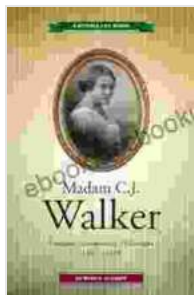


# Madam C.J. Walker: A Trailblazing Entrepreneur Who Changed the Face of Beauty and Commerce



Madam C.J. Walker was an extraordinary woman who defied the odds and became one of the most successful entrepreneurs and philanthropists in

American history. Born Sarah Breedlove in 1867 to former slaves, she overcame poverty, racism, and sexism to build a multi-million dollar empire. Her story is an inspiring testament to the power of perseverance, determination, and the belief in oneself.



## Madam C.J. Walker: Inventor, Entrepreneur, Millionaire (A Notable Life Book 1)

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1529 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 28 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported



### Early Life and Struggles

Sarah Breedlove was born in Delta, Louisiana, the daughter of Owen and Minerva Breedlove, who had been enslaved until the end of the Civil War. She was one of six children, and her early life was marked by poverty and hardship. Her parents struggled to make a living as sharecroppers, and Sarah was forced to work in the fields from a young age.

In 1888, Sarah married Moses McWilliams, a sharecropper, and they had one daughter, Lelia. However, tragedy struck early on when Moses died just a few years later, leaving Sarah widowed and struggling to support herself and her daughter. Determined to make a better life for herself and her child, Sarah moved to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1887.

## **The Hair Care Empire**

In St. Louis, Sarah worked as a washerwoman and took on odd jobs to make ends meet. But her life took a dramatic turn in 1905 when she met Annie Minerva Turnbo Malone, a successful African American businesswoman who had developed a line of hair care products for Black women. Inspired by Malone's success, Sarah began experimenting with her own hair care formulas.

In 1906, she created her first product, a hair growth stimulant called "The Wonderful Hair Grower." The product was an instant success, and Sarah soon began selling it door-to-door. She later expanded her product line to include a range of shampoos, conditioners, and other hair care products.

In 1910, Sarah established the Madam C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company, which quickly became one of the most successful African American-owned businesses in the country. The company employed hundreds of people and manufactured a wide range of hair care products that were sold through a network of sales agents throughout the United States.

## **A Business Pioneer**

Madam Walker's business savvy was evident in her innovative marketing and sales strategies. She employed a team of sales agents, known as "Walker agents," who sold her products door-to-door and at hair salons and other businesses. She also established a network of beauty schools that trained women in hair care and sales techniques.

Madam Walker's success was not limited to the sale of her hair care products. She also invested in real estate, opened a hotel and bank, and

established a variety of charitable organizations. She was a vocal advocate for civil rights and women's suffrage, and she used her platform to speak out against racial injustice and discrimination.

## **Philanthropy and Activism**

Madam Walker was a generous philanthropist who supported a wide range of causes, including education, health care, and civil rights. She established the Madam C.J. Walker Home for the Elderly and the Madam C.J. Walker School for Girls, which provided educational opportunities for African American children.

She was also a strong supporter of the NAACP and other civil rights organizations. She used her voice and her financial resources to advocate for the rights of African Americans and to fight against racial discrimination. In 1919, she led a delegation of African American women to the Versailles Peace Conference to demand an end to lynching and the establishment of an international body to address racial discrimination.

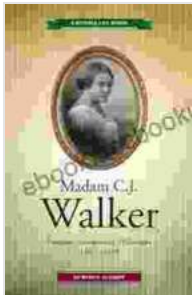
## **A Legacy of Success and Inspiration**

Madam C.J. Walker died in 1919 at the age of 51, but her legacy continues to inspire generations of entrepreneurs, philanthropists, and activists. She was a self-made millionaire who overcame tremendous obstacles to achieve success. She was a pioneer in the beauty industry and a trailblazer in the fight for civil rights. Her story is a reminder that anything is possible with hard work, determination, and a belief in oneself.

## **Additional Resources**

- Madam C.J. Walker Legacy Center

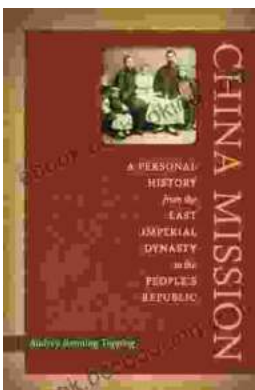
- Madam C.J. Walker: Business Woman and Civil Rights Activist
- Madam C.J. Walker
- Madam C.J. Walker: The First Black American Millionaire



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