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### RUFFIN FAMILY

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MOORLAND-SPINGARN RESEARCH CENTER  
Howard University Washington, D.C. 20059

RUFFIN FAMILY PAPERS  
Collection 87-1 to 87-3

Revised by:  
Karen L. Jefferson  
January 1985

MANUSCRIPT DIVISION

## Scope Note

This collection was donated by Florida Ruffin Ridley, daughter of George Lewis Ruffin in 1942 and 1943. It spans the years 1823-1936 and is contained in three boxes measuring 1 ½ linear feet.

Included in the collection are the papers of several members of the Ruffin Family, among them John Lewis, George W. Ruffin, George Lewis Ruffin and Florida Ruffin Ridley. The bulk of the papers, however, arises from the activities of George Lewis Ruffin, prominent Boston lawyer, member of the Massachusetts Legislature, and Municipal Court Judge of Charlestown District, Massachusetts. The collection consists of letters, documents, manuscripts, speeches, scrapbooks, photographs and clippings, family and general correspondence. There are also papers of persons unrelated to the Ruffin Family.

Correspondents include Wilmot Blyden, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Archibald H. Grimke, Charles Lenox Remond, George W. Williams, Frederick Douglass, and George Washington Cable.

### **Biographical Data**

Although the Ruffin Family Papers include materials of several members of the Ruffin Family, the bulk of the collection pertains to George Lewis Ruffin, prominent lawyer and judge. His biographic sketch follows. For biographical and genealogical information concerning other members of the Ruffin family, refer to the series entitled "Ruffin Family" or the individual family name series, such as "Florida Ruffin Ridley ", in this register.

#### George Lewis Ruffin

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 1834 Dec. 16 | Born of free parents in Richmond, Va.  |
| 1853         | Family moved to Boston, Mass.  |
| 1858         | Married Josephine St. Pierre; had 5 children.  |
| 1869         | Earned Bachelor of Laws degree from Harvard Law School.  |
|              | Elected to the Massachusetts Legislature.  |
| 1875-1879    | Elected to the Boston Common Council.  |
| 1883-1886    | Appointed Judge of Municipal Court: in Charlestown, Mass. Only Negro that held office, in New England. |
| 1886 Nov. 19 | Died in Boston, Mass.  |

### Series Description

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Series A            | <u>Ruffin Family</u>  |
| Box 87-1            | Contains the title page from the Ruffin Family Bible with genealogical notes, Ruffin Family Tree, a program from Christmas celebration of 1880 and general and family correspondence of Ruffin family, primarily addressed to "Dear Madam," "Dear Sir," "Dear Cousin" etc.  |
| Series B            | <u>John Lewis, 1774-1839</u>  |
| Box 87-1            | Receipts, court papers, last will and testament. Also pasted on the back of John Lewis' receipts are receipts and court records of George L. and George W. Ruffin covering the years 1837-1855.   |
| Series C            | <u>Nancy Lewis Ruffin (wife of George W. Ruffin)</u>  |
| Box 87-1            | A deed to property.   |
| Series D            | <u>George W. Ruffin, d. 1863</u>  |
| Box 87-1            | Receipts, bills, invoices, estimates, a deed to property, promissory notes and a bank draft.  |
| Series E            | <u>George Lewis Ruffin</u>  |
| Box 87-1<br>to 87-2 | Comprises the bulk of the material in the entire Ruffin Family Papers including biographical material, documents such as: passports, appointment papers, petitions, call to jury duty etc., clippings pertaining to his political career; programs, addresses, resolutions, reports, materials related to organizational affiliations and social activities, family and general correspondence, and scrapbooks. |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Series F  | <u>Florida Ruffin Ridley</u>   |
| Box 87-2  | Biographical materials, clippings, manuscripts and general correspondence  |
| Series G  | <u>James D. Ruffin</u>   |
| Box 87-2  | A photograph of James Ruffin inscribed as Sergeant in the Massachusetts 55th Regiment, "War of the Rebellion."   |
| Series H  | <u>Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin</u>   |
| Box 87-2  | Correspondence   |
| Series I  | <u>Stanley Ruffin</u>  |
| Box 87- 2 | Clippings on the case of Bishop Arnett in which Ruffin presented a resolution on his behalf.   |
| Series J  | <u>Materials Collected on Others</u>   |
| Box 87-2  | Includes programs , photographs, a poem, certificates of identification, speeches and letters of people apparently associated with the Ruffin Family not yet identified as family members. |
| Series K  | <u>Poetry</u>  |
| Box 87-2  | A printed poem dedicated to John A. Andrew, a Boston patriot and officer in the First Massachusetts Calvary.   |
| Series L  | <u>Restricted Materials - FRAGILE DO NOT CIRCULATE</u>   |
| Box 87-3  | These original items are in fragile condition, and have been isolated as a preservation measure. Xerox copies of these items are available in Boxes 87-1 and 87-2.                         |

