

Frederick D. Glidden papers, 1933-1976

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Glidden, Frederick Dilley, 1908-1975
Title	Frederick D. Glidden papers
Dates	1933-1976 (inclusive) 1933 1976
Quantity	18.5 linear feet, (33 containers)
Collection Number	Coll 148
Summary	Frederick D. Glidden was one of America's foremost western authors. Under the pen name Luke Short he published several novels, novelettes and articles. He also wrote a number of screenplays and teleplays. This collection documents his writing career and publishing record through manuscripts, correspondence, reviews, magazines, tearsheets and personal documents.
Repository	University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives. UO Libraries--SCUA 1299 University of Oregon Eugene OR 97403-1299 Telephone: 541-346-3068 spcarref@uoregon.edu
Access Restrictions	Collection is open to the public. Collection must be used in Special Collections and University Archives Reading Room. Collection or parts of collection may be stored offsite. Please contact Special Collections and University Archives in advance of your visit to allow for transportation time.
Additional Reference Guides	See the Current Collection Guide for detailed description and requesting options.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Frederick Dilley Glidden was born in Kewanee, Illinois in 1908. A graduate of the University of Missouri, he began his early career as a general reporter for a series of Midwest daily newspapers. Not lasting long at any of the papers, the Depression found him trapping for furs in Canada. He married Florence Elder in 1934 and, during the next few years had three children.

Glidden's writing career began in earnest when he started submitting western stories to pulp magazines while living in Santa Fe. Once he took on an agent, Marguerite Harper, his work began to sell. It is not clear who came up with the pen name Like Short- Ms. Harper or Glidden himself- but apparently

enough of his audience appreciated this accolade to the real-life man, and sales were not hindered. By the end of the 1930's he had turned out fourteen novels and numerous short stories.

The 1940's proved to be the most profitable decade in Glidden's career. For the first few years, he worked as a scriptwriter in Hollywood. A number of his books were made into movies, with stars such as Joel McCrea, Randolph Scott, and Robert Mitchum in the lead roles. He signed contracts with paperback publishers, generating a lifetime total of over 26 million copies in sales. Toward the end of the decade, Glidden broke out of the pulps and into the slicks, such as Collier's and Saturday Evening Post. Between the two magazines, nine Luke Short novels were serialized.

During the next twenty years or so, Glidden tried a series of different ventures, none very successful. He wrote more screenplays in hopes of landing more movies, but these were rejected. The thorium company he founded proved to be a bust. There were several cases of plagiarism of his stories by others, none of which ever saw the courtroom. He also tried other genres of writing, but received little encouragement. Residing in Aspen, he came to love Colorado's natural beauty and became active in civic affairs.

His writing came full circle when, by the end of the 1960's, he had returned to writing westerns on a full-time basis and produced six novels. Despite rapidly deteriorating eye sight, Glidden continued to write, but discovered that he had throat cancer. He died in August, 1975.

Source: Gale, Robert L. Luke Short. Twayne's United States Authors Series, 1981.

Content Description

The Papers of Frederick D. Glidden, one of America's foremost western writers known internationally by his pen name Luke Short, document his writing career and publishing record. Included in the collection are correspondence, personal documents, reviews, manuscripts, teleplays, tearsheets, pulp magazines containing his stories and books.

Correspondence in the collection is arranged alphabetically by person or organization. The largest segment is that with his agent Marguerite Harper, providing a bio-bibliography of Luke Short, as well as a history of the publishing business as applied to westerns. One file of notable interest is that of the Western Writers of America, Inc. It concerns the plagiarism of the Luke Short story "Ramrod" (1943) by Gladwell Richardson in 1951. Richardson was published under the pseudonym John Winslowe, calling the plagiarized piece "Short Trigger Man."

Novels, novelettes, short stories, non-fiction articles, screenplays, and unpublished teleplays comprise the manuscript series. They are arranged alphabetically by title. Glidden dictated his stores and the typed copy, with corrections, represents the original manuscript (with the exception of one novel written in long-hand). A selection of untitled manuscripts, identified only by the first line, completes the series. The teleplays that follow were all produced by Zane Grey Theatre.

The tearsheets represent the first time a particular story was published. Appearing serially in magazines such as the Saturday Evening Post and Collier's, many were subsequently published as books, primarily in paperback form, or in anthologies. Additionally, some were published in pulp magazines and several eventually appears in comic book form. The tearsheets, pulp-printed stories, and books are all arranged alphabetically by title.

Administrative Information

Detailed Description of the Collection

Description

[Guide to the Frederick D. Glidden Papers](#)

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

American literature--20th century

Authors, American--20th century

Western films--United States

Western television programs--United States

Personal Names :

Harper, Marguerite

Short, Luke, 1908-1975

Form or Genre Terms :

Carbon copies

Screenplays

Western stories

Finding aid prepared by Linda Hodgkin and Erick Arenas
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