



The Wittliff Collections

Guide to the Lonesome Dove Television Miniseries Production Archives

1985-1990

Collection SWWC-111

Descriptive Summary

Creators:	Wittliff, William D. (1940-2019); McMurtry, Larry; Ramsey, Van Broughton; White, Cary
Title:	Guide to the Lonesome Dove Television Miniseries Production Archives
Dates:	1985-1990
Abstract:	The <i>Lonesome Dove</i> archive contains scripts, memos, letters, notes, production forms, set and costume sketches, set blueprints, photographs, props, costumes, videotapes, audiocassettes and a laser videodisc. The material details every aspect of the production--from the writing of the teleplay through the budgeting, casting, planning, scheduling, filming, publicity and distribution.
Identification:	SWWC-111
Extent:	78 Linear Feet, 21 boxes
Language:	English
Repository:	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

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Production History

The *Lonesome Dove* miniseries originated from a chance meeting between Motown Productions president Suzanne de Passe and author Larry McMurtry in which de Passe asked McMurtry about his current project. McMurtry subsequently sent a copy of his unpublished *Lonesome Dove* to de Passe who quickly snatched up the film rights. The book was published in June 1985, and went on to spend 20 weeks on the New York Times best seller list. It received the 1985 Pulitzer Prize, the Spin Award for Best Western Novel of 1985 and the Texas Institute of Letters Jesse Jones Award for Best Fictional Book.

Lonesome Dove originated as a screenplay called *The Streets of Laredo*, which was intended as a vehicle for John Wayne, Henry Fonda and James Stewart. The 288-page script was written by McMurtry with Peter Bogdanovich in 1972. The project failed to materialize and McMurtry eventually chose to expand the idea into a sprawling 843-page novel eulogizing the Texas past, both factual and mythical, as represented by the horseman and cowboy. Motown Productions contracted with CBS Television to air the western as an eight-hour miniseries. Bill Wittliff, who had scripted the westerns *Barbarosa* (1982) and *Red Headed Stranger* (1986), was signed to write the teleplay. He also served as Executive Producer. Filming began March 1988 in Austin, Texas; moved to Del Rio, Texas in April and then to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in May, wrapping in July after 88 days of shooting. The film, directed by Simon Wincer and starring Robert Duvall, Tommy Lee Jones, Robert Urich, Danny Glover, Anjelica Huston and Diane Lane, aired on CBS in February 1989 to high ratings and critical acclaim.

Among *Lonesome Dove*'s many awards were seven Emmys for directing, sound editing, sound mixing, makeup, costume, music, and casting. It also received a Peabody Award and two Golden Globe Awards, one for best miniseries and one to Robert Duvall for best actor in a miniseries. Duvall, already a celebrated actor noted for a distinguished career, reported that the character Gus was a favorite role, and he remarked "When I was doing *The Godfather*, I knew we were doing something big. When I was doing *Lonesome Dove*, I got the same feeling. I've only felt that a couple of times in my life." (*New York Tribune*, Feb 6, 1989) Bill Wittliff reminisced "sometimes something just takes over and is a good example of that. I think every

element works, from cast to crew to wardrobe to Jerry [sic] White's art design and the production design . . . it was just a beautiful combination of enormously talented people . . . [and] the final project was larger than all the people." (*Austin Chronicle*, March 11, 1994)

Scope and Contents

The *Lonesome Dove* archive contains scripts, memos, letters, notes, production forms, set and costume sketches, set blueprints, photographs, props, costumes, videotapes, audiocassettes and a laser videodisc. The material details every aspect of the production--from the writing of the teleplay through the budgeting, casting, planning, scheduling, filming, publicity and distribution.

The archival arrangement follows the order of production and is organized into eleven series: 1. Story and Script 2. Producer's Unit 3. Production Staff 4. Casting 5. Art 6. Wardrobe 7. Production 8. Post-Production 9. Distribution 10. Publicity 11. Congratulations and Awards.

Of particular interest are the various drafts of the screenplay, the almost complete set of production records, the dailies, the set designs, the story boards, the props, the costumes, the costume research notes and Bill Wittliff's photography of the cast and filming.

The archive was donated through Bill Wittliff. Some material was sent to Wittliff for inclusion in the collection by others--producer Suzanne de Passe; storyboard artist Michael Peal; property master Eric Williams; actors Tim Scott, Glenne Headly and Anjelica Huston; production designers Cary White and John Frick; costume designer Van Broughton Ramsey; and composer Basil Poledouris. The remainder of the archive belonged to Wittliff as writer and producer.

Administrative Information

Physical Location

Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice is required for use:

<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/makearesearchappointment.html>.

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Bill Wittliff since 1988.

Preferred Citation

Lonesome Dove Television Miniseries Production Archives, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University.

Conditions Governing Use

Materials from the Wittliff Collections are made available for use in research, teaching, and private study. The user assumes responsibility for determining copyright status, obtaining permission to publish, and abiding by U.S. copyright laws.

