

Challenges in Tracing Portuguese Immigration from the Açores and Madeira to the Hawaiian Kingdom

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Researching Portuguese immigration from São Miguel and Madeira to the Hawaiian Kingdom presents numerous challenges, especially for those tracing family history. As a family researcher, I learned firsthand how difficult it is to find accurate and consistent information about my ancestors' journey. Portuguese passenger records were handwritten and often illegible—names were crossed out, added in the margins, or spelled phonetically by ship captains who spoke English, French, or German rather than Portuguese. Birth and death records were rarely accurate; ages changed from one document to another, and children might be listed on one record and omitted on another.

In many cases, single women were recorded using only their devotional or given names, without any family surname to link them to relatives. Names like Maria de Jesus, Maria da Glória, Maria da Conceição, Maria dos Anjos, and Maria da Assunção (often misspelled in the records) were extremely common. Women who immigrated to Hawai‘i with their children to reunite with a husband were also frequently listed under devotional names, making it difficult—if not impossible—to connect them to their spouses.

There were quite a few stowaways aboard the ships. Most climbed aboard the steamers at night, often using the anchor chains. One family reportedly hid in a pile of mattresses. Women without passports sometimes boarded by joining other families and, amid the confusion, escaped detection. When the S.S. *Victoria* arrived in Honolulu, there were fourteen stowaways. Eight of them—six of whom were minors—claimed they had boarded on the recommendation of an engineer who told them they would easily find employment. According to immigration law, they were supposed to be returned to their point of departure. They were detained at the police station for this purpose, but instead, those with no criminal history and who were healthy and fit were given contracts to work on the Honolulu plantation. Many were required to work without wages until they had repaid the cost of their passage.

Many young men from the Açores and Madeira stowed away to escape Portugal's mandatory military service, which prohibited those of draft age from emigrating. Parents, unwilling to see their sons conscripted, sometimes smuggled them aboard ships despite the risk of steep fines they could not afford. Portuguese law also required a \$75 bond for each boy over 14 who wished to emigrate. Many families were unable to pay or secure such a bond, so some left their sons behind with relatives or risked illegal passage.

Ship officers were required to examine passports, but many immigrants had lost theirs or did not understand their importance. Some claimed they had them but couldn't locate them. Officers reported that several passengers left without the required passports, which were mandated by the Portuguese government. In some cases, people used passports purchased from others at the port. One woman was even allowed to board using her husband's passport—though she may not have been his wife.

Another major challenge in Portuguese family research is navigating the country's unique naming conventions, which differ significantly from American practices. Compound surnames—

such as *Pacheco Cabral*—might appear reversed in different documents, like *Cabral Pacheco*, making it hard to track individuals accurately. Common names like António Silva, José Carvalho, João Vieira, and Manuel Tavares add to the confusion, especially when no additional identifying information is available. Without the names of spouses, children, or siblings, it is nearly impossible to confirm a person's identity. While birthdates can be helpful, they are not always accurate. Devotional names shared by hundreds of women create further complications. In addition, many names were anglicized by plantation owners or officials who struggled with pronunciation, leading to variations that obscure original identities.

Resource: Curammeng, Kahealani Martins. *They Came in Ships to Terra Nova: Portuguese Immigration to Hawai'i, 1878-1913*

For more information about Portuguese names, visit:
https://everything.explained.today/Portuguese_name/

Portuguese Name Variations and Critical Changes in Immigration Records

The following lists outline notable variations and significant changes in Portuguese names found in immigration records. Name variations often arose from phonetic interpretations, misspellings, or anglicization during recordkeeping. These variations can be minor and usually traceable. In contrast, critical name changes represent substantial alterations—sometimes entirely different names—that posed considerable challenges in identifying and verifying the correct individuals in historical immigration documentation.

Given Name/Surname	Variations
Abreu, Abreu	Abrew
Adelaide	Ida
Adeline	Lena
Afonso	Alfonso
Agostinho, Augusto	Augustine, Gus, August
Agrela	Agrella
Águeda	Ada
Aires	Ayres
Alexandre	Alexander, Alex
Alexandrina	Sandra, Alex, Alice
Alfredo, Frederico	Fred, Alfred
Almeida	Alameda
Amalia	Emily
Amâncio	Amos
Ambrósio	Ambrose
Amélia	Emily, Emelia
Ana	Anna, Annie
Andrade	Andrada, Andrews
André	Andrew, Andy
Andresa	Andreza
Angélica	Angel, Angie, Gina, Lena
Anias	Annie
Aníbal	Hannibal
António	Anthony, Tony, Antone, Antoneo
Apolinário	Peter
Arsénia, Arsénia	Elsie, Arsenia
Arsénio, Arcénio	Arnie, Semo
Artur, Arturo	Arthur
Baptista	Baptiste, Baptist
Barbosa	Barboza
Bartolomeu	Bartholomeu
Bento	Benjamin
Berló	Bento
Bicho	Bisho

