



# **The Works of James M. Whitfield: America and Other Writings by a Nineteenth-Century African American Poet**

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In this comprehensive volume of the collected writings of James Monroe Whitfield (1822-71), Robert S. Levine and Ivy G. Wilson restore this African American poet, abolitionist, and intellectual to his rightful place in the arts and politics of the nineteenth-century United States.

Whitfield's works, including poems from his celebrated *America and Other Poems* (1853), were printed in influential journals and newspapers, such as Frederick Douglass's *The North Star*. A champion of the black emigration movement during the 1850s, Whitfield was embraced by African Americans as a black nationalist bard when he moved from his longtime home in Buffalo, New York, to California in the early 1860s. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, his reputation had faded.

For this volume, Levine and Wilson gathered and annotated all of Whitfield's extant writings, both poetry and prose, and many pieces are reprinted here for the first time since their original publication. In their thorough introduction, the editors situate Whitfield in relation to key debates on black nationalism in African American culture, underscoring the importance of poetry and periodical culture to black writing during the period.

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