



American-Portuguese  
Genealogical and Historical Society, Inc.

# Bulletin Board

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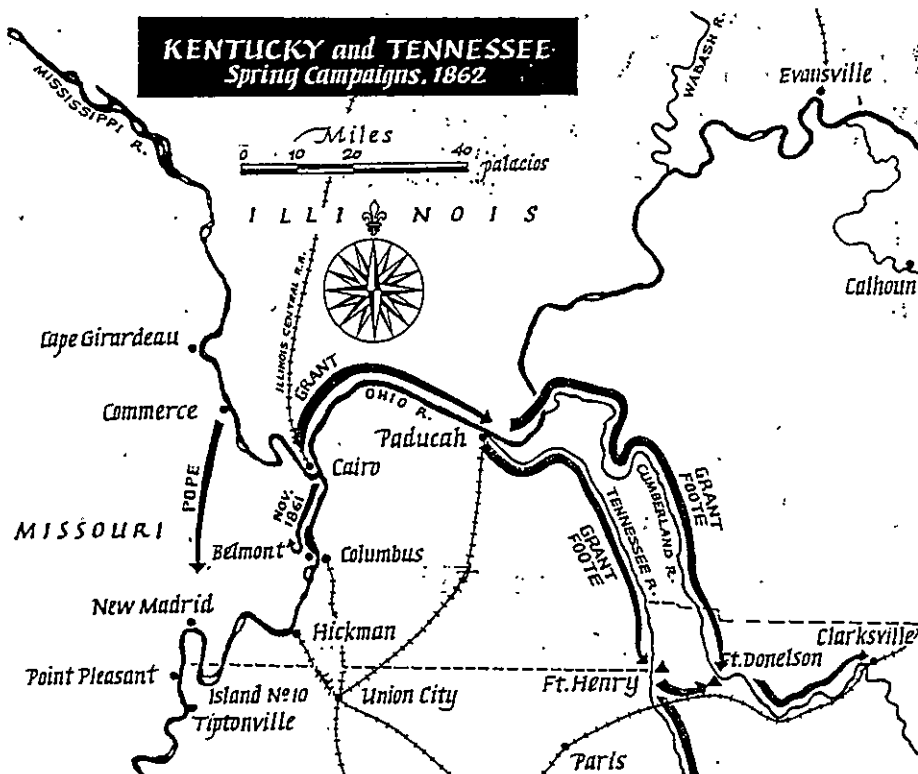
## Elisha Nunes Silveira Avila

Elisha Avila was a young man with probably many dreams when he left Faial, the island of his birth. One must wonder if he would have been so willing to flee "Ilha Azul" and conscription in the Portuguese military if he had known that his flight would lead to an untimely wartime death while a member of another military—the U.S. Navy.

Like so many parents of their time, Antone and Maria (Nunes) Silveira Avila feared for their son's life with Portuguese authorities closing in on every able-bodied young male in the Azores. Relief came with the familiar solution: secrete the lad aboard a whaling ship and hope he would be safe in the New World. Part One was a success. Elisha married Agnes Matilda Chivers, widow of John Chivers, in New Bedford's Trinitarian Church, 87 Fourth Street, on March 7, 1860. The second-time bride, with one daughter from her previous union, was the daughter London-born Edward and Matilda Reynolds. The newlyweds settled at 107 Third Street where a daughter, Laura Maria Nunes Silveira, was born on December 30, 1860.

Their peaceful world, however, would come to an end because of outside forces. On December 10, twenty days before Laura's birth, South Carolina, furious that Republican Abraham Lincoln had been elected President, seceded from the Union. By Lincoln's March 4, 1861, inauguration, the Palmetto State had been joined by six other southern states to form the Confederate States of America at Montgomery, Alabama, and elect its own president—Jefferson Davis.

On April 12, 1861, Confederate guns fired on Union-held Ft. Sumter in Charleston, S.C., harbor. Two days later the fort fell; the next day Lincoln asked for 75,000 militia volunteers to suppress the rebellion. He later called for 52,000 regular army and 18,000 navy volunteers to serve from one-to-three years. The call to arms caused four more states to secede. The Civil War was on and Elisha Avila's life moved on. He enlisted in the Navy on August 25, 1861, and was assigned to the *Benson*, but the gunboat's completion was delayed so he was re-assigned to the receiving ship, *Maria Denning*. Early Civil War records are sketchy, but military records show that Elisha N.S. Avila served on the Ohio River with a Mississippi River squadron and later transferred to the *Cincinnati*.



From *Terrible Swift Sword*, by Bruce Catton. Doubleday & Co. With permission.

