Note: This letter begins in the middle of a sentence and has the number 15 printed at the top.

September 14, 1920

. . . sinner, and that is that, in the range of my experience with you I have seen nothing of the sinner, nor do I ever expect to see anything of him. Dear Pal, I don’t doubt in the least that there are some women, somewhere in this world, who, with more or less cause, consider you more or less of a sinner. I imagine that you have played at love with women, who themselves have liked to play at love, that you have flirted with women who enjoyed flirtations, and that, in general, you have been gay and foolish, at times, ridiculous, at times even indiscreet with women who called forth by their own actions gaiety, foolishness or indiscretion. You like women, you enjoy their society; your greatest mistake, I believe, would be to follow the mood of the woman you are with rather that to make her follow yours. This might lead to sad results if she was the wrong kind of woman. If a woman was of the frivolous type and liked to flirt, you’d flirt with her following her lead just for the fun of seeing how far she’d go; you would play the same game that she played and you’d do it cleverly without getting your fingers burned. I’m quite sure that you are a past master of all the games. Every individual is many-sided, having a good side and a bad side and a lot of sides that are partly good, and partly bad. Of the persons whom we meet on our way through life, some attract the good side of us, some attract the bad side and the majority attract medium sides.

Dear Pal, I know that I attracted the best side of you, the serious worth-while, spiritual side, just as you attracted the best side of me. You drew out all that was best in me as the suns draws up the moisture from the earth. From the very beginning each of us penetrated beneath the superficial, everyday exterior of the other, to the real person that was concealed behind the mask. We saw into each other’s souls and for that reason we understood each other.

It has seemed to me that our relation has been exquisitely beautiful and idyllic. It has been spiritual and for that reason has not depended upon how often we saw each other; the bonds between us could increase in number and strength however far apart we might be because they were spiritual bonds. And so, dear Pal, it cannot matter to me which of your sides you have turned to other women, for to me you have turned only the beautiful, strong, holy side.

It has been said that woman is the soul of man. That is, in large measure, true. For one thing, women have a finer moral sense than men, they are more deeply religious and usually more spiritual. A woman may make or break a man’s life. And there was never a man so bad that some woman couldn’t discover the angel in him and bring it to the surface. A woman may take into her hands the golden thread of a man’s life and deftly and lovingly weave it into a wondrously rich and beautiful pattern. It will usually be found that great men have been blessed with the great love of a fine woman, while the failures are men who have known only small, selfish, insignificant women. But I needn’t tell you about the ways in which women influence a man; my thoughts were in quite another direction.

Several pages back I spoke of what my meeting you had meant to me. Not even you will be able fully to appreciate how much you brought into my life. Your viewpoints, your attitude toward life, your feeling about women – each was a separate and wonderful revelation to me. [Several sentences blocked out.] (I can think of no other name for it). I used to wonder what other women who were married had to suffer in private and if every woman found marriage a painful disillusionment. Then I met you, as I said before. The few conversations I had with you during those first two months before you left for Pittsburg (sic) changed the course of my life. Of course you’ve forgotten what you talked about, but I haven’t. You probably couldn’t recall a word of what you said the first time we dined at the Endicott in October, 1918. But I can tell you that for some reason or other, I don’t really know why, you talked through nearly the whole meal about your wife. I would have been content to sit there by the hour listening to what you said about her. You could not have picked out a topic of conversation more soothing and healing and helpful than just that. It gave me an absolutely . . .”

Note: This is where the letter ends. Barnum Brown’s first wife was Marion Raymond, who he married in 1904. They had a daughter named Francis Raymond Brown (1908-1998). Marion died in 1910, some eight years before his dinner with Marjorie where he spent the evening talking about her. In 1922, he married his second wife, Lilian McLaughlin. Francis R. Brown apparently never married.