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Guide to the Miles Bronson Family Papers

RG 282

Andover Newton Theological School library staff

2017

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New Haven, CT 06511
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Divinity Library
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New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 432-5301
divinity.library@yale.edu
http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections

CALL NUMBER: RG 282

CREATOR: Bronson family

TITLE: Miles Bronson Family papers

DATES: 1831–1883

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 4 linear feet (10 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection documents the work of Miles Bronson and his family, American Baptist missionaries serving in Assam, India from 1836-1879.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.282

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.282.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Transferred from Andover Newton Theological School, 2017

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

Miles Bronson Family Papers (RG 282), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

Existence and Location of Copies

6 reels of microfilm

Biographical / Historical

Miles Bronson was born in Norway, New York, July 20, 1812. He graduated from Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution (Colgate University) in 1836 and was ordained to the Baptist ministry that same year. On April 29, 1836, he received an appointment from the American Baptist Missionary Union for service in Assam, India.

Ruth Montague Lucas was born in Madison, New York, August 13, 1813. She was educated at Ladies Seminary in Hamilton, New York, and received an appointment for missionary service on the date of her marriage to Miles, September 7, 1836.

After brief terms of service at the mission stations of Jaipur and Namsang, in 1841 the Bronsons were sent to Nowgong. With the exception of visits to the United States 1848-1850, 1855, and 1857-1860; Miles and Ruth remained in Nowgong until 1868. Shortly after Ruth's death in the United States in 1869, Miles returned to Assam and the Nowgong station. He married Frances Studley Danforth* in 1872; and Miles and Frances continued the work at Nowgong. After the death of Frances in 1874, Miles moved to Gauhati. That same year he married Mary Rankin. Miles and Mary remained in Gauhati until 1879, when they moved to Dibrugarh to open a mission station. Shortly thereafter, Miles and Mary returned to the United States where they lived in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. Miles died there, November 9, 1883.

The children of Miles and Ruth Lucas Bronson were: Mary Rebecca, 1838-1903 (married Cyrus Tolman), Maria, 1841-1874 (unmarried), Ruth Eliza, 1842-1912 (married to a Mr. Cotes, widowed, and then married Albert Robinson), Harriette, 1844-1929 (married William Gunn), Ann Sophia, 1846-1920 (married John Titterington), Frances Jane, 1847-1849, Martha, 1850 (died in infancy).

The children of Miles and Mary Rankin Bronson were Miles, b.1875, Ruth and Laura, b.1878.

Scope and Contents

The Miles Bronson Family Papers, 1831-1883, primarily document Baptist missionary work in Assam, India, 1836-1879. The collection is arranged according to the following categories: journals; essays and poems; sermons and addresses; correspondence; records of the work of the American Baptist Missionary Union in Assam.

The correspondence is business and personal in nature. Details of administration of the Assam mission appear in letters of Miles Bronson and other missionary personnel: Nathan Brown, Milton B. Comfort, Oliver T. Cutter, Appleton H. Danforth, Grell Keeler, Thomas J. Keith, Marcus C. Mason, John N. Murdock, R. Edward Neighbor, Solomon Peck, Edward P. Scott, Annie K. Scott, Ira J. Stoddard, Cyrus Tolman, William Ward. A personal dimension of nineteenth century missionary experience is reflected in the letters of Ruth Lucas Bronson, Frances Danforth Bronson and other women who worked in Assam: Eliza Brown, Harriet B. L. Cutter, Cordelia S. Ward, Susan R. Ward. There is a name index to the correspondence.

The collection contains a small number of mission records. Included in this material are committee reports related to specific issues of mission administration, such as governance of individual mission stations and financial support of missionary work in general.

