

Fifty-one essays and over 90 maps tell the story of how each of the 50 states in the Union became part of, and remained, one nation, indivisible, over a span of 172 years. From Delaware's entry in 1787 through Hawaii's joining in 1959, *The Uniting States* brings together the unique stories of each of the 50 United States' journey into statehood in a single reference work. Local, national, and international matters loom large in this unique look at America's continent-spanning transformation from isolated English colonies to 50 distinct states. From Delaware's entry in 1787 through Hawaii's joining in 1959, *The Uniting States* brings together the unique stories of each of the 50 United States' journey into statehood in a single reference work. Based on primary federal and state sources, each essay tells the real story of the people and the issues behind the debate for statehood. Contrary to popular opinion, statehood was not a done deal in many states. North Carolina and Rhode Island, original colonies, did not enter the Union easily, taking two and three years longer than the First State, Delaware. Conventions failed, votes for union failed. Iowans defeated statehood initiatives twice. Citizens of several states were not even given the opportunity to vote on their states' new constitutions. Hawaii had been a kingdom, Texas a nation, and Oklahoma, the territory promised by the federal government to be the new home of native Americans in perpetuity. All the basic issues of nationhood—land, boundaries, banking, money, taxes, religion, citizen rights, government, politics, security—were issues in the unifying states. Leading off with an overview of U.S. expansion, users are introduced to recurring themes such as colonial settlement, Indian removal, federal land policy, free labor versus slavery, and homesteading. Each state's unique odyssey from unorganized land, to organized territory, and, finally, to statehood is then amply described. Key local events and figures are highlighted in each state's eventual embrace into the Union, as are the national and global issues framing the wider political context of America's internal empire-building such as slavery, national defense, and access to natural resources. Each signed entry is divided by subheadings for easy topical access, and concludes with an extensive bibliography. The set provides over 90 maps, giving users clear, easy-to-use overviews of U.S. territorial growth. The set is fully indexed, and contains appendices and an extensive bibliography.

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