



# The Wittliff Collections

## Guide to the Donley Watt Papers 1970-2004

### Collection SWWC-104

#### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Watt, Donley
<b>Title:</b>	Guide to the Donley Watt Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1970-2004
<b>Abstract:</b>	Correspondence, drafts, notes, research, and reviews from novelist Donley Watt. The collection is arranged into the following five series: Personal Papers, 1970-2004; Novels 1994-2004; Short Fiction; Other Writings; Media.
<b>Identification:</b>	SWWC-104
<b>Extent:</b>	7.5 Linear Feet, 18 boxes
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Repository:</b>	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

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## Biographical Notes

Writer Donley Watt was born in 1940, and he arrived in Athens in East Texas at the age of five. After graduating Athens High School, Watt attended Henderson County Junior College for one year then moved on to the University of Texas, where he received his Masters in History. In 1973, Watt helped found Austin Community College and was its dean for a few years. In his life, Watt has been a land man in the oil business, owned an herb farm, and owned a contemporary art gallery. In 1987, Watt decided to go back to school to achieve his childhood dream and become a writer. In the early 1990s, Donley Watt lived, traveled, and researched in Mexico and Guatemala. For six years, Watt was the writer in residence at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. e has also taught at Northern Arizona University and at the University of Arizona. Watt is the former vice-president of The Texas Institute of Letters. Currently he lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

*Can You Get There From Here?*, a collection of short stories, was published in September 1994, which won the Texas Institute of Letters' Stephen F. Turner Award for best first work of fiction. *The Journey of Hector Rabinal* (also published in 1994) was a finalist for a Western Writers of America Spur Award and translated in Spanish in 1995 by a publisher in Mexico City. *Haley, Texas 1959*, and 2 novellas followed in 1999. Watt then published *Reynolds* in 2002 and *Dancing with Lyndon* in 2004. He has also published numerous essays and reviews.

## Scope and Contents

The Donley Watt Papers span the years from 1970 to 2004. The collection includes correspondence, photographs, clippings, notes, drafts, and computer discs. The bulk of the papers is focused on the writings of his published works from 1994 to 2004: *Can You Get There From Here*; *The Journal of Hector Rabinal*; *Haley, Texas 1959*; *Reynolds*; and *Dancing with Lyndon*. Other materials in the collection concern Watt's short story ideas, essays, and reviews. Short story and essay titles often are repeated in Series III and Series IV. This follows the original arrangement of the collection by Donley Watt. There are five series in the collection: Personal Papers, 1970-2004; Novels, 1994-2004; Short Fiction; Other Writings; Media.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Conditions Governing Access**

Collection is open for research.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Donley Watt in 2004 and 2006.

### **Preferred Citation**

Donley Watt Papers, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University.

### **Physical Location**

Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice is required for use: .  
<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/makearesearchappointment.html>.

### **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**

- Authors, American -- Texas -- 20th century
- Books -- Reviews
- Fiction
- Teachers -- Texas

# Detailed Description of the Collection

## Series I: Personal Papers, 1970-2004

### Photographs

#### **Box Folder**

1	1	Various photographs including ( a trip to San Cristobel, historical family portrait and family pictures)
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### Correspondence, 1970-2004, undated

1	2	Correspondence, undated
1	3	Correspondence, 1970-1992
1	4	Correspondence, 1993-1995
1	5	Correspondence, 1996-1997
1	6	Correspondence, 1998-1999
1	7	Correspondence, 2000-2004
2	1	University Letters ( Southern Methodist University, Sul Ross State University, Texas Christian University, Southwest Texas State University [Texas State University])
2	2	Awards, Speeches, Employment
2	3	Specific Individuals (Busby, Scott, Graves, John, Malone, Paul, Root, Bill, Shearer, Bill)

### Travel

2	4	Trip to San Cristobal, Mexico and other travels
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### Notes

2	5	Notes
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### Newspaper Clippings

