

**The Filson Historical Society**  
**Williams, Rusty, 1948-**  
**William Breckinridge Research Collection, 1884-2009**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, see the Curator of Collections.

Size of Collection:  
3 volumes

Location Number:  
Mss. A W726a

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**Scope and Content Note**

This collection is comprised of research concerning the William Breckinridge Breach of Promise Trial: 1894, compiled by author and historian Rusty Williams. The collection contains photocopies of various sources including: newspaper articles, photographs and drawings, and excerpts from a book.

Binder 1 contains photocopies of newspaper articles ranging from 1884-March, 1894. The newspaper articles discuss Breckinridge's political career prior to the trial, as well as his family, including his second wife, Issa Deshsa Breckinridge. Also included are clippings about Breckinridge's engagement to Madeline Pollard, and later marriage to his third wife, Louise Scott Wing. Articles concerning the suing of Breckinridge by Madeline Pollard and the events of the Breach of Promise Trial are also present.

Binder 2 contains a title page, table of contents, and introduction, written by Rusty Williams concerning the Breckinridge trial. The binder also contains related books of the trial, and historical context and summary of the trial. Also within the collection is an excerpt from the book, *The Celebrated Case of Colonel W. C. P. Breckinridge and Madeline Pollard*, which gives information concerning the relationship between Breckinridge and Miss Pollard before the trial.

Binder 3 contains newspaper clippings concerning the events of the trial and the verdict, as well as information regarding Breckinridge's post-trial life. Some of the articles protest Breckinridge's actions and discuss attempts by various organizations to boycott his lectures, etc. Also included are articles concerning Breckinridge's congressional loss, religious disciplinarian action, and death.

Separation Note: This collection was separated from the Rusty Williams Confederate Home Research Collection (Mss. A W726).

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**Biographical Note**

William Campbell Preston Breckinridge was a prominent figure in Kentucky history. He was born into the Breckinridge political family, and served during the Civil War for the Confederacy. Breckinridge later became known as an orator, member of the House of Representatives, and an attorney. Breckinridge had a troubled private life. During his marriage to his second wife, Issa, he began a relationship with a seventeen year old girl named Madeline Pollard. After his wife's death, Breckinridge promised to marry Pollard, but instead married another woman, Louise Scott Wing. Following the disclosure of Breckinridge's third marriage, Pollard sued him for "Breach of Promise." The trial occurred in Washington D.C., and related delicate information. The verdict was called in Pollard's favor. The trial, and the information that was disclosed from it had serious consequences for Breckinridge, as the community withdrew much of their support from him.

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**Folder List**

- Binder 1: Research concerning the William Breckinridge trial, 1884-Mar. 1894.
- Binder 2: Research concerning the William Breckinridge trial, 1894-2009.
- Binder 3: Research concerning the William Breckinridge trial, Jan. 1894-1904.

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**Subject Headings**

Blackburn, Julia C. 1833-1922.  
Breckinridge, Desha, 1867-1935.  
Breckinridge, Issa Desha, 1843-1892.  
Breckinridge, Louisa R. Scott Wing, 1845-1920.  
Breckinridge, Robert, 1871-1944.  
Breckinridge, William Campbell Preston, 1837-1904.  
Paxton, John R., 1843-1923.  
Pollard, Madeline B. V.  
Rodes, James C.  
Sex scandals.  
Trials (Breach of promise).