One of the North's war objectives was to control of the Mississippi River from its source to its mouth. This would split the South in two and provide a river highway for farm produce from America's breadbasket. One of the important rivers that fed the Mississippi was the Ohio and two of its most important tributaries were the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers. On each the Confederates had hurriedly built a fort: Ft. Donelson on the first; Ft. Henry on the latter.

An April 1861, James B. Eads, an Illinois salvage master appeared in Washington, D.C., with plans for ironclad gunboats, but was thwarted by tradition-bound Commander John Rodgers, who initiated his own all-wood gunboat flotilla. Undaunted, Eads, whose steel-arch bridge across the Mississippi River at St. Louis in 1874 would precede the more famous Brooklyn Bridge, got a government contract and built a flotilla of seven ironclad river gunboats in one hundred days. In charge of the flotilla was Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote of Connecticut.

Foote's army counterpart was Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. Earlier stationed at Cairo, Illinois,<sup>1</sup> at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, Grant had moved his headquarters to Paducah, Kentucky. Although slave-holding, the Blue Grass State (but not all its citizens) had remained loyal to the Union. From Paducah, Grant by land and Foote by water planned to capture Henry and Donelson from the Rebels.

On February 6, 1862, four ironclads (*Carondelet*, *Cincinnati*, *Essex*, *St. Louis*), three timberclads (*Conestoga*, *Lexington*, *Tyler*) and nine river steamers carrying Grant and his 15,000 Union soldiers approached Ft. Henry. Eight miles downriver on both sides, the soldiers disembarked for the land attack while Foote preceded south. Torrents of rain mixed with sleet turned roads muddy and icy and so delayed Grant that the attack on Ft. Henry became solely a naval operation.

<sup>1</sup> Although spelled like Cairo in Egypt, Illinois' southernmost city is properly pronounced "Karo."

The bad weather that hampered Grant aided Foote. Ft. Henry had been unwisely built on low land and was subject to floods; high water and heavy rain flooded out the lower gun batteries making them inoperable. The fighting was fast and furious. Foote's flagship, the *Cincinnati*, received almost half of the fifty-nine hits registered by the Confederate guns. Rebel Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman had thought that destroying Foote's flagship would demoralize the rest of the flotilla and enable his defenders to continue firing with better effect on the remaining Unions.

The *Cincinnati*, equipped with more accurate guns than the other gunboats, received but nine casualties among her crew, whereas the gunboats, although receiving fewer hits, proportionately, were more heavily damaged. Among the casualties, however, was Foote. Although not then deemed life-threatening, it would soon end his combat command. Detesting desk-bound duty on land, Rear Admiral Foote would die on June 26, 1863, on the eve of an important combat assignment.

Two direct hits from the fort altered the *Cincinnati's* course and Foote's plans. It went downriver out of range, but the remaining ironclads managed to maneuver to within 600 yards of the fort and their cannon reduced the fort's parapet to rubble. Tilghman and his troops abandoned Ft. Henry.

Leaving the fort in army hands, Foote retired to Cairo for repairs. From the waiting *Louisville* and *Pittsburgh*, he commanded enough seamen for the *Cincinnati* to offset his deserters (the Civil War word was "skedadlers") and combat losses at Ft. Henry. Grant, meanwhile, marched his army twelve miles to Ft. Donelson, besieged the fort and waited for Foote. If Grant had not delayed, the fort could have been easily taken, but because the Confederates increased their strength during the waiting period, when it did fall, it became a bigger prize.

Ft. Donelson wasn't Ft. Henry; it was on a bluff 120 feet above its river. The tactics Foote learned on the Tennessee would prove naught on the Cumberland. On February 14 the *Carondelet* rounded a bend in the river below the fort, turned broadside and angled out across the stream from its bank. The *Pittsburgh* next rounded the bend and positioned itself on the *Cincinnati's* starboard quarter. Behind the *Pittsburgh* were the *St. Louis* and *Louisville*. Bringing up the rear were the timberclads *Conestoga* and *Tyler*. Both were ordered to stay out of the target zone and fire high. In retrospect, all the gunboats should have remained out of Donelson's range. With their longer-range guns, they could have battered the fort with impunity. Getting closer (like at Ft. Henry) made the angle of fire from the Rebels high on the bluff on the Union boats' iron hulls (built at an angle to avoid direct hits) strike like head-on hits.