2	6	Newspaper Clippings
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## Series II: Novels , 1994-2004

### Journey of Hector Rabinal, 1994

3	1	Correspondence
3	2	Book reviews and correspondence
3	3	Notes and drafts

Day of the Dead, 2002

3	4	Correspondence
3	5	"Durango"
3	6	Notes
3	7-10	Drafts
4		Drafts
5	1	Drafts

Reynolds, 2002

5	2	Correspondence
5	3	Reviews and promotional materials
5	4	Legal documents
5	5	Notes
5	6	Short story ideas
6	1	Short story ideas
6	2-5	Drafts – chapters
7	1	Complete draft
7	2	Complete draft, corrected, December 29, 1997
7	3	Complete draft, 1999
7	4	Complete draft, December 13, 2000
8	1	Complete draft, undated
8	2-5	Proofs, October 17, 2001
9	1-2	Proofs

Dancing with Lyndon, 2004

9	3	Correspondence
9	4	Book reviews
9	5	Notes
9	6-7	Drafts – chapters
10	1	Drafts – chapters
10	2	First draft of first 153 pages, July 2001
10	3	First complete draft
10	4	Second draft, undated
10	5	Second draft, August 24, 2001
11	1	Complete draft, June 28, 2001
11	2-3	Complete drafts, undated
11	4	Final draft, undated
11	5	Proofs, corrected, December 2003
12	1	Proofs, corrected, December 2003

12 2-3 Proofs, December 30, 2003

### Series III: Short Fiction

#### Story Ideas and Incomplete Stories

12	4	Story Ideas, First Short Story, "Bonnie"
12	5	Flying from "Sarah & Deanie" and "Girl Stories"
13	1	"A Home Game", "House of Smiles"
13	2	"Houston Antique Dealer Story", Prologue to "Charlie"
13	3	"Shooting Straight", "Waiting"
13	4	"Wish Me Luck"

#### Can You Get There From Here? [Short Story Collection], 1994

13	5	Correspondence
13	6	Clippings
13	7	"Caddo"
13	8	"Can You Get There From Here?"
14	1	"Disappearing"
14	2	"Ducks"
14	3	"A High Place"
14	4	"In the Mood"
14	5	"The Man Who Talked to Horses"
14	6	"Not Just Another Waltz"
14	7	"Waiting for a Good Day to Leave"
14	8	"The Way the Big World Is"
14	9-10	"The Way Things Happen"

#### Haley Texas 1959 [Novella Collection], 1999

15	1	Correspondence
15	2	Book reviews and promotional materials
15	3	Legal documents
15	4	Film adaptation
15	5	Notes
15	6	Dreaming Mexico
15	7	"Bazette"
15	8	"Books"
15	9	"Church"
15	10	"A Day or Two of Fiddling"
15	11	"Events (Celebrations)"
15	12	"Five Days Working"



15	13	"Food"
15	14	"Land"
15	15	"Living and Dying and Other Temptations"
16	1	"Moving On"
16	2	"Something Old, Something New, Something Black and White and Brown"
16	3	"Vices"
16	4	Notes, Drafts
16	5	Drafts
16	6	Proof (partial)
16	7	Damon – Drafts
16	8	Notes, Drafts
16	9-10	Drafts

## Series IV: Other Writings

### Essays

17	1	Books “not included in Haley TX 1959” God, Church and other Unfathomables, "An Innocent in a new Land" (with cover letter, July 6, 1995), "Primogeniture" (Published in Texas Observer June 1995), "A Silver Watch" (with note from author's daughter), "A Special Place" (3 copies), 1995
17	2	Chasing the Cantaloupe Man, “Dreaming Mexico and Other Mexico Essays”
17	3	Crossing the Border, “unpublished essay”
17	4	Dreaming Mexico and Other Mexico Essays
17	5	Junior's World “JR's World – Essay – ‘Graves 2’”
17	6	Mexessa (Night of the Nino) unpublished essay
17	7	My Father's Black Book “House Beautiful – unpublished essay” includes correspondence with Elaine Greene, 1999
17	8	The Texas Stream, with correspondence regarding the 1997 John Graves essay contest

