

Accession No. M1981-1010
Bruce Collection
Box 2, Folder 48

[COPY of a Letter from Henry Bruce, Sr. to Henry Bruce, Jr., March 1853]

Fleming County [Kentucky], March 1st, 1853 [March 1, 1853]

Dear Henry

Your letter under date of the 24th February is before me and I am trying to answer it I have not attempted to make any calculacions [calculations] of the interest neither do I think myself capable of doing it correctly if I were to undertake it. and I presume you have done it as it should be I never enter the amounts I received that was paid by James Morgan on the \$550 till since I got your letter. I had all entered in a Book. I don't know whether I have pursued your instructicion [instruction] exactly though I hope it will answer the purpose. I will enclose it with this letter. as regards the \$400 I have entered the \$343.42 as a credit on it as you requested. but I cannot say on oath that there is no usury. I will state to you how I preceeded with all my Sons-in-laws, they were in the habbit [habit] of Borrowing money from me and I charged them 12 per cent [percent] for a part of it as I was paying that interest then myself and when I settled with Mister J.S. Morgan I took his Receipt for \$3200 on the first of January 1843 that being the amount I give him as a porcion [portion] of my estate, and then there was a Balance due of four thousand dollars for which he executed his Note

I have a receipt from Mister T. Porter Woodson and William Morgan for \$3200 each, Mister Porter owed me some \$200 (if I mistake not) above the amount on his Receipt which he paid me though Woodson and William Morgan owes me a considerable amount which they are unable to pay; I have never charged any of them but 6 per cent [percent] since the day of their Receipts and if the interest has been compounded which is the usual way when money is loaned – they would owe me considerable more than my demand is notwithstanding I charged 12 per cent [percent] part of the time, under all the circumstances I don't think the charge of usury would or ought to

apply to me though the law might be construed otherwise. I also send you the \$400 Note too that you may see whether the way I have wrote on it meets your approbacion [approbation] and if not. I wrote so that you could cut it off without injury to the Note. I want Ellen to have the Benefit of the amount of the \$365.24 you say is remaining and I think under all the circumstances you could let her have it on a credit for the amount on what she may owe the estate provided she ~~may~~ holds more property than her third porcion [portion], you can let your Council know what I have said on the subject of usury and if you are not allowed to admit the claim as it is, you can return the Note to me, and in justice to my other Children I ought [ought?] to deduct the amount from the sum that will be to devide [divide]. and my intencion [intention] is to let each Child or Fam ily [Family] have Eight Thousand Dollars, and if there should be anything left then devide [divide] it equally, your poor Sister Dudley bears heavily on my mind, Something more should be done for her, tho [though] you will be astonished when I tell you that I have paid as his security \$9548 in actual Cash, besides after deducting \$3200, the amount of the receipts by others from what I give her and lent to him there would be then a Balance due me of about 1200 Dollars, and no doubt if the interest was correctly calculated from the various payments of these security debts it would now amount to more than ~~dollars~~ \$10,000. also I paid in Bank for Elbrige Waller \$358 besides I hold his note for \$110 lent money these sums now with only 6 percent interest would be nearly doubled.

I paid some years ago upwards of \$100 as security for Tom Mills I lent Jasper Morris \$100 which he swindled me out of by lying also James Patton cheated me out of \$100 about seventeen years ago I paid \$110 to Bank or indorsed [endorsed] for Wm H. [William H.] McCord and I hold bonds on different persons besides other claims which would amount to several hundred Dollars. besides all this I lost about \$7,000 by purchasing hogs too early about sixteen years since, and since then I sent a drove to South Carolina by Stephen Powell on which I lost about \$700. also you know I had some likely Negroes to Die and run off which together with various other losses I have met with would amount to more than \$6000 at the first or lowest estimate. I heard it was

rumoured about that I would be Broke but thank God I have weathered the storm have paid every security Debt and have enough and more in safe hands to pay every demand against me I sold Herman. Rolcy and Williams and Savanna and eighteen acres of land 7 78 acres of land to James and this sets me free

I am sorry to hear that Mary is still in Bad Health. I hope her visit to New Orleans [Louisiana] may restore her health. I received her letter detailing the incidence relative to my poor Brother's last illness and death. I have no doubt the change is much better than to have him spared to remain longer on earth to indure [endure] continued afflicticion [affliction]. when I was in New Orleans [Louisiana] in 1824 I became acquainted with Mister Manuel White [?] and we came up to Louisville [Kentucky] in the Steam Boat Caledona [Caledonia] and I was much pleased with his Company he had with him different kinds of medicin [medicine] and was very attentive to the Sick especially those on deck you know this was a mark of Humanity and generosity too, for all was gratis. I have often thought I would write to him but neglected it but as you are going there I have concluded to write a few lines by you hoping it may be of some advantage to you, sometimes such things does good. I leave the letter open that you may read it then seal it or not as you may think proper. I am heartily sorry you and Mister Porter could not settle Mister Morgan's Business without going to law I was in hopes it have been closed by arbitracion [arbitration]. I have said and done all I can and I shall drop the subject. James' Boy Godfrey was a notorious thief for which he whipped him several times before he went South and in his absence he stole some Money from Mister Saunder's store and things elsewhere – and he of course was expected to be whipped and Sold otherwise he might not have gone when he did alone. he is well assured that he was assisted by some Irish Rail Road hand 'tis now very precarious property. Martha has been very ill and is now confined to bed Doctor Fleming says she has Measels though she says she had it when young. Your Mother is still quite feeble and can't walk without holding to something yet she has a good appetite and will yet knit and spin a little; I am very lame yet though don't have much pain, the rest of your friends here are generally in usual health

and may the Lord preserve you boath [both] and give you a prosperous journey and permit you to return in health to the embrace of your family and Friends is the fervent prayer of your devoted
Father
Henry Bruce.