

Finding Aid to the Martha's Vineyard Museum

Record Unit 224

Portuguese on Martha's Vineyard

Nancy Prada Young

Descriptive Summary

Call No.

Title: Portuguese on Martha's Vineyard

Quantity: .5cu. ft.

Abstract: A collection of family papers, letters, clippings and genealogical research relating to Portuguese immigrants to the Island of Martha's Vineyard

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information: The Portuguese on Martha's Vineyard Collection was acquired by the Martha's Vineyard Museum during the 20th and 21st centuries; many donors contributed to the growth of this compilation.

Processing Information: Nancy Prada Young

Access Restrictions: none

Use Restrictions: none

Preferred Citation for Publication: Martha's Vineyard Museum, Portuguese on Martha's Vineyard, Record Unit 224.

Index Terms:

Azores

Bettencourt

Cape Verde

DeLoura

Dias

Mattakesett Creek Company

Portugal

Silva

Swazey

Wood

Series and Subseries Arrangement

Series I: History

 Subseries A: Early Arrivals

 Subseries B: Immigrant Life

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Historical Note:

Beginning in the early 1800s, whale ships from Martha's Vineyard stopped at the Azorean and Cape Verde Islands for supplies and crew. Through these direct contacts, a number of Portuguese fishermen and whalers chose to settle on the Vineyard. As the immigrants became successful in their new home, they sent for family members and friends to join them. Additionally, these immigrants established contact with other Portuguese immigrant communities in the United States. For example, a regular packet service was begun between New Bedford and the Islands as more new comers and families came to Martha's Vineyard.

Among the earliest immigrants was Joseph Dias, he married Sarah Manter in 1781. So after his marriage, Dias was captured by British forces and died on a prison ship. Dias' marriage to the prominent Manter family began the Portuguese integration into the fabric of Vineyard life. For example, Joseph Dias' grand-son rose to the position of whaling master and his great-grandson became a Cottage City hotelier. Beyond the Dias family, there were many other Portuguese families that have contributed to the Island community. For example, Elmer DeLoura, son of another Azorean, left a \$2.3 million scholarship fund with income of over \$100,000 for the children of Martha's Vineyard. William Madison Wood, of the American Woolen Company, entrepreneur and philanthropist, was born in Edgartown. An important reference for individuals and families is Marianne Thomas' 2 volume *Our Portuguese Heritage: An Informal Genealogy of 3000 Families on Martha's Vineyard*.

Scope and Content:

This collection documents the arrival on the Vineyard of Portuguese immigrants, mainly from the Azorean Islands, beginning in the 1700's and their assimilation into Island life. It includes letters from the home Islands, legal papers, biographies and newspaper articles about the Portuguese on Martha's Vineyard, and genealogical research.

Series Description:

Series I: History

Subseries A: Early Arrivals

Box 1 of 1:

Folder 1: "Portuguese Words Known to the Indians," Evening Tribune, 1968
Folder 2: "Portuguese Immigrants to Martha's Vineyard before 1800" , Dr. Charles E. Banks. Typed mss. of a talk to *The Edgartown D.A.R.* April, 1915; "Early Portuguese Settlers" , V.G. April 1990.
Folder 3: "Immigrants from the Azores Settled on the Vineyard" , Warner Foote Gookin, V.G. August 15, 1980. "Coming of Portuguese Marked New Era on Vineyard" , Warren F. Gookin, V.G. May 10, 1946.

Subseries B: Immigrant Life

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Folder 4: "High Tribute Paid Heritage of Portuguese" n.d. "Vineyard Owes a Great Deal to Portuguese Kin " , V.G., n.d.
Folder 5: Obituary of Jules Ben David, V.G., November 13, 1964. Maxemena Mello Looks Back Across the Edgartown Years" , V.G. February 12, 1982. "Special Birthday Marks Older Americans Month". V. G. May 4, 1950. "Famous Fannie " Silva Jenkinson. Obit of Captain Antone Bettencourt. V.G. John Bent, "Interesting Vineyarders". V.G., July 1, 1927.
Folder 6: "This was Manuel- (Swartz Roberts (16) A Legend in His Own Time" , V.G. August 3rd, 1979. Letter to Polly Burroughs from his nieces correcting inaccuracies in material written about him, May 12th, 1989.
Folder 7: Clippings of Portuguese, 1946-1988. "First Resident and Business Directory of Nantucket, Edgartown, Cottage City, Vineyard Haven, Tisbury, West Tisbury and Chilmark" 1897.
Folder 8: "How is Your Memory? Here is Something to Work On" Lawrence Viera, V. G., March 11, 1939.
Folder 9: Clippings from 1985-2000 re annual Portuguese American Feast honoring the Holy Ghost and Queen Isabella.

