

# The Portuguese Adstratum in North American Place-Names

LEO PAP

## I

PORTUGAL, one of the smaller countries of Europe, has played only a very minor role – in an overall demographic sense – in the actual settlement of what now constitutes the United States and Canada. Yet Portuguese involvement in the destinies of North America (not to speak of Brazil) goes back to the very beginnings of European overseas expansion. The Portuguese had a part in exploring the northeastern seaboard of North America, and even the California coast and some of the southeastern interior. Small numbers of Portuguese were present among the American colonists. In post-colonial times, fairly compact centers of Portuguese immigration developed in southeastern New England, in central California, in Hawaii (now tied to North America at least in a socio-political sense), and most recently, in eastern Canada. One may wonder, therefore, what influence, if any, the presence of early Portuguese pioneers and of later Portuguese immigrant communities may have had on the formation of place-names in various parts of the United States and Canada; and inversely, to what extent an apparent Portuguese adstratum in the toponymy is clearly attributable to the presence of such a Portuguese population element – or else to other, less palpably demographic influences emanating from Portugal.

The following study, which I believe is the first survey of this kind, represents a somewhat accidental outgrowth of a more general study of the history of Portuguese immigration into the United States, on which I have been engaged over the years.<sup>1</sup> The data here presented are, of course, primarily intended as a linguistic contribution to the investigation of naming processes, rather than as a general bit of Americana. An attempt will be made, therefore, to relate the specific names and what little I have been able to find out about their origins to some more general theoretical scheme, a “typology” of place-names – as far as is applicable to the peculiar conditions of American history. In addition to miscellaneous sources used in my general research on Portuguese immigration, the more specific

---

<sup>1</sup> An initial portion of that study of mine, focusing on linguistic aspects of the acculturation of Portuguese immigrants in this country, was published under the title *Portuguese American Speech* (New York: Kings Crown Press, 1949). That monograph actually represented my doctoral dissertation at Columbia University. In preparing it, I greatly benefited from stylistic suggestions and a general screening of the manuscript by the late Professor Elliott V. K. Dobbie, to whom this issue of *Names* is dedicated.

sources which I have tapped for information on United States place-names include (1) several United States postal directories and gazetteers published between 1916 and 1970<sup>2</sup>; (2) available county or other local histories, covering whatever towns or post offices – as listed in those directories – I suspected of bearing some onomastic relationship to Portugal (or else to Brazil, historically and linguistically an extension of Portugal); (3) direct correspondence with local historians, county clerks, town officials, etc., particularly with respect to places on which my own library research had yielded no relevant information. Even with this combination of published and unpublished sources, my survey can make no claim to completeness: a number of relevant place-names which were never extended to post offices, or were dropped from postal lists long ago, may have escaped my attention, as have probably some street names in small cities. More important than the omission of a few names as such, my account leaves many gaps as to the precise circumstances under which a majority of the listed places did receive (or subsequently lost) their Portuguese-sounding names. Some of these gaps – never all of them, I am sure – might still be filled through patient additional research in local archives, old newspaper files, interviews with local “old-timers,” or from records of the United States Postal Service, the Board on Geographic Names, etc.

## II

By far the most common United States place-name derived from Portugal, attaching to towns, villages, as well as to many streets, is – not unexpectedly – the name of the Portuguese capital, *Lisbon*. The first community to adopt this name seems to have been the township (town) of Lisbon in New London County, Connecticut. Originally known as Newent, a part of Norwich, it was incorporated in 1786 and “doubtless named after Lisbon in Portugal, from the fact that Hezekiah Perkins and Jabez Perkins, and other commercial shippers, traded from Norwich with Lisbon in Southern Europe and that probably suggested the name.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> *A Complete Pronouncing Gazetteer or Geographical Dictionary of the World* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1916). It is based largely on data as of 1900 and hereinafter referred to as *GG*. *United States Official Postal Guide, July 1943*, Part I: Domestic Postal Service (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943) = *PG*; *Rand McNally Geographical Handbook: A Keyed Index of the United States . . .* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1952) = *RM*; *The Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World, with 1961 Supplement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962) = *CL*; [*United States*] *Directory of Post Offices, July 1962* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962) = *DP*; *National Zip Code Directory 1969–70* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969) = *ZC*.

<sup>3</sup> Henry F. Bishop, *Historical Sketch of Lisbon, Connecticut, from 1786 to 1900* (New York: by the author, 1903), pp. 14, 21, 39; D. H. Hurd, *History of New London County, Connecticut* (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1882), p. 539; Benjamin Tinkham Marshall

Only a year later, in 1787, we find the name of Lisbon echoing within the state of New York. In that year, the State Land Commissioners sold a large stretch of unused public land, divided into ten townships, within what was then Clinton County, near the Canadian border; and they named eight of these townships after foreign cities, including Lisbon (along with Stockholm, Potsdam, Madrid, Canton, etc.). In 1801, upon petition by some residents of the sparsely settled area, the ten townships were combined into one incorporated Town of Lisbon; and the following year, the area was separated from Clinton County to constitute the new St. Lawrence County, along the river of that name, with Lisbon township as the center. Although several separate "towns" were soon carved out of the Lisbon territory, the rest has continued to this day as the town and village of Lisbon (c. six miles east of Ogdensburg), with a post office by that name. A second post office in a newly developed downtown section was set up in 1851 under the name of Lisbon Center. In addition, there is a township and village, with post office, by the name of New Lisbon, within Otsego County, New York; first settled in 1773, and set off as Pittsfield in 1797, this community decided in 1806 to be known as Lisbon; the name was changed to New Lisbon in 1808, presumably under pressure, to avoid confusion with the previously established namesake in St. Lawrence County.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps prompted by the way the name of Lisbon had come into the limelight in 1801 in northern New York State, a community in Maine next adopted this name in 1802. In that state, near Lewiston within Androscoggin County, there is today a cluster of three separate villages, each with its corresponding post office, called Lisbon, Lisbon Falls, and Lisbon Center, respectively. In 1780, a piece of land along the Little

---

(ed.), *A Modern History of New London County, Connecticut* (3 vols.), Vol. I (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1922), p. 1. This place is listed in *GG* (1916), but not in *PG* (1943) nor in *RM* (1952); it appears again in *CL* (1962), and is listed in *DP* (1962) as a "rural station" attached to the Jewett City post office only. Once more, in *ZC* (1969), it disappears from view. Similar ups and downs in official and quasi-official listings, since the turn of this century, affect many of the other places I am about to mention.

