**Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** Rancho San Pedro Reference Collection

**Dates:** 1905-2004

**Collection Number:** Consult repository.

**Collector:** California State University, Dominguez Hills

**Extent:** 2 boxes (1 linear foot)

**Repository:** California State University, Dominguez Hills Archives and Special Collections

**Abstract:** This collection includes correspondence, brochures, newsclippings, papers, and copies of historical documents related to the Rancho San Pedro. Subjects include the Dominguez Adobe and Claretian Seminary, families descended from the Dominguez sisters, companies owned by these descendants, and the history of the Rancho San Pedro. Language: Collection material is in English

**Access**

There are no access restrictions on this collection.

**Publication Rights**

All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Director of Archives and Special Collections. Permission for publication is given on behalf of Special Collections as the owner of the physical materials and not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

**Preferred Citation**

[Title of item], Rancho San Pedro Reference Collection, Courtesy of the Department of Archives and Special Collections. University Library. California State University, Dominguez Hills

**Acquisition Information**

Many items can be traced to Robert C. Gillingham, the author of The Rancho San Pedro. Other materials were donated through the years by faculty members and off-campus sources.

**Processing Information**

The collection was first processed in the fall of 1997 and was opened to research without restrictions. In 2005, the collection was reassessed, with materials added and rearranged into a better working organization. During this process, photographs were removed to the Rancho San Pedro Collection. Materials that were clearly used by Gillingham to write the "Stories of Rancho San Pedro" series and The Rancho San Pedro were separated into the Robert C. Gillingham Working Papers Collection; some of his research materials are still scattered throughout this collection.

**Project Information**

This finding aid was created as part of the Early Los Angeles/Rancho San Pedro Manuscript Cataloging Project, a CSU Dominguez Hills Library project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project started in 2005. Project Director was Greg Williams. Project Archivists were Thomas Philo and Jennifer Allan Goldman.

**History**

Originally encompassing over 75,000 acres the Rancho San Pedro was granted to Juan Jose Dominguez by the King of Spain in 1784. Juan Jose had served as a Spanish soldier in California and received the land following his retirement. Juan Jose built one of the first adobes in the region and lived there for varying periods until his death in 1809. The Rancho San Pedro was then willed to Jose Cristobal Dominguez (a nephew) who in turn willed it to his sons. One of the sons, Manuel, eventually took sole ownership of the property. Manuel built a new adobe structure where he lived with his wife (Maria Engracia) and their children. He was also very involved in local politics and served as mayor of Los Angeles on three separate occasions as well as becoming one of the first county supervisors and delegate to the first constitutional convention of California in 1849. When California became a state in 1849 Manuel was responsible for proving the legality of the original land grant thus ensuring his ownership. A United States land patent was granted to him for the Rancho lands in 1858. The area covered by the patent ran from Redondo Beach in the west, to Compton in the east and the harbor in the south. Manuel used the land to graze cattle and raise crops. His brand, a lemon shaped mark, became a highly
recognizable symbol on the ears of his cattle. In 1882 Manuel Dominguez died and left his estate, including the remainder of the Rancho lands, to his six daughters.

Five of the daughters married, three to Anglos, and went on to create corporations which would administer their holding. These corporations, The Dominguez Estate Company, the Carson Estate Company, the Watson Estate Company, the Francis Estate Company and the Del Amo Estate Company oversaw the daughters' interests in the land. By 1930, when oil was discovered on Rancho land, most of the agrarian activities associated with the Rancho had ceased. It is estimated that the 350 oil wells developed on the land produced over $1 million year of income for a period of over 20 years. Today only two of the original estate companies survive, the Carson Estate Company and The Watson Land Company, but much of the heritage of the original owners of the Rancho and their descendants can be found as both local street and city names in communities which were part of the original Spanish land grant.

The original adobe structure built by Juan Jose Dominguez was replaced by a more permanent structure built by Manuel Dominguez. This more modern adobe served as the main family residence for many years. In the 1920's the Del Amo family gave the property to the Claretian order and built a structure to be used as a seminary. The Adobe continued to be used as a residence of the Dominguez family until 1924. In 1945 the Adobe became an official California State Landmark (No. 152). In 1976, to commemorate its 150th anniversary, the adobe underwent a complete restoration and again was recognized by being placed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks. Today the Adobe is open to the public tours. The seminary building is now used by the Claretians as a retirement retreat.

