



America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink

By Kenneth M. Stampp

Oxford University Press. Paperback. Condition: New. 416 pages. Dimensions: 9.2in. x 6.1in. x 1.1in. It was a year packed with unsettling events. The Panic of 1857 closed every bank in New York City, ruined thousands of businesses, and caused widespread unemployment among industrial workers. The Mormons in Utah Territory threatened rebellion when federal troops approached with a non-Mormon governor to replace Brigham Young. The Supreme Court outraged northern Republicans and abolitionists with the Dred Scott decision (a breathtaking example of judicial activism). And when a proslavery minority in Kansas Territory tried to foist a proslavery constitution on a large antislavery majority, President Buchanan reneged on a crucial commitment and supported the minority, a disastrous miscalculation which ultimately split the Democratic party in two. In America in 1857, eminent American historian Kenneth Stampp offers a sweeping narrative of this eventful year, covering all the major crises while providing readers with a vivid portrait of America at mid-century. Stampp gives us a fascinating account of the attempt by William Walker and his band of filibusters to conquer Nicaragua and make it a slave state, of crime and corruption, and of street riots by urban gangs such as New York's Dead Rabbits and Bowery...



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