



Woodrow Wilson House Scholar Projects

Kyra Joostema

MY PROJECTS AS A SCHOLAR

**Black
History
Month
Project:**

Matthew Henson

Rosamond Johnson

James Weldon Johnson (x2)

**Education
Project:**

US occupation of Haiti

Written text and videos

Mentorship from WWH Board Member Ambassador Joel Danies

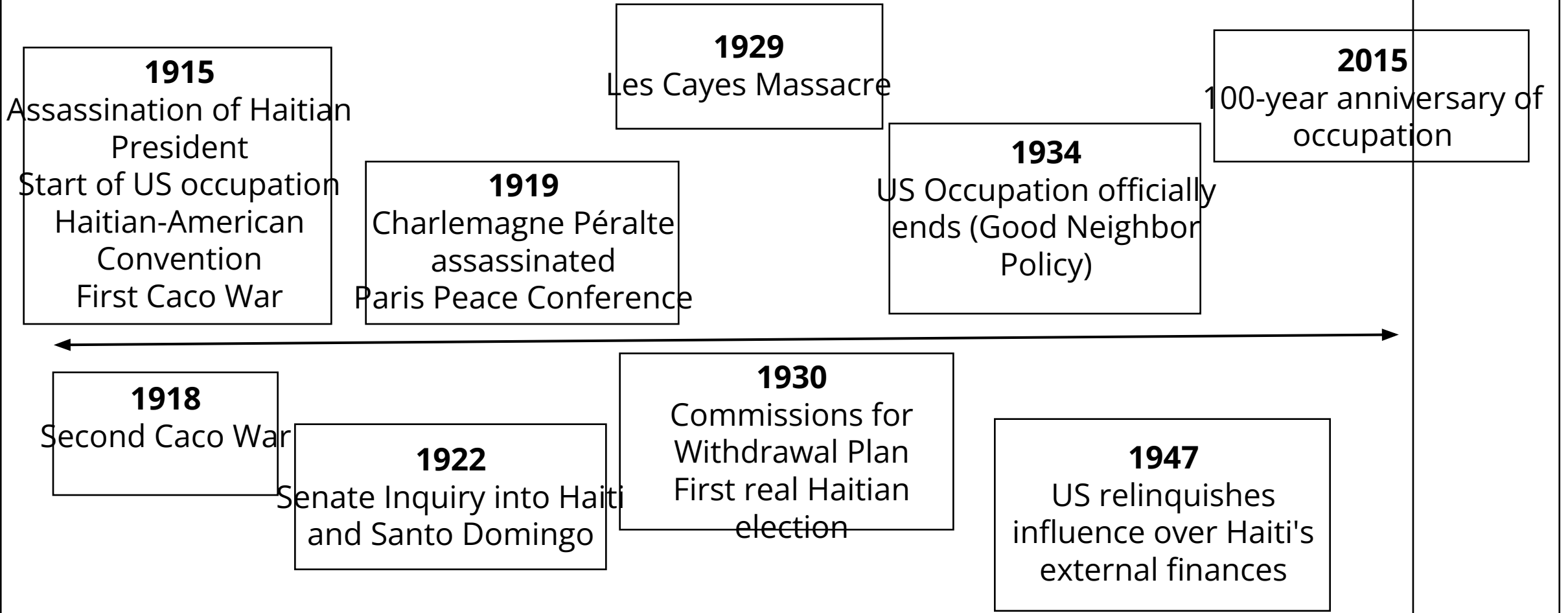
Haiti Occupation Media

Written
text
Images

Videos

Music

Timeline





BACKGROUND

Background

History of Haiti:

- Haitian Revolution (1791-1804)
- Established itself as the first independent Black republic in 1804
- Not recognized as a nation for many decades (U.S. was 1862)



A historical black and white photograph of a harbor scene. In the foreground, a long pier extends into the water, featuring a set of railway tracks that curve to the right. Several people are walking along the pier. To the left, several large sailing ships with multiple masts are docked at the pier. In the background, a town with various buildings and a church with a dome is visible on a hillside. The sky is overcast. The word "CONTEXT" is overlaid in large white letters in the bottom left corner.

