

A Story of Boylston Clay and Its Ties to a Line of Veterans

Part I

By Inga Milbauer

This story begins with a cup made of Boylston clay by Alice Maud Hazard, the granddaughter of one of Boylston's Civil War Veterans, Theodore Hazard.

Alice Segersten of Shrewsbury donated the clay cup in these photographs to the Boylston Historical Society in 1972. The cup is 3.25 inches tall with a diameter of 3 inches, and has an orange/brownish color with a clear glaze. According to the provenance she made the cup from Boylston clay. This was not surprising as it first appeared, once we explored her Boylston roots and the nature of her father's local business!



*Clay Cup – BHSM Collection
Side View*



*Clay Cup – BHSM Collection
Top View*

Joseph Emil Segersten married Alice Maud Hazard on 21 August 1925 in Brooklyn, New York.¹ Joseph was born on 13 August 1886 in Hjorted, Kalmar, Sweden. He had emigrated to the United States at age 17, arriving on 17 November 1903 at the port of New York, New York. According to the passenger list his destination was Worcester, Massachusetts, to join his brother Gustav Segerten.²

Alice and Joseph lived in Mount Vernon, New York where she was a teacher.³ According to the 1940 Census, Joseph, who was a carpenter, was residing at 165 Oak Street in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts.⁴ On his World War II registration card, he is 56 years old, and his employer is listed as E.G. Cross Co. in Worcester.⁵ This was the fourth draft registration, often referred to as the “Old Man’s Draft” because on April 27, 1942, it registered men who were 45 to 64 years old at the time. Mrs. Maude Alice Segersten of Mount Vernon, New York, is listed as his next of kin. Her name is listed differently in several documents: as Alice Maud in the Boylston Birth Records, but in other records Maud is spelled as Maude, and is used as both a middle name and first name. For clarity, Alice Maud will be used here. Joseph Segersten died in 1963 and was interred in Mountain View Cemetery.⁶ His wife Alice died on 14 December 1978 in Worcester and was buried with him in Mountain View Cemetery in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts.⁷

Alice Maud Hazard was born on 22 March 1893 in Boylston, the daughter of George Hazard (often spelled Hazzard) and Alice (nee Flagg) Hazard. Alice Flagg was the daughter of Levi Lincoln Flagg; for more information about Levi and his homestead, please read “*From Modest Beginnings to the Wealthiest Man in Town!*” and the “*Then and Now - 250 Shrewsbury Street, Boylston, Massachusetts*”.^{8,9}

George and Alice had four children, three boys and a daughter. The oldest son was Irving Lincoln Hazard, born on 7 April 1884. The two younger sons were George Lambert Hazard, born on 8 September 1886, and Otis Myron who was born on 18 April 1889. George Lambert Hazard would become a motorman for the Worcester-Clinton Trolley Line. The trolley followed what is now Route 70, from Worcester through Boylston Center to Clinton.



*George Hazard Homestead
Cross Street, Boylston, Massachusetts
BHSM Collection*

The children's mother was 37 years old when she died from “acute inflammation of the stomach” on 17 March 1895.¹⁰ After the death of their mother, according to the 1900 census for

¹ Marriages. Times Union, Brooklyn, New York, 1925

² List or Manifest of Alien Passengers For the U.S. Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival

³ Obituary of George Hazard, Evening Gazette, 1939

⁴ United States Federal Census, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, 1940, ancestry.com

⁵ Draft Registration

⁶ Gravestone Memorial, Joseph Segersten, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/7101329/joseph-e-segersten>

⁷ Gravestone Memorial, Alice H. Segersten <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/7101329/alice-h-segersten>

⁸ “*From Modest Beginnings to the Wealthiest Man in Town!*”, Patricia Kelleher Bartram, Boylston Historical Society, 2023, <https://www.boylstonhistory.org/images/2023%20Oct%20FFF/FFF%20-%20102023%20Levi%20Lincoln%20Flagg.pdf>

