

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Washington, D.C.
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Blanche K. Bruce House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
909 M Street, Northwest

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: **D.C.** CODE: COUNTY: CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Anna R. MacCarthy

STREET AND NUMBER:
c/o Recorder of Deeds, 6th & D Streets, Northwest

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: **D.C.** CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
6th and D Streets, Northwest

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: **D.C.** CODE:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Shaw School Urban Renewal Area Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: **October, 1968** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
National Capital Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
726 Jackson Place, Northwest

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: **D.C.** CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

General Statement

- A. Architectural character: This house, built in 1865, follows the esample of simplified French Second Empire Style, popular in France around 1852-1870.
- B. Condition: Apparently structurally sound and presently occupied.

Description of the Exterior

- A. Overall dimensions: The total lot acreage is 2,200 square feet. The house consists of four stories of varying ceiling heights and a full-sized basement. The floor areas also vary, according to setbacks which occur from the rear of the house. The first floor has the maximum floor area and the fourth floor the minimum.
- B. Foundation: Apparently brick on top of a cement basement floor.
- C. Wall construction: The first three floors and basement are constructed of brick, and the upper floor is covered with slate tile.
- D. Porch: There is no true porch; the front entrance, recessed, is atop of 12 stairs.
- E. Firescape: Metal outdoor firescape on the front.
- F. Chimneys: Brick chimneys not in use; interior fireplaces also not in working condition.
- G. Openings: Door - A single door recessed entrance elevated about eight feet from the street level. Windows - All windows are double-hung. The first floor has four arched windows in simplified Romanesque fashion. The second floor has four simply framed rectangular windows. The third floor windows cut through the mansard roof and follow the Romanesque arch. The fourth floor openings appear to have been projected at one time and subsequently altered to a simple frame rectangular, following the roof slope.
- H. Roof: Mansard with slate tile.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1841-1898**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <u>Afro-American</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | <u>History</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Blanche Kelso Bruce, the first black man to serve a full term as Senator, representing Mississippi from 1875 to 1881, was born a slave on March 1, 1841 in Prince Edward County, Virginia. Early in his life he displayed an interest in reading and learning, being taught to read along side his "master's" son. Freed by the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Bruce taught at the first black elementary school in Lawrence, Kansas and then helped to establish a school for black children in Hannibal, Missouri. Bruce attended Oberlin College in Ohio where he excelled as a student but was forced to withdraw because of financial difficulty. Although he never officially completed his college education, Bruce did receive an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Howard University in 1890.

After leaving Ohio, Bruce wandered for awhile and finally settled in Mississippi. His acquaintance with James L. Alcorn, the Mississippi governor, introduced the ex-slave to the field of politics. In 1869 he began his political career as conductor of elections in Mississippi's Tallahatchie County and was elected Sergeant-at-Arms of the new State Senate.

In 1871 Bruce assumed a number of additional responsibilities that enhanced his political aspirations. He was appointed Assessor of Taxes and Superintendent of Education for Bolivar County, elected county sheriff, and served as a member of the Floreyville Board of Aldermen.

In 1872 he attended the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia along with James Hill, an ex-slave who exercised a great deal of power in Mississippi, and with Hill's assistance was elected Senator from Mississippi in 1874. Taking his seat in Washington on March 4, 1875, Bruce quickly established himself as a sharp, intelligent, and effective politician who had gained the respect of his colleagues. During his term of office he involved himself in numerous legislative activities. He supported resolutions to investigate the Democratic vote in the Mississippi election of 1875, the admission of duty free clothing from England for destitute blacks, and the implementation of a more enlightened Indian policy. He also sought aid for emigrants from Liberia and made an appeal for integration in all phases of the Army. He also presented a petition to prohibit a cotton tax refund and made an outstanding speech

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cromwell, John. The Negro in American History. Washington: The American Negro Academy, 1914.

Franklin, John Hope. From Slavery to Freedom. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956.

Haynes, Elizabeth Ross. Unsung Heroes. New York: DuBois and Dill Publishers, 1921.

Simmons, William J. Men of Mark: Eminent, Progressive and Rising. New York : Arno Press and the New York Times, 1968. (Reprint)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"		
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"		
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"		
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"		

07M
18/324500
420-410

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **Less than one acre**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Marcia M. Greenlee, Historical Projects Director

ORGANIZATION: **Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation** DATE: **2 July 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:
1420 N Street, Northwest

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington, D.C.** STATE: _____ CODE: _____

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Washington, D.C.	
COUNTY	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8- Significance

against a bill to restrict Chinese immigration. His committee chairmanships included heading the Mississippi River Improvement, where he introduced a bill for the development of a channel and levee system; and the Select Committee on the Freedmen's Bank, that had failed in 1874 and whose complex affairs Bruce successfully and efficiently completed. In February, 1879, in the absence of Vice-President Wheeler, Bruce presided over the Senate and in the following year assumed the same position for a short period of time.

A Democratic majority in the 1880 Mississippi election ushered the Republican party out of the office. Bruce lost his senatorial seat but remained in Washington. President Garfield appointed him Register of the Treasury and he served from 1881-1885. In 1884 he was appointed Assistant Commissioner General of the United States to the World's Fair at New Orleans and was in charge of exhibits made by blacks. In 1885, at the end of his term as Register of the Treasury, Bruce entered private life delivering lectures and participating in Washington's civic activities. In 1888 he attended the GOP convention as a delegate and received eleven votes for the Vice-Presidential nomination. President Harrison appointed him Recorder of Deeds for the District from 1888-1893. From 1890-1897 he also served as trustee of the District of Columbia Public Schools and was a trustee of the Howard University from 1894-1898.

In December, 1897 Bruce was reappointed Register of the Treasury by President McKinley but was only able to serve three months, having to retire because of illness. He died on March 17, 1898. His funeral attended by 3,000 people was held at Metropolitan A.M.E. Church and he was eulogized as one of America's truly great leaders.

Blanche Kelso Bruce was the first black man to serve a full term in the U.S. Senate. Although a former slave who was unable to complete his formal education, Bruce held various local elective and appointed offices in the state of Mississippi, including Assessor of Taxes and Supervisor of Education for Bolivar County. His term in the Senate was marked by an awareness and a broad range of national concerns. Remaining in the District after his Senate term had terminated, Bruce continued to serve the District and the entire nation as Recorder of Deeds and Register of the Treasury, appointed on two separate occasions by two different presidents. Commemoration of his home in the District would be acknowledgement of the ambition and efforts of a former black slave who rose to the position of U.S. Senator and who contributed his talents and energy to the entire nation.