Jesse Bowman of the Federal army had stolen away from his camp to watch the attack. The first salvo came from the fort; the flotilla answer almost as one. The boats were alternating solid shot and explosive shells, but the actions were the same: load, prime, aim, jerk the lanyard. In Bowman's words: "The gunboats steamed around the bend and maneuvered into position. A boom and a screech from the fort filled the air and the landing boat returned fire, that boat being the *St. Louis*. In a moment the *Louisville* was also in action." Thirty-seven shots were fired on the *Louisville*. One cut the rudder chain, putting it out of action and adrift downriver. The overhead shots from the timberclads downriver hampered the vision of the *Louisville's* crew and they were unable to steer manually from the stern. Four crewmen, including Elisha Avila, were killed.

On the *St. Louis* things were also bad. Its pilot was wounded and the steering ropes were shot away. Men serving the guns were told to get down and away from the casements whenever shot was seen heading for their gun ports. One crew of gunners disregarded the warning. Incoming shot decapitated two, fatally wounded two more and disabled the gun.

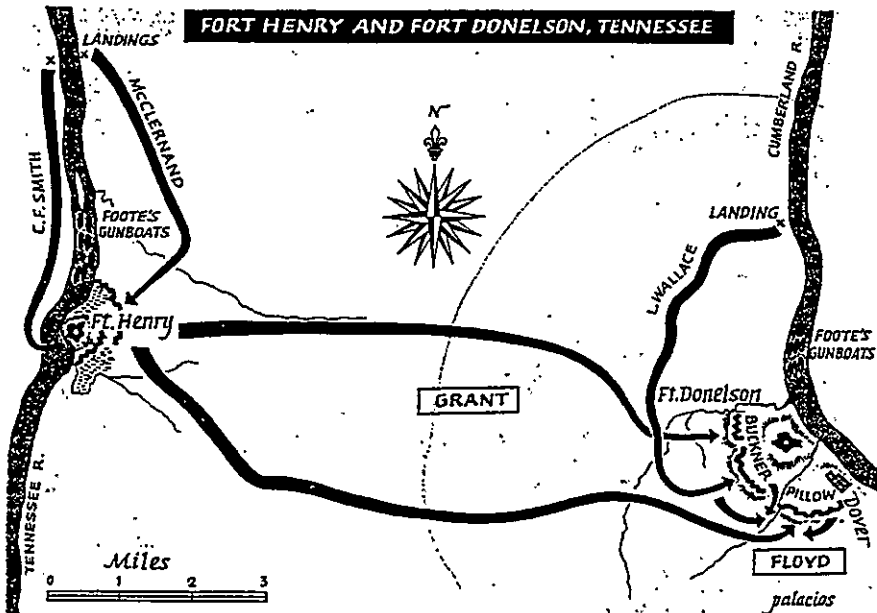
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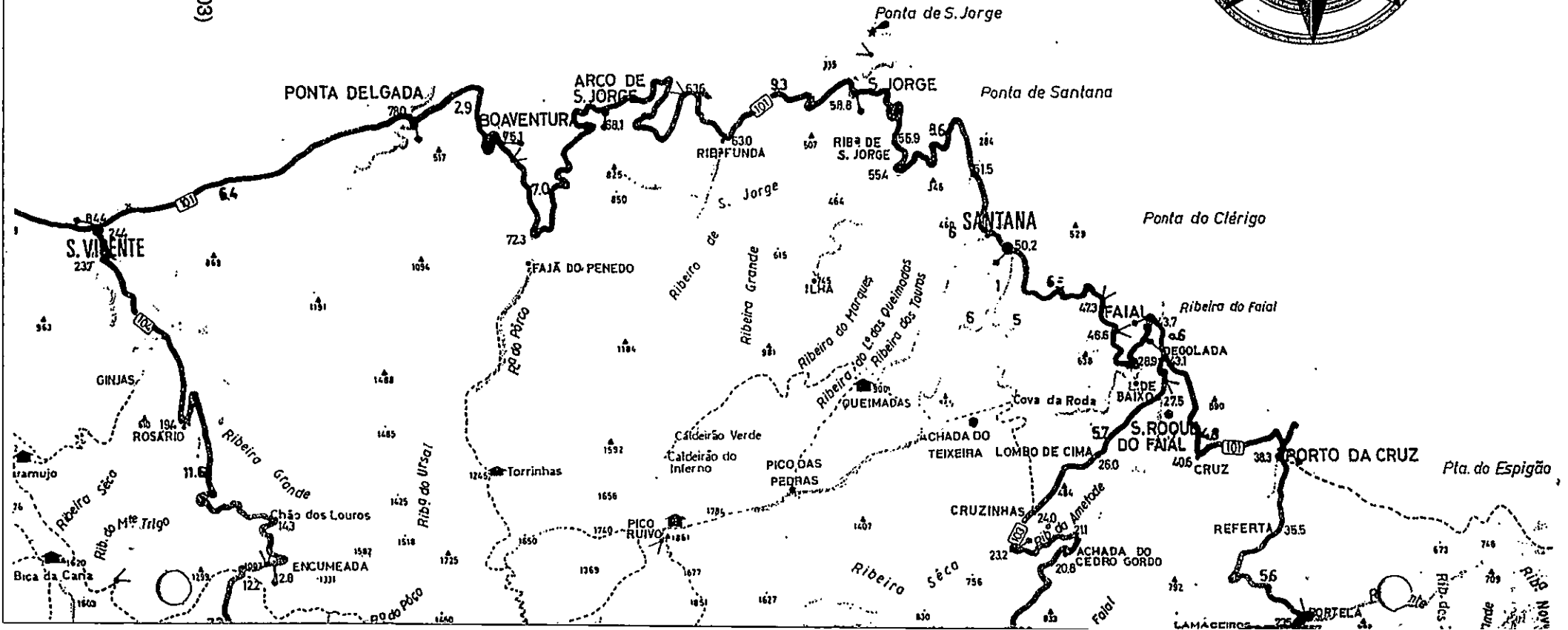
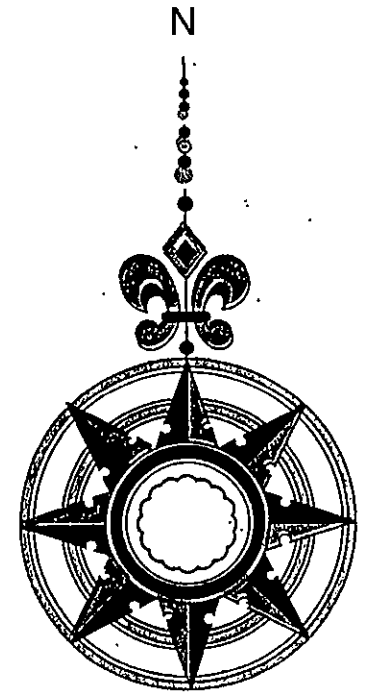
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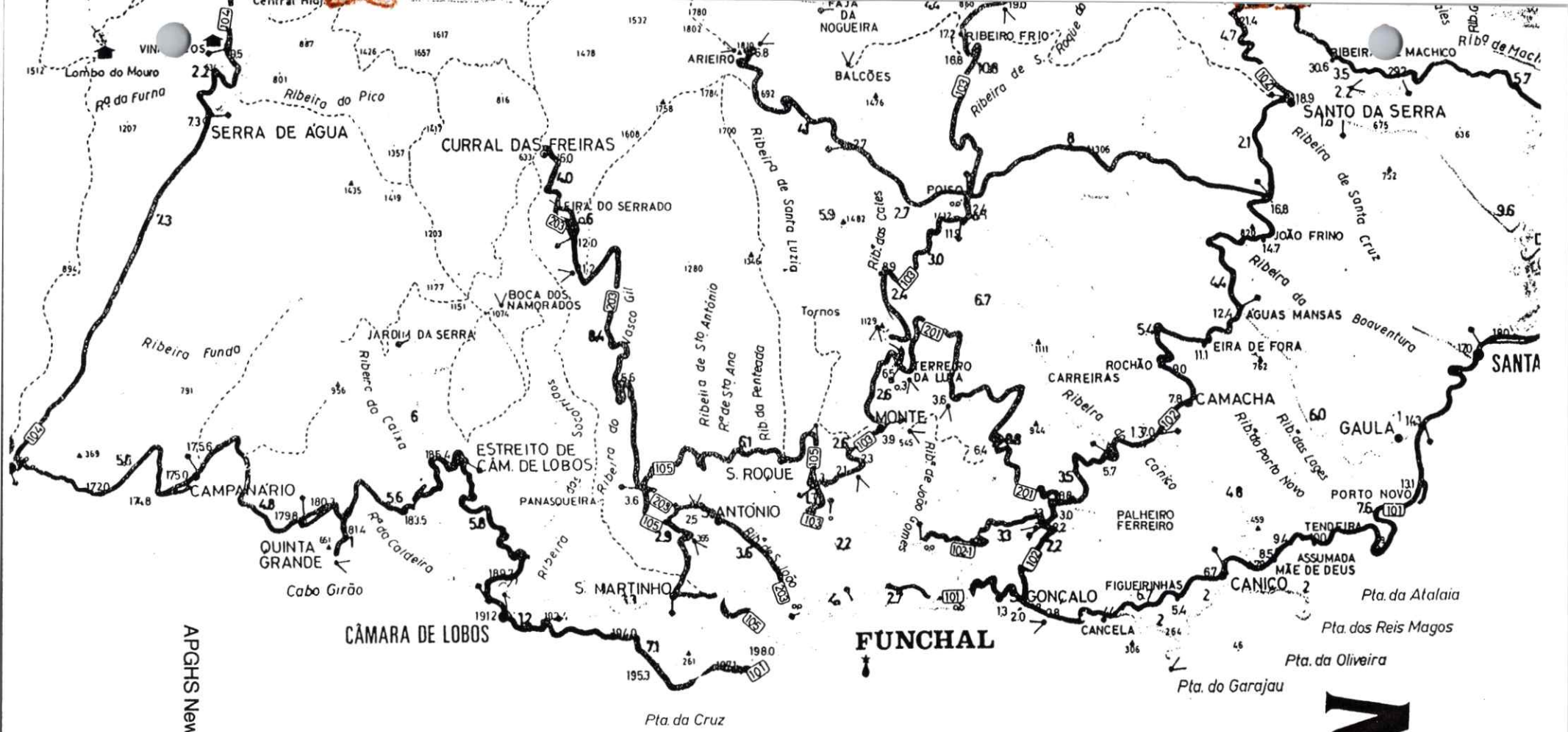
The disabled fleet retreated north to safety with the *Carondelet* providing cover fire. In a field along the Cumberland, Foote buried his dead with his flotilla's flags at half-mast. Among the clergy was a priest. Ft. Donelson would fall the next day, but to Grant's army.

