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Travel writing has always been intimately linked with the construction of American identity. Occupying the space between fact and fiction, it exposes cultural fault lines and reveals the changing desires and anxieties of both the traveller and the reading public. These specially-commissioned essays trace the journeys taken by writers from the pre-revolutionary period right up to the present. They examine a wide range of responses to the problems posed by landscapes found both at home and abroad, from the Mississippi and the Southwest to Europe and the Holy Land. Throughout, the contributors focus on the role played by travel writing in the definition and formulation of national identity, and consider the experiences of minority writers as well as canonical authors. This Companion forms an invaluable guide for students approaching this new, important and exciting subject for the first time