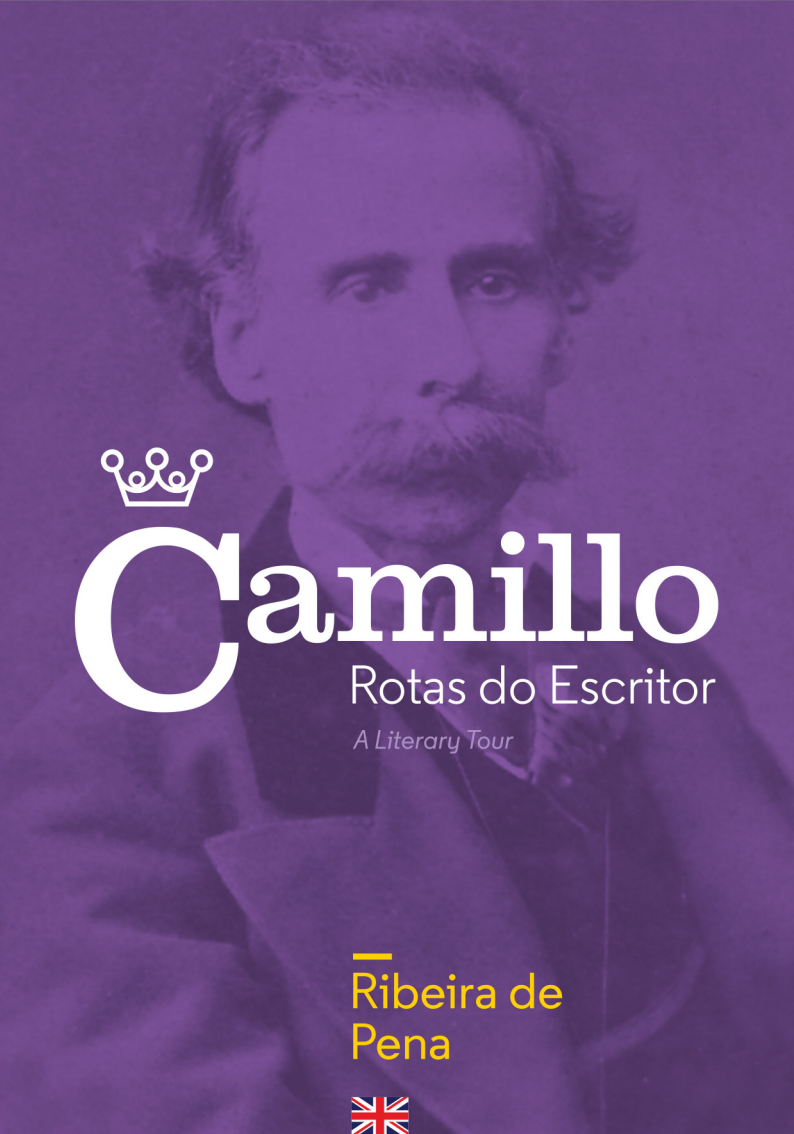


A purple-tinted portrait of Camilo Castelo Branco, a man with a mustache and wavy hair, wearing a suit and tie.

Camillo

Rotas do Escritor

A Literary Tour

—
Ribeira de
Pena



The writer took enough literary material from Trás-os-Montes to last him a lifetime. Above all, he took the regional character of his Trás-os-Montes family, which was reinvigorated in Samardã and Friúme.

João de Araújo Correia – *Uma sombra picada das bexigas*

Camilo Castelo Branco

Lisbon, 16 March 1825
São Miguel de Seide
(Famalicão), 1 June 1890

Camilo Castelo Branco lived in Ribeira de Pena during his restless youth, between the ages of 16 and 18. This leaflet provides the visitor with a general overview of the “infinite seedbeds of novelistic plants” that he took from the banks of the river Tâmega and which “gave fruit”.

Camilo moved from Vilarinho de Samardã to Friúme in 1841 so that he could attend classes with a well-known Latin master, father Manuel Rodrigues (or Manuel da Lixa, so-called because he was from Lixa do Alvão). He lodged with his cousin, Maria do Loreto, who was married to Francisco Ribeiro (Moreira), a wealthy landowner.



House of the priest and teacher Manuel da Lixa, a Latinist of repute. The photographic record shows the house prior to restoration.

41°32'14.5"N
7°46'51.6"W



There are no known portraits of Joaquina Pereira da França. The portrait of her sister Rosa is reproduced here, for it is said that they were very similar in appearance.

During his stay in the Tâmega valley, Camilo experienced a rich and fertile series of episodes, and his memory was abundantly furnished with material for his future fictional production. For example, he refers to his first job as a notary's clerk; his attendance at Latin lessons and his bonhomie with the Latin master's other disciples; his excursions in the surrounding area to exercise the arts of fishing and hunting; his participation in popular pastimes, whether instructing the villagers of Friúme in how to play noughts and crosses, drafting and rehearsing farces, or writing verses for the locals to sing in popular concerts; his propensity for a bohemian life in the company of the local parish priest and the pharmacist, Macário Afonso, "a master of backgammon and draughts", and his own penchant for gambling and love affairs. However, the event that had the greatest impact during Camilo's time in this region was his marriage to Joaquina Pereira da França. He would later abandon her when she was pregnant with their daughter, never to see her again. In spite of this, her memory was not absent from the creation of characters such as Josefa (*Maria Moisés*) and Mariana (*Amor de perdição* [*Doomed Love*]).