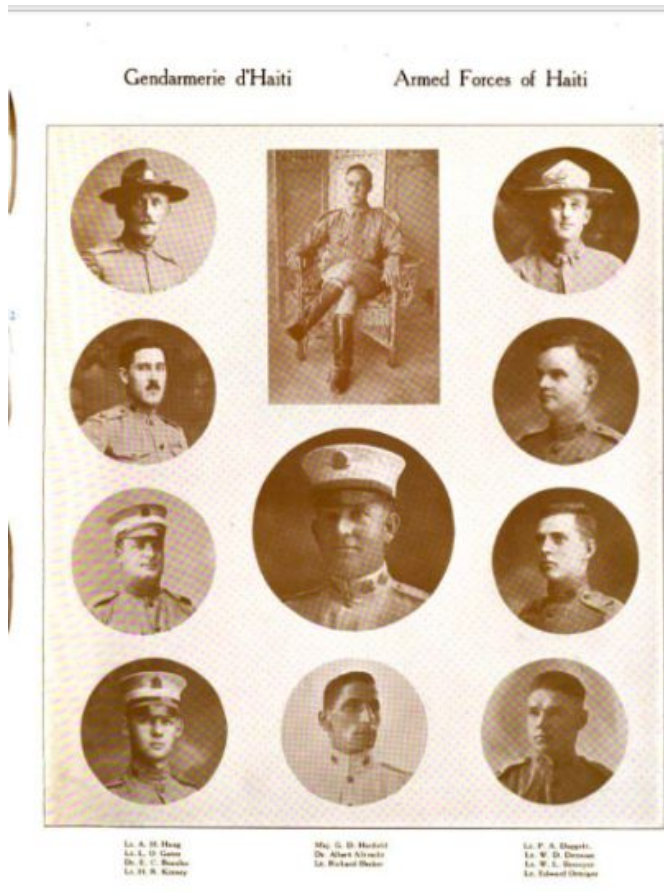
CONTEXT

Context

- **US has always had an interest in Haiti**
 - President Andrew Jackson (1868)
 - Secretary of State James Blaine (1889)
 - President Woodrow Wilson (1915)
- **Western Hemisphere Power**
 - France vs. Germany vs. US
 - Roosevelt Corollary and Monroe Doctrine
- **Control of Latin America**
 - Moral diplomacy vs. Dollar diplomacy
 - Democracy
- **July 28, 1915: beginning of the US occupation of Haiti**



POLITICAL



Political

Haitian-American Convention (1915)

- Granted US the power to oversee security and appoint leaders in Haiti

Haitian Constitution

- Foreign land ownership

Dissolving the Haitian Parliament

Gendarmerie

- US military members and Haitian elites

1922 Senate inquiry

- Found the occupation to be a failure

Forbes Commission of 1930

- Withdrawal plan

1934 Roosevelt administration completed withdrawal plans

- Good Neighbor Policy



The U.S. Occupation of Haiti

Political Ramifications



ECONOMIC





Economic

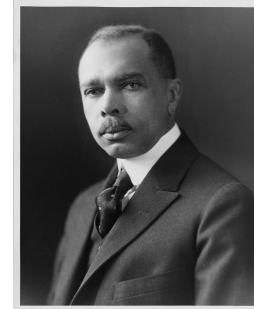
- **US control of Haiti's finances**
 - Control of Haitian debt
 - Removal of gold from Haitian National Bank
- **American businessmen**
 - Information of the president;
 - Exploitation of Haitian resources
- **Forced labor**
- **Retained influence over Haiti's external finances until 1947**

SOCIAL



Social

- **James Weldon Johnson**
 - NAACP Secretary sent to write about American imperialism in Haiti
- **Rebellions**
 - "Cacos" = insurgents
 - First Caco War (1915)
 - Second Caco War (1918)
- **Les Cayes Massacre**
 - International outrage
- **Haitian activism against social injustices**
 - Fueled by ideas of Haitian Revolution
 - La Revue Indigène



LA REVUE INDIGÈNE

Vol. I nos. 1-6
JUL 1927-PHÉ 1928

ANTHOLOGIE DE LA POÉSIE
HAÏTIENNE "INDIGÈNE"
Par son Directeur, J.W.

