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"Southern Road" is a book of poems, portraying Negro folk characters, the sufferings, endurance, laughter, and religion of the Negro on the levee, in the chaingang, in cottonfields, cabins and Northern cities. Wandering guitar players, railroad men, tellers of tall tales, dandies, truckmen, farmers, singers of spirituals and blues; these with many others form a composite picture of Negro life as the author knows it in the South. He employs, in many instances, a varied folk idiom and rhythms evolved from folk ballads, worksongs, and spirituals. Although the work of a young man of thirty, "Southern Road" is the result of nearly ten years of work. One section of the book is on personal themes. James Weldon Johnson, editor of "The Book of American Negro Poetry," writes: "More than any other poet Sterling Brown has made thematic use of Negro folk epics and ballads. He has really absorbed the spirit of this poetry, made it his own. He has, in fact, worked it into original and genuine poetry."

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