On February 16, 1862, Brig. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, CSA (a friend of Grant in pre-war days), surrendered to him at the Dover Hotel. Three other Rebel generals, John Floyd, Gideon Pillow and Nathan Bedford Forest, not wanting the dishonor of being the first Confederate general to surrender to the Yankees, had skedaddled through breaks in Union lines. The victory and Grant's answer to Buckner's request for surrender terms: "No terms except and immediate and unconditional surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works," struck a responsive cord with Northerners. The fact that unconditional surrender and Ulysses Simpson began with the same letters also helped.

"Unconditional Surrender" Grant would go on to more Civil War fame and serve eight years in the White House. Buckner, a pallbearer at Grant's 1885 funeral, would later serve as governor of Tennessee and was a losing minor party candidate for Vice President in 1896. In 1885, the fifty-three year widower remarried; he died in 1914. His namesake, Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr., born in 1886, followed his father to West Point and an army career. While commanding Tenth Army, Lt. Gen. Buckner was killed in action on Okinawa on June 18, 1945.

The lesser figures (as some people reckon) finished their lives. Elisha never saw his second daughter, Isabella Nunes Avila, born posthumously on May 29, 1862, at Third Street. Agnes, as a milliner, was unable to support her daughters. In September 1863, a month before Laura Maria's death on October 10, Agnes filed for a navy widow's pension. Her statement to the police court described Elisha: Thirty-five years old; five feet, seven inches tall; light brown hair; light complexion; hazel eyes. Her pension, which wasn't forthcoming until a July 5, 1866, Act of Congress, would be eight dollars a month.





Continued from p. 29

On July 17, 1867, Agnes (age thirty-seven) married Richard M. Delano (age thirty-four), the son of Richard and Elizabeth Delano. The marriage was the third for Agnes and the second for Richard. On December 3, 1868, as Isabella's guardian, he petitioned for a pension granted to children under age sixteen of deceased navy officers and seamen through the provisions of an 1862 Act of Congress.

The Delanos (including daughters Agnes M. Chivers, born of her first marriage, Isabella N. Avila and Fannie Ricketson Delano) moved to Providence and later to Philadelphia where Agnes (Reynolds) (Chivers) (Avila) Delano died in April 1890. She and Fannie were buried in the Delano family plot in Rural Cemetery, New Bedford. After her mother's death, Agnes Chivers married Edgartown's William W. Pease in New Bedford on October 1, 1890. Isabella Nunes Avila's later life is unknown.

In 1867 the Union dead were re-interred in Ft. Donelson National Cemetery on a bluff above the Cumberland River. Elisha's remains are under an UNKNOWN marker. His sacrifice to his nation is recorded in the War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navy, Series I, Vol. 29, p.587, Flag Officer Foote's transmitted list of casualties on the *Louisville*: Elisha N.S. Avila, Charles Billings, James Curtis and John Williams.