<sup>4</sup> Franklin B. Hough, *A History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, New York, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (Albany: Little & Co., 1853), pp. 267, 328–29; *History of St. Lawrence County, New York . . .* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1878), pp. 70, 268–69, 273–74; Gates Curtis (ed.), *Our County and Its People: A Memorial Record of St. Lawrence County, New York* (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1894), pp. 81, 106–07, 321–22, 326. Address by Edwin A. Jones at Lisbon Old Home Week celebration in Lisbon, New York, August 18, 1930; as reprinted from *Republican-Journal* (Ogdensburg, N.Y.), August 19, 1930; Harry F. Landon, *The North Country; A History Embracing Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Oswego, Lewis, and Franklin Counties, New York* (3 vols.; Indianapolis: Historical Publishing Co., 1932), Vol. I, pp. 139, 235; Edwin F. Bacon, *Otsego County, New York* (Oneonta, N.Y.: The Oneonta Herald, 1902), p. 58; *History of Otsego County, New York* (Philadelphia: Everts & Fariss, 1878), pp. 219–20.

River had been conveyed to one Samuel Thompson; this later became incorporated as Little River Plantation, but an immediately adjoining area received the name of Thompsonborough. Subsequently, "something did not please the majority of the voters in General Thompson's views or actions, and specifying the length of name as a reason an act was obtained to change the name to [the shorter] Lisbon" in 1802. Thereafter, a grist mill built in 1800 at one end of Lisbon village (by two brothers named Curtis) changed from Curtis' Mills to Lisbon Factory, and ultimately to Lisbon Center. Little River Plantation was annexed to Lisbon (the former Thompsonborough) in 1808, but later received separate status as Lisbon Falls.<sup>5</sup>

After Maine, the next state to enter into "totemistic" bonds with the Portuguese capital was Ohio. Seat of Columbiana County, the town of Lisbon, Ohio, was first settled by one Lewis Kinney and his associates about 1802. In 1803, Kinney laid out the site as a village, and baptized it New Lisbon. On this choice of name, the anonymous compiler of the first history of Columbiana County (1879) has this to say: "There does not seem to be a plain reason why 'New Lisbon' was selected as the name of the village . . . It was doubtless suggested by the fancy of one who dreamed that here, among the hills of Columbiana, would rise a capital which should be to the new county what old Lisbon is to the country which encouraged the discoverer Columbus (for whom the county was in part named) to seek this new world."<sup>6</sup> In 1895, as "many of the citizens deemed it a misnomer to call the old town New Lisbon," the name was reduced to Lisbon.<sup>7</sup> In 1954, on the occasion of the celebration of Peter Francisco Day in Massachusetts (just then introduced there as an official annual observance, to honor Americans of Portuguese descent), the mayor of Lisbon, Ohio, sent an official greeting to the municipality of Lisbon, Portugal, through the American embassy there — thus signifying an awareness of the symbolic ties established by that casual naming process.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Georgia Drew Merrill (ed.), *History of Androscoggin County, Maine* (Boston: W. A. Fergusson & Co., 1891), pp. 433–36; Mitchell and Campbell (compilers), *The Lisbon Town Register* (Lisbon, Me., 1905), pp. 6, 9, 14–15, 20, 38. The Lisbon town clerk, in a personal communication to me (April 1971), states she has no information as to why the townspeople chose the name of Lisbon, other than that they were looking for a shorter name than *Thompsonborough*; "we have no Portuguese people here," she adds, "except a scattering one here and there."

<sup>6</sup> *History of Columbiana County, Ohio* (Philadelphia: D. W. Ensign & Co., 1879), p. 106 (also pp. 8, 101).

<sup>7</sup> C. S. Speaker, C. C. Connell, and George T. Farrell, *An Historical Sketch of the Old Village of New Lisbon, Ohio* (Lisbon, Ohio: J. J. Bennett, 1903), p. 143 (also p. 1); William B. McCord (ed.), *History of Columbiana County, Ohio* (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Co., 1905), p. 269.

<sup>8</sup> *Diario de Noticias* (Portuguese-language daily newspaper in New Bedford, Massachusetts), March 26, 1954. Peter Francisco, a native of Portugal, distinguished himself by

In New Jersey, a few miles from Pemberton within Burlington County, some 30 miles east of Philadelphia, there is the small village of New Lisbon. If trust can be placed in the available published sources, this was the first American community to owe its name to the actual presence of Portuguese settlers: around 1800, there was a forge together with a grist and saw-mill on that site; some time thereafter the spot became known as Lisbon Forge, but by 1830 it was called simply Lisbon. The Lisbon designation is said to have been given to the place by some Portuguese who had been hired to cut lumber during the building of the Kinkora branch of the railroad, to supply wood to the Camden and Amboy Railroad. A post office named Lisbon was opened in 1834; it was renamed New Lisbon somewhere between 1876 and 1883.<sup>9</sup>

Just as the state of New York, in the unconcerned free-for-all of place-name creation in the early decades of American independence, came to comprise two communities identically called Lisbon (one of which was soon changed to New Lisbon to lessen confusion), so also the state of New Hampshire suffered for a while from a duplication of places called Concord, one in Merrimac County and the other in Grafton County. In 1824, the latter town decided to look around for a more distinctive appellation: first, the name Columbia was proposed but voted down. Finally, the name of the Portuguese capital won out (again, I presume, because of its association with the name of Columbus, as had happened in Ohio a few years earlier); and yet another Lisbon was put on the map.<sup>10</sup>

From the northeastern part of the United States, the name of Lisbon had begun to migrate westward when it was espoused by the above-mentioned new settlement in Ohio (1803). In addition, from the 1830's onward well into the twentieth century, this name spread to about a dozen new places in the Midwest and as far as the Mountain States, and

---

his fighting prowess in George Washington's armies during the American Revolution. After the Second World War, his name was "rediscovered" to provide a vehicle of political recognition for Portuguese-Americans, who are particularly numerous in Massachusetts (but hardly at all represented in Ohio).

<sup>9</sup> Henry B. Bisbee, *Place Names in Burlington County, New Jersey* (Riverside, N.J.: The Burlington County Publishing Co., 1955), p. 78; Major E. M. Woodward and John F. Hageman, *History of Burlington and Mercer Counties, New Jersey* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883), p. 399. In my research on the history of Portuguese immigration, I have found no indication of the presence of any Portuguese in New Jersey during the first half of the nineteenth century; but a few Portuguese, including the prominent scholar and diplomat Father José F. Correa da Serra and the paternal grandfather of the novelist John Dos Passos, are attested to have lived in nearby Philadelphia at the time.