Series II: Portuguese Families

Subseries A. Swazey

Papers relating to Joseph Swasey, (1743- 1807) whose original name may have been Jose de Souza, Jr. He and his wife Susannah Pease built a home on Starbuck's Neck, Edgartown.

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Folder 10: Biography of Joseph Swasey. Genealogical records of Swasey family from church records. n.d. Handwritten mss. Notes on owners of the Swasey House. n.d. Deed from Joseph Swasey to Joseph Dunham, of land on Chappaquiddick, August 6th, 1785. Obituary of Admiral A. Loring Swasey V.G., January 13, 1956. (photocopy). Real estate ad for the Swasey House, V. G. September 21, 1984. Swasey Graveyard, October 22, 1984.

Subseries B: Dias

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Folder 11: Joseph Dias and family: Record of marriage of Joseph Dias and Sarah Manter, January 4, 1781. Certification of citizenship for American seaman, John H. Dias born in Tisbury, from District of Warren and Bristol, June 17th, 1836. Clippings re: Captain Joseph Dias III.

Subseries C: Silva

Box 1 of 1

Folder 11: Papers of Antone King Silva. Birth certificate in Portuguese, 1869. Death certificate, Westfield, New Jersey, February 3, 1948. Eulogy given by Rev. Henry Butman at Capt. Silva's funeral, February 7, 1948. Obituary of Mrs. Antone King Silva (Mabel Marchant) V. G., 1944. Two deeds transferring shares owned by Antone Silva of the capital stock of The Proprietors of the New Mattakesett Creeks Company to the Edgartown National Bank, October 13, 1911 and September 28, 1917. List of proposed officers for The Proprietors of the New Mattakesett Creeks Company, n.d. Receipt for \$100 for one share in Trapp's Pond Fishing Co. from Antone K. Silva signed by Chester Pease, April 11, 1904.

Subseries D: Wood

Box 1 of 1

Folder 12: Documents and clippings about William Madison Wood (1858-1926). "He Changed the Textile Industry," *Eagle-Tribune*, November 7, 1982. "Mills, Mansions, and Mergers: The Life of William M. Wood", Edward G. Roddy, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, North Andover, Ma. n.d. "The House That Wool Built". Newton Fuessle, *The Outlook*, n.d. "Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the American Woolen Company, 1922. "Semi-Annual Report of the American Woolen Company, 1946.A. Wolff, May 14th, 1995 re name of Wood may be translation of Silva.

Subseries E: DeLoura

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Folder 13: Clippings and notes re; Elmer Hobson DeLoura, and the Scholarship he founded. 1957- 1991.

Subseries F: Miscellaneous Family Papers

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Folder 14: Receipt from Dave's Department Store, V. H. to Lawrence Bettencourt, June 22, 1935.

Series III: Legal Papers

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Folder 15: Shellfish Permit from Town of Edgartown, October 3, 1935 for Manuel S. Bettencourt. Membership certificate for Arthur M. Bettencourt, May 12, 1935, U.S. Dept of Commerce and Justice Beneficial Association.

Series IV: Correspondence

Box 1 of 1

Folder 16: Series of letters in Portuguese most to Manuel Alves Bettencourt from Maria Luz and Antonio Alves, from Grazioza, 1897-1900.

Folder 17: Request to Lawrence Bettencourt from Allan Keniston, 1936.

Series V: Genealogy

Box 1 of 1

Folder 18: Clippings referring to *Our Portuguese Heritage*, Marianne Thomas, The Community History Project, Edgartown, Ma. 1996.

Folder 19: American-Portuguese Genealogical Society *Bulletin Board*, Winter 1980--Fall 1986.

Folder 20: "Antonio Tavares (Antone Tavas) Silva, Vital Records to the Year 1987", compiled by Jean L. Silva, Tisbury, Massachusetts. "Jean L. Silva Reflects Fondly... Fifty Years in Girl Scouts" V.G. July 6, 1990.