Arrangement

Series I. Journals

Series II. Essays and Poems

Series III. Sermons and Addresses

Series IV. Correspondence

Series V. Mission Records

Collection Contents
Series I: Journals

	Ruth Lucas Bronson	
b. 1, f. 1	Entries, including fragments	1837, no date
	Maria Bronson	
b. 1, f. 2	Entries, including letter of Maria to parents, 1/24/1854, tied with booklet	[1853] December 28 - [1854] January 13
b. 1, f. 2	Entries, including letter of Maria to parents, 11/20/1854, tied with booklet	1854 October 25 - November 21
b. 1, f. 2	Entries	1854 December 17 - 1855 February 12
b. 1, f. 2	Entries, including letter of Maria to Miles, 5/22/1855, tied with booklet	1855 April 23 - May 24
	Eliza Bronson Cotes Ruth Eliza Bronson Cotes married Albert Robinson in 1872 following the death of her first husband.	
b. 1, f. 2a	Small handwritten journal Though the journal dates from when Eliza was eight years old, it is written in mature cursive writing. It was apparently copied from an original by Eliza Bronson Cotes later in her life.	1850 October-December

Series II: Essays and Poems

	Ruth Lucas Bronson	
b. 1, f. 3	"The ocean"	1831 November 26
b. 1, f. 3	"An evening walk"	1831 November 29
b. 1, f. 3	"Slavery"	No date
b. 1, f. 4	"Lest I should hinder the gospel of Christ"	No date
b. 1, f. 5	"Poem to Miles" (fragment)	1866 January 1
	Mary Rankin Bronson	
b. 1, f. 6	"Druidism"	1851 February
b. 1, f. 7	"Not knowing"	No date

Series III: Sermons and Addresses

	Arranged by title	
b. 1, f. 8-9	Undated fragments	No date
b. 1, f. 10	And now, if you will deal truly...	No date
b. 1, f. 10	Appearances of Jesus after His resurrection	No date
b. 1, f. 10	Bible Society address	No date
b. 1, f. 10	Charge to missionaries	No date
b. 1, f. 10	Decision to do missionary work	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Duties and trials that exist between the relation of pastor and people	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Errors of science	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Plea for Assam (Address to Tremont Temple)	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Reasons to be faithful	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Remarks at Nowgong on first arrival after death of Bro. Scott and Mrs. Bronson	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Sacrament of communion	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Sacred and responsible work of gospel ministry	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Sunday school (2)	No date
b. 1, f. 11	Booklet of handwritten notes on religious subjects	1836
	Arranged by date and text See first folder of subseries for full list of texts preached upon	
b. 1, f. 12-20	Undated sermons	
b. 1, f. 21-25	Sermons	1850 - 1857
b. 2, f. 1	Sermons	1858
b. 2, f. 2	Sermons	1859
b. 2, f. 4-5	Sermons	1860
b. 2, f. 6-7	Sermons	1861
b. 2, f. 8	Sermons	1862
b. 2, f. 9	Sermons	1863
b. 2, f. 10	Sermons	1864
b. 2, f. 11	Sermons	1864–1865
b. 2, f. 12	Sermons	1866

Arranged by date and text (continued)

b. 2, f. 13	Sermons	1867
b. 2, f. 14	Sermons	1870
b. 2, f. 15	Sermons	1871
b. 3, f. 1	Sermons	1872
b. 3, f. 2-3	Sermons	1873
b. 3, f. 4	Sermons	1874
b. 3, f. 5	Sermons	1875
b. 3, f. 6-7	Sermons	1876
b. 3, f. 8-9	Sermons	1877
b. 3, f. 10	Sermons	1878
b. 3, f. 11	Sermons	1879
b. 3, f. 12-13	Sermons	1880
b. 3, f. 14	Sermons	1881

Series IV: Correspondence

See name index of correspondents in first folder of this series.

	Fragments and incomplete dates	
b. 3, f. 15	unidentified (Bengali script)	No date
b. 3, f. 16	unidentified hand (1 item)	No date
b. 3, f. 17	Barker, Jane (3 items)	No date
b. 3, f. 18	Bronson, Anna (2 items)	No date
b. 3, f. 19	Bronson, Frances S. Danforth (4 items)	No date
b. 3, f. 20	Bronson, Maria (1 item)	No date
b. 3, f. 21	Bronson, Martha (1 Item)	No date
b. 3, f. 22	Bronson, Miles (5 items)	No date
b. 3, f. 23	Bronson, Ruth M. Lucas (6 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 1	Brown, Eliza (6 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 2	Brown, Nathan (3 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 3	Browne, Mary L. (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 4	Champlin, Sarah (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 5	Clark, Mary J. M. (2 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 6	Cole, Mary Lucas (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 7	Cross, Edmund B. (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 8	Cutter, Harriet (3 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 9	Cutter, Oliver T. (2 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 10	Danforth, Appleton H. (9 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 11	Gunn, Harriette Bronson (2 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 12	Gurney, Albanus K. (l item)	No date
b. 4, f. 13	Kay, Sardohka P. (l item)	No date
b. 4, f. 14a	Keith, Thomas (7 items)	
b. 4, f. 14	[Lindeman, B.] (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 15	Lucas, Alice (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 16	Mason, Marcus C. (2 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 17	Mason, Orrell Keeler (18 items)	No date

