

Accession No. M1981-1010
Bruce Collection
Box 1, Folder 7

[COPY of a letter from Henry Bruce, Sr. to his son, Henry Bruce, Jr., Dec. 1832]

Fleming County, Ky. [Kentucky]
December 10, 1832.

Henry Bruce, Jr.
Sparta, Georgia.

Dear Son:

Your letter under date of the 19th ultimo came to hand on the third instant. We were all anxious to hear from you, the more especially as you were in a weakly condition when you left Mr. Donaldsons. We were glad to hear you are restored to health after from confinement in Georgia. You must be careful not to expose yourself and never travel in wet weather without your umbrella. If you have to go to Florida before you return home, I will be glad if you would write to us again by your brother James and let us know when we may expect to see you.

Should you be preserved to reach home you will be deprived of the pleasure of seeing all your sisters, as Mary Ann (1) is no more. She went to see Miss Elizabeth Wood on Friday the 9th of November, who was then very sick (and is since dead). She came home on Saturday evening, apparently in usual health, but about sunset went to bed and complained of some pain in her side, took some medicine and appeared to be much better the next day, and complained very little afterwards, the she appeared more melancholy than usual. On Thursday we began to discover that she was a little deranged and then the next day she became entirely insane, so continuing till Tuesday, the 4th instant, and about eight o'clock in the morning breathed her last. I hope that her immortal spirit will rest among the saints in glory.

Her sisters were all present, but your brother George was taken sick shortly after his sister and was then confined to bed, but is now getting well. Your mother appears to bear the loss with Christian fortitude. We had three doctors employed. One called to see her every day, but did no good. I never had my pantaloons off but once in eighteen days and nights (2). I can't describe my feelings nor give you a description of her situation, except that she was very good humoured [humored] and knew the family and

others of her acquaintance at times. She often talked about you and James. She appeared to be in good health and was very active and strong till about the last three days, the she slept very little and never appeared to want to eat. I hope this dispensation will admonish you and all my dear children of the shortness of time and the importance of being prepared to meet your final doom.

(1) Mary Ann Bruce, fourth child of Henry Bruce; born March 26, 1807; died December 4, 1832.

(2) Usually at this season Henry Bruce was in the far South. This year he had decided to remain home, sending to Georgia his two youngest sons instead.

Mr. Andas wrote on the back of your letter that Mr. Duke Hamilton died on the 20th. This must have been sudden as you said nothing about his health the day before.

You think my bacon is not likely to yield a profit. I want you to see all lists of slaes to see if I have got seven pieces of the hog. Where that is not done you know we can be easily imposed upon.

I hear the Darien bank has failed again in Georgia. Be on our guard about money. I want you not to fail to sell York (1) and it is your mother's request also. You know he can induce others to take the same tramp he did and he might again go off entirely. We need money and I will let you have Charles, which will ultimately be best for you.

When you are traveling with money be careful and never let strangers know your business. Treat every person with respect, be human and hospitable. Relieve the condition of the poor and destitute when you are able. Be temperate in all things; punctual in your engagements and by an upright course of conduct you will merit the esteem of all who know you. My most ardent desire is for the welfare of my children.

Mr. Morgan has not received a line yet from his brother nor Henry. Your fine boy, Sir Archer, is in good plight. We killed 74 hogs last week. The weather here is moderate, no snow yet to cover the ground. Wheat looks well. The cholera is generally subsided.

Give my respects to my brother and family. Tell sister that her daughters are well and that Lucy Ann is still making young Lowrys again from appearances. Give my respects to Mr. Sayre and other friends. Get your cousin Mary or Ellen a dress, or some

other present, and come home as soon as you can. We desire much to see you.

May the Lord bless you in time and eternity in the prayer of,

Your affectionate father,

Henry Bruce.

(1) A runaway slave.

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