

Accession no. M1981-1010  
Bruce Collection  
Box 6, Folder 169

[letter, on Saint James letterhead, from Pauline Bruce Duke to her sister Henrietta Bruce Green, 1874]

The  
SAINT JAMES HOTEL  
Bruce & Alexander Proprietors

Centrally located: Street Cars to Union depot  
And Wyandotte. Telegraph in the house.

Kansas City, Mo [Missouri] Dec 28th 1874 [December 28, 1874]

My dear darling old Retsy [Retta or Henrietta]! I would love to squeeze you right hand, for my beautiful christ was present. It was such a delightful surprise! I have always wanted a polonaise like it, ever since I saw yours; but had no idea my desires would ever be realized. It is beautifully made, and fits me exactly. The sleeves are a little too long however; but can be shortened easily, by taking a little plait in them. And now how can I thank you each and all, for the well selected store of christmas presents, contained in the christmas box, which came safely to hand on the 26th. I wish you could have been present at it's opening, + have witnessed [witnessed] the pleasure it gave us all - particularly the children. It was such fun, to watch each expectant face, as Pa took out the different parcels (one at a time) and read each name out loud. Such jumping + grabbing [grabbing] you never saw! As soon as Bruce spied the overcoat, he commenced catching hold of his sleeves, preparatory to putting it on, and immediately wanted to know "if he couldn't go down town [downtown] and wear his new shoes + stockings, his overcoat + hat." He is the proudest fellow now in Kansas City. And declares, "that Uncle Dick + Aunt Retta [Henrietta] are the best old 'santa clauses' in the world!" He sends lots of Kisses to you both, also to Bah [?] + Aunt Lillie, for his box of pretty hand kerchiefs [handkerchiefs] and scarfs. His happiness-like

[happiness-like] his out-fit [outfit] is now complete. I wish you could have seen Baby Dick, when Pa took out a parcel, and read "to old red head dick, from Aunt Retta". He gave one of his loud, hearty old laughs, and grabbing the stockings said 'wesh, Petty send em to me". He was delighted with Uncle Dick's present of the ring, which looks so cunning on his fat hand, and is a tight fit on his third finger. but I can have it made larger. He is terribly tickled, when Pa handed him the 'chiming-bells from Aunt Lail," and altho [although] he already had one, he seemed only to prize the one "Aunt Lail" sent and didn't care to play with the other one - so I gave it to Harrison Blake for his little boy. Mary Goggins gave Dick + Linny each a big drum - so with them and their chime bells, we have plenty of christmas! - but the louder the noise, the more they enjoy it. She also gave Bruce, one of Johnson's cottages, and Maymie, a pretty little bedstead for her Doll. She says I must tell you all how proud she is of her christmas presents and says the Dolly you sent her Grandma, is so sweet + cunning! I am so much obliged to you Ma, for my pretty neck tie, and my hand kerchief [handkerchief] Lil, is beautiful. And Retta the hand kerchiefs [handkerchiefs] you sent to Dr [Doctor] Lester (as a christmas present from Baby May) are perfectly beautiful. The embroidery ~~was~~ is the finest I ever saw. You couldn't have selected any thing [anything] more appropriate, Retsy [Retta or Henrietta]. I did as you requested me, wrote a pretty card + put inside the box, then tied it up nicely in paper + sent it up by Jackson, the Dr [Doctor] was not in, be he left them + told them to tell him, that Mrs Green sent that package in our Christmas box. However my card inside will explain it all. We haven't seen the Dr [Doctor] since. But I know he was delighted. Say to Bro [Brother] Richard that Pa was jubilant over the old Kentucky ham - he took it in the office, and laid it on the counter - that every body might see his Christmas present. He was also [also] delighted with the hand kerchiefs [handkerchiefs] + cravat. But he will write and thank you all himself if he has not already done sa [so].

Tell Lil [Lillie], Mr. Shudy came last night. + is looking splendid! Wishing you all a happy New Year - I am yr. [your] affectionate Sister

Polly Finks.