished. It contains beautiful paintings and is worth visiting. The nave measures 27 meters by 9 meters. Of greatest curiosity value in this church is the image of Nossa Senhora dos Anjos in blue and gold which, it is said, appeared one day on the beach of Cascais, possibly the remnant of some shipwreck. It was brought to the Church, disappeared again only to be found on the same spot of the beach where it had first been discovered. Returned to the Church it disappeared again and was finally found floating on top of a strange wooden snake, the head of which one can see in a small annex of the Church where other ancient images are kept. Formerly the hospital of the Misericórdia was in a building close by, but to-day a new and more spacious one has been built in a different part of the town with a subsidy from the Count of Castro Guimaraes.

The same Count left his palatial residence — on the road from the Citadel to the *Bôca do Inferno* — to the town of Cascais together with an ample endowment for its maintenance. Surrounded by a beautiful park in which the Count and his Countess are buried, the palace has been turned into a museum and library. The house was built by Senhor Jorge O'Neill who claimed descent from the ancient kings of Ireland. The entrance to the museum is through a



charming Spanish patio. The museum has a collection of paintings, sculptures and rare faience. Amongst the paintings one should note «The Lady with the white gloves» (A Senhora das Luvas Brancas) by Columbano, dated 1901; the portrait of the Count of Sub-Serra by Pellegrini, dated 1806; a landscape (paisagem) by Alfredo de Andrade; a study (estudo) by Frederico Madrazo, dated 1871; a portrait of Dr. José de Figueiredo by António Carneiro; two landscapes of Setúbal by João Vaz; and two water colours of Sintra by Casanova, dated 1881.

The private library of the Count has been converted into a reference and lending library with a fair collection of books in Portuguese, English, French and German. Additions are constantly being made, and donations gratefully accepted. In the library the «Crónica de D. Afonso Henriques» by Duarte Galvão, and the Charter of Cascais, dated 1514, are on view.

Furthermore there is the Archeological Room in which finds from the pre-historic caves of the Poço Velho of Cascais are on exhibit. These neolithic burial sites were explored in 1879 by the wellknown archeologist Carlos Ribeiro and yielded all sorts of axes, hatchets, arrows, daggers, earthenware pottery, the remains of human bones etc. etc.. The Junta de Turismo de Cascais is working to make the caves accessible to the public.

In the park of the Museum de Castro Guimarães there is an old chapel dedicated to S. Sebastião which, like the patio, is decorated with lovely Mozarab tiles.

Some hundred meters further along the marginal road one comes to the famous Bôca do Inferno, which on a rough wintry day when the waters hurl themselves through the small opening and fill the

rockwalled basin with cascades of foaming water, looks like a real devil's punchbowl. On a calm day it is possible to descend into the great pit at low tide, but at all times carefulness is strongly recommended, because more than one foolhardy visitor has been caught by an unexpected wave and swept away. Like the Empire State building of New York the Bôca do Inferno is a favorite spot from which to commit suicide, a fact which probably adds to its macabre attraction.

Next to the Bôca do Inferno used to be the small beach of the Mexilheiro on which on October 2nd 1873 Queen Maria Pia accompanied by her two small sons was examining the famous cave, when an unexpected wave swept her and the little princes off their feet. They might easily have drowned had it not been for the presence of mind of the lighthouse keeper who saved them just in time. In recognition of his courage he received a medal from the King and a pension for life.

Near the Bôca do Inferno is the Fenda de Mata Cães (Kill Dog Crevasse) which, because it presented a quite unexpected deathtrap, has been walled in. The story tells of a portly lady who got stuck in her fall half way down the crevasse and could only be rescued after many hours and by the most complicated corkscrew process.

The marginal road leads eventually, past many spots for the amateur angler, to the beautiful beach of Guincho. Lately the rocky coastline has been made more accessible and less dangerous. Steps have been hewn into the rocks, wooden planks have been spread platform like between the crevasses, for a better foothold, and along the road little signposts, with a fish painted on them, direct the angler to his favorite spot. In summer weekly fishing competitions, to see who catches most fish, by the

weight, bring contestants by the bus-load from near and far.

Not far off the coast the professional fishermen, — those who supply Cascais with «the best fish in the world» —, can be seen spreading their nets. The inflated pigsbladders, painted in bright, cheerful colours, float on the sea and mark the spot. Others are seen in canoe shaped boats with brown sails and masts lowered as they fish in the ancient manner used in the sea of Galilee, the boats working in pairs with great nets strung between.

But, returning to Cascais, particularly on a hot summer day, it is an unexpected pleasure to go for a stroll through the Park of General Carmona — next to the Palace of the Count de Castro Guimarães, with another entrance opposite the Church of Nossa Senhora da Assunção — and to refresh one's lungs with the pure air of the eucalyptus trees. There are benches for the weary, ponds with swans and others with small boats for children to paddle around; there is a miniature Zoo, sandboxes and swings to delight old and young.