## Container List

| Box  | Folder   |   |
|------|----------|---|
|      | <u>A</u> | <u>Ruffin Family</u>  |
| 87-1 | 1        | Title page of the family bible 1823;<br>with genealogical notes |
|      | 2        | Genealogical chart and notes                                    |
|      | 3        | Clippings: re Frank G. Ruffin;<br>Mrs. Margaret Ellen Ruffin    |
|      | 4        | Program - Christmas 1880  |
|      | 5        | Correspondence  |
|      | 6        | Correspondence, envelope covers                                 |
|      | 7        | Correspondence (incomplete)                                     |
|      | 8        | Other correspondents  |
|      | <u>B</u> | <u>John Lewis, 1774-1839</u>                                    |
|      | 9        | Receipts and court papers - 1830-1832                           |
|      | 10       | Receipts, 1831-1849   |
|      | 11       | Court record, 1837  |
|      | 12       | Last Will and Testament, 1838, June 29                          |
|      | <u>C</u> | <u>Nancy Lewis Ruffin (wife of George W. Ruffin)</u>            |
|      | 13       | Deed<br>(no folder 14)  |
|      | <u>D</u> | <u>George W. Ruffin, d. 1863</u>                                |
|      | 15       | Receipts, bills, invoices, etc.<br>1831-1864                    |
|      | 16       | Receipts .... 1836-1857   |
|      | 17       | Receipts and bills 1836-1866                                    |
|      | 18       | Receipts 1841-1857  |
|      | 19       | Receipts 1842-1860  |
|      | 20       | Receipts 1843-1857  |
|      | 21       | Deed, 1853  |
|      | 22       | Carpentry estimates, 1854                                       |
|      | 23       | Promissory notes and draft, 1855-1859                           |

E George Lewis Ruffin, 1834-1886

Biographical Materials

| Box  | Folder |  |
|------|--------|--|
| 87-1 | 24     | Biographical sketch by E.P. Benjamin   |
|      | 25     | Dinner in honor of G.L. Ruffin<br>Nov. 22, 1883, (program)<br>(See also folder 56) |
|      | 26     | Clippings, November 1886 -<br>obituaries   |

Documents

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 27 | Passport, July 28, 1852   |
| 28 | Passport, August 5, 1864  |
| 29 | Petition for the position as Minister<br>of Haiti                       |
| 30 | Call to Petit Jury, Sept. 10, 1867                                      |
| 31 | Appointments as Justice of Peace,<br>1867 to 1881                       |
| 32 | Certificate of graduation, 4-23-36<br>and clipping re: graduates 7-1869 |
| 33 | Appointment as Municipal Judge,<br>Nov. 19, 1883                        |

Political Career

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 34 | 1st list of colored voters after<br>emancipation, Boston 1864                |
| 35 | List of Negro members of House of<br>Representatives, 1867-1873              |
| 36 | Acceptance of nomination, 1871 by<br>Labor Party of Massachusetts            |
| 37 | Clipping state election 1870, and<br>vote tally, 1869                        |
| 38 | Resolution, Re: 15th Amendment<br>Feb., 4, 1870                              |
| 39 | Program, Re: 15th Amendment<br>April 14, 1870                                |
| 40 | Labor Reform Ticket, Nov. 4, 1871  |
| 41 | National Convention of Colored Men,<br>New Orleans (clipping) April 10, 1872 |



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E George Lewis Ruffin, 1834-1886

Political Career

| Box  | Folder  |
|------|---|
| 87-1 | 42 National Convention of Colored Men, New Orleans. (Clipping) April 17, 1872   |
|      | 43 National Convention of Colored Men. (Clipping) n.d.                          |
|      | 44 National Convention of Colored Men. (Clipping) Sept. 27, 1883                |
|      | 45 National Convention of Colored Men. (Clipping) Sept. 27, 1883                |
|      | 46 National Convention of Colored Men. (Clipping) Sept. 1883                    |
|      | 47 National Convention of Colored Men. (Clipping) Sept. 1883                    |
|      | 48 The Colored Voters. (Clipping) (Clipping) Oct. 16, 1872                      |
|      | 49 Ballot Republican Party Dec. 1875  |
|      | 50 Ballot Republican Party Dec. 1876  |
|      | 51 The Colored Men of Boston. Clipping, March 6, 1880 (clipping)                |
|      | 52 Appointment as Judge. 1883 (clipping)  |
|      | 53 Appointment as Judge, 1883 (Clipping)  |
|      | 54 Appointment as Judge Nov. 1883 (clippings)                                   |
|      | 55 Appointment as Judge Nov. 1883 (Clippings)                                   |
|      | 56 Dinner honoring Ruffin 1883 (Clippings)                                      |
|      | 57 Appointment as Judge clipping; congratulatory letter from Frederick Douglass |