1911
REVUE REPRINT
Pensée
1928

LEGACY



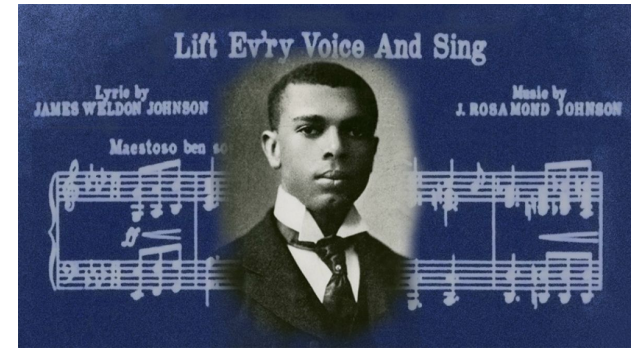
Legacy

- **Evaluation of US occupation of Haiti**
 - Failure
 - What remained were systems of disrepair
- **New standards set by the Wilson administration**
 - Gunboat diplomacy
 - Navy power is overwhelming
 - Use of naval presence to influence foreign government
- **2015: 100-year anniversary of invasion**
 - "Our desocupacion has yet to come" - Edwidge Danticat



100 years





BHM Project

BHM Media

- Written text
- Videos

Videos

To find out more
about Matthew
Henson visit
[https://www.woodrow
wilsonhouse.org/](https://www.woodrowwilsonhouse.org/)



Written Text

Rosamond Johnson



Rosamond Johnson: August 11, 1875 - November 11, 1954
An influential musician and composer during the Harlem Renaissance.

Along with his brother, James Weldon Johnson, he composed "Lift Every Voice and Sing," which is regarded as the Black national anthem.

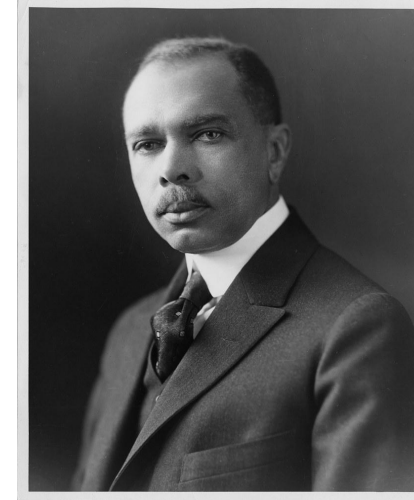
J. Rosamond Johnson was born in Jacksonville, Florida. He is the younger brother of the activist James Weldon Johnson. His mother inspired a passion for music at a young age. Johnson began learning the piano at age four. He studied at the New England Conservatory and then in London. He worked as the Supervisor of Music in the Jacksonville public school system from 1896 to 1898.

He moved to New York City in 1901 and wrote over 200 Broadway songs with his brother. Johnson also partnered with Robert Cole for a decade, composing musicals in the vaudeville style and performing at Carnegie Hall. With Cole, he produced two successful operettas with Black actors: *The Red Moon* in 1904 and *Shoo-Fly Regiment* in 1906. Johnson served as the Music Director and a trustee of the Music School Settlement for Colored People from 1914 to 1918. He gained even more fame with his portrayal of a lawyer in *Forge and Brass* in 1925.

During World War I, Johnson served as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 156th regiment. After the war, he found with fellow military musicians and inspired communities.

As an activist, Johnson advocated for Black Civil Rights through the arts. Out of the 100 members of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, only six were Black. To highlight Black musicians, Johnson produced a collection of works in the *Book of American Negro Spirituals* and the *Second Book of American Negro Spirituals* between 1925 and 1926. Additionally, he served as first Deputy Marshal for the historic Negro Silent Protest Parade in 1931.

Johnson died in New York City in 1954. He was a source of inspiration for Black musicians and amplified the voices of Black communities with his powerful voice.



BHM Project

- Matthew Henson
- Rosamond Johnson
- James Weldon Johnson

CONCLUSION



The importance of
public history



Collective memory



Linking the past to the
present to take action
in the future