<sup>10</sup> Hamilton Child, *Gazetteer of Grafton County, New Hampshire, 1709-1886* (Syracuse, N.Y.: The Syracuse Journal Co., 1886), pp. 434-35, 439, 443-44; Hazel Ash Pickwick, *Lisbon's Ten-score Years*, 1963 (as cited in a letter to me by the librarian of the Lisbon Public Library).

ultimately also to a number of locations in the Old and New South. In some cases this is clearly explained by the movement of the population itself; but in many other instances, I have discovered no motive. Chronologically the first case (after New Hampshire) is that of New Lisbon in Henry County, Indiana. A small village between Richmond and New Castle, it was originally called Jamestown (after its first settler, James Donaldson). But when a post office was added a few years later, c. 1838, the place had to be re-named because there already was a Jamestown post office elsewhere in the state; "New Lisbon was chosen, . . . probably . . . from . . . the county seat of Columbiana County, Ohio."<sup>11</sup> About the same year, 1838, a town of Lisbon came into being in Waukesha County, Wisconsin, by an act of the Territorial Legislature; its area was subdivided into three towns the following year, and one of these retained the post-office name of Lisbon until some time between the two World Wars.<sup>12</sup> In addition, a town named New Lisbon was organized in 1853 in what is now Juneau County (then part of Adams County), within the same state of Wisconsin; and it has kept this designation down to the present. (But the local post office, also set up in 1853, was known as Mill Haven until 1868 – exemplifying a not very uncommon divergence between official post-office addresses and generally current community names.) According to one source, this New Lisbon was changed to Lisbon some time in the 1870's, but this change, which led to duplication of place-names within the state (if indeed it took place), must have been revoked soon thereafter. As to how and why this town came to be a namesake of the capital of Portugal: one published version has it that an early settler picked the name to commemorate "his old home at Lisbon, Ohio; also that of his sister at Lisbon, Sheboygan County, Wis. . . ."<sup>13</sup> (There is thus an indication – for which I have found no confirmation elsewhere – that about the middle of the last century, for a limited period at least, Wisconsin could boast of no fewer than three places named for Lisbon.)

In Illinois, there is a township and small village (within Kendall County, some 20 miles from Aurora) which has been known as Lisbon since 1850. The name was proposed by one John Moore at a town meeting that year,

<sup>11</sup> *Hazzard's History of Henry County, Indiana, 1822–1906*; military edition (2 vols., New Castle, Ind.: George Hazzard, 1906), Vol. II, pp. 956–57; Elwood Pleas, *Henry County, Past and Present . . .* (New Castle, Ind.: Pleas Brothers, 1871), p. 75; *History of Henry County, Indiana . . .* (Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Co., 1884), p. 562.

<sup>12</sup> *The History of Waukesha County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1880), p. 744. A town by this name is still listed in *GG* (cf. note 2 above), but it appears in none of the later directories consulted.

<sup>13</sup> J. T. Kingston, "Early Exploration and Settlement of Juneau Co.," in *Report and Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* Vol. VIII [1877–1879], (Madison, 1879), pp. 370–410; esp., pp. 379–82; *New Lisbon Centennial Book*, 1954 (as quoted from by the City Clerk of New Lisbon, in a letter addressed to me).

for unstated reasons.<sup>14</sup> The following year, a town by the name of Lisbon sprang up in Linn County, Iowa; the first settler in the area, who was from New York, had christened it Yankee Grove (c. 1837), but when the town was laid out in 1851, another early resident "suggested it be named Lisbon after the town he came from in Ohio."<sup>15</sup> In Kent County, Michigan, 16 miles from Grand Rapids, a post office first set up in 1848 as Pintler's Corners was renamed Lisbon in 1859, and this name was adopted by the entire village upon its incorporation in 1869.<sup>16</sup> Within the territory of Minnesota, a new township in Yellow Medicine County was named after the capital of Portugal in 1873. About that same year, in adjoining Lyon County, the new town of Canton briefly opted to change its name to Lisbon, before becoming Lucas more permanently. A third Minnesota county, Renville, also adjacent to Yellow Medicine, had a post-station by the name of New Lisbon earlier in the twentieth century.<sup>17</sup> As is suggested by the switch from Canton to Lisbon (names of neighboring communities in New York State) in the one case, probably the appearance of three Lisbons in Minnesota was sparked by migration from New York. A relationship to New York's toponymy (rather than to that of Portugal in any direct sense) is definitely attested for the town of Lisbon in Ransom County, North Dakota; this one was so named in 1880 by its first settler, one Joseph L. Colton, "after his home town in the state of New York."<sup>18</sup>

To conclude this enumeration of the many *Lisbons* in the United States: several additional post-villages or post-hamlets bearing that name are

---

<sup>14</sup> E. W. Hicks, *History of Kendall County, Illinois . . .* (Aurora, Ill.: Knickerbocker and Hodder, 1877), pp. 116, 146, 184, 269–70, 285. According to this source, the first actual settler, who arrived about 1835, hailed from around Plattsburg, N.Y., which is not very far from Lisbon, N.Y. Might this fact have had some bearing on Moore's proposal? Or was it the widely publicized arrival in Illinois of a large group of Portuguese Protestants — the so-called "Madeiran exiles" — in 1849–50 that contributed to making people in that area think of Portugal and thus of Lisbon?

<sup>15</sup> *History of Linn County, Iowa* (Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1878), pp. 557, 568–69, 572. Personal communication from Mrs. S. F. Emerson, of Lisbon, Iowa.

<sup>16</sup> Dillenback and Leavitt, *History and Directory of Kent County, Michigan* (Grand Rapids: Daily Eagle Steam Printing House, 1870), pp. 18, 93; Franklin Everett, *Memorials of the Grand River Valley* (Chicago: Chicago Legal News Co., 1878), pp. 247–48. A town by this name is still listed in *CL* (1962), but no corresponding post office appears in the directories.

<sup>17</sup> Arthur P. Rose, *An Illustrated History of Yellow Medicine County, Minnesota* (Marshall, Minn.: Northern History Publishing Co., 1914), p. 93; Warren Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names . . .* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1920 [Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society, Vol. XVII]), pp. 313, 595. A post-station called New Lisbon, within Renville County, is listed in *GG* (1916).

<sup>18</sup> *The Early History of Ransom County* [North Dakota], . . . 1835–1885 (Larimore, N.D.: H. V. Arnold, 1918), pp. 8, 62–63.

found listed in the *Gazetteer* published by Lippincott in 1916, although in none of my later sources (see note 2 above); *viz.*, there was one each in Noble County, Indiana (not to be confused with the above-mentioned New Lisbon, Ind.); Howard County, Missouri; Bedford County, Virginia; Sampson County, North Carolina<sup>19</sup>; Union County, Arkansas; Dallas County, Texas.<sup>20</sup> Lisbon was the name of a post-hamlet in Lincoln County, Georgia, until some time after 1943. The present village of Lisbon in Claiborne Parish, Louisiana, had its beginnings (and presumably received its current name) shortly before the Civil War.<sup>21</sup> In Maryland, too, there is a tiny village called Lisbon (in Howard County near Baltimore); it was first settled by one Caleb Pancoast, some time during the last century. But nothing is known about why this and the several other places just mentioned received the name of Lisbon.<sup>22</sup> The youngest sibling in this numerous onomastic family seems to be the village of Lisbon in Florida,<sup>23</sup> located in the same Lake County as is the city of Tavares (see below). Of quite a different order is the occurrence of this place-name in the environs of Sacramento, California: there, around the villages of Freeport and Clarksburg, an area of small vegetable farms owned and operated by several hundred Portuguese immigrants came to be popularly known as the "Lisbon district," in the early years of this century; but this was not an official designation, and did not coincide with a clearly delineated political unit (except perhaps with a school district).<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> George R. Stewart, in his *American Place-Names; A Concise and Selective Dictionary* . . . (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), s.v. *Lisbon*, claims that there is a place called Lisbon in South Carolina, and moreover, that it was so named by Portuguese immigrants. I find no such place mentioned in any other source consulted. Except for Louisiana and Florida, none of the Southern states ever received any significant number of Portuguese immigrants.

