

THE HISTORIE OF THE PORTUGUESE IN HUDSON

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PREFACE

This short and modest text is not by all means a complete work of History but rather a brief chronological history of the Portuguese people in Hudson, written in a manner all can understand and enjoy.

It includes the years from 1886 when the first Portuguese immigrant settled in Hudson up until the present time. Incorporated is a brief history of the people, clubs, events and organization through the years.

I would like to express my appreciation to all those who unselfishly gave their time and information. I would like to especially thank Mr. Jose Mario deChaves who so graciously passed on to me any information which he had authenticated through the department of Emigration at Vila do Porto, Santa Maria, Azores.

THE FIRST PORTUGUESE TO LIVE IN HUDSON

The first Portuguese to live and work and make his home in Hudson, Mass. arrived here from New Bedford Mass. in July of 1886. His name was Jose Tavares. Young Mr. Tavares, still in his teens, arrived in New Bedford only a few days earlier from Santa Maria, Azores. He made his eight month long trip on the whaling bark, "Sara".

It is generally believed that Jose, having lived on a farm in the Azores, worked his way to Hudson in search for work. This must have been an ordeal for he spoke no English and knew nobody. He finally found work on the farms of a Mr. Stow.

Jose Tavares, then, was the very first Portuguese immigrant to settle and live in the town of Hudson. In the ensuing 80 years, many more have come.

PORTUGUESE BEFORE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

We can only assume that young Jose Tavares was impressed with this country and the little town of Hudson for the following year he sent for his two younger brothers, namely Manuel and Joao, or John. They arrived in May of 1887. Unlike Jose, John and Manuel made their trip on a Portuguese sailing ship called the "Penisular". Their trip was a much shorter, 35 days. Manuel went to work on a farm owned by Mr. Stratton and John worked on a farm owned by Mr. Teele.

The Tavares Brothers later married and, before long, Hudson had second generation Portuguese.

Jose married a girl named Luisa Nunes from Newport, R. I. and the island of Pico, Azores. They left a large family, one of them, Mary (Mrs. Charles Alves), is still living in Hudson. Manuel Travares

married a French girl from Marlborough. He is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Antonia Rainha of Hudson. The third brother, John, married a French girl named Rose Veo from Hudson. He left quite a number of children and grand-children many of whom now live in Hudson.

In the year 1888, came Antonio Figueiredo Chaves and his sister, Maria, with a baby girl also named Maria. In July of that same year, another young man of 18 came from Santa Maria to live and work in Hudson. He was Jose J. Braga who went to work for the Dunn and Green Company, a tannery, where he worked until the 1920's when it went out of business.

The first family to arrive was the Garcia family in 1889. The Garcia's, Antonio and Maria, came from the island of Sao Miguel, Azores with their two daughters, Maria and Amelia, and two sons, Abel

(10 years old) and Jacintho (9 years old). Eventually the two sisters married. One, Amelia, married Jose Braga and the other, Maria, married Antonio Figueiredo Chaves. The brothers also married in due time. Abel married a French girl from Marlborough and Jacintho married Evelin Morin, a French girl from Hudson.

Maria, the sister of Antonio F. Chaves, married a Patrick Connors, and Irishman from the Emerald Isle and Hudson. Maria, the baby who came with her, married Antonio deMello from Marlborough and Santa Maria. Antonio F. Chaves left no family but his sister Maria, Mrs. Connors, left two sons, Patrick and William Connors of Marlborough and two daughters Mrs. deMello of Marlborough and Mrs. Laura Mello of Red Lands, California.

Victorino deBairos and Augusto S. Correia,

both still in their teens, arrived in 1893 from Santa Maria. They both went to work for Dunn and Green. Victorino, the first Portuguese to become an American citizen, married a girl from the island of Graciosa, Azores. He left three sons John, Joseph and Augusto Jr. and a daughter, Lillian of Hudson.

In 1898, the last Portuguese to arrive before the turn of the century were Antonio R. Luz, Jose J. Braga, and Joao N. Camara. Luz and Braga, a cousin of the first Braga, migrated from Santa Maria, and Camara from Sao Miguel. Antonio Luz married a girl from the island of Faial, Azores. Joao Camara being a barber in Sao Miguel, pursued his profession and opened up a barber shop on Broad Street.

With these people, Hudson now had a small Portuguese colony within the town. They settled around

the High Street, Washington Street, and Riverview Street area. Of these original immigrants only two are still living today. Mrs. deMello (Maria Chaves) and Mr. Luz are both living in Marlborough.

EARLY 1900's

In July of 1900 came Jose J. Almada, his wife Leonor (Silva) Almada and her brother, Manuel Silva, from Cambridge, Mass. and Santa Maria. Along about the mid 1905's came the Rainhas: father and mother with six sons; Victorino, Manuel, Jose, Antonio, Mariano, and Evaristo, and three daughters; Rosa, Isabel and Maria. Of the eleven only two are living today, Jose and Mrs. Jose Soares of Hudson. Also in 1905 came another family, the Coutos; father, mother and four children; Maria, Augustin, Elvira (later Mrs. John Rio) and Gil. Still living today are Augustine and Gil in Berlin, Mass. These people

were all from Sao Miguel.

