Bruce, Blanche K(also) (b. March 1, 1841, Prince Edward county, Va., U.S.--d. March 17, 1898, Washington, D.C.), black senator from Mississippi during the Reconstruction era.

The son of a slave mother and white planter father, Bruce was well educated as a youth. After the American Civil War, he moved to Mississippi, where in 1869 he became a supervisor of elections. By 1870 he was an emerging figure in state politics. After serving as sergeant at arms in the state senate, he held the posts of county assessor, sheriff, and member of the Board of Levee Commissioners of the Mississippi River. Through these positions he amassed enough wealth to purchase a plantation in Floreyville, Miss.

In 1874 Mississippi's Republican-dominated state legislature elected Bruce, a Republican, to a seat in the U.S. Senate. He served from 1875 to 1881, advocating just treatment for both blacks and Indians and opposing the policy excluding Chinese immigrants. He sought improvement of navigation on the Mississippi and advocated better relations between the races. Much of his time and energy he devoted to fighting fraud and corruption in federal elections.

Bruce lost his political base in Mississippi with the end of Reconstruction governments in the South. He remained in Washington when, at the conclusion of his Senate term, he was appointed register of the Treasury. He served in that post from 1881 to 1885 and again from 1895 to 1898. He was also recorder of deeds in the District of Columbia (1889-95) and a trustee of Howard University.