Very recently the previously private park of the Duke of Palmela — off the marginal road between Cascais and Monte Estoril — has also been opened to the public.

For the future world champions in hockey on roller-skates (hockey em patins) there is the ring just behind the market with good accomodation for the spectators who come to watch the matches mostly held at night.

Next to the hockey ring is the Campo Hípico where usually in the month of September the annual horse jumping competitions are held. These gatherings attended by a large number of Portugal's «High Society» are interesting not only for the

horse lover but also for those who are anxious to see the latest fashions on display.

Apart from the Sporting Club de Cascais — a yacht club next to the Citadel — where from all over the world people come to compete in the regattas, — in 1948 the world «Star» championship was held in the Bay of Cascais —, there is the fashionable Club da Parada in Cascais, with excellent tennis courts and a miniature track for motorcycle races and gymkanas, for the sports minded, as well as card tables for bridge and canasta fiends, and an excellent cuisine to top it all.

Talking of food, there is of course the Casa da Laura — on the marginal road between the Town Hall and the Citadel — famous for its sea food and for a special kind of cookies served at tea time. There is further the «Fim do Mundo» right opposite the station, attractive with its modern decorations and a pleasant Bar. The restaurant «A Marisqueira» — next to the post office and just off the Fishermen's Beach — has a French touch to it and makes one think of the waterfront «bistros» in Marseilles.

At Marinha — on the road leading from Cascais to Guincho — the «Delfim Verde»



has recently been opened. Further out in Guincho restaurants and tea rooms seem to be shooting up over night, and on Sundays and holidays one can see a steady procession of cars driving out there. Oldest amongst these places is the «Casa do Faroleiro» with its excellent «lagosta à maneira do Faroleiro», lobster with a piquant red sauce which alone is worth the trip. There is also the *Barraca-Bar*, famous for its lobsters as well as chickens.

The beach of Guincho, dangerous for swimming, but exhilarating with its big ocean waves and impressive with its vast expanse of clean sand, is a favorite spot for picnics. If the wind blows too strongly from the ocean one can take refuge in the dunes or further back in the pinewoods of *Marinha*. A daily bus service from Cascais to Guincho makes it more accessible to the public, and lately a new road has been opened leading from Guincho along the Serra to Sintra.

In the summer months there is dinner and dancing at the «Palm Beach» — off the beach da Duqueza at Cascais — on the sea shore, which in sophistication rivals the Wonderbar at Estoril.

For the visitor who wants to stay at Cascais without renting a house of his own there are various boarding houses, amongst them the *Pensão Ricco* — near the Casa da Laura — and the *Pensão da Avenida* — Avenida Valbom, near the station — which

offer comfortable rooms and board at reasonable rates.

There is a special attraction for the visitor who comes to Cascais at night and assists at one of the auctions at the «Lota» — just above the Fishermen's Beach in the town. The auctioneer starts at the top of the scale with the highest price the fish can possibly bring. Then with breathtaking rapidity he counts backwards, 95. 94. 93. etc. etc.. Suddenly one of the buyers shouts «Tchui» — it sounds like a hearty sneeze — and the lot is sold to him at the price called out that instant. Obviously it is quite an art to call out at the right moment. Not too soon, or the price is too high. Not too late, or a rival has shouted «Tchui» and sealed the bargain. And so goes one lot of fish after the other. A new building has just been completed some hundred yards away which will shortly be used for the «Lota». A hygienic measure, no doubt, yet it seems a pity that this picturesque scene should no longer be conducted in the open air.

The young fishwives, «Varinas», are amongst the most interesting and attractive peasant girls in Europe. Those of them who do not sell their fish directly at the market can be seen in the day time balancing their baskets with fish on top of their heads, singing out their wares, their musical cry mingling with that of the lottery sellers, the knife grinders, and other ambulant hucksters.

Near the Fishermen's Beach one can see the men squatting and, in the manner of their ancestors, mending their nets spread out on the modern sidewalk. They hardly raise their eyes when an elegant car drives past them or pulls up in front of the fashionable Casa da Laura. But when a pretty girl walks by they look after her and smile. Yes, there can be no doubt, Cascais is a Portuguese town.





Cascais early in the XXth Century: The fishing beach.



*An old fisherman mending
his net on the beach.*





View of Cascais Bay.



Fifteen miles west of Lisbon and just off Estoril, on the «Sunny Coast», Cascais, facing south and sheltered by the Sintra mountains, enjoys a wonderful sunny and temperate climate. It is held to be one of the best winter resorts in Europe.