

Christmas day, '06.

My dear Willie,

Your last letter was a great-
pleasure to me. You give such good ad-
vice and it usually turns out so well that
I'm almost afraid not to take it, but I had
about made up my mind to shut up.
What you say is very true and yet I think
there is more. It is not all so cheap, or so
quick that it is impossible to live by, or so cheap
wrt to my "old-fashioned" ideas and morals" as
you say. Isn't there a chance that I could
do high class illustrating? That is neither
here. I don't seem to have many artists
friends to look over and they seem to be
teachers. I teach, I guess it is as profitable as
any thing else to teach, but I don't
want to teach it any way. The chief point
in my mind is whether I have sufficient
talent. I don't think a late start in art is
the same as in music and any way
ever since I was very small I've been
dabbling at it, so that it has for me the
"warmth and intimacy of feeling" that James
talks about. Still, maybe I better stay at
what I have been doing. I don't think I've
lost any of my interest in English and in

teaching; I haven't a bit I'm still crazy over
it all. I really don't know what to do about
next year. Of course I can't pluck, but I
mean about changing. All of the family
advise me not to stay at Glendale, but I
don't know any thing better to do and I
don't know of changing places too.

I feel just sure that I haven't sent you
or Mary either any Christmas present and I
haven't even any in mind for you. I got you
a little divined sharing mirror but con-
cluded it was too heavy to send and gave it
to Mamma to give Selden. I asked Mamma
what you wanted but she hasn't answered.
It is a long time since any of us have heard
from Mary and we don't know when she
is spending her Christmas, but maybe the
mails are delayed. O, how I long to see
you two people. It is a year and a half
since I've seen you, Billy Boy, and I do
want to see you + talk to you so much.
I take very great pleasure in the fact that
you + Mary are together. I'm glad you
find each other so congenial. How near
of an age we all seem as we grow older.
You know you always seem like an older
brother to me.

Mamma's Maria and Adelaide are here. They are the prettiest things you ever saw, perfectly fascinating and every thing we do is perfect in their eyes. Saturday night we had a party - the same night they came, and one of the ~~good~~ College fellows who was up has a terrible case on Adelaide and I don't wonder.

Mamma is pretty ill. O. Willie, my heart aches for her. Do pray for her, write for her. I ought not to say any thing but encouraging things to you people who are so far away perhaps. But if I were you I should not want things made out better than they are. Mrs. Hawkins is encouraging but Mamma certainly is pretty badly off yet.

O. Willie, I think if you can possibly manage it you better stay in school. I think Mamma is very happy to have you there. You should have seen her asking Mr. Fisher (who was up at the party) about you. How she loves us all! I do wish I had the money to help you out, but I haven't. Can't you borrow it? I wish you could get some land or some thing to make a lot of money on out there like

some of those people you or Mary wrote about
 out there. Can't you? If you sing on the
 the club maybe you'll get practice so
 that you could get a fair position in the
 church.

I've been here just half of my vacation
 tomorrow. How I shall hate to leave home!
 I wonder if you & Mary are together tonight.

Well, good night. Billy Boy. All the
 rest of the house are asleep long ago.

I think you're doing just fine to keep
 in school and make your way. There were
 a desperate effort to stay in. I don't know
 just what you meant about writing the aunt
 but they are helping with money here as they
 can so I don't believe they would be able
 to do any thing else. They are making a des-
 perate effort for Mamma. You see expenses
 are heavy having a girl all the time, not
 having many if any roomers in the house
 + a doctor's bill that must be ~~so~~ on toward
 a hundred dollars, and sending the
 laundry out. I don't know how we are
 ever to get out of the hole. The sure, but
 Mamma is all we care about now.

Lots of love to you + give Mary my love
 if she is with you. Your honest sister
 Helen Peratt or Belden