<sup>20</sup> A Lisbon post office on the outskirts of Dallas continued to operate as of the late 1920's, according to John H. Cochran, *Dallas County* (Dallas: Service Publishing Co., 1928), p. 175.

<sup>21</sup> D. W. Harris and M. B. Hulse, *The History of Claiborne Parish, Louisiana* . . . (New Orleans: W. B. Stansbury & Co., 1886), pp. 91–92. A group of Portuguese had settled in and near New Orleans in the 1840's; but this fact probably has no bearing on the naming of the village of Lisbon (all the early settlers mentioned in Harris & Hulse bore clearly Anglo-Saxon names).

<sup>22</sup> J. D. Warfield, *The Founders of Anne Arundel and Howard Counties, Maryland* (Baltimore: Kohn & Pollock, 1905), p. 465.

<sup>23</sup> Not a post office; but listed in *RM* (1952).

<sup>24</sup> *Reports of the [U.S.] Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries*, Vol. 24 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), p. 329; G. Walter Reed (ed.), *History of Sacramento County, California* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1923), p. 976 (biographical sketch of one Frank J. Lewis, who is here said to have attended the "Lisbon grammar school" near Sacramento as a boy, and in adult years to have "served as school trustee of the Lisbon district").



### III

Apart from the 30-odd *Lisbons*, several other place-names in the United States (and a few in Canada) derive from names of geographic features of the Portuguese-speaking world.<sup>25</sup> In the first place, there is the territorial name of *Brazil*.<sup>26</sup> We find this name bestowed upon a city and township in Indiana (near Terre Haute, within Clay County). At the time of the town's incorporation in 1866, "the name of Brazil was suggested by Mr. William Stewart, familiarly known as 'Yankee Bill'. When approached for his suggestions concerning a name, he was reading a copy of the New York 'Herald', in which was an account of interesting occurrences in Brazil, South America. This fact suggested to Mr. Stewart the name by which the town was called . . ."<sup>27</sup> In 1966, on the occasion of its centennial, this small Hoosier city engaged in a symbolic gift exchange with the Republic of Brazil, donating a poplar tree to be set up in the Brazilian capital and receiving a spring fountain for its own public park.<sup>28</sup> The little town of Brazil in Tennessee (near Trenton, within Gibson County), originally known as Pin Hook, received its current name (upon incorporation in 1869) because one W. T. Banks, who was living on a farm near Pin Hook, and who was to become the town's first mayor, had been saying, "If I ever move, it will be to Brazil, S. A." (many ex-Confederates actually did move to Brazil, S. A., after the Civil War); thus, "when Banks had to give up his hoped-for move to South America and moved into Pin Hook instead, his friends changed the name of the village to Brazil."<sup>29</sup> In 1949, when the then President of Brazil, General Dutra,

<sup>25</sup> I am limiting this term to Portugal proper and to Brazil. If I were to include Portugal's colonies in Africa, where Portuguese is only the language of a ruling minority, it would be appropriate to mention the name of Angola (derived from the Ngola tribe in West Africa). In Sussex County, Delaware, this name shows up (in Angola Neck) as far back as 1688. Cf. C. H. B. Turner, *Some Records of Sussex County, Delaware* (Philadelphia, 1908), p. 142. (Many slaves from Angola were imported into the American colonies during the seventeenth century.) In Erie County, New York, a village near Buffalo was named Angola about 1855. (H. Perry Smith, [ed.], *History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County* [2 vols., Syracuse, 1884], Vol. I, pp. 579-80.) Subsequently, the city of Angola in Steuben County, Indiana, received its name from settlers hailing from the Angola in upstate New York (personal communication from the mayor of Angola, Ind.). There is also a village named Angola in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, and another in Labette County, Kansas.

<sup>26</sup> Occurrences of the name *Brazil* in the United States represent a Portuguese adstratum not only because the country of Brazil is Portuguese-speaking and a former colony of Portugal, but because this territorial name as such derives from the Portuguese common noun designating brazilwood; this type of wood, coveted as a source of reddish dyes, was abundant along Brazil's coast when the Portuguese first settled there.

<sup>27</sup> Charles Blanchard (ed.), *Countries of Clay and Owen, Indiana* (Chicago: F. A. Battey & Co., 1884), pp. 139-45.

<sup>28</sup> News story in the *Bulletin of the Brazilian American Cultural Institute* (Washington, D.C.), Vol. 1, no. 4 (May, 1966).

<sup>29</sup> Personal communication (April 1971) from Frederick M. Culp, Gibson County Historian.

on an official visit to the United States, dropped in on a war-time friend in Humboldt, Tenn., and there heard of a nearby community bearing the name of his country, he insisted on detouring to it for a courtesy call.<sup>30</sup> Some time about the year 1880, Portugal's huge outpost in South America acquired its third namesake in the United States, *viz.*, a mining village called Brazil in Appanoose County, Iowa.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, as of 1943 there was and perhaps there still is a small place by that name in Washington County, Missouri, as well as in Jackson County, Kentucky. On the other hand, the small Kansas community of Brazilton is not named for the country of Brazil, but for Thomas Brazil, one of the owners of the townsite.<sup>32</sup>

In Pamlico County, North Carolina, there is a small community called Janeiro (with its own post office by that name, as of 1943). Although I have no further background information on it, a reference to Rio de Janeiro, the (former) capital city of Brazil, seems rather obvious. It is equally natural to assume that the village of Madeira, now a suburban extension of Cincinnati (in Hamilton County, Ohio), and the suburban community of Madeira Beach on the fringe of St. Petersburg (Pinellas County, Florida) were originally named with the thought of the tourist- and wine-famous Portuguese island of Madeira in mind. At least this was my initial assumption, but it turned out to be at least partly wrong: the place in Ohio, which started out (some time before 1871) as a railroad station and post office on the Marietta & Cincinnati railroad, took its name from John Madeira, who was treasurer of that railroad company and owned a large tract of land in the neighborhood.<sup>33</sup> As for Madeira Beach in Florida, it sprang up in the 1920's around an amusement park located on what had been known as Mitchell Beach; and it was the developer and owner of that amusement park, one Albert Archibald, who reportedly "selected the name Madeira after searching for a name ending in the letters *i-r-a*, in memory of his brother Ira, a developer of Siesta Key, Sarasota."<sup>34</sup> A counsel of caution against hasty interpretation of place-

<sup>30</sup> News story in *The Jackson Sun* (Jackson, Tenn.), May 27, 1949.

