


1817

17: 1817 January 7: Archibald Dunbar (Cambridge) to Dinah Dunbar (Natchez)

Archibald Dunbar

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Cambridge Jan 7th 1814

My Dear Mama,

The vacation has now commenced, and tho' it has been several days since, I hope you will excuse me for not writing sooner, having been prevented, by going to Boston several times, for the purpose of procuring instructors in the flute & in dancing &c. The end of the term, you must naturally suppose, is a very busy season, & moreover having had the honor to be chosen on different committees &c. for the clap, I have scarcely had time to bestow more than my thoughts on my Dear Mama. I begin by hoping that you have passed a merry Christmas & happy New Year. Believe me; that when I considered the dull & insipid manner in ^{which} that season was spent here, I greatly regretted the impossibility of enjoying it at home, surrounded by my family & friends. Christmas is regarded very little more than a common day. The Episcopalians, indeed, have service performed in church during the morning, & a few old people from the old country preserve the custom of celebrating that period. Besides this, nothing distinguishes it from a common day. I received a letter, a few days ago, from William; from the contents he expected me to pass this vacation in Philad^a or rather, he appeared to think that his letter would influence me to do so; & certainly I felt a great inclination, but you, Mama, thought proper that I should remain in Cambridge, & it must be a very important affair that would prevent me to act contrary to the wishes

of my beloved Mother. He inclosed a letter of introduction for me to
a family, residing at Princeton, by the name of Fitch, concerning
which family he gave me some very interesting intelligence, which
he says you are acquainted with, and to introduce myself to
M^{rs} Fitch & her daughter. I desired very much to pass that way
to Philad^a — You ask me if I visit M^r. Appleton, indeed I do
very often & am much pleased with him. He gives me a great deal
of good advice, which I always gratefully receive, & endeavour to
improve to my advantage. he has not heard from his son lately
but the last time he was in good health. M^r. Appleton has been kind
enough to write to his son, directing him to procure for me a
good flute & clarionet, it is impossible to procure them in Boston
I hope you will have no objections to indulge me in this
By the end of this quarter I expect to be well acquainted with
flute, & then it will be an easy matter to learn on the clarionet, &
without taking lessons. M^r. Appleton has advised me, & I have no doubt
you will agree with him, to spend the remaining 6 weeks of this vacation
in Boston, boarding in the family of the French Instructor, and
studying French & Spanish. I will then be able to attend very
conveniently to several gentlemanly accomplishments which you
wish me to acquire. The expense would be very little more than
living in Cambridge. I shall also have an opportunity of becoming
acquainted with the people of Boston, & of polishing myself in the
company of ladies. I shall take care to give you an account

of every thing that befalls me there. — I will now speak of money
matters. As to spending it improperly, I dare say Mr. A. could find out
I tell you how every cent of it is used. I confess I have been imprudent
in keeping bells, which I shall never do again. As for entertainments
(I will conceal nothing) I attend one each term, & that is a supper which
is provided for a society to which I belong, all the most genteel & respect-
-table part of the college are chosen into it about 20 all together, the
members of our class, & every Sophomore class in succession, are
considered immediate members, & invite part of the others to sup
with them, the expense is never more than 3^l except on anniversary
when all the members are invited; I should blame myself if this was the
only motive for joining a club, there is a very fine library &
to it, which has been examined & approved by the governour
very feelingly warned me of the dangers of drinking; but
Mama, when I tell you that I dislike the taste of every kind
of liquor, cider is the only thing besides water which I can bear.
I now proceed to give you an account of one quarters expences as you
desired. You will find \$69. ^{cts.} 89 accounted for, I have yet 20^{cts} in case of
immeregency, paying postage &c. the remainder I neglected to take an
acct of at the time, but it has been spent in buying a few books, paying
passage to Boston, & taking dinner there 2 or 3 times, I assure you not a
cent improperly. — Nov. 1st for horse & chaise hire from May to Nov. — 21. 22, 8^{cts} for a study-
-chair — \$3. Nov. 2. for a pair shoes \$2. 50. 8^{cts} for a hat \$8. 8^{cts} for paying postage & moving
furniture \$1. 50. Nov. 3rd for washing \$5. Dec. 15th For shirts, cravats, stockings &c. 28. 71.
8^{cts} for boards during vacation (4 weeks) \$18. Dec. 6th quarter bill \$64. 63. 7^{cts} for washing 3. 25
Dec. 30th boot cleaner \$5. anniversary of society \$6. 9