Given Name/Surname	Variations
Bogado	Bugado
Botelho	Boteilho
Brás	Braz
Brum	Brown
Cabral	Cable, Cobal, Chambers
Câmara	Chambers, Cambra
Capelas	Capellas
Cardoso	Carduso, Carduza
Carlos	Charles
Carolina	Carrie
Carreiro(a)	Carreira(o)
Carvalho	Cravalho
Catarina	Catherine, Katherine, Cathy, Katie, Tina
César	Caesar
Cipriano	Cypriano
Coelho	Cuelho
Coito	Canto, Couto, Coite
Conceição	Cozy
Constância	Constance
Correia	Coreia, Correa, Corea
Costelo	Costello
Couto	Coito, Coite, Canto
Cristina	Christina
Curvelo	Crivello, Crivella
Dâmaso	Damas
Delfina	Delphina
Dinis	Diniz, Denis, Dennis, Deniz
Diolinda, Deolinda	Linda
Domingos	Dominic
Dorotéia	Dorothy
Dueneize	Dennis
Efigénia	Ephigenia
Elisa	Elizabeth, Eliza
Emília	Emelia, Amelia, Emily, Millie
Estefânia	Estephania
Ester	Esther
Estefânia	Stephanie, Fannie, Fanny, Estufania
Estrela	Estrella, Stella
Esteves	Teves
Eugénia	Virgínia, Jennie
Eugénio	Eugene, Gene, Ogen
Evangeline	Virgínia, Eva, Ginnie, Vangie
Faria	Farias
Farias	Faria

Given Name/Surname	Variations
Ferraz	Frazier
Ferreira	Ferry, Ferreia
Filipe	Felipe, Fillipe, Fellipe, Philip(s)
Filomena, Felismina	Philomena, Fanny, Minnie
Florinda, Florênci a	Flora
Frias	Farias
Francisca	Frances
Francisco	Frank, Francis
Frederico	Fred, Freddie, Frederick
Freitas	Frates, Francis, Frazer
Galêgo	Gallego
Genife	Rego
Genovéva	Genevieve
Georgina	Gina, Jean, Ginnie, Jorgia
Góis	Goias, Goes, Goeas
Gonçalves	Gonsalves
Gilherme	William, Willie
Graça	Grasa, Garcia
Guilhermina	Hermina, Minnie, Wilhelmina
Guindinho	Guindin, Ginden
Helena	Helen, Elena
Henrique(s)	Hendrick(s), Henry
Henriqueta	Harriet
Herminia	Minnie, Erma
Hilário	Elariano
Inácia	Innes, Inez
Inácio	Ignácio, Enos
Inês	Agnes, Innes, Inez
Isabel	Izabel, Isabell, Isabella
Jacinta	Jacintha, Jessie
Jacinto	Jacintho, Jesse, Jason, Jack
Jaime	Jayme, James
Jardim	Jardin, Jardine
Jerónimo	Jerónimo
Jesuína	Jessie
Joana	Joanna
João	John
Joaquim	Joachim, Joaquin, Jack
Jordão	Jordan
Jorge	Jorginho, George
Jorgina	Georgina, Gina, Jorgie, Jean
José (Also surname)	Joe, Joseph (Also surname)
Josefa	Jose
Josefina	Josephine, Jessie

Given Name/Surname	Variations
Julinha	Julia
Júlio	Jules, Julius
Julius	Jules
Lázaro	Lazarus
Lourenço	Lawrence, Lorenzo
Luanda	Loanda, Loando, Leandro
Luís	Luiz, Louis, Lewis
Luísa	Luiza, Lucy
Madalena	Magdalena, Madine
Manuel	Manoel (Archaic spelling), Manny
Marcelino	Marshall
Margarida	Margaret, Maggie, Martha
Maria	Mara
Mariana	Marriana, Marianna
Mariano	Marino, Marion
Marques	Marquez, Marks
Martins	Martin
Mata	Matta
Mateus	Matheus
Matias	Mathias, Mateas
Matilde	Mathilda
Matos	Mattos
Medeiros	Vidinha
Melo	Mello, Miller
Mendes	Mendez
Mendonça	Mendonsa, Mendonca
Meneses	Menezes
Miguel	Michael
Moniz	Monis, Munis, Muniz
Mota	Motta
Natividade	Nellie, Nativity
Nóbrega	Nobriga
Olim	Dolim
Olímpia	Olympia
Olival	Leval, Oliver
Oliveira	Oliver
Ornelas	Ornelles
Paixão	Paishon
Palmira	Palmyra
Patrício	Patrice
Paulo	Paul
Pedra	Pedro, Stone
Pedro	Peter, Peters, Stone
Pereira	Perreira, Perry, Peters