**Scope and Content**

The Rancho San Pedro Reference Collection consists of documents, maps, and newspaper clippings which document the history of the Rancho lands. Also included are copies of Dominguez family papers, including legal documents.

**Arrangement**

Arranged in five series:

- Series I. General History (1905-1990)
- Series II. Legal Documents and Maps (1919)
- Series III. Dominguez Adobe (1941-2004)
- Series IV. Dominguez Family (1906-1987)
- Series V. Dominguez Companies (1955-1995)

**Subjects**

Rancho San Pedro (Calif.)
Dominguez Hills (Calif.)

**Personal Names**

Carson, John Victor

**Corporate Names**

Dominguez Rancho Adobe Museum

**Titles**

*Reminiscences of the Dominguez Ranch and the Carson Family: An Oral History*

**Related Collections**

Del Amo Nurseries Collection
Del Amo Estate Collection
Dominguez Water Corporation Collection
Robert C. Gillingham Working Papers Collection
Rancho San Pedro Collection
Watson Land Company Collection

**Secondary Sources**

All of these publications can be found in the CSUDH Special Collections Library. Call numbers are at the end of the citation.

Crawford, C.M. *A Short History of the Dominguez Family.* [SPCOL F868.L8 C87 1955]
General History 1905-1990

Physical Description: 12 folders
Scope and Content Note
This series contains material regarding the history of the Rancho and has been divided into three subseries.

Papers 1910-1984

Physical Description: 5 folders
Scope and Content Note
Contains historic papers written about the Rancho San Pedro, including student papers on the Nigger Slough, a copy of William Mulholland’s report on the Rancho’s water supply system, and a paper on the battles of Dominguez Hill.

Box 1, Folder 1
Chronology and history of chief events n.d.

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3
"Battle of Dominguez Ranch I and II" n.d.

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5
"History of Nigger Slough", Susan Hikida 1984

Publications 1955-1990

Physical Description: 3 folders
Scope and Content Note
Contains published pieces about the Rancho San Pedro, including an oral history by John Victor Carson and Judson Grenier and a history distributed by the Dominguez Water Company.

Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 1, Folder 8
"Early Dominguez Families and Settlement of the Rancho San Pedro", booklet, William M. Mason. 1990

Miscellaneous 1905-1985

Physical Description: 4 folders
Scope and Content Note
Contains newsclippings, land development proposals, a calendar with many historic photographs, a land-use proposal, a program from a symposium related to the Rancho San Pedro, and a lesson plan for 3rd grade classes learning the history of Carson.

Box 1, Folder 9
Newsclippings 1905-1970

Box 1, Folder 10
Ocean View Cemetery Co. Proposal 1906

Box 1, Folder 11
Rancho San Pedro Historical Calendar 1985

Box 1, Folder 12

Box 3
Houghton, William L., Justice of the Peace; case book, with index circa 1870s
Legal Documents and Maps 1919

Physical Description: 18 folders
Scope and Content Note
This series contains generally undated copies of legal documents and maps showing the partition of the Rancho San Pedro lands. Included are copies of the 1858 land patent, brand registration, and transcripts of court proceedings between Manuel Dominguez and the United States government. Other legal documents include deeds of right-of-way on rancho land and challenges to the ownership of parts of the Rancho San Pedro. Maps detailing early Spanish pueblos, the location of Spanish ranchos, and the partition of the rancho lands are also included.

