10-1-2015

BRUCE, Blanche Kelso

MSRC Staff

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Scope Note

The Blanche Kelso Bruce papers were purchased in 1954 from Martha A. Smoot of Washington, D.C. The Blanche K. Bruce papers total two linear feet and span the years 1870 to 1891. Blanche K. Bruce had the distinguished honor of being the first of his race to serve a full six year term in the United States Senate, 1875 to 1881, and the first of his race to preside over the National Republican Convention of 1880 held in Chicago.

The collection primarily consists of correspondence between members of his family, constituents of the state of Mississippi and other political allies. Letters in support of candidates for particular appointments, letters requesting aid in seeking appointments, pensions, and other general requests, form most of the general correspondence received by Bruce while serving as a U.S. Senator. Most of the official correspondence requesting aid have holographic notes by Bruce on what action, if any, was taken as a result of that particular letter.

Throughout the correspondence, are comments on the national political developments. This is especially noted in the correspondence with political ally, P.B.S. Pinchback. Other important correspondents include James Hill, John R. Lynch, J.J. Spelman and Booker T. Washington.

Extensive clippings are a part of the collection, some are biographical in nature, others are editorials on Bruce. Some of the clippings are related to political issues and controversies of the late 1800's. Other materials, in the collection, include documents, petitions, financial papers and biographical information on the Plummer family, dated 1787 to 1852.
Scope Note continued

Of special significance to the Bruce papers, is a collection of research notes, a bibliography, an abstract and documents used for a dissertation on Bruce by Sadie Daniel St. Clair. Items of interest include a photocopy of his wedding and death certificate, chapter ten of the dissertation, a script copy of his will, a page from the Congressional Record dated March 8, 1875 and correspondence by Mrs. St. Clair in pursuit of her research.
Biographical Sketch

1841 March 1 Born a slave in Farmville, Prince Edward County, Virginia.
1866-1868 Attended Oberlin College, Oberlin Ohio.
1869 Feb. Moved to Mississippi - worked as a planter.
1871 Elected Sheriff and tax assessor of Bolivar County, Mississippi.
1872 Delegate to the National Republican Convention - Bruce was for all his life, a
1876 Staunch follower of the G.O.P. - the first of his race to preside over a national convention, which he did in Chicago in 1880.
1874 Elected to U.S. Senate representing the State of Mississippi.
1875-1881 Began his fall term as a U.S. Senator.
1878 June 24 Married Josephine of Cleveland, Union produced one son - Roscoe C. Bruce.
1881-1885 Appointed Register of the Treasury by President Garfield.
1893 Howard University conferred upon him the Honorary degree of LL.D.
1894-1898 Elected trustee of Howard University.
1897 Reappointed Register of the Treasury by President McKinley.
1898 March 17 Died in Washington, D.C.
Series Description

Series A  Correspondence
Box 9-1  Primarily correspondence between members of family and constituents of Mississippi.
to Box 9-3

Series B  Manuscripts
Box 9-4  A holographic poem by Bruce plus holographic covers and notes by Bruce, manuscripts by others are included.

Series C  Printed Material
Box 9-4  Printed material include a mail receipt and a printed map of Mississippi.

Series D  Financial Papers
Box 9-4  Include Bruce's bank account book, bank receipts and financial papers.

Series E  Documents
Box 9-4  Include credentials for Bruce as a delegate to Republican Convention of 1889, U.S. bills, petitions, statistics.

Series F  Newspaper Clippings
Box 9-4  Include biographical and editorial clippings on Bruce and other political issues of the late 1800's.

Series G  Artifact
Box 9-4  Include a memorandum book of Bruce, which include holographic notes, dates 1885.

Series H  Plummer Family Records
Box 9-4  Clippings on the Plummer Family dated 1787 to 1832.

Series I  Sadie Daniel St. Clair Research Materials
Box 9-5  Includes a bibliography, an abstract correspondence, appendices, chapter ten of research for a dissertation on Bruce; also include a copy of his death and wedding certificate, his will and other extensive notes.
## Container List

### Correspondence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 9-1</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Calvin Bruce - Family Correspondence - 1878</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>E. Bruce - Family Correspondence - 1879</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>H.C. Bruce - Family Correspondence - 1876-1877</td>
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<td>Josephine Bruce - Family Correspondence - 1896</td>
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<td>Josephine Bruce - Family Correspondence - 1897</td>
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<td>Josephine Bruce - Family Correspondence - undated</td>
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<td>Roscoe C. Bruce - Family Correspondence - 1896</td>
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<td>Roscoe C. Bruce - Family Correspondence - 1897</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>General Correspondence - A</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Badges to Bauman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Bell to Bliss</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Bolton to Bowyer</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Brackett to Bricewell</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>General Correspondence - Brooks to Brown</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>General Correspondence - Bruce</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Bryant to Bryson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Buchanan to Bynum</td>
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<td>General Correspondence - Campbell to Church</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Clarke to Curtis</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Dallas to Davis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>General Correspondence - Deddick to Downing</td>
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A Correspondence cont'd