Fragments and incomplete dates (continued)

b. 4, f. 18	Osgood, Seward M. (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 19	Scott, Anna K. (7 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 20	Scott, Edward P. (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 21	Tamod, Bogee Emily (1 item) English translation available	No date
b. 4, f. 22	Tolman, Cyrus F. (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 23	Tolman, Edward (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 24	Tolman, Mary Bronson (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 25	T.... (1 item)	
b. 4, f. 26	Usborne, Henry (1 item)	No date
b. 4, f. 27	Ward, William (13 items)	No date
b. 4, f. 28	Whiting, Elizabeth (1 item)	No date

Arranged by date
A full list of items is available in the first folder of this subseries.

b. 4, f. 29	Including from Harriet Lathrop to Ruth Lucas; from Sherburne, New York	1832 November-December
b. 4, f. 30	Including from Harriet Lathrop to Ruth Lucas; from Sherburne, New York	1833 April - September
b. 4, f. 31	Including from Harriet Lathrop to Ruth Lucas; from Hamilton, NY	1834 March - October
b. 4, f. 32	Including from Harriet Lathrop to Ruth Lucas; from Sherburne, NY	1835 May - November
b. 4, f. 33	Including from Harriet Lathrop to Ruth Lucas; from Sherburne, NY	1836 January - October
b. 4, f. 34	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson while in India	1837 February - November
b. 4, f. 35-36	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson while in India	1838 January - October
b. 4, f. 37	Including correspondence to/from Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson while in India	1839 January - September
b. 4, f. 38	Including Ruth to her family and Miles to "the Board"	1840 June - September
b. 4, f. 39	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson while in India	1841 January - November
b. 5, f. 1	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson while in India	1842 March, August

Arranged by date (continued)

b. 5, f. 2	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson while in India	1843 March - November
b. 5, f. 3-4	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson, Ruth M. L. Bronson, and Eliza Brown	1844 March - December
b. 5, f. 5-8	Including primarily correspondence of Ruth M. L. Bronson and Eliza Brown	1845 February - December
b. 5, f. 9	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson, Ruth M. L. Bronson, and Eliza Brown	1846 January - December
b. 5, f. 10-11	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1847 January - November
b. 5, f. 12	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1848 February, October
b. 5, f. 13-14	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1849 February - December
b. 5, f. 15	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1850 January - November
b. 5, f. 16-19	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1851 January - December
b. 5, f. 20-22	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1852 January - December
b. 5, f. 23	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1853 April - December
b. 5, f. 24-27	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson, Ruth M. L. Bronson, and Mary (daughter)	1854 January - December
b. 5, f. 28	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1855 January - December
b. 5, f. 29	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and Ruth M. L. Bronson	1856 January - December
b. 5, f. 30-33	Including from A. H. Danforth to Miles; from Gauhati	1857 January - September
b. 6, f. 1	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson, Ruth M. L. Bronson, and Mary (daughter)	1858 January - October
b. 6, f. 2	A. H. Danforth to Miles; W. Ward to Miles	1859 January, December
b. 6, f. 3-4	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1860 January - December
b. 6, f. 5-11	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1861 January - December
b. 6, f. 12-20	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1862 January - December

Arranged by date (continued)