Box 1, Folder 13  Manuel Dominguez v. U.S., Case #398, translation of 1805 grant n.d.
Box 1, Folder 14  Petition, Original Land Grant, 1852, typed copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 15  Brand Registration for Manuel Dominguez, 1854, copy with negative n.d.
Box 1, Folder 16  Transcript of Proceedings, Nasario Dominguez v. US, case #480, circa 1854, typed copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 17  Manuel Dominguez v. U.S., Case #398; Decree of Confirmation, 1857, copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 18  Land Patent, 1858, copy with negative n.d.
Box 1, Folder 19  Deed of Right-of-Way Manuel Dominguez to Phineas Banning and the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad Company, 1869, copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 20  Deed of Right-of-Way Manuel Dominguez to the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad Company, 1869, copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 21  Partition of the Estate of Manuel and Maria Engracia Dominguez/Lands Allotted to Maria Dolores Simona Dominguez de Watson: Case 3284, L.A. County Superior Court, 1885, copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 22  Description for Taxation - Maria Dolores Dominguez de Watson, copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 23  Abstract title to Salt Flat, Inner Bay, Rattlesnake Island and Deadman's Island, 1891, copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 24  Map of Indian villages on Rancho San Pedro, with negative and key n.d.
Box 1, Folder 25  Maps of original grant of Rancho San Pedro based on maps in National Archives, with negatives n.d.
Box 1, Folder 26  Map of "The Old Spanish and Mexican Ranchos of Los Angeles County" 1919
Box 1, Folder 27  Map of Spanish pueblos in the Southwest and Northern Mexico n.d.
Box 1, Folder 28  Map of 1884 partition of Rancho San Pedro, 1884, copy and negative n.d.
Box 1, Folder 29  Map of subdivision of part of Rancho San Pedro, 1870, copy n.d.
Box 1, Folder 30  Map of township 3, South Range 13, showing RSP boundaries, copy n.d.

Dominguez Adobe 1941-2004

Physical Description: 15 folders
Scope and Content Note
This series includes materials related specifically to the Dominguez Adobe, the homestead built by Manuel Dominguez and used by various branches of the Dominguez Family and the Claretian Order before becoming a museum and cultural center. The materials have been divided into seven subseries.

Box 1, Folder 31  Newsclippings from local publications 1954-1994, 2004
Box 1, Folder 32  "History of the Development of the Dominguez Ranch Homesite", R.C. Gillingham 1974
Claretian Order 1941-1996

Physical Description: 2 folders
Scope and Content Note
Contains newscuttings about the Claretian Order and the Dominguez Seminary, as well as brochures and pamphlets from and about the Order.

Box 1, Folder 33
Brochures and pamphlets n.d.

Newscuttings 1941-1996

Sesquicentennial 1974-1976

Physical Description: 1 folder
Scope and Content Note
Contains news releases and programs from the celebration of the adobe’s 150th anniversary.

Box 2, Folder 1
News releases and program 1974-1976

Bicentennial 1983-1984

Physical Description: 5 folders
Scope and Content Note
Contains news releases, newscuttings, invitations, and programs for the 200th anniversary of the adobe. The bicentennial event included the participation of Hollywood celebrities Lorne Greene and Ricardo Montalban. Also included is a first-day postcard and press about the US Postal Service stamp depicting the Dominguez Adobe and an article by Judson Grenier in the LA Education Network newsletter about the bicentennial.

Box 2, Folder 2
Correspondence and planning materials 1983

Box 2, Folder 3
News releases 1984

Box 2, Folder 4
Newscuttings 1983

Box 2, Folder 5
Postal stamp and card of Dominguez Adobe, first day issue and New York Times column 1984

Box 2, Folder 6
Event invitations and programs 1984

Box 2, Folder 7
LA Education Network newsletter, article by Grenier 1984

Museum 1975-2005

Physical Description: 4 folders
Scope and Content Note
Contains newscuttings and news releases, programs, and invitations directly related to the Dominguez Adobe as museum. Informational pamphlets were used as museum guides.

Box 2, Folder 7
Newscuttings 1985, 1989

Box 2, Folder 8
Informational pamphlets 1975, 1984

Box 2, Folder 9
Airmeet Room opening 1977

Box 2, Folder 10
Grand re-opening and flyers 2004-2005

Events 1966-1978

Physical Description: 1 folder
Scope and Content Note
Materials regarding events held at the Adobe are contained in this subseries. Included are invitations to the annual fiesta and other events.