⁹ “*Then and Now-250 Shrewsbury Street, Boylston, Massachusetts*”, Nancy A. Filgate, Boylston Historical Society, <https://www.boylstonhistory.org/images/2023%20Apr%20FFF/Then%20and%20Now%2004292023%20Flagg%20F-arm.pdf>

¹⁰ *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al, pub. Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023, p.433

Boylston, Massachusetts, George L., 13 years old at the time, lived with his father. The 7-year-old Alice Maud and 11-year-old Otis Myron were living with their grandfather Levi L. Flagg.¹¹



*Alice Maud Hazard
(sitting in the middle)
BHSM Photograph Collection
BHS is seeking identification of others in this photograph*

In 1910, she was 17 years old and living with her aunt Jennie Flagg in Bolton, Massachusetts.¹²



*Alice Maud Hazard in Boylston Center
Circa 1910
BHSM Photograph Collection*



*Alice Maud Hazard
1912
BHSM Photograph*

So how did Alice end up working with clay? Alice's father owned the brickyard in Boylston! In 1885 George Hazard had re-opened the John Howe commercial brickyard which had been established in 1807 and operated until 1842, see the "Then and Now-The John Howe Brickyard" for additional information.¹³

Clay was found in Massachusetts in several places and the production of bricks in Massachusetts goes back to the Colonial times. According to the *History of the Clay-working Industry in the United States* by Heinrich Ries, Henry Leighton, 1909, J. Wiley & Sons, bricks were imported to Massachusetts and the New England region prior to 1629. This ended in 1629 when the first brick kiln was established in Salem, Massachusetts. The MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report of Boylston, published in 1983, notes the availability of clay during the Colonial Period (1675-1775) and during the Federal Period (1775-1830):

"An industry dating from the mid-18th century was brickmaking, enlarged in scope in 1807 when a brickyard was established north of Green Hill."¹⁴

In *A Gazetteer of the State of Massachusetts: with numerous illustrations* by Nason, Elias & Varney, George J., published in 1890, the availability of clay is also mentioned.

"Boylston is an agricultural town in the eastern part of Worcester County, about forty miles west of Boston, on the Central Massachusetts Railroad...The land is elevated and broken, yet of good quality. Merrimack schist and calcareous gneiss constitute the geological formation. There is much clay suitable for bricks. Iron ore, good building stone and crystallized quartz, are found. The location of the quartz is Diamond Hill, near the centre."¹⁵



*George Hazard's Workers Carrying Bricks
1890
BHSM Photograph Collection*

George Hazard's brickyard prospered as factories in Clinton, especially, used his bricks for the construction of factory buildings and houses for their workers.

Notes on the back of this photograph indicate that it depicts the brickyard about 1890, Mr. Hazard is driving the two-horse wagon, and "They made brick & square fireplace tile, brick orange in color."

¹¹ United States Federal Census, Boylston, Massachusetts, 1900

¹² United States Federal Census, Boylston, Massachusetts, 1910

¹³ "Then and Now-The John Howe Brickyard", Nancy A. Filgate, Boylston Historical Society & Museum, Inc., 2022, <https://www.boylstonhistory.org/images/John%20Howe%20Brickyard.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/townreports/Cent-Mass/boy.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://archive.org/details/gazetteerofstate00naso/page/192/mode/2up?q=boylston>



Late 19th Century Brick
BHSM Collection

The brick in this photograph is in the collection of the Boylston Historical Society and Museum. The measurements are approximately 7.75x3.75x2 inches. According to the provenance it was made in the late 19th century in the Boylston brickyard.

Demand for bricks declined around the turn of the century and the brickyard closed in 1912.¹⁶

Stay tuned for part II of this story which will lead us back in time to a Revolutionary War Veteran, two Civil War Veterans, and a kidnapping!

Acknowledgements:

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<https://brickfrog.wordpress.com/2012/02/23/history-of-the-clay-working-industry-in-massachusetts/>

¹⁶ <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/townreports/Cent-Mass/boy.pdf>