Submitted by Pat Amaral of Massachusetts

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**Research items:**

arm@arquivo-madeira.org

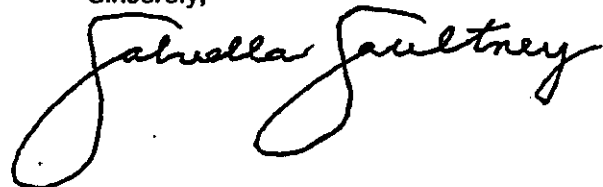
From Rhode Island APGHS member Sandra Pineault the Society has learned of a resource site in Madeira (<http://www.arquivo-madeira.org/indice.asp>). Using the above e-mail address, the Society got a quick English response seeking permission to print their addresses. The Arquivo Histórico da Madeira has sent the Society a gratis copy of *Indices dos Passportes: 1872-1900*.

**A letter from Gabriella Gaultney of Connecticut**

I would like to inform APGHS members that João Ventura, the person recommended in the spring issue of the ~~Bulletin Board~~, has done some excellent work for me. I contacted him in early September 2002 and he immediately went to work and located my ancestors, provided a genealogy report, copies of the documents (a total of 28), and a translation of those documents. I had tried repeatedly though the Family History Library to locate documents filmed by the LDS, and after a very long time I was able to find only one marriage certificate. I looked though several films before I found that one and it was such a poor copy one could barely read it.

João is currently doing more work for me and I highly recommend him. I certainly am very appreciative of all he has done for me. Never in a million years would I have been able to what he has done in a remarkably short time. I know that by recommending him he will probably be flooded with requests and therefore one can't expect a quick turnaround. It's a time-consuming task at best for someone well versed in the language. Thank you for recommending João.

Sincerely,





# 1846 to 1948 Marriages of Portuguese People in Stonington, Ct.

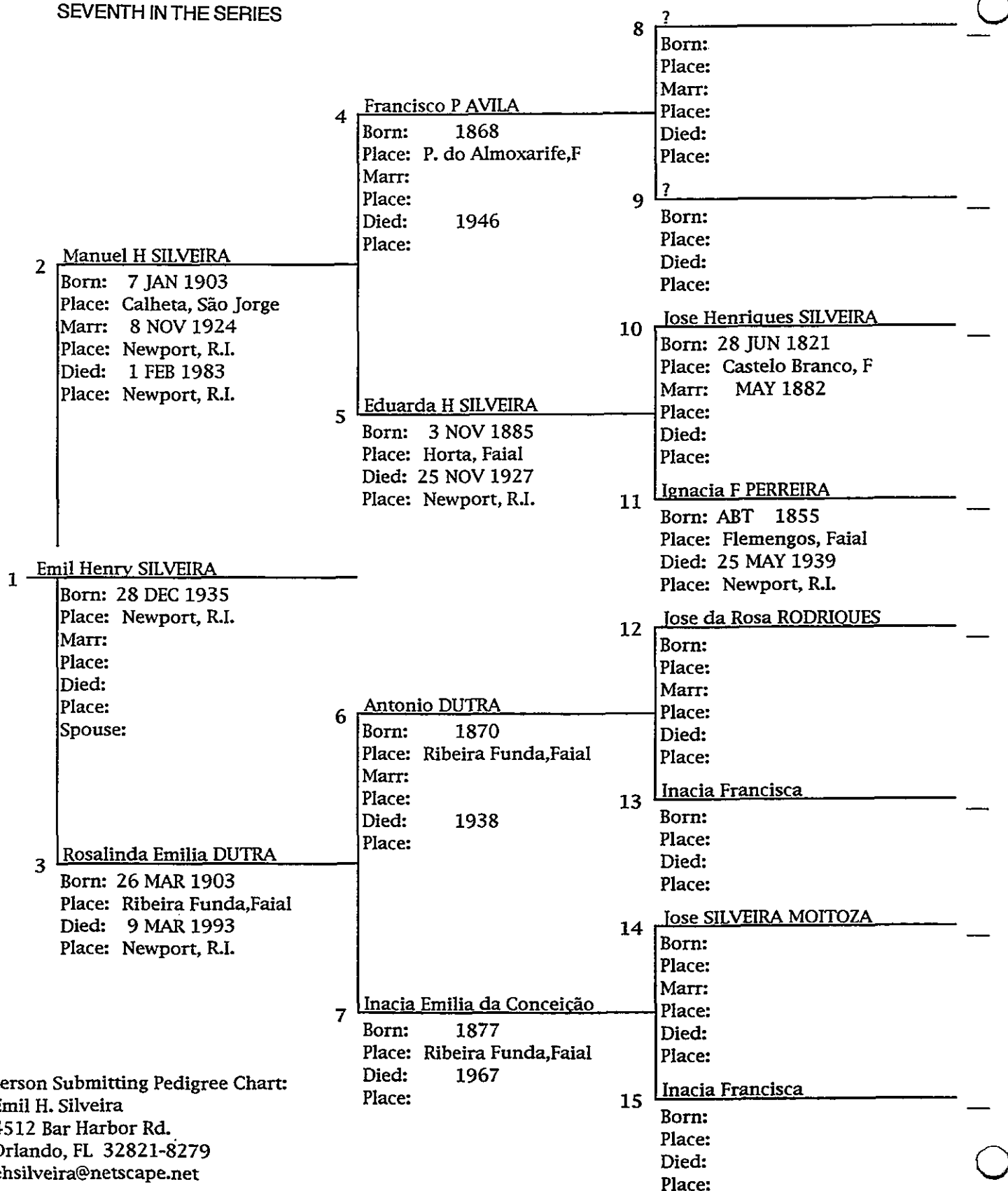
Continued from the spring (Vol. XXIV, No. 2) issue....

