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Hey, Charleston!: The True Story Of The Jenkins Orphanage Band (Carolrhoda Picture Books)



Synopsis

What happened when a former slave took beat-up old instruments and gave them to a bunch of orphans? Thousands of futures got a little brighter and a great American art form was born. In 1891, Reverend Daniel Joseph Jenkins opened his orphanage in Charleston, South Carolina. He soon had hundreds of children and needed a way to support them. Jenkins asked townspeople to donate old band instruments—some of which had last played in the hands of Confederate soldiers in the Civil War. He found teachers to show the kids how to play. Soon the orphanage had a band. And what a band it was. The Jenkins Orphanage Band caused a sensation on the streets of Charleston. People called the band's style of music "rag"—a rhythm inspired by the African American people who lived on the South Carolina and Georgia coast. The children performed as far away as Paris and London, and they earned enough money to support the orphanage that still exists today. They also helped launch the music we now know as jazz. Hey, Charleston! is the story of the kind man who gave America "some rag" and so much more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A Wonderful and beautifully illustrated book about Rev. Daniel Joseph Jenkins, the man, and his phenomenal accomplishments as the originator of the Jenkins Orphanage. I recommend this book

be added to all Black home libraries.

Interesting history

Reverend Daniel Joseph Jenkins peered through the open door of a boxcar. A small group of barefoot boys huddled together as the moonlight lit up the sky. If he listened closely he could have probably heard their stomachs growling and their *teeth chattering* from the cold. *A one-time orphan himself*, there was only one place to take the boys and that was to his church. Reverend Jenkins plied those tummies with *hot soup* and gave them *warm blankets and a place to sleep*. The church door kept opening and anxious faces looked toward him for help. A small church was not enough room, but when he asked the town he soon had a warehouse and *they gave him a hundred dollars besides*. *Angry voices emanated from a nearby prison*, but under Reverend Jenkins's direction the orphans sang to drown them out. There were musical instruments left over from the Civil War and when he asked the people of Charleston for them, they came. Brass, percussion, and woodwinds came through the doors and the Jenkins Orphanage Band flourished because teachers weren't far behind. Many of the *orphans were descended from the Geechee or Gullah people* and the band danced as the notes flowed into the air. When they played people would ask, *"Give us some rag!"* More money was needed so the band would head to New York. Would they make more money there than on the streets of Charleston? This is an amazingly interesting story of the Jenkins Orphanage Band young readers will love. The book is set up in a picture book format, but the storyline is detailed enough to pull in all kinds of readers from the reluctant to the confident and beyond. Of course the orphans would dance and the imitators were soon dancing none other than the Charleston, a wildly popular dance in the 1920s on. The vibrant artwork has an aura that launches the reader into the distant past to watch the young orphans grow into awe-inspiring musicians and dancers. In the back of the book is an author's note giving more information about the band and a selected bibliography. This book courtesy of the author.

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Carolina. He soon had hundreds of children and needed a way to support them. Jenkins asked townspeople to donate old band instruments--some of which had last played in the hands of Confederate soldiers in the Civil War. He found teachers to show the kids how to play. Soon the orphanage had a band. And what a band it was. The Jenkins Orphanage Band caused a sensation on the streets of Charleston. People called the band's style of music "rag"--a rhythm inspired by the African-American people who lived on the South Carolina and Georgia coast. The children performed as far away as Paris and London, and they earned enough money to support the orphanage that still exists today. They also helped launch the music we now know as jazz. Hey, Charleston! is the story of the kind man who gave America "some rag" and so much more."A very informative and engaging read geared for elementary and middle schoolers but certainly interesting and entertaining enough for adults as well with beautifully talented illustrations. An important read for any classroom with an excellent example of the age old saying "turning something into nothing" or turning bad into good---a theme worth repeating over and over again for all to learn and live by.

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