



"Lift Every Voice And Sing"

*Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.*

*Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.*

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

Written by James Weldon Johnson and set to music by his brother, Rosamond, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" was known for decades as the Negro National Anthem. It was first performed on January 12, 1900 by 500 school children at a celebration for Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

In the years that followed the school children continued to sing the Anthem. And when some of them became teachers, they taught it to their pupils. In less than twenty years, the moving

words and stirring music of this Anthem were being sung throughout the South, as well as other parts of the country.

Today it still speaks so eloquently of hope, promise and perseverance. R.J. Reynolds salutes and supports African Americans in their quest for a bright future.

R.J. Reynolds