<sup>31</sup> Listed in *GG* and *PG*. Also see T. J. Fitzpatrick, "The Place-names of Appanoose County, Iowa," *American Speech*, 3:1 (October 1927), p. 41; *Biographical and Historical Record of Wayne and Appanoose Counties, Iowa* (Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Co., 1886), p. 746; L. L. Taylor (ed.), *Past and Present of Appanoose County, Iowa* (2 vols.; Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publ. Co., 1913), Vol. I, p. 416.

<sup>32</sup> George R. Stewart, *op. cit.*, s.v. *Brazilton*. Cf. note 51 below.

<sup>33</sup> Henry A. and Kate B. Ford, *History of Hamilton County, Ohio* (Cleveland: L. A. Williams & Co., 1881), p. 271; *History of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio* (Cincinnati: S. B. Nelson & Co., 1894), p. 393; James A. Green, "The Map of Hamilton County," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 35 (1926), p. 304. Although I have not uncovered any further biographical data about John Madeira, his last name is unquestionably Portuguese.

<sup>34</sup> Feature story in *Evening Independent* (St. Petersburg, Fla. ?), April 18, 1970. This report may be true as far as it goes, but it hardly tells the whole story; probably an addi-

names can also be gotten out of comparing the toponymic histories of Tagus, in Tulare County, California, and of Tagus in Mountrail County, North Dakota: In the former case, a ranch located along a creek was named the Tagus ranch, for the Tagus, the principal river of Portugal, on which Lisbon is situated. Probably this naming was done by Portuguese immigrant farmers settling on that ranch some time around the turn of the century. (Tulare and adjoining parts of the San Joaquin Valley have attracted a great deal of Portuguese immigration.) After the property changed hands in 1912 it became one of the largest farm enterprises in California, with a town and post office around it by the name of Tagus.<sup>35</sup> However, the village of Tagus in North Dakota (some 20 miles east of Stanley) has nothing at all to do with the Tagus river flowing through Spain and Portugal: this place-name is a shortening of *Taguson*, the name of a local rancher (presumably of Scandinavian descent).<sup>36</sup>

To the extent to which groups of Portuguese immigrant settlers in a given community or area were felt by their neighbors to constitute a distinctive or "foreign" element, such neighbors would naturally get into the habit of referring to the spots of Portuguese concentration descriptively as "the Portuguese district," "the Portuguese hill," or the like; and the descriptive label would in due course become an unofficial, or eventually even official, proper name. The instance of the "Lisbon district" near Sacramento has already been mentioned. Of a similar nature was the designation "Fayal" which, as of the turn of this century, had come into familiar use for a small community of Portuguese vegetable farmers on the island of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts; these immigrants hailed chiefly from the island of Fayal (Faial), in the western part of the Azores (which, of course, are Portuguese territory).<sup>37</sup> But above all, there are a fair number of American place-names, some of them quite unofficial or even ephemeral, that incorporate the more general national-ity designation "Portuguese" (rather than some limited regional reference such as "Lisbon," "Fayal"): in California, where small numbers of Portuguese were to be found among the pioneers of the Gold Rush and subsequent mining days, but more importantly, a little later, among those who developed the Pacific whale fisheries, Gudde has counted "about ten geographic features [that] bear this adjective of nationality" (*viz.*,

---

tional reason why Archibald picked the word Madeira was that he vaguely associated it with some foreign "vacation paradise." (Otherwise, what would have been wrong with *Ira Beach*?)

<sup>35</sup> Feature article in special issue of *Visalia Morning Delta* (Visalia, Calif.), 1927.

<sup>36</sup> George R. Stewart, *op. cit.*, s.v. *Tagus*.

<sup>37</sup> Emelyn Foster Peck, "An Immigrant Farming Community," *New England Magazine*, Vol. 37 (New Series, Vol. 31, 1904-05), p. 207.

“Portuguese”); of these he specifically mentions only four.<sup>38</sup> According to him, a California post office later called Hazel Creek went by the name of Portuguese from 1870 to 1877. East of San Pedro, near Los Angeles, there are two coastal spots named Portuguese Bend and Portuguese Point, respectively; and farther north in Shasta County, there is Portuguese Flat, “locally pronounced pôr’tü-gē, named for Portuguese settlers in the mining days.”<sup>39</sup> Another such coastal location used to be known as Portuguese Cove.<sup>40</sup> Near the old whaling station at San Simeon, in San Luis Obispo County, there are two places called, respectively, Portuguese Lane and Portuguese Flats.<sup>41</sup> One such place-name died aborting: in 1905, the Portuguese immigrant journalist and community leader Joaquim Borges de Menezes tried to get some new town in California to be called Portugueseville, in honor of “his people.” The Southern Pacific Railroad agreed to reserve this name for a new settlement in the Butte Valley, Siskiyou County (near Mount Shasta). But then no Portuguese settlers could be induced to move to that place, with its relatively cold climate, and the project failed.<sup>42</sup> Most of the Portuguese immigrants in California preferred the central part of the state, where they eventually became a leading element in truck and dairy farming. A large part of the San Diego suburb of Point Loma, which is rather densely populated by Portuguese engaged in the tuna fisheries, has been informally known as Little Portugal at least since World War II. Swinging back east across the continent, we find that a hillside section near Jacksonville, Illinois, is (or used to be) locally known as Portuguese Hill; about the middle of the nineteenth century, hundreds of Portuguese refugees from the island of Madeira (Protestant converts who had been harrassed by the local Catholic Church) were resettled on land between Jacksonville and Springfield, Ill., through the efforts of American Protestant groups, and many of their descendants still live in the area.<sup>43</sup> In New Bedford, Massachusetts, the old whaling city which became the first and largest center of Portu-

<sup>38</sup> Erwin G. Gudde, *California Place Names; A Geographical Dictionary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), p. 270.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* Portuguese Bend was a whaling station from about 1864 to 1884, and was later used for Japanese abalone diving; after World War II, with commercial fishing gone in that area, it became a private beach club. W. L. Scofield, *California Fishing Ports* [State of California, Dept. of Fish and Game, Fish Bulletin no. 96] (Sacramento, 1954), p. 128; Edwin C. Starks, *A History of California Shore Whaling* [State of California, Fish and Game Commission, Fish Bulletin no. 6] (Sacramento, 1922), p. 27. At present, Portuguese Bend is the name of a rural branch of the Palos Verdes Peninsula post office.

<sup>40</sup> *Jornal Português* (weekly Portuguese-language newspaper, Oakland, Calif.), annual Special Number for 1938, p. 13.

<sup>41</sup> August Mark Vaz, *The Portuguese in California* (Oakland, Calif.: Brotherhood of the Divine Holy Ghost, 1965), p. 45.