Within the county, the historical heritage associated with episodes from Camilo's life is a particular highlight. The majestic Church of the Divine Saviour, which dominates the built-up area of the town, was constructed in the second half of the eighteenth century and the

Main altar of the Church of the Divine Saviour, in which the image of the Divine Saviour can be seen on the left, and the Archangel Saint Gabriel on the right.



41°31'10.6"N
7°47'37.7"W

work was funded by the philanthropy of a local emigrant to Brazil, Manuel José de Carvalho. Camilo and Joaquina were married in this church on 18 August 1841: they were both about 16 years old. An incident that Camilo used to justify leaving Ribeira de Pena is connected to this monument. It involved the adolescent writing some quatrains that satirised the marriage of a certain nobleman to a commoner, against the will of the nobleman's brother: "I escaped martyrdom for my genius by a whisker," Camilo joked. The small shack in Friúme that the young couple lived in, close to the grocer's shop run by Sebastião dos Santos, Joaquina's father, and near Moreira's house, was converted into a museum. It is also worth mentioning the priest's residence where Camilo took Latin instruction, situated in Granja Velha, and also a chapel that offers a superb example of the



Camilo's house in Friúme – Camilo and Joaquina's bedroom.

41°32'00.3"N
7°48'44.4"W



The Chapel of Granja Velha – on the façade, the stone coat of arms of its founder, the priest Lourenço Valadares Vieira, stands out.

41°32'14.5"N
7°46'51.6"W

rural baroque, and which was commissioned in the first half of the eighteenth century by a priest who exercised important religious functions in Brazil.

People, places, and facts relating to Ribeira de Pena abound in Camilo's tales. The examples are numerous. He wrote about the festivals of St. Bartholomew of Cavez and Our Lady of Guidance in the story *Como ela o amava* and in the "Sixth" of *Doze casamentos felizes*. On the right bank of the river Tâmega, next to the Cavez bridge, stands the Quinta da Casa da Ponte. The patron saint of the chapel on this estate is St Bartholomew, a great enemy of Satan. The festival in honour of this saint takes place on 24 August and is attended by people from all over the Minho and Trás-os-Montes regions, who are drawn by the sulphurous waters and the reputation of St Bartholomew as a rescuer of bodies from the influence of infernal spirits.

The chapel of Our Lady of Guidance rises up on one of the hillsides of Alvão and it is the setting for one of the biggest festivals in the county. Our Lady was consecrated as the patron of Ribeira de Pena in 1952, and the inhabitants of many of the surrounding settlements are devoted to her. On 15 August, there is a

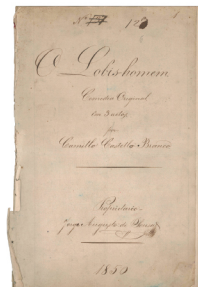
procession in her honour and the people fulfil promises that they have made in the Chapel. With regard to the people of the region, some prominent names are the pharmacist of Friúme, Macário Afonso (*O filho natural*) and especially, José Pacheco de Andrade e Vasconcelos, the famous "nobleman-beggar" who is recalled and transformed in various plots (among them, *Aventuras de Basílio Fernandes Enxertado*, *Noites de Lamego*, and *Mistérios de Fafe*).

The comedy *O lobisomem* is "nothing more and nothing less than what is probably the precise story of his courtship and marriage to Joaquina Pereira", according to Alberto Pimentel. *Maria Moisés*, his most popular novella with its plot centred on the Tâmega river and valley, interconnects with and makes material the memories and experiences of his adolescence in sublime fashion, with the adult writer's exceptional talent for storytelling enabling a transformation of the characters, places, and episodes that were experienced and suffered, whether directly by him, or by others. However, and in spite of this fictional transformation and of the human need for progress that abounds today in the physical landscape of the region, to read the texts by Camilo relating to Ribeira de Pena is to be enticed into (re)living stories and (re)visiting the local, nineteenth-century, historical and cultural heritage that was immortalised through his genius.



The Chapel of Our Lady of Guidance – It was constructed in the first half of the eighteenth century at the devotion and wish of the owners of the Casa de Santa Marinha and the Casa do Mato. Above the façade there is a large scallop shell in granite. The influence of Santiago de Compostela is easily recognisable.

41°32'00.7"N
7°46'00.8"W



O lobisomem – The cover page of the manuscript of the play, written in 1850 and published posthumously.



41°30'50.7"N
7°53'28.3"W

The festival of St Bartholomew is geographically curious. It takes place overlooking the river Tâmega, next to the bridge that connects the two banks of the river. Each bank has its particular point of interest: on the Minho side stands the Chapel of St Bartholomew; and on the Trás-os-Montes side is the miraculous spring of sulphurous water.

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