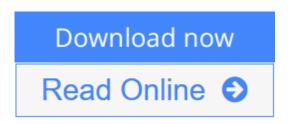


# Black Titan: A.G. Gaston and the Making of a Black American Millionaire

By Carol Jenkins, Elizabeth Gardner Hines



#### **Black Titan: A.G. Gaston and the Making of a Black American Millionaire** By Carol Jenkins, Elizabeth Gardner Hines

The grandson of slaves, born into poverty in 1892 in the Deep South, A. G. Gaston died more than a century later with a fortune worth well over \$130 million and a business empire spanning communications, real estate, and insurance. Gaston was, by any measure, a heroic figure whose wealth and influence bore comparison to J. P. Morgan and Andrew Carnegie. Here, for the first time, is the story of the life of this extraordinary pioneer, told by his niece and grandniece, the award-winning television journalist Carol Jenkins and her daughter Elizabeth Gardner Hines.

Born at a time when the bitter legacy of slavery and Reconstruction still poisoned the lives of black Americans, Gaston was determined to make a difference for himself and his people. His first job, after serving in the celebrated all-black regiment during World War I, bound him to the near-slavery of an Alabama coal mine—but even here Gaston saw not only hope but opportunity. He launched a business selling lunches to fellow miners, soon established a rudimentary bank—and from then on there was no stopping him. A kind of black Horatio Alger, Gaston let a single, powerful question be his guide: *What do our people need now?* His success flowed from an uncanny genius for knowing the answer.

Combining rich family lore with a deep knowledge of American social and economic history, Carol Jenkins and Elizabeth Hines unfold Gaston's success story against the backdrop of a century of crushing racial hatred and bigotry. Gaston not only survived the hardships of being black during the Depression, he flourished, and by the 1950s he was ruling a Birmingham-based business empire. When the movement for civil rights swept through the South in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Gaston provided critical financial support to many activists.

At the time of his death in 1996, A. G. Gaston was one of the wealthiest black men in America, if not *the* wealthiest. But his legacy extended far beyond the monetary. He was a man who had proved it was possible to overcome staggering odds and make a place for himself as a leader, a captain of industry, and a farsighted philanthropist. Writing with grace and power, Jenkins and Hines bring their distinguished ancestor fully to life in the pages of this book. *Black Titan* is the story of a man who created his own future—and in the process, blazed a future for all black businesspeople in America.

From the Hardcover edition.

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

"No library of American business achievement is complete without the story of Arthur G. Gaston. . . . *Black Titan* is a long overdue contribution to the recording of not just black history, but American history." —EARL G. GRAVES SR. Chairman and CEO, Earl G. Graves Ltd.

Founder and Publisher, *Black Enterprise* magazine Author of *How to Succeed in Business Without Being White: Straight Talk on Making It in America* 

"A. G. Gaston was there first. He succeeded when the odds seemed insurmountable. This important book traces his incredible life, from coal miner to millionaire. It is full of lessons for anyone looking to succeed in today's business world."

---ROBERT JOHNSON CEO, Black Entertainment Television, Inc.

"It was my privilege to meet A. G. Gaston in Birmingham, Alabama, during the early 1970s. I was greatly inspired by his unique entrepreneurial vision and passionate belief in economic self-sufficiency.... This book should be read by every entrepreneur."

—BYRON LEWIS Chairman, Uniworld Group

#### From the Hardcover edition.

#### From the Inside Flap

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From the Back Cover

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#### John Householder:

Reading can called imagination hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book especially book entitled Black Titan: A.G. Gaston and the Making of a Black American Millionaire your mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe unidentified for but surely can become your mind friends. Imaging each word written in a reserve then become one contact form conclusion and explanation in which maybe you never get just before. The Black Titan: A.G. Gaston and the Making of a Black American Millionaire giving you another experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful info for your better life with this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern at this point is your body and mind will probably be pleased when you are finished reading it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

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