<sup>42</sup> *Jornal Português*, annual Special Number for 1938, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup> *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), December 5, 1942.

guese immigration in the United States, a waterfront section used to be referred to locally as the "Portuguese Arsenal" or "Portuguese Navy Yard"; this was where the Portuguese (Azorean) crews of the Yankee whalers would assemble in the early days, and many Portuguese fishing boats have been lying at anchor there up to the present.<sup>44</sup>

#### IV

The names cited so far can be called geographic in a dual sense, i.e. not only because they designate communities in the United States, but also because they are derived – directly or indirectly – from names of foreign countries (Portugal, Brazil) or of subdivisions thereof. (Of course, it goes without saying that the American names, as usually pronounced, differ slightly from their Portuguese counterparts. Usually this is just a matter of the difference between American-English and Portuguese phonology, or of spelling pronunciation; however, in the cases of *Lisbon* and *Tagus*, the English form is not directly borrowed from modern Portuguese, but from earlier forms closer to Latin.) The place-names to be cited in this section, by contrast, derive from Portuguese personal names, not from geographic ones. They are few in number; but to them might perhaps be added two names previously mentioned, Brazilton (Kansas) and Madeira (Ohio), which occupy an intermediate position inasmuch as their direct derivation is from surnames.

João Rodrigues Cabrilho was a Portuguese seafarer who, as leader of a Spanish expedition, first charted and set foot on the California coast in 1542. Because his name appears mostly in Spanish documents, it is the Hispanicized spelling of his name, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, that is usually cited in English. To commemorate this Portuguese discoverer, monuments have been erected to him in two or three locations along the California coast (the principal one at Point Loma). In addition, a spot near Mendocino, California, was officially named Point Cabrillo by the United States Coast Survey, in 1870; and another spot, at Monterey, was officially designated Cabrillo Point by the United States Board on Geographic Names, in 1935.<sup>45</sup> Finally, a branch of the Long Beach (Calif.) post office is currently called Cabrillo.

In Victoria County, Texas, there is the town of Dacosta (which had its own post office by that name until after World War II). The place is named for Arthur DaCosta, agent for the Morgan Steamship lines at the old seaport of Indianola.<sup>46</sup> I have no data on this individual's ethnic

<sup>44</sup> Personal communication from long-time New Bedford residents.

<sup>45</sup> Gudde, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>46</sup> Fred I. Massengill, *Texas Towns; Origin of Name and Location of Each of the 2,148 Post Offices in Texas* (Terrell, Texas: by the author, 1936), p. 50.

background (was he a descendant of Portuguese Jews, many of whom had found their way into commerce in Caribbean and Gulf ports?); at any rate, his name looks Portuguese. I also regard as clearly Portuguese the name Acosta (a variant of Dacosta); there is a village by that name in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Then there is Castro County, as well as a town of Castroville (in Medina County, some 25 miles west of San Antonio), both of them in Texas, and both named for Henri Castro, a Frenchman who owed his Portuguese-sounding name to being a descendant of Portuguese Jews. Castro had come from France to Providence, R. I., in 1827; in 1842, after negotiating a French bank loan to the infant Republic of Texas, he himself moved to Texas and launched a colonization scheme involving the settlement of some two thousand Europeans, chiefly from Alsace, on free land near San Antonio. This colony officially became Castroville in 1844.<sup>47</sup> (There is also a town of Castroville in Monterey County, California. But this one was founded in 1863 by Juan Bautista Castro, who was of Spanish rather than Portuguese extraction.<sup>48</sup> Indeed the name Castro is “native” to both Portugal and Spain.)

Florida’s Lake County comprises not only a village of Lisbon, as mentioned above, but also a small city called Tavares. This settlement was founded in 1882 by Alexander St. Clair-Abrams, whose family had come to New Orleans from Jamaica. He named the place in honor of an ancestor of his (probably on his mother’s side) called Lopez Para y Tavares, who “is said to have been a grandee of Portugal.”<sup>49</sup> In the Hawaiian Islands, where the Portuguese stock represents an important element of the population (because of the importation of thousands of contract laborers for the sugar plantations, from Madeira and the Azores, mostly in the 1880’s and again shortly after the turn of the century), the only possible instance of a Portuguese place-name – other than names of city streets – seems to be that of Inez, which appears on an old map of the island of Maui.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Julia Nott Waugh, *Castroville and Henry Castro, Empresario* (San Antonio: Standard Printing Co., 1934), pp. 1–21; Fred I. Massengill, *op. cit.*, p. 37; Lillie Mae Hunter, *The Moving Finger* (Berger, Texas: Plains Printing Co., 1956), pp. 2–3; Gerald M. Moser, “Portuguese Family Names,” *Names*, 8:1 (March, 1960), p. 30.

<sup>48</sup> Personal communication (April, 1971) from C. R. Phillips, of Castroville, Calif.

<sup>49</sup> Personal communication (April, 1971) from Ken Sears, of Tavares, Fla., with quotation from a letter which Alexander St. Clair-Abrams himself wrote in 1925, on the origin of the name Tavares. George R. Stewart, in his *American Place Names*, s.v. *Tavares*, says the name of this community is “probably from a Spanish personal name, but data are lacking.” But as Gerald M. Moser has pointed out (*op. cit.*, see note 47 above), Tavares is a Portuguese rather than a Spanish family name.

<sup>50</sup> George R. Stewart, *Names on the Land; A Historical Account of Place-Naming in the United States*; rev. ed. (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1958), p. 422. The risks involved in guessing at the ethnic origin of surnames as used in the United States, frequently Anglicized as they are (as a matter of phonological adaptation or even of loan translation), are

V

Instances of a Portuguese adstratum are to be found not only in the toponymy of the United States, but also in that of Canada. My data on this are limited essentially to northeastern Canada, *viz.*, Newfoundland including Labrador, and Nova Scotia. In other parts of Canada, Portuguese influence in place-names is almost non-existent.<sup>51</sup> Portuguese emigration to Canada, substantial as it has been for the past 15 years or so (centering on Toronto and southern Ontario, with smaller Portuguese communities in Montreal and Vancouver), has been too recent to be able to contribute to the naming of new places, including city streets. However, in the early sixteenth century, the Portuguese played an important part in exploring the northeast coast of North America, and in establishing some outposts there in connection with fishery enterprises.<sup>52</sup> Thus,

---

fairly well-known. (For many instances of Anglicization of Portuguese surnames, among Portuguese-Americans, see my *Portuguese American Speech* [New York: Kings Crown Press, 1949], pp. 125–36.) Similar risks are, of course, taken in interpreting place-names which appear to be derived from personal names, whether they be Dacosta, Coello, or whatever. This kind of risk is dramatized by a wrong guess that Gerald M. Moser made in this journal (Vol. 8, p. 30) some ten years ago, when he cited Rego Park, a community in Queens County, New York, as an example of Portuguese place-names having left their mark on the American map: while it is true that *Rego* occurs as a Portuguese family name, it turns out, according to George R. Stewart (*American Place-Names*, 1970, s.v. *Rego*), that in New York (although perhaps not in the case of a community called Rego in Indiana) Rego Park is named for a Rego Construction Company which had coined its own name or “trademark” acronymically from the phrase “Real good.” Hard to believe, but *cf.* the origin of *Madeira Beach*, above.