Given Name/Surname	Variations
Perrigil	Pregill
Pimenta	Pimento
Pimentel	Pimental
Pires	Peters, Perry
Querubina	Cubrina
Quintal	Quintel
Rafael	Ralph, Raphael
Raimundo	Raymond
Raposo	Raposa, Rapoza, Rapozo, Roposo, Ropoza
Raquel	Rachel
Raulino	Rawlins
Rebelo	Rebello, Robello
Resendes	Resendez, Resents, Resentes
Ricarda	Rachel
Rita (surname)	Ritta
Rodrigues	Rodriquez
Rosa	Roza, Rose, Rosie
Sarafina	Sarah
Senhorinha	Sarah, Sara
Silvana	Silvia, Sylvia
Silveira	Silva, Sylva
Silvestre	Silvester
Simão, Simões, Simões	Simon, Simas
Sousa	Souza
Teixeira	Texeira, Texiera
Teodora	Theodora
Teodoro	Theodore, Theodoro, Ted
Teresa	Theresa, Thereza, Tereza
Tomás, Tomé	Thomas, Tom
Vasconcelos	Vasconcellos
Victória, Vitória	Victoria
Victoriano, Victório, Vitório, Vitórino	Victor, Victorine
Vieira	Vierra, Viera
Virgínia	Gina, Ginnie, Vergie
Viriato	Veriato

Critical Name Changes

Name on Passport/Passenger List	Name Used in Hawai‘i
Agrela	Agrellas
Aleixo	Augusto
Almeida	Amaral
Almeida	Andrade
Amaral	Freitas
António	Gabriel
António	Pedro
Arruda	Perreira
Aveiro	Oliveira
Barbusano	Barbosa
Berlo	Bento
Bicho	Bisho, Bishop
Borracha	Lima
Branco	Gonsalves
Caires	Ascenção
Caires	Freitas
Caires	Pereira
Câmara	Oliveira
Câmara	Ornellas
Carrilho	Ponte
Carvalho	Medeiros
Chadinha	Pacheco
Coelho	Rego
Coelho	Antone
Cordeiro	Antone
Cordeiro	Galdera
Correia	Oliveira
Correia	Bernard
Correia	Nunes
Correia	Oliveira
Didão	Olim
Drumond	Alexander
Estevão	Stevens, Stephen, Steven
Eugénio	Ogen
Faias	Perrigil
Falau	Gomes
Faria	Morgan
Fernandes	Camacho
Fernandes	Serrao
Ferreira	Fonseca
Freitas	Andrade

Name on Passport/Passenger List	Name Used in Hawai‘i
Freitas	Peru
Furtado	Moritz
Furtado	Isiboro
Galdeira	Cordeiro
Garcês	Garcia
Gomes	Jesus
Gomes	Paschoal
Inácio	Enos
Jardim	Gomes
Jesus	Garrida
Jesus	Gomes
Jesus	Leopoldino
Joaquim	Ascenção
José	Amorin
Léon	Carita, Carrita
Lomelino	Vasconcelos
Mancebo	Sousa
Martins	Correia
Medeiros	Ayres
Medeiros	Calhau
Medeiros	Phillips
Melim	Gomes
Moreira	Pavão
Moura	Caires
Nascimento	Franco
Nunes	Oliveira
Pacheco	Loranda, Luranda, Luanda
Paixão	Paishon
Passos	Gomes
Pedra	Pedreira
Pedro	Peters, Stone
Pereira	Gonçalves
Pernegra	Pereira
Perpétua	Baptista
Pico	Pereira
Pita	Peters
Resendes	Furtado
Ribeiro	Rivers
Rodrigues	Paul
Salvador	Perry
Silva	George
Silva	Gonzaga
Silva	Vasconcellos
Soares	Nunes
Sousa	Caixeiro

Name on Passport/Passenger List	Name Used in Hawai‘i
Sousa	Jesus
Tavares	Jardin
Teixeira	Jardim
Ventura	Yaden
Victorino	Paz