



# Along This Way: The Autobiography Of James Weldon Johnson

*James Weldon Johnson*

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## **Along This Way: The Autobiography Of James Weldon Johnson** James Weldon Johnson

Here is, to quote the eminent historian Nathan Irvin Huggins, “one of the finest American autobiographies written in this century.” Born in 1871 in Jacksonville, Florida, James Weldon Johnson began his career as a high-school principal. He went on to attain success as a songwriter on Broadway and as the compiler of the definitive *Book of American Negro Spirituals*. But he achieved one of his greatest triumphs in 1912, when, under a pseudonym, he published *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*—a classic novel about a musician who rejects his black roots, a novel that is still in print today in multiple paperback editions. Johnson went on to be, from 1920 to 1930, the first African-American head of the NAACP, fighting tirelessly for the passage of a federal anti-lynching law. His life story is that of a truly remarkable man who triumphed over a system of institutionalized racism to become one of black America’s leading educators, men of letters, and reformers.

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