Guide to the Guassac Family Papers MS 186

Finding aid prepared by Katrina White
Collection processed as part of grant project supported by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) with generous funding from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.
San Diego History Center Document Collection
1649 El Prado, Suite 3
San Diego, CA, 92101
619-232-6203
August 1, 2011
**Title:** Guassac Family Papers  
**Identifier/Call Number:** MS 186  
**Contributing Institution:** San Diego History Center Document Collection  
**Language of Material:** English  
**Physical Description:** 0.25 Linear feet (1 box)  
**Date (inclusive):** 1895-1936  
**Abstract:** This collection contains papers from the Guassac family between 1895 and 1936, specifically related to Jose Dolores Guassac, his children, grandchildren, and other relatives. This includes family birth records, personal and business correspondence, legal and financial papers, documents related to tribal administration, and personal journals. The majority of the documents are related to either Dolores Guassac or his sons Luciano and Sebastian Guassac.  
**Language of Materials:** Collection materials are in English and Spanish.  
**creator:** Guassac family  
**Biographical / Historical Notes**  
Jose Dolores Guassac was born in 1857 in Mesa Grande, California, according to the online International Genealogical Index. He was often called Dolores as a first name instead of Jose. Guassac had at least one brother, Pablo Guassac. Jose married his spouse, Madelina, in 1891. The family name was alternatively spelled Wassac in addition to other variants. Guassac was elected Captain of the San Jose tribe in 1898. He was also affiliated with the Mesa Grande Band, which along with many other tribes has historically been grouped under the more general heading of Diegueño Mission Indians. Relatively few biographical details about Guassac are available. The collection also includes papers concerning his sons, Sebastian and Luciano Guassac, as well as other members of the family about whom even less is known. It appears that some, if not all, of Dolores’ sons were sent away to boarding school to learn English and receive a higher level of education. Sebastian Guassac followed in his father’s footsteps by serving as Captain of the Mission tribe in the 1930s.  
**Arrangement**  
Items in this collection are arranged by subject.  
**Conditions Governing Access**  
This collection is open for research.  
**Conditions Governing Use**  
The San Diego History Center (SDHC) holds the copyright to any unpublished materials. SDHC Library regulations do apply.  
**Preferred Citation**  
Guassac Family Papers, MS 186, San Diego History Center Document Collection, San Diego, CA.  
**Processing Information**  
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**Separated Materials**  
Original photographs separated to the SDHC Photographic Department (5/21/1987), OP 13079 to OP 13079-25, and OP 13080.  
**Scope and Content**  
This collection consists of the papers of Jose Dolores Guassac and his family, including his sons Sebastian and Luciano Guassac. The documents are dated between 1895 and 1936, and pertain to personal, legal and tribal issues. Several documents are in Spanish. The papers include family correspondence and birth records, personal journals, legal and financial documents, and documents related to tribal administration, as well as several miscellaneous items including a local newsletter called the “Carlisle Arrow,” a handwritten recipe for soap and a pro-prohibition propaganda poem. The collection includes many of Luciano Guassac’s personal correspondence as well as his personal journal. The legal documents include court summons and legal complaints against several male members of the Guassac family for issues such as driving off a steer and allowing a horse to run free. Tribal administration papers include numerous governmental documents and letters from the United States Indian Service, including a certification of Dolores Guassac’s appointment as Captain of the San Jose Tribe. The documents in this collection provide a unique perspective into Indian and Caucasian relations during the turn of the century, and clearly document the role of the U.S. government in tribal issues during that period.  
**Immediate Source of Acquisition**
Accession number 830505A.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Albanes, Jose
Albanes, Vicente
Castillo, Adam
Chowa, Adolph
Dady, John W.
Guassac family
Guassac, Amado
Guassac, Eusavio
Guassac, Luciano
Guassac, Pablo
Guassac, Sebastian
Guassas, Jose Dolores
Guassas, Madelina
Hemsby, Alice
Indian Tribal Organization.
McCormick, T.F.
Mission Indian Federation.
O’Keefe, James
Pacific Supply Co..
United States. Bureau of Indian Affairs.
West Coast Mercantile Agency.
Carlisle Arrow
Diaries
Los Angeles (Calif.)
Mesa Grande Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of the Mesa Grande Reservation, California
Pechanga Reservation (Calif.)
Prohibition
Riverside (Calif.)
San Diego (Calif.)
San Jacinto (Calif.)
San Jose Tribe

Box-folder 1:1  Family documents, 1909 May 25-1923 September 4 and undated
Includes:
Registration Certificate for Luciano Guassac, September 12, 1918.
Handwritten family birth records, undated.

Box-folder 1:2  Family correspondence, 1897 November 4-1919 October 12 and undated
Includes:
Letters from Dolores Gaussac’s brother Pablo regarding his imprisonment
Letter from Superintendent of Schools to Jose Wassac denying his request to transfer his son to “the white school at Bloomdale,” October 6, 1907.
Box-folder 1:3 **Luciano Guassac correspondence, 1908 July 8-1919 January 15 and undated**
Includes:
Collection of postcards addressed to Luciano Guassac, July 8, 1908-August 31, 1914 and undated.
Correspondence from Alice Hernsby to Luciano (love letters), October 26, 1917-January 16, 1918.

Box-folder 1:4 **Luciano Guassac journal, 1905 September 20-1906 February 13**
Includes:
Poems, rhymes, journal entries, and sketches.

Box-folder 1:5 **Family legal documents, 1904 January 20-1919 September 29**
Includes:
Letter from U.S. Indian Service Agent Chas Shell in defense of Jose Wassac’s property, January 20, 1904.
Court summons for Dolores Guassac to be present at the Indian Court on Saturday, November 6, 1909. (dated May 30, 1909)
Criminal complaint against Dolores Guassac for “Permit[ting] a Stallion to run at large,” April 21, 1910.

Box-folder 1:6 **Tribal administration, 1895 March 4-1936 April 10**
Includes:
Letter from U.S. Indian Agent L.A. Wright ordering Captain Dolores Wassac to pick up the supplies proportioned to his Reservation by the government, December 3, 1897.
Certification of Jose Dolores Wassac’s appointment to Captain of the San Jose Tribe, July 1, 1898.
Letter from John Dady, Superintendent of the Mission Indian Agency to the Indian people regarding electing a spokesman for each Reservation with whom Dady can communicate directly, July 17, 1933.
Letter from Adam Castillo, President of the Mission Indian Federation, to his congressman in support of passing bill s. 1793 and companion bill H.R. 5167 regarding the 18 un-ratified treaties between the U.S. Government and the Indian nations, April 10, 1936.

Box-folder 1:7 **Financial papers, 1904 October 15-1919 December 8 and undated**
Includes:
Receipts, invoices, and debt claims.

Box-folder 1:8 **Carlisle Arrow publication, 1911**
Scope and Content
“A newspaper printed by Indians”: A publication from the Carlisle Indian School with letters to the editor, news on athletics and new teaching appointments.
Box-folder 1:9  

**Miscellanea, 1905 August 8-1926 October and undated**

Includes:

- Notebook with few entries, mostly about weather, 1920-1926.
- Handwritten recipe for soap, undated.
- Prohibition sample voting card and pro-prohibition propaganda poem, undated.
- Advertisement by Pacific Supply Co. for blankets, comforts and pillows, in Spanish and English, undated.
- Pacific Supply Co. brochure for “Special Bargains in Groceries,” undated.
- Empty envelopes.