Addresses, Resolutions, and Reports

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 58 | National Convention of Colored Men. Report 1864 on Syracuse Convention                               |
| 59 | Address, 1871 re: chaotic conditions in southern states  |
| 60 | Resolution to Congress asking protection to life liberty and property in all parts of the U.S., 1871 |
| 61 | Address 1883, Oct. at 12th St. Baptist Church  |

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E      George Lewis Ruffin 1834-1886 (cont'd)

Addresses, Resolutions, and Reports

| Box  | Folder   |
|------|--|
| 87-1 | 62      Tribute to Wendell Phillips, n.d.        |
|      | 63      Obsequies at funeral Robert Morris, n.d. |

Manuscripts

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 87-2 | 64      Preface to the life and times of Frederick Douglass                        |
|      | 65      Manuscript of beginning of a novel   |
|      | 66      Manuscript of article of the relationship between Negroes and whites, n.d. |
|      | 67      Manuscript of article re: conditions on the commons, n.d.                  |

Organizations and Social Activities

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 68 | Boston's Shrine, 1894 (clipping)                                     |
| 69 | Social activities in early Boston, 1855-1859                         |
| 70 | Invitations  |
| 71 | Invitations and announcement   |
| 72 | Freedman's Memorial Monument Association-clipping, 1 page of minutes |
| 73 | Webster historical Society, Nomination as member, Aug. 15, 1885      |
| 74 | Invitation from The Club, Mar. 3, 1887                               |

Correspondence

|    |                      |
|----|----------------------|
| 75 | Family               |
| 76 | A-B                  |
| 77 | C                    |
| 78 | D-E                  |
| 79 | F-L                  |
| 80 | M-R                  |
| 81 | S-T                  |
| 82 | Other correspondents |

Scrapbooks

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 83 | George L. Ruffin - Scrapbook of clippings on politics ca 1869-1878 |
|----|--|

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|      |          |   |
|------|----------|---|
|      | <b>E</b> | <u>George Lewis Ruffin 1834-1886 (cont'd)</u> |
| Box  |          | Folder  |
| 87-2 | 84       | Scrapbook of Clippings re: Ku Klux Klan       |

**F Florida Ruffin Ridley**

Biographical Material

- 85 Clippings, July 22, 1894 concerning Boston Society
- 86 Articles by her (clippings)

Manuscripts

- 87 Impasse! n.d.
- 88 Out of New England, n.d.
- 89 Saturday Evening Quill, no. 1, June 1928
- 90 Two Gentlemen of Boston

Correspondence

- 91 Correspondence

**G** James D. Ruffin

- 92 Photograph

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**H** Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin

- 93A Correspondence

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**I** Stanley Ruffin

- 93B Case of Bishop Arnett (Clippings)

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**J** Materials Collected on Others

- 94 Thomas Bethune (Blind Toni) program
- 95 E.T. Greenfield - "The Black Swan" program

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|      | <u>J</u> | <u>Materials Collected on Others</u>  |
|------|----------|---|
| Box  |          | Folder  |
| 87-2 | 96       | Lewis Hayden - Photograph of his home in Boston                                       |
|      | 97       | Rachel Herbert - Certificate of identification and freedom                            |
|      | 98       | Edwin Markham - Poem "The Man With the Hoe"   |
|      | 99       | Isaac Readding - Certificate of freedom   |
|      | 100      | Charles Lenox Remond - Speech, n.d., Faneuil Hall Convention (incomplete text)        |
|      | 101      | John S. Rock - Notebook of correspondence re: Syracuse convention, 1864               |
|      | 102      | John S. Rock - Draft of will, n.d.  |
|      | 103      | Robert H. Terrell Photograph in cap and gown  |
|      | 104      | George W. Williams News articles about him  |
|      | 105      | George W. Williams Correspondence   |
|      | <u>K</u> | <u>Poetry</u>   |
|      | 106      | Poem. "The Return of the Standards" Dedicated to Gov. John A. Andrews no author, n.d. |
| 87-3 | <u>L</u> | <u>Restricted Items- - FRAGILE DO NOT CIRCULATE</u>                                   |