<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/visit/policies/publication.html>

Controlled Access Headings

- Lonesome Dove (Television program)
- Television -- Production and direction
- Television mini-series
- Television scripts

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Story and Script, 1986-1988

Box Folder

1 1-9 Typescript of novel by Larry McMurtry

Box Folder

2 1-5 Typescript of novel by Larry McMurtry

2 6 de Passe letter re: audiotapes, October 1, 1986

2 Bill Wittliff's annotated hardback and soft back copies of Lonesome Dove

Part I, "Leaving"

3 1 Notes and partial rough draft, December 1986

3 2 First rough draft, January 14, 1987

3 3-5 First draft, January 24, 1987

3 6-8 Polished draft, March 8-9, 1987

Part II, "On the Trail"

3 9 Notes and rough draft, January 27-February 6, 1987

4 1 Typescript of first rough draft, February 6, 1987

4 2 Rewrite of first rough draft, February 9-18, 1987

4 3-4 First draft, February 18, 1987

4 5 Part I retyping of March 9, 1987 draft and Part II draft, February 18, 1987

Part III, "The Plains"

4 6 Notes

4 7-9 Rough draft, April 10-May 1, 1987

4 10 Rewrite of rough May 1 draft, May 19-May 24, 1987

5 1-2 First draft, May 25, 1987

5 3 Retyping of first draft, June 18, 1987

Part IV, "Return"

5 4 Notes

5 5-7 Rough draft, July 6-29, 1987

5 8 Rewrite of rough draft, August 5-15, 1987

5 9 First draft, August 15, 1987

6 1 First draft, August 15, 1987

Completed Script

- 6 2-7 First full script with changes
 6 8 Production polish, March 3, 1988
- 7 3 Corrected pages for polish and blue script revisions, March 4, 1988
 7 4-5 Shooting Script with blue pages, March 4, 1988
 7 6 Final changes made, pink pages, June 4, 1988
 7 7-8 Final draft, Part I & II (title page autographed), June 4, 1988
- 8 1-2 Final draft, Part III & IV

Series II: Producer's Unit, 1987-1991

- 8 3-5 Wittliff, Executive Producer, letters, bills, etc., 1987-1991
 8 6 Connie Todd memos
 8 7 Connie Todd period music research file
 8 8 Stationery for Hat Creek Outfit Co.
 8 9 Producer's memos, September 1987-January 1990

Series III: Production Staff, 1987-1988

- 8 10 Production Manager's memos, August 1987-March 1988
- 9 1 Production Manager's memos, April-July 1988
 9 2 Budget, inventories
 9 3-5 Breakdown Sheets
 9 6 Production Board
 9 7 Deal memos, contracts, March-May 1988
 9 8-9 Shooting Schedules, February-May 1988
- 10 1 Shooting Schedules, June 1988
 10 2 Day-Out-of-Days, March-May 1988
 10 3 One-Line Schedules, February-April 1988
 10 4 Cast and Crew Lists, March-June 1988
 10 5 Movement Lists, February-July 1988
 10 6 Call Sheets (Wittliff's copy), March-July 1988
 10 7 Daily Production Reports (Wittliff's copy), May-June 1988
 10 8-10 Call Sheets, March 17-June 15, 1988
- 11 1 Call Sheets, June 16-July 2, 1988
 11 2 Call Sheets, 2nd Unit, April 26-June 8, 1988
 11 3-4 Daily Production Reports, March 8-July 5, 1988
 11 5 Daily Production Reports, 2nd Unit, April 25-June 9, 1988

- 11 6 Actors Production Time Reports, March 3-July 5, 1988
11 7-10 Continuity Script

12 1 Script Supervisor's production records
12 2 Script Supervisor's daily production report, April 7-July 2, 1988

Series IV: Casting, 1988

- 12 3 Casting memos, February-April 1988

Series V: Art, 1988

- 12 4 Set drawings (see also Box 22 – Oversized Material)
12 5-6 Storyboard roughs
12 7 Storyboards (copies)
12 8-14 Property master's continuity photos
13 1-11 Property master's continuity photos

13 12-13 Props and memorabilia

Series VI: Wardrobe, 1988

- 13 14 Costume drawings and research
14 1-2 Costume drawings and research

14 3-5 Wardrobe notebook, forms and notes

15 1-4 Wardrobe Volume I
15 5-7 Wardrobe Volume II

16 1-2 Wardrobe Volume III
16 3-4 Wardrobe Volume IV

Series VII: Production, 1988

- 16 5 Glenne Headly's (Elmira) annotated script
16 6 Photographs of production taken by Bill Wittliff
16 7 Dailies index
16 8 Additional scenes videotape

17 1 Videotape of a June 1988 day on the set

Series VIII: Post-Production, 1988-1989

- 17 2 Post-production budget and cost reports

17	3-4	Cutting Notes, August-December 1988
17	5	Automated Dialogue Replacement (ADR) sheets
17	6	Main titles and final credits
17	7-9	Music
18	1	Music

Series IX: Distribution, 1988-1989

18	2-3	Quintex
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Series X: Publicity, 1986-1991

18	4	CBS in house promo
18	5	CBS Publicity, December 1986-February 1989
18	6-7	Clippings from CBS, March 8, 1989
19	1	Clippings from CBS, March 8, 1989
19	2-7	Articles, clippings, 1987-1989
20	1-2	Articles, clippings, 1987-1989
20	3	CBS promo videotape, January 18, 1991
20	4	The Making of Lonesome Dove videotape

Series XI: Congratulations and Awards, 1989-1990

21	1-2	Congratulatory letters, February 1989
21	3	Emmy, 1989
21	4	Golden Globe, 1990
21	5	Writer's Guild of America (WGA), March 1990
21	6	Peabody, March 1990
21	7	Cowboy Hall of Fame, March 1990

Series XII: Oversized Materials

22	Set designs and storyboards. Also includes the hand-drawn map outlining the route traveled
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