In 1907 came Maria (Frias) Pereira with three children; Maria, Jacintha Jose, and Maria Jose from Santa Maria. Living today are Mrs. Jose L. Furtado, Mrs. Jacintha L. Furtado and Mrs. Antonio Peréiro, all of Hudson. In this same year from Sao Miguel, came two brothers Mariano and Dinis Garcia, who are still living in Hudson. Mariano is the oldest Portuguese in Hudson today. In 1908 came Jose Pestana and his wife from the Island of Madaira.

FIRST MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY

In 1908, the Portuguese of Hudson and a few who lived in Marlborough then, together formed Lodge No. 19 of the Portuguese Fraternity of the U. S. A. Their first president was Jose T. Grillo, later Father Grillo of Saint Anthony Portuguese Parish of Lowell, Mass.

This nationally affiliated organization was formed as a mutual benefit society, with sick benefits and death benefits to its members. Because of increasing claims and rising operating costs the national organization was forced to disband in 1937. The local organization, although having a very stable treasury disbanded as well.

FIRST PORTUGUESE FROM THE MAINLAND

From 1909 to 1915 a few more Portuguese came to Hudson, all from the Azores and mostly from Santa Maria and Sao Miguel, but none from the Portuguese mainland until 1916. At that time the Apsley Rubber Company expanded and wanted more help and Portuguese began arriving from the mainland, or other cities and towns in the United States where they had settled, were Jose Simoes who opened a bakery, Felix Correia and Joao P. Rio. Mr. Rio is the only one

living today in Hudson of those Portuguese who arrived first from the Portuguese mainland.

Then, in the twenties, a scout was sent by the Apsley-Firestone Rubber Company to other cities and towns for more Portuguese employees for the concern, and in a few months, close to a thousand Portuguese were in Hudson. They originally came from all over Portugal, Madeira and the Azores.

FIRST PORTUGUESE GROCERY STORE

The first Portuguese grocery store was opened to the public in 1913 on Broad Street. The store, which specialized in many Portuguese foods, was owned and operated by Victorino Bairos and Antonio J. Chaves. The first clerk was Jose M. deChaves who came here in 1910.

HUDSON PORTUGUESE BAND

In the winter of 1914 a group of twenty-two

Portuguese in Hudson, formed a brass band that played for the first time in the streets of our town in May of 1915 under the name of HUDSON PORTUGUESE BAND. It had as its instructor and leader the late Fred Byron, a well known cornet soloist from the old Hudson Military Band.

This band, in the Middle 1920's joined the Hudson Portuguese Club and changed its name to HUDSON PORTUGUESE CLUB BAND. This formidable musical aggregation played for a good many years until, like most bands, had to give way and make room for radio, television and other entertainment media of today.

Of the twenty-two original members, only three are living today, Jose M. Chaves, Virginio P. Garcia and Michael Garcia. These people remember vividly the day in 1916 playing in the HUDSON PORTUGUESE BAND when Hudson was celebrating its 50th anniversary.

HOLY GHOST SOCIETY

In 1915 a group of families from the island of Sao Miguel, Azores, formed a "Irmadade" (Brotherhood) of the Holy Ghost, the HOLY GHOST SOCIETY.

In the tradition of a "Festa" (Feast) celebrated in the Azores on Trinity Sunday of every year, a silver crown is taken to the church to be blessed by the priest, and usually a little girl is crowned the queen for that day.

This feast was originated by Queen Saint Isabel of Portugal in 1300 A.D. to honor the poor to whom she, herself, served a dinner on that day.

It is worth notice that this feast, as said, which originated in the royal palace in Lisbon, was taken by the discoverers and first settlers of the Azores and is still very much in evidence in all of the nine islands today.

HUDSON PORTUGUESE CLUB

The first Portuguese Club, under the name Hudson Sport Club, was formed in 1919 by a group of Portuguese young men from continental Portugal who lived then in the section of town known as the Back Bay. Its headquarters were on the second floor at 86 Apsley Street. Joao P. Rio was its first President, and its Board of Trustees was composed of Alpidio Barreira, Abilio Augusto and Jose M. Ferreira. The activity of this club was sports. It closed its doors in 1922 when its members joined another group of young Portuguese from continental Portugal, Madeira and the Azores and formed the CLUB PORTUGUESE de HUDSON or HUDSON PORTUGUESE CLUB as it is known today. This new club established its headquarters at 49 Main Street where it stayed until 1933 when it moved to its new clubhouse on Riverview Street. There purpose

was to render entertainment, recreation, and good citizenship to all its members, and to create a better understanding between the new arriving Portuguese-speaking people from the mother country, and the American way of life.