DATE	GROOM	AGE	POB	BRIDE	AGE	POB
1919-06-03	William J. Silvia	18	Niantic, Conn.	Margaret B. Walker	22	New London, Conn.
PARENTS:	Frank Silvia & Julia Enos			William J. Walker & Elizabeth J. Kingdom		
06-10	Frederich J. Ostman	37	Stonington	Mabel Bates Dias	20	Hyde Park, Mass.
	Frederich J. Ostman & Elizabeth Hammond			John L. Dias & Letitia Jordan		
06-14	Mariano Depollna	42	Italy	Mary Corry	31	Azores
	Frank Depollna & Mary Lombardo			Andrea Silva & Sarah Silvia		
07-28	Manuel Gomes	25	Portugal	Lena Santos	19	Azores
	Anthony Gomes & Christina Jazus			Jose Vereino Santos & Jacinta Vereiro		
08-21	Joseph G. Enos	26	New London, Conn.	Ruth Sisson	21	Pawcatuck, Conn.
	Manuel Enos & Mary McNamara			Frank Sisson & Nellie (Unknown)		
09-04	Manuel Roderick Jr.	18	Azores	Anna Borges	21	Azores
	Manuel Roderick & Rosa Gill			Antone Borges & Mary Sylvia		
09-06	Mathew Leahy	28	Stonington	Clara H. Vargas	29	Stonington
	Joseph F. Leahy & Ellen Louise Connors			Joseph A. Vargas & Ellen Sylvia		
09-20	Lawrence C. Joseph	23	Stonington	Nellie Helen Pont	18	Stonington
	Manuel E. Joseph & Nancy C. Sylvia			Manuel J. Pont Sr. & Amelia Mayne		
12-27	Ernest P. Cravinho	22	Azores	Mary A. Primental	19	Stonington
	Louis Cravinho & Mary Primental			Frank Primental & Mary Joseph Medos		
1920-01-22	Manuel B. Moniz	24	São Miguel	Marie I.Y. Despardies	24	Taftville, Conn.
	Manuel B. Moniz & Mary August			Demdonne Despardies & Victoria Desloges		
01-31	Thomas P. Tuite	27	Lowell, Mass.	Charlotte Goodwin Joseph	27	Stonington
	John Tuite & Margaret Ivens			Joseph F. Joseph & Charlotte Gurelis		
03-02	Manuel Barbosa	22	São Miguel	Maria deGloria Papagio	21	São Miguel
	Clurenta Barbosa & Jacintha deEstrella			Joseph C. Papagio & Maria A. Muniz		
06-08	Stanley H. Pierce	23	Kennebunk, Maine	Geraldine Joseph	23	Stonington
	Wilfred S. Pierce & Mary Lake			Joseph F. Joseph & Charlotte G. Aurelio		
06-24	Frank Sylvia	23	Taunton, Mass.	Rose Rose	18	São Miguel
	Joseph Sylvia & Mary A. Fratus			Manuel Rose & Katrina Rose		
06-26	Robert E. King	23	Stonington	Hazel Annie Lamb	20	Ledyard, Conn.
	Nicholas King & Mary Levy			Daniel Lamb & Fannie Chapman		
08-16	Manuel Roderick	28	Azores	Mary Roderick	24	Azores
	Manuel Roderick & Mary August			Joseph Roderick & Mary Rose		
08-25	Frank M. Joseph	33	Stonington	Frances Moniz	24	São Miguel
	Manuel E. Joseph & Nancy C. Sylvia			Francesco Costa & Carolina Costa		
12-02	J. Raymond Dunham	25	Stonington	Laura Rose	23	Stonington
	John R. Dunham & Alice Wilcox			Manuel Rose & Mary Victoria		
1921-04-22	Joseph Oliver	23	Azores	Mary Jesus Patricia	23	Azores
	Antone Oliver & Joaquinna Jesus			Christine Patricia & Amelia Jesus		
08-27	Victorino Cravinho	22	Azores	Gelia Souza	21	Azores
	Joseph Cravinho & Frances Cravinho			Joseph Souza & Mary Souza		
08-27	Joaquim A. Cancellas	28	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Frances Pont	18	Azores
	John Cancellas & Joaquina Cancellas			Joseph Pont amd Emily Lewis		
10-29	Manuel L. Clay	22	Stonington	Caroline Burdick	25	Westerly, R.I.
	Manuel Clay & Mary Sylvia			Edgar Burdick & Sarah McEwen		

To be continued...

