



# **Winifred Sanford: The Life and Times of a Texas Writer (Southwestern Writers Collection Series, Wittliff Collections)**

*Betty Holland Wiesepape*

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# Winifred Sanford: The Life and Times of a Texas Writer (Southwestern Writers Collection Series, Wittliff Collections)

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Winifred Sanford is generally regarded by critics as one of the best and most important early twentieth-century Texas women writers, despite publishing only a handful of short stories before slipping into relative obscurity. First championed by her mentor, H. L. Mencken, and published in his magazine, *The American Mercury*, many of Sanford's stories were set during the Texas oil boom of the 1920s and 1930s and offer a unique perspective on life in the boomtowns during that period. Four of her stories were listed in *The Best American Short Stories of 1926*.

Questioning the sudden end to Sanford's writing career, Wiesepape, a leading literary historian of Texas women writers, delved into the author's previously unexamined private papers and emerged with an insightful and revealing study that sheds light on both Sanford's abbreviated career and the domestic lives of women at the time. The first in-depth account of Sanford's life and work, Wiesepape's biography discusses Sanford's fiction through the sociohistorical contexts that shaped and inspired it. In addition, Wiesepape has included two previously unpublished stories as well as eighteen previously unpublished letters to Sanford from Mencken.

*Winifred Sanford* is an illuminating biography of one of the state's unsung literary jewels and an important and much-needed addition to the often overlooked field of Texas women's writing.

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