<sup>51</sup> The official *Gazetteer of Canada*, Vol. 10, *Ontario* (Ottawa, 1962), does list a hamlet of Lisbon, in Wilmot Township, Waterloo County, Ontario. Also listed in the same source are a Brazil Lake and a Brazil Creek, in Foster Township, Sudbury District, Ontario. However, the *Brazil* in these place-names probably has nothing to do with the country of Brazil. The same can be said of three small lakes called Brazil Pond or Brazils Pond in the interior of Newfoundland, and of two Brazil Lakes and two Brazil Rocks in Nova Scotia. E. R. Seary (*Place Names of the Avalon Peninsula of the Island of Newfoundland* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971], p. 229) alleges a connection with the Irish family name Brazil (on which see also Edward MacLysaght, *Irish Families* [Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1957], p. 310). But more likely, I think, is a reference to the presence of reddish trees resembling brazilwood, in some of these locations.

<sup>52</sup> For a summary of early Portuguese contacts with this region, and for some of the place-names attributed to such contacts, see M. A. Buchanan, “Notes on Portuguese Place-Names in North-Eastern America,” *Estudios Hispánicos, Homenaje a Archer M. Huntington* (Wellesley, Mass.: Wellesley College, 1952), pp. 99–104. Apart from this, my data on Canada are chiefly drawn from the following sources: *Gazetteer of Canada* (Ottawa), Vol. 9, *Nova Scotia* (1961), and Vol. 11, *Newfoundland and Labrador* (1968); E. R. Seary, “Linguistic Variety in the Place Names of Newfoundland,” *Canadian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 65, no. 5 (Nov. 1962), pp. 146–55; E. R. Seary, *Place Names of the Avalon Peninsula of the Island of Newfoundland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971); Thomas J. Brown, *Place-Names of the Province of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, 1922). For an evaluation of Portuguese entries on early maps, see also W. F. Ganong, *Crucial Maps in the Early Cartography*

to start with, the very name *Newfoundland* is a loan translation from the Portuguese, *Terra Nova* ("new land"). The original Portuguese name is commemorated in the village of Terra Nova, and a river and a lake of the same name, as well as Terra Nova National Park, all of them located in the southeastern portion of Newfoundland, in the vicinity of Bonavista and Alexander Bays. There is also a Terra Nova Point along the southwestern shore of Indian Island, off the Labrador coast. Labrador is named for the Portuguese João Fernandes, also called Lavrador or Labrador (< Port. *lavrador* "farmer, small landowner") because of his regular status as a gentleman farmer in the Azores; Fernandes set out on maritime exploration in 1501, reaching Greenland and, according to old (but probably inaccurate) maps, the present-day Labrador.

Within Newfoundland proper, a particularly heavy concentration of Portuguese place-names, or toponymic references to Portugal, is in evidence on and around Avalon Peninsula: between Conception and Trinity Bays, there is Bay de Verde Peninsula (and a town by the same name), with Baccalieu Island slightly to the northeast, and a channel called Baccalieu Tickle nearby. In addition, there is a Bacalhao Island elsewhere along the Newfoundland coast, and a second island by the same name southeast of Holton off the Labrador coast. Both *Baccalieu* and *Bacalhao* derive from Port. *bacalhao* "cod." On the southeast coast of Avalon Peninsula, north of Shoe Cove, there is Ferryland Harbour, and the village of Ferryland (and in addition, on the French island of St. Pierre off Newfoundland, there is a Ferryland Head); I will follow Buchanan (see note 52) in deriving this *Ferryland* from Port. *farelhão* "cliff" (as old maps show *Farilham*, and later *Ferillon*). Between Ferryland Harbour and Shoe Cove, we find Fermeuse Harbour and a village called Fermeuse, as well as an offshore bank called Fermeuse Bantam; *Fermeuse* evolved under French influence from Port. (*Baia*) *Fermosa* "beautiful bay." The *Freels* in the name of Cape Freels, located on the southeastern tip of Avalon Peninsula, and in a second Cape Freels at the northern end of Bonavista Bay, is thought to correspond to an older *Frey Luis*. Also probably of Portuguese origin are the names of Cape St. Francis, St. John's, Cape Spear (< Port. *Cabo da Espera* "cape of expectation or hope"), Cape Race (< Port. *Cabo Raso* "flat or barren cape" – the name of a cape at the mouth of the Tagus river, in Lisbon harbor), Cape Pine (< Port. *Cabo de Pena* "cape of punishment or sorrow"), and St. Mary's Bay. Presumably the very common Portuguese first name Manuel underlies the name of the Manuels River flowing into Conception Bay, and of a second river by that name at the northern end of the Long Range

---

*and Place-Nomenclature of the Atlantic Coast of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964 [reprint of a series of articles by Ganong originally published in 1929–37, now with an introduction and critical notes by Theodore E. Layng]).



Mountains. Also, there is a village called Manuels south of Wabana, and a village of Manuel's Cove on South Twillingate Island. Elsewhere in Newfoundland, a group of small islands in Catalina Harbour and several other shore points are named for one or the other Manuel. Again on Avalon Peninsula, east of Wabana not far from St. John's, a village bears the designation Portugal Cove; the same name attaches to a cove along Trepassey Bay and another on Conception Bay. Also on Trepassey Bay is Portugal Point, and east of Trepassey one comes upon the village of Portugal Cove South.

Near Hare Bay at the northernmost tip of Newfoundland, Crémaillère Harbour hides under its French-looking name an original reference to Port. *caramellos* "caramel cubes, ice floes." Whether Cape St. Anthony in that same coastal area, plus St. Anthony Harbour and the town of St. Anthony, owe their names to the patron saint of Lisbon (St. Anthony of Padua, born in Lisbon) would be worth investigating. And what about Maria Bay, and Maria Island (in Hare Bay)? As for New Ferolle Peninsula, also on that far-northern stretch of the Newfoundland coast: does not *Ferolle* almost certainly derive from Port. *farol* "ship's lantern, lighthouse"? (Cf. *Farilham* > *Ferillon*, above.) Miguels Lake in the Gander area, and Miguel Hill south of Windsor, Nfld., obviously point to Miguel as a Portuguese name; also to be mentioned in this connection are the Miguel Islands at the northern tip of Labrador. The name of the island of Fogo (< Port. *fogo* "fire"), off the northeast shore of Newfoundland, undoubtedly appeared first on a Portuguese map. (But *Fogo*, in this case, may possibly represent a Portuguese folk etymology, a misinterpretation of an earlier English designation *Bay of Fogs*.)