Box 2, Folder 11
Annual fiesta and other events 1966-1978
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subseries</th>
<th>Physical Description</th>
<th>Scope and Content Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dominguez Family 1906-1987</strong></td>
<td>34 folders</td>
<td>This series contains materials regarding the Dominguez family from Juan Jose through the daughters of Manuel Dominguez. It has been separated into six subseries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History 1965-1985</strong></td>
<td>2 folders</td>
<td>Includes newscippings on the Dominguez family in general and a piece about the family in honor of the sesquicentennial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carson 1906-1981</strong></td>
<td>4 folders</td>
<td>Includes Judson Grenier’s oral history interview with John Victor Carson, newscippings, and a photocopy of a railway pass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Del Amo 1900-1976</strong></td>
<td>7 folders</td>
<td>Contained in the subseries are tax records, audits, correspondence, newscippings, and a paper on the Del Amo Family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dominguez 1906, 1984</strong></td>
<td>14 folders</td>
<td>This subseries contains information regarding the Juan Jose, Jose Cristobal, Manuel and his wife Maria Engracia, and Guadalupe, Manuel’s only unmarried daughter. Materials include copies of the wills of the family members and term papers on Manuel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Box 2, Folder 12** | Articles and newscippings 1965-1985 |
**Box 2, Folder 13** | “A Tribute to the Dominguez Family for the 150th Anniversary of the Building of Their Home and Almost 200 Years on the Rancho San Pedro 1826-1976” by Evelyn M. Stanford 1976 |
**Box 2, Folder 14** | Carson, George: L.A. Terminal Railway Pass, 1899, copy n.d. |
**Box 2, Folder 16** | Carson, George Earl birthday press release 1991 |
**Box 2, Folder 17** | Newscippings 1906-1969 |
**Box 2, Folder 18** | "An Anniversary" 1976 |
**Box 2, Folder 19** | Del Amo, Dr. Gregorio, Correspondence 1900, 1914 |
**Box 2, Folder 20** | Tax receipt, Redondo Beach 1900 |
**Box 2, Folder 21** | Audit report 1922 |
**Box 2, Folder 22** | Home, Westchester Place, copy n.d. |
**Box 2, Folder 23** | Susana and Gregorio, Obituaries 1931, 1941 |
**Box 2, Folder 24** | Newscippings 1960-1967 |
**Box 2, Folder 25** | Cattle brands of Nasario, Pedro, Maria Engracia, Guadalupe, and Dolores n.d. |
**Box 2, Folder 26** | Guadalupe: Cancelled check 1906 |
| Box 2, Folder 27 | Guadalupe: Correspondence, 1897, copy n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 28 | Guadalupe: Declaration of Trust, 1910, copy n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 29 | Jose Cristobal - "The Children of Jose Cristobal" n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 30 | Jose Cristobal - will, transcript copy, 1825 n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 31 | Juan Jose - will, transcript copy, 1827 n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 32 | Manuel - "Factors in the Survival of Manuel Dominguez," Anthony Armendariz 1984 |
| Box 2, Folder 33 | Manuel - Untitled term paper on the life of Manuel Dominguez n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 34 | Manuel - Interrogatory, transcript n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 35 | Manuel - will, transcript, 1882 n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 36 | Manuel - land holdings, sales, and partitions n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 37 | Maria Engracia: Letter of Administration of Will, 1883, copy n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 38 | Maria de los Reyes Ybanez - will, transcript, 1834 n.d. |

**Francis 1933-1934**

- **Physical Description:** 3 folders
- **Scope and Content Note**
  This subseries contains correspondence, an Internal Revenue Service petition and a copy of Maria Jesus de los Reyes Dominguez de Francis' obituaries.

| Box 2, Folder 39 | Correspondence, 1909-1913, copies n.d. |
| Box 2, Folder 40 | IRS Petition 1934 |
| Box 2, Folder 41 | Obituaries 1933 |

**Watson 1924-1988**

- **Physical Description:** 4 folders
- **Scope and Content Note**
  This subseries contains correspondence, newsclippings, and obituaries of Watson family members, including Lavena Watson Brown and Susan Watson Lacayo.

| Box 2, Folder 42 | Brown, Lavena correspondence 1926-1927 |
| Box 2, Folder 43 | Lacayo, Susan correspondence and auction catalog 1941, 1988 |
| Box 2, Folder 44 | Maria Dolores obituary 1924 |
| Box 2, Folder 45 | Newsclipping 1987 |

**Dominguez Companies 1955-1995**

- **Physical Description:** 3 folders
- **Scope and Content Note**
  This series covers two of the many companies the Dominguez families founded and maintained: the Dominguez Water Corporation and the Dominguez Estate Company. Materials include newsclippings, brochures, and newsletters.

| Box 2, Folder 46 | Dominguez Water Corporation - brochures and newsclippings 1955, 1984 |
| Box 2, Folder 47 | Dominguez Estate Company - brochures and newsclippings 1959, 1963, 1967 |