b. 6, f. 21-25	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1863 January - December
b. 6, f. 26-32	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1864 January - December
b. 6, f. 33-35	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1865 January - December
b. 6, f. 36-41	Including correspondence of Miles Bronson and W. Ward	1866 January - December
b. 7, f. 1-4	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1867 January - May
b. 7, f. 5-8	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1867 June - September 10
b. 7, f. 9-14	Including correspondence of Miles and Ruth Bronson and W. Ward	1867 September 11 - December 30
b. 7, f. 15-19	Primarily to Miles and Ruth, from various correspondents	1868 January - June
b. 7, f. 20-22	Primarily to Miles and Ruth, from various correspondents	1868 July - December
b. 7, f. 23-26	Primarily to Miles and Ruth, from various correspondents	1869 January - August 9
b. 7, f. 27-30	Primarily to Miles and Ruth, from various correspondents	1869 August 23 - December
b. 7, f. 31-37	Primarily to/from Miles, including from I. J. Stoddard and F.S. Danforth	1870 January - December
b. 8, f. 1-10	Primarily to/from Miles, including from I. J. Stoddard and F.S. Danforth	1871 January - December
b. 8, f. 11-19	Primarily to Miles, including from I. J. Stoddard	1872 January - December
b. 8, f. 20-35	Primarily to/from Miles, from various correspondents	1873 January - December
b. 8, f. 36-42	Primarily to Miles, from various correspondents	1874 January - December
b. 8, f. 43-49	Primarily to Miles, including from R. E. Neighbor	1875 January - December
b. 9, f. 1-3	Primarily to Miles, including from R. E. Neighbor	1876 January - December
b. 9, f. 4-8	Primarily to Miles, including from R. E. Neighbor	1877 January - December

Arranged by date (continued)

b. 9, f. 9-21	Primarily to Miles, from various correspondents	1878 January - December
b. 9, f. 22-29	Primarily to Miles and Mary Bronson, from various correspondents	1879 January - December
b. 9, f. 30-32	Primarily to Miles and Mary, from various correspondents	1880 January-December
b. 9, f. 33-35	Primarily to Miles and Mary, from various correspondents	1881 January - December
b. 9, f. 36-38	Primarily to Miles and Mary, from various correspondents	1882 January - December
b. 9, f. 39-40	Primarily to Miles and Mary, from various correspondents	1883 February - May

Series V: Mission Records

Records concerning the work of American Baptist Missionary Union in Assam

b. 10, f. 1	Miles Bronson, Draft of circular letter concerning the Nowgong mission school	1843 August 25
b. 10, f. 2	Miles Bronson, Circular letter concerning Nowgong Orphan Institution	1847 October 1
b. 10, f. 3	Nathan [Brown], Farewell address to the Bronsons	circa 1848
b. 10, f. 4	Miles Bronson, Circular letter concerning subscription for erecting a native chapel and permanent buildings for Nowgong Orphan Institution	1850 July 8
b. 10, f. 5	Floor plan of mission house at Nowgong	circa 1851
b. 10, f. 6	Miles Bronson, Committee report concerning "The state and claims of Nowgong as a mission station, together with the adjoining tribes"	circa 1853
b. 10, f. 7	Miles Bronson, Remarks concerning circular letter of Nathan Brown	1854 October
b. 10, f. 8	Miles Bronson, Committee report concerning "The language or languages to be employed in communicating the gospel to the Assamese and Hill tribes"	1854 [November]
b. 10, f. 9	Miles Bronson, Draft of circular letter concerning financial arrangements for additional construction to the Bronson's house	1856
b. 10, f. 10	Miles Bronson, "Substance of Bro. Danforth 's remarks on the present state of the mission"	1856 September 23
b. 10, f. 11	I. J. Stoddard, Report of Garo mission	1868 February
b. 10, f. 12	Miles Bronson, Papers concerning sale of the printing press	circa 1876
b. 10, f. 13	R. E. Neighbor, Report of meeting of Bronson, Mason, Gurney and Neighbor	1877
b. 10, f. 14	R. E. Neighbor, "What I think of the circular"	1877
b. 10, f. 15	Report of meeting of missionaries	1877
b. 10, f. 16	Agreement wLth C. A. S. Muller concerning construction of bungalow at Gauhati; Floor plan of mission house at Gauhati	1877
b. 10, f. 17-18	Enclosures	
b. 10, f. 19-20	Fragments	
b. 10, f. 21-25	Vouchers	1840s-1870s

Preservation microfilm of Bronson Family papers (6 reels)

Reel1: Journal entries; Sermons (1863); Reel 2: Sermons (1864-); Correspondence (1841); Reel 3: Correspondence (1842-1864); Reel 4: Correspondence (1865-1871); Reel 5: Correspondence (1872-1878); Reel 6: Correspondence (1879-), Assam records

b. 11, f. 1

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Missions -- India

Names

Bronson, Miles, 1812-1883

Families

Bronson family