

Vassar College, Jan. 10, 1869.

My dear Brother John,

I have neglected answering your last letter longer than is my wont, partly from lack of time, in preparing to go away &c. but chiefly because I did not know exactly what to say to you. Your letter surprised and hurt me quite as much, as, judging from your letter, mine angered you. I must have been very unhappy in expressing myself – for I know, or at least unless I am much mistaken in you, I know, did you understand my feelings about the matter, you would not feel towards me as you do now. All that I wanted was to know what was right for me to do, right towards you, and towards myself & it was difficult for me to decide, especially when there was no one near me with whom I could discuss the matter, no one who knew the circumstances. I did not wish to decide blindly. I think it a crime in any one to do so in any matter in which he has a responsibility. There are certainly two sides to any question, and both must be viewed. In this emergency, feeling still undecided and troubled about it, I wrote to you. Materially, it seems to make but little difference, as you had already written to me, saying you did not need the property, and when I received that letter, I at first wished I had not written the one to you; and yet I should not wish to have credit for generosity that I had not shown. I most sincerely regret that my letter affected you as it did, and if I said any thing untrue or unkind it was unintentional, and I am truly sorry. We are all liable to be mistaken and to look at things in a false light, and I may have done so. I know what you

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thought about me, "O yes Annie can make protestations, but when it comes to any self-sacrifice, she is like every one, not willing to make it." I hope and believe that such is not my character. I do not like to refer to past favors on my part, and thus spoil them by being too conscious of them, but I can not refrain from asking if I failed you last summer in your time of need? Did I not in your absence do things for your wife that her own sister failed to do, seeing too the need of them? Beaten enough of this; it is my constant regret that so much of my life has been spent away from my brothers, when I might be helping them. But it seemed unavoidable. When the old home is gone, the father and mother no more upon earth the members of a family quickly scatter; the strong bond between them trembles and quivers and threatens to break, yes, some times is snapped asunder. O my brother let not such be the case with us. Do not let this chill your brotherly affection for me. Whatever you may do or say to me, or think of me, you are always my brother, my dear brother, and I shall always hold you as such. You may not confide in me or love me, but I shall love you, hope for you, pray for you.

I spent part of the Holidays in the College and a part in Utica, with Helen Thomas, one of my College friends. I feel quite rested and ready for work again now. I can not realize that I am so near through here at the College. The time will fly quickly now, and June will soon be here. Can I not hope to see you here, too, at that time, my brother?

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I know of nothing else to interest you, so I must say good-bye. Again asking your forgiveness for all my failings, and invoking the Father's care for you, I remain,
Your loving Sister,

Annie.

{Annie (Glidden) Houts, '69,