Box 9-1 Folder
22 General Correspondence - Dunbar
23 General Correspondence - Eaton to Ellinger
24 General Correspondence - Embry to Eyrich
25 General Correspondence - F
26 General Correspondence - G
27 General Correspondence - A. Hall to J. Hall
28 General Correspondence - P.C. Hall to Halliday
29 General Correspondence - Hamilton to Hancock
30 General Correspondence - Hardy to Harrington
31 General Correspondence - Harris
32 General Correspondence - Hart to Hazlewood
33 General Correspondence - Heiderhoff to Helper
34 General Correspondence - Henderson
35 General Correspondence - Henly
36 General Correspondence - Henry to Heywood

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37 General Correspondence - Hichborn to Highgate
38 General Correspondence - Hill
39 General Correspondence - Hines to Hitz
40 General Correspondence - Hodges to Holstead
41 General Correspondence - Horton to Howe
42 General Correspondence - Howgate to Hunt
43 General Correspondence - Hunters to Hutchins
44 General Correspondence - I
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 9-2 Folder</th>
<th>General Correspondence - J</th>
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<td>47</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>Knod to Kornman</td>
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<td>Lamar to Larned</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>Leachman to Leas</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>LeDuc to Lee</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Leverett to Lindsey</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>Linte to Live</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>Livingston, H.L.</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>Longstreet to Lowery</td>
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<td>Luckett to Lumer</td>
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<td>Lynch, J.R.</td>
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<td>59</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>O'Connor to Oldsoyd</td>
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<td>61</td>
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<td>Overton to Ousley</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>Parke, A.M. to Pearce, A.G.</td>
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<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Pease to Perry</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>Peusiane to Pierrepont</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>Pinchback -June 1878</td>
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69 General Correspondence - Pinchback -March 5, 1880 to Oct. 5, 1880
70 General Correspondence - Pledfr to Power

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71 General Correspondence - Randolph to Ray
72 General Correspondence - Raymond, J.B.
73 General Correspondence Ray ... to Reeds
74 General Correspondence - Reeve to Rexroat
75 General Correspondence - Rives to Roberts
76 General Correspondence - Robinson to Ross
77 General Correspondence - Sampson to Saville
78 General Correspondence - Scott to Shannon
79 General Correspondence - Sharpe to Shattuck
80 General Correspondence - Shelby to Simmons
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82 General Correspondence - Sloanmaker to Smith, E.
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84 General Correspondence - Symth to Spear
85 General Correspondence - Spellman, J.J. to Spotford
86 General Correspondence - Sterling to Stites
87 General Correspondence -
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89 General Correspondence - Sullivan, M.B.
90 General Correspondence - Sullivant, J.W.
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Box 9-4 Folder 107 Manuscript - Blanch K. Bruce - "Our Hero"
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111 Printed Material
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114 Financial Papers - Bank Receipts - 1875-1877
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117 H.R. 4318. Act providing for the Mississippi River Improvement Commission. Feb. 6, 1879
118 List of Appointees from Mississippi in the Treasure. 1 p. n.d. 25cm.
119 Petition to Charles Devens, Attorney General from Republicans of the
120 Petition to Congress in the interest of Wilberforce Univ. receiving a portion of the Unclaimed Volunteer Soldier's Bounty.

121 Petition to Pres. Chester A. Arthur from Daniel A. Adams offering his service for appointment as vice-consul at Tuxpan, Mexico. With testimonials and signatures attached. Nov. 5, 1881. 115 cm.

122 Petition to President Rutherford B. Hayes and Congress from the Colored citizens of James City North

123 Petition to the Postmaster General of the U.S. from citizens of Grenada(?) Co. Miss. endorsing Capt. Matthew K. Mister, Jr. over Dr. James H. Campbell as postmaster.

124 Petition recommending Randolph Peyton for employment. Signed by John A. Moss, Frederick Douglass Jr., and D.P. Holloway

125 Senate Bill 117 amending the charter of the Freedmen's Savings and Trust Company. Annotated. May 8, 1880.
### E. Documents cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 9-4 Folder</th>
<th>126</th>
<th>Statistics of 22 institutions for the instruction of the colored race for 1878 as called for by B.K. Bruce.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>127</td>
<td>Subscriptions to the colored newspaper, The Virginia Post. May 1, 1880. With signatures and pledges.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>Supervisor's District in Mississippi. n.d. lp. 25cm</td>
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### F. Newspaper Clippings

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<th>130</th>
<th>Clippings 1873-1897</th>
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<td>131</td>
<td>Clippings 1891</td>
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<td></td>
<td>132</td>
<td>Clippings 1937-1971</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>133</td>
<td>Clippings -undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### G. Artifact

|   | 134 | Memorandum Book 1885 |

### H. Plummer Family Records

|   | 135 | Plummer Family Record, 1787-1832. Includes Barlett and Greenleaf |

### I. Sadie Daniel St. Clair Research Materials

| Box 9-5 | 136 | St. Clair Research - Bibliography |
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Research Materials

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Bruce. 2 copies
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143  St. Clair Research -
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144  St. Clair Research -
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145  St. Clair Research - Real
Estate once owned by
B.K. Bruce.
146  St. Clair Research -
Congressional Record
March 8, 1875
147  St. Clair Research -
Script copy of Bruce's
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148  St. Clair Research -
Notes - Congressional
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149  St. Clair Research -
Notes
150  St. Clair Research -
Notes