And so, the Portuguese Club became a center where the Portuguese of Hudson--young and old--would gather on Saturday night for their outing, dancing, their regional folk dances, and to discuss their problems.

Soccer ball, being a major recreational activity in Portugal was soon introduced in this community. In 1923 a group of young men from the Hudson Portuguese Club formed two soccer ball teams; one retaining the Club name of the Hudson Portuguese Club and the other known as the Madeirense Soccer Ball Team. The later being comprised entirely of players

from the beautiful Portuguese island of Madeira.

These two friendly rivals competed in the New England Soccer Ball League for years against such stalwart teams as the Scandinavians of Worcester, the Lusitania Recs of Cambridge and other famous soccer ball teams of Mass., Rhode Island, and Conn. The Hudson Portuguese Club proudly displays many beautiful trophies won by these athletic gladiators of a by-gone era.

Some of the faces in the crowd of spectators at soccer ball games today are well remembered for their heroics on the field in their younger days. Some of these former players who are still around are Jose Marques, Faustino Mendes, Jose Alves, Carlos Alves, Manuel Miranda, Alexandre Abreu, Jose T. Cabral, Manuel Machado, Olivier Nunes, and Jose M. Ferreira.

Early games were played at the Old Trotting

Park now known as Morgan Bowl. It should be noted here that the members of the team toiled many days cutting and clearing this field in order to make it payable.

Today the club still manages to support two teams. The "A" team is currently competing in the Massachusetts State League, while the "B" team is making its presence known in the Boston District League.

In 1928, the club was incorporated and its members started to look for a better and bigger place that would serve club activities such as; night schools, soccer ball games and a band that was a credit to the Portuguese Club and the town of Hudson. Late in 1928, it was voted to buy a tract of land off River Street to build a clubhouse, a ball field and picnic grounds.

On September 22, 1933, the clubhouse was inaugurated with the presence of the local authorities, church and other distinguished guests from Hudson and other cities and towns. That culminated the dream of the Portuguese Club members for what they had been longing for so long.

The Portuguese Club, as it stands today, is a monument to the Portuguese race and their stay, marking their passage in Hudson and for which Hudson should be proud.

LADIES' AUXILIARY

When the new clubhouse was inaugurated, a group of women formed the Ladies' Auxiliary within the club which proved to be very helpful to the club. This group was formed under the leadership of the late Mrs. Leonor Almada, Mrs. Elvira Rio, and Mrs. Rita Ferreira, together with a group of other good

ladies and young girls.

It was in 1939 that the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Hudson Portuguese Club adopted as their patron saint, "Nossa Senhora Do Rosario De Fatima" (Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima). They decided in conjunction with the club to have a feast every year in honor of the Patron. This, they did that year and every year since, usually in the first part of July.

It consists of a procession from the club to the church where they attend Mass or religious services, and go back to the club where dinner is served and a band concert is held. On Saturday night before the feast day, there is also a band concert and a display of fireworks that attract a lot of people to the club grounds.

The present chapel where the Image of Our Lady

could be venerated all the year round, was built at the left side of the club entrance by John P. Rio who offered, gratis, his services for the project in 1951.

In the early days, the Ladies' Auxiliary certainly was a great help to the club, as today under the leadership of its President, Mrs. Rose Sousa Monteiro, and other active and good ladies, they still are a great group of workers to whom the club is grateful.

Up until 1910, there were in Hudson only four Portuguese voters. Today there are more than one thousand Portuguese names on our town voting list. On the voting list we notice that of those who have registered, a great majority are Democrats, some Independents, and only four are registered Republicans.

It is also worthy to mention that during World

War I, 19 Patriots from a relatively small Portuguese colony in Hudson, joined our armed forces. Of the nineteen who went to war only eighteen returned. One, Domingos P. Fortes, was killed in action in the battle of Argonne, France.

On the Honor Roll in the main hall of the Portuguese Club, there are the names of 142 Portuguese or American born Portuguese boys and 3 young ladies who served during World War II. Of these 142, four lost their lives in the battle fields of war. They were: John Sousa, Edward (Rainha) Queen, Jose Neves, and Jose Faria.

Of those who worked and helped the Portuguese of Hudson to become citizens, it is worthy to mention the names of Jose M. deChaves, Jose M. Ferreira, the late Mrs. Lecnor Almada, and Mrs. Elvira Rio. Chaves, alone, the records show, sponsored 281 Por-

20.
tuguese, whom he accompanied to U. S. District
Court in Boston where they became U.S. Citizens.

From a few immigrants of some sixty or seventy
years ago and those that have arrived since, to
prove their worth, stands the Portuguese Club and
the beautiful homes that they have built or bought
in Hudson. Today, in Hudson, there are Portuguese
from all the islands of the Azores, Madeira and
every province of continental Portugal.