

**University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Archives and Special Collections
Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese American Archives**

**Sylvia and Luis Cotta Family (Little Compton, Rhode Island)
Papers, 1890-1998**

Manuscript Collection – MC 18

Extent: 2.1 linear ft. (5 manuscript boxes)

Biographical note: The Sylvia (or Silva) and Luis Cotta family of Little Compton, Rhode Island originated from Ponta Delgada, Flores, Azores, and Santa Barbara, Terceira, Azores. Joao Silva (John Sylvia) was born in Ponta Delgada in 1874 and in 1892 immigrated to Little Compton, Rhode Island where he worked on the Arthur MacComber farm. Emilia Serafina Luis Cotta was born in 1880 in Santa Barbara, Terceira, Azores. She immigrated to Little Compton about 1895 with her sister. Her brother Jose, the oldest of 14 children, had gone to Little Compton in 1888 to work on the Levi Sisson farm. Emilia also worked for the Levi Sisson family. Seven other brothers and sisters, some of whom first went to Little Compton, went to California where they acquired property and dairy ranches in and around Los Banos in the San Joaquin Valley. Joao Silva and Emilia Luis Cotta married in 1898 in New Bedford and settled in Little Compton. They purchased a large dairy farm there and eventually had 15 children all together: John, William, Lawrence, Mary, Frank, Amelia, Anna, Alice (who married Joseph Garcia, see MC 19), George, Antone, Philip, Pauline, Frederick, and Elton.

Scope and Contents note: the collection consists of photographs and ephemera of various members of the Sylvia family, family correspondence from 5 of the Sylvia brothers (Philip, Antone, Frederick, Lawrence, George) while they served in the military during World War II, and a selection of Philip Sylvia's Little Compton, Rhode Island well drilling business and personal records.

Access: unrestricted

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Acquisition: Gift of Frances Sylvia Gracia, between 1997 and 2000.

Processed: July 2000 by Judy Farrar.

File list

Box # Folder # Description

Series I: Sylvia and Luis Cotta Family (from John and Emilia Sylvia)

- 1 Documents and religious ephemera of John and Emilia Sylvia, Little Compton, RI:
 - 1 Newspaper Clippings, 1954-1958
 - 2 Bank Books, 1942-1960
 - 3 Condolence letters, 1960
 - 4 White Star Line Baggage Ticket, undated
 - 5 Religious cards and certificates, 1925-1960
 - 6 Association of Mary Immaculate, undated
 - 7 Franciscan Missionary Union, 1960
 - 8 Sixtieth Wedding Anniversary Card (1958)
 - 9 Prayers, undated
 - 9a-b Emilia and John Sylvia funeral books, 1960
 - 9c Emilia Cotta religious print, framed
 - 9d Lewis Family (California) genealogy

- 2 Photographs from the collection of John and Emilia Sylvia:
 - 10 John and Emilia Sylvia
 - 10a John and Emilia Sylvia homestead, Little Compton, 1960, 1970, 1988
 - 11 Children of John and Emilia Sylvia
 - 11a Alice Sylvia, Little Compton High School, 1927
 - 11b Alice and Joseph Garcia passports
 - 12 Azorean relatives of Emilia Sylvia (from sister Maria de Sao Pedro), 1950s
 - 13 Luis Cotta Family of Los Banos, California, 1890-1929
 - 14 Luis Cotta Family of Los Banos, California, 1915-1926
 - 15 Luis Cotta Family of Los Banos, California, 1926-1930
 - 16 Gomes/Luis Cotta Family, 1900-1960
 - 16a Azores – Church of St. George and photo of liberation graffiti
 - 16b Rego branch of the Luis Cotta family

Series II World War II Correspondence and photographs from the children of John and Emilia Sylvia

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 - 17 “Cat Stamp”
 - 18 Philip Sylvia, US Army, 1941-1945
 - 19 Philip Sylvia, US Army, 1941-1945
 - 20 Philip Sylvia, US. Army, 1943-1944
 - 21 Antone Sylvia, US Navy, 1942-1944

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<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	22	Antone Sylvia, US Navy, 1942-1944
	23	Frederick Sylvia, US Army, 1942-1945
	24	Frederick Sylvia, US Army, 1942-1945
	25	Lawrence Sylvia, US Army, 1942-1945
	26	Lawrence Sylvia, US Army, 1942-1945
	27	George Sylvia, US Army, 1942-1945
	28	George Sylvia, US Army, 1942-1945
	29	Newspaper Article, 1944
	30	Photographs, 1941-1950
	31	Photographs, 1941-1942
	32	Photographs, 1942-1947
	33	Photographs, 1944-1945

Series II: Philip Sylvia, Business Records

4	34	Correspondence, 1955-1967
	35	Check Register, 1959-1960
	36	Deposit Receipts, 1961-1962
	37	Security Agreement, 1963
	38	Billed Receipts, 1959-1968
	39	Receipts, 1950-1970
	40	Receipts-Aetna Engineering, 1959-1960
	41	Receipts-Case & Wilber, 1961-1967
	42	Receipts-Corcoran Supply Co, 1959-1971
	43	Receipts-Coyne Industrial, 1967-1969
	44	Receipts-Gill Rock Drill, 1959-1961
	45	Receipts-Stan's Service Station, 1960-1971
	46	Automobile Policy, 1961-1968
	47	General Liability, 1967-1973
	48	Liability Policy, 1963-1996
	49	Manufacturers and Contracting Liability, 1958-1960
	50	Business Cards, undated
	51	Lab Analysis, 1960
	52	Well Completion Report, undated
	53	Well Contract, undated

Series III: Philip Sylvia Personal Records

5	54	Vital Documents, 1972
	54a	Correspondence with reminiscence, 1997
	55	Obituaries, 1998
	56	Passports, 1972-1978

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<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Description</u>
5	57	Re-employment Service Card, 1934
	58	Military Discharge, 1945
	59	Allotment of Pay Form, 1945
	60	Club Invitations, 1954-1971
	61	Receipt of Subscription, 1957
	62	Photographs, 1925
	63	Photographs, 1945-1950
	64	Photographs, 1951-1959
	65	Photographs, 1945-1973
	66	Photographs, 1960-1993
	67	Sylvia family genealogical documents (photocopies of originals), 1646-1932
	68	Sylvia family genealogical documents (photocopies of originals), 1628-1931
	69	War ration book of Jean Sylvia, 1940s

Revised 2/28/07