### Poetry

17	9	Poetry A-Z Note: “Don Watt Poetry – some for a class at University of Arizona. Some early bad attempts – wrong genre for me.”
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Another Tuesday Night in Longview  
 The County Courthouse  
 From Sundays I Remember  
 Granite Jetty at Port Aransas  
 The Hawk  
 Hills of East Texas; East Texas Hills  
 History Lesson  
 Jealousy  
 Joe, edited  
 Letter to John  
 New York Letter Poem  
 Perpetual Motion Machine  
 Poems for Bill Zavatsky

Poets Never Die  
 A Short Visit to a Small Town After Thirty Years  
 Thibodaux, LA 1962  
 The Wasp  
 What Do You Expect in the Spring?  
 Why I am Not a Banker  
 Untitled

Reviews of Work by Other Authors, 1988-1995

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|----|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17 | 10 | Correspondence and Notes (Correspondence: Bob Compton April 25, 1988, May 3, 1988; Notes: Books to be Reviewed 1990, with note from Bob [Compton], 1992-1993; 1995 with notes and packing slip), 1988-1995, undated                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 17 | 11 | <p>Reviews, A-L</p> <p>Abbey, Edward. A Voice Crying in the Wilderness<br/>             Alvaraez, Julia. How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents<br/>             Babb, Sanora. Whose Names are Unknown<br/>             Baker, Kevin. Dreamland<br/>             Barthelme, Frederick. Natural Selection<br/>             Bragg, Rick. All Over but the Shoutin'<br/>             Bukoski, Anthony. Time Between Trains<br/>             Cameron, Carey. Daddy Boy<br/>             Colbert, David (ed.) Eyewitness to the American West<br/>             Crews, Harry. Scar Lover<br/>             Crumley, James The Muddy Fork &amp; Other Things<br/>             Draper, Robert. Hadrian's Walls<br/>             Ely, Scott. Pit Bull<br/>             Erdrich, Louise. Tracks<br/>             Garro, Elena. First Love &amp; Look for My Obituary: Two Novellas<br/>             Heinemann, Larry. Cooler by the Lake<br/>             Kimball, Michael. The Way the Family Got Away<br/>             Lacy, Allen (ed.) The American Gardener. A Sampler and Stein, Sara B. My Weeds, A Gardener's Botany<br/>             Lott, Brett, Reed's Beach</p> |
| 17 | 12 | <p>Reviews, M-Z</p> <p>Martin, Lee. From Our House<br/>             Matthiessen, Peter. Killing Mister Watson<br/>             McAfee, John P. Slow Walk in a Sad Rain<br/>             Mora, Pat. House of Houses<br/>             Navas, Deborah Things We Lost, Gave Away, Bought High and Sold Low<br/>             Poverman, C.E. On the Edge<br/>             Powers, Richard. Prisoner's Dilemma<br/>             Reynolds, Clay. Monuments<br/>             Shepard, Sam. Cruising Paradise<br/>             Silko, Leslie Marmon, Almanac of the Dead<br/>             Smith, C.W. Understanding Women<br/>             Stern, Daniel. In the Country of the Young<br/>             Taylor, Benjamin, Tales Out of School<br/>             Wilkinson, D. Marion. The Empty Quarter</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## **Series V: Media, 2003, undated**

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|----|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18 | 1 | VHS Video: "Donley Watt, October 7, 2003. Craft Lecture, 11 a.m C.W.W. Reading, 7 pm Shirley Recital Hall.", October 7, 2003 |
| 18 | 2 | Book chapters on 3 ½ ", 2 HD Floppies (27)                                                                                   |