



The Robertsons, the Sutherlands, and the Making of Texas

Anne H. Sutherland

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All Texans, or their ancestors, started as something else. The families that came here molded the state and were molded by it. Anne H. Sutherland explores just how the experiences of two of the early Anglo land-grant families—the Robertsons and the Sutherlands—shaped Texas events and how they handed down those experiences from one generation to another, transforming two Scots-Irish families into what in hindsight we have branded Anglo-Texans. The story of these two pioneering families, told through their letters, poems, diaries, and oral histories, embodies western expansion and political upheaval. Settling in central and southeast Texas, these families struggled to build a new Texas and make a life for their children. The Texas revolution and the Civil War acted as catalysts for the emergence of their Texan identity. A unique blend of family and Texas history, Sutherland's *Made in Texas: A Family Tale* positions personal stories as windows of insight onto Texan identity. She peels back the layers of family tradition and textbook history to show how her forebears experienced the transforming events of the settlement of Texas and its war for independence. As new generations emerged, each contributed its own anecdotes and historical context from the time period. By placing the families within Texas history, Sutherland effectively and innovatively traces identity from the early nineteenth century to today. As settlers in the western wilderness, the Robertsons, the Sutherlands, and others like them actively shaped Texas, even as they were changed themselves.

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