Coastal waters around Nova Scotia include the Bay of Fundy, which gets its name from Port. *Rio Fondo* "deep bay," as well as the Minas Basin and Minas Channel (< Port. *minas* "mines"). There is also a settlement called Minasville, southwest of Truro. Then there is Mira Bay, in the southeastern part of Cape Breton Island, and a Mira River flowing into it; the latter probably takes its name from a river in southern Portugal (or else the bay does, and the river was named after the bay; cf. Buchanan). Features adjoining this river include Mira Lake and the Mira Hills. Two settlements near the bay, southeast of Sydney, bear the name of Mira and of Mira Road, respectively.<sup>53</sup> On Cape Breton Island (where the Portuguese had established their very first – but short-lived – settlement in North America, at Ingonish), we also find lakes called Bras d'Or, and settlements by the same name; *Bras d'Or* resulted from a popular reinterpretation of *Labrador* by French speakers. (In addition, there is a

<sup>53</sup> According to Thomas J. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 95, the Mira River was named Mire in honor of a French officer, Lieutenant M. de Mire, in 1746. But Buchanan cites the Portuguese origin, which I consider more likely. Also cf. Ganong, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

Labrador Lake in Lunenburg County, in the southwestern part of Nova Scotia.) The name of the Portnova Islands, within Cape Breton County, would also appear to be of Portuguese origin (< *porto novo* "new port" ?). Overlooking the Minas Basin, in Kings County, N. S., Cape Blomidon is thought to derive its name from Port. *promontório* "promontory, cape." (Located on Blomidon Peninsula, it has naturally extended its name to the nearby community, Blomidon.) Finally, south of Halifax, there is a cove and an adjoining settlement known as Portuguese Cove, with a nearby lake called Portuguese Cove Lake; and within Halifax Harbour, one encounters Portuguese Shoal.

## VI

In a broad sense at least, place-names include any kind of verbal expressions whose primary function it is merely to identify (rather than to describe) some individual segment of the earth's surface – such as some subdivision within a town. We are justified, therefore, in including in this survey a look at Portuguese influences in the naming of city streets and squares. Street names do, of course, presuppose the existence of organized communities of some size and compactness; and the selection of such names is more regularly a matter of formal public procedure than is the case with various features of the open countryside, or with isolated pioneer settlements. My data are limited to street names within the United States (i. e., excluding Canada), and to those American cities for which a listing of streets is included in the *National Zip Code Directory* 1969–70, as issued by the U. S. Post Office Department. Only in a few instances do I have specific information as to why or how a particular name was chosen.

By states, the largest number of relevant street names is found in California (a total of 34, distributed over ten cities ranging in size from Los Angeles to San Leandro); Massachusetts is second (22, all but one of them in New Bedford and Fall River), followed by Hawaii (20, all in the city of Honolulu). By cities, Honolulu has the largest number of street names relating to Portuguese places or persons; about ten each are found in New Bedford, Fall River, and Greater Providence. In contrast to the names of towns and villages mentioned earlier in this article, a marked majority of street names commemorate individuals rather than places or social groups; no descriptive Portuguese term appears in any of them.

Among references to places in Portugal (none of the streets was found to refer to Brazil), Lisbon is mentioned most frequently. Paralleling the relative popularity of this name for labeling entire communities, there is a Lisbon Street (or Avenue, Lane, etc.) in Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, and San Rafael, Calif.; in Honolulu, H. I.; in Fall River and Boston, Mass. (but not in New Bedford,

which has sometimes been called "the Portuguese capital of the United States"); in Providence, R. I.; Hartford, Conn.; the Bronx (New York City), Buffalo, and Rochester, N. Y.; Milwaukee, Wisc.; Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus, Ohio; Jacksonville and Miami, Fla. In at least half of these instances, the choice of Lisbon as a street name does not seem to have had anything to do with the local prestige of Portuguese-American groups, nor probably with any special recognition of the historical or contemporary importance of the Portuguese capital. Although space does not permit me to extend this investigation further, it would be of some interest to compare the incidence of streets named for Lisbon with the use of Paris, London, Moscow, etc., for identification of American city streets. Replication of Portuguese place-names other than Lisbon is rare: I have found four streets named for Madeira (evidently prompted by the presence of many Madeiran immigrants in the cases of Honolulu and of Pawtucket, R. I.); two for Funchal (the provincial capital of Madeira); three for Fátima (a Portuguese town that has become a pilgrimage center because of an alleged appearance of the Blessed Virgin there; several Portuguese immigrant churches in New England have named themselves Our Lady of Fatima); one each for the Azores, Flores (one of the Azores islands), and Oporto (the second city of Portugal).

These names referring to locations in Portugal represent almost exactly one third of the total of about one hundred "Portuguese" street names I have counted. Most of the remaining two thirds, *viz.*, a little over 50, commemorate almost as many different Portuguese-American individuals (usually local residents recently deceased, and of no more than local distinction). In addition, one street each in five California cities is named for Cabrillo, the Portuguese discoverer of California. Both Fall River and Honolulu have a Magellan Street honoring the sixteenth-century seafarer. In the years following World War II, which in the United States were characterized by increasing official recognition of the contributions made by various ethnic minorities, and by a growing political weight of the Portuguese-American element in particular, a street intersection in Pawtucket, R. I., was officially renamed Luso-American Square and a street in adjoining Central Falls, R. I., became Madeira Avenue. In honor of some local war-dead of Portuguese extraction, New Bedford acquired a Vieira Square and a Souza Square, Fall River a Charles Braga Bridge; and in Newark, N. J., a spot in the heart of the Portuguese section of town received the name of Peter Francisco Park.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> On Peter Francisco, see note 8 above. For Portuguese influence in Honolulu street names, see T. Blake Clark, "Honolulu Streets," *Papers of the Hawaiian Historical Society*, 20 (March 1939), pp. 14-21. How Anglicization may obscure the original non-English backgrounds of some name-bearers in this country is vividly documented in the instance of *Oakes Boulevard*, in San Leandro, California: a Portuguese immigrant by the name of

These last few names lead us almost imperceptibly from the subject of toponymy to that of monuments – which would be another story. While some place-names do memorialize in a secondary way, their main function is to serve as arbitrary markers of space. Nevertheless, as this study confirms, some place-names are less obviously “arbitrary” than others.

The State University College at New Paltz, New York

---

Antonio E. Sylva had bought some land there in 1861; “during the next 75 years, the Sylva family gradually changed their names, some of them taking ‘Carvalho’ . . . and others adopting the English translation, ‘Oakes’, from which Oakes boulevard was named. [Port. *carvalho* means “oak”.] Four generations of this substantial family have made their homes on the original tract purchased in 1861.” (Reginald R. Stuart, *San Leandro; a History* [San Leandro, Calif.: First Methodist Church, 1951], p. 163.)

### NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

In accordance with its regular policy, *Names* furnishes *gratis* to its contributors 25 reprints of all longer articles and from two to five copies of notes and book reviews. Additional quantities of reprints must be ordered at least a month in advance of publication date, preferably at the time of final galley proofreading. Rates for additional copies appear below.

Pages	Number of copies			Additional
	25	50	100	100
1–4	\$11.00	\$14.00	\$15.50	\$5.50
5–8	\$14.00	\$16.00	\$17.50	\$7.00
9–12	\$15.50	\$17.50	\$20.00	\$8.75
13–16	\$17.75	\$20.00	\$22.50	\$11.25

Contributors are also reminded that, in order to facilitate typesetting, footnotes should be placed on separate sheets at the end of manuscripts.