Research by Henrietta M. Meyer, computer work by Gabriella P. Gaultney of Connecticut  
APGHS Newsletter, Vol. XXIV, No 3. (2003) 33.

APGHS PEDIGREE CHART  
SEVENTH IN THE SERIES



Person Submitting Pedigree Chart:  
 Emil H. Silveira  
 4512 Bar Harbor Rd.  
 Orlando, FL 32821-8279  
 ehsilveira@netscape.net

# American-Portuguese Genealogical and Historical Society, Inc.

The Society's year is July 1 to June 30.

## DUES SCHEDULE:

\$ 10.00	Regular membership
2.50	Spouse, no Surname Roster reception
10.00	Professional Membership, no Surname Roster reception
15.00	Libraries, Societies, etc., no Surname Roster reception
150.00	Life Membership for a regular member up to the age of fifty-five
100.00	Life Membership for a regular member over the age of fifty-five

Regular members are those who have submitted a pedigree chart; their known ancestor's life dates and place of birth are printed in the summer Surname Roster. Because the Roster omits the ancestor's place of death and the date and place of marriage, members who wish to impart that information in a *Bulletin Board* should re-submit a new chart, which confers permission to print.

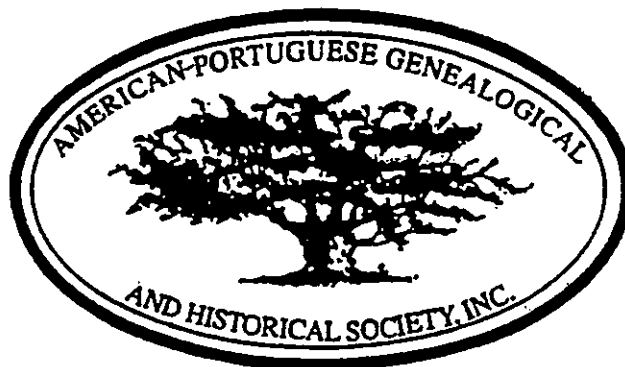
Life Member dues are kept in a separate account. When it reaches \$1000, certificates of deposit are purchased. The interest from the CDs is withdrawn each June 30 and put into the Library Fund to continue our goals with the Special Collection.

The following are available:

1. Maps:
    - Corvo, Flores, Graciosa, Santa Maria (one sheet each)
    - Faial, Porto Santo, São Miguel (two sheets each)
    - Terceira (three sheets); Pico (five sheets). each sheet: \$ 1.00
  2. Back issues of the *Bulletin Board*, each: 2.00
  3. Crests, in color, 5" x 7":
    - Armao, Ataide, Baleeiros, Bettencourt, Botelho, Brum, Câmara, Cardoso, Goularte, Leites, Macedo, Martin Behaim, Mendonca, Peixoto, Pereira, Pimentel, Porras, Silveira, Soares, Sousa, Terra, Vernes, Utra [Dutra] each: 10.00
  4. *Portuguese Pride and Pleasure*, by Carmelina Rio Borroz, soft bound, 59 pages 5.00
  5. "Bridge to the Past," a student's introduction to genealogy, 8 pages 5.00
  6. "Teacher's Guide" [for "Bridge to the Past"], 31 pages 10.00
  7. Tote bags, navy blue with white Society logo 10.00
  8. *The Mary P. Mesquita: Rundown at Sea*, by Cecile Pimental, soft bound, 85 pages 16.95
  9. *Portuguese Bermudians: An Early History and Reference Guide, 1849-1949*, by Patricia Marírea Mudd, hard bound, 702 pages 29.50
  10. *Portuguese Spinner: An American Story*, edited by Marsha L McCabe and Joseph D. Thomas 29.95
  11. *St. John's Cemetery [New Bedford] Gravestone Inscriptions*, by Gil and Pat Amaral, 230 pages 39.95  
Massachusetts residents add 5% sales tax .
- Postage and handling (for 4-10 only) 3.00

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