



The Five Negro Presidents: According to what White People Said They Were

By J. A. Rogers



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Historian Joel Augustus Rogers provides his evidence that there have been nineteenth- and twentieth-century presidents of the United States who had partial black ancestry, including Harding, Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln.



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Editorial Review

Review

“If America hadn't already invented the ‘one-drop rule’ by this time, Rogers most probably would have. He seems to have had some sort of miscegenation-meter, which he used to ‘out’ all sorts of ‘white’ people as having black ancestry. And while he erred on the side of excess as he peered into the proverbial woodpile, Rogers got it right an impressive amount of the time, especially considering when he was publishing his work. (At the other end of his collected works, though, stands *The Five Negro Presidents*, which, shall we say, would get the “Black History Wishful Thinking Prize,” hands down, were there such in existence.)”—Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *The Root*

About the Author

JOEL AUGUSTUS ROGERS (September 6, 1880–March 26, 1966) was a Jamaican-American author, journalist, and historian who contributed to the history of Africa and the African diaspora, especially the history of African Americans in the United States. His research spanned the academic fields of history, sociology and anthropology. He challenged prevailing ideas about race, demonstrated the connections between civilizations, and traced African achievements. He was one of the greatest popularizers of African history in the twentieth century. Rogers addresses issues such as the lack of scientific support for the idea of race, the lack of black history being told from a black person’s perspective, and the fact of intermarriage and unions among peoples throughout history.

A respected historian and gifted lecturer, Rogers was a close personal friend of the Harlem-based intellectual and activist Hubert Harrison. In the 1920s, Rogers worked as a journalist on the Pittsburgh Courier and the Chicago Enterprise, and he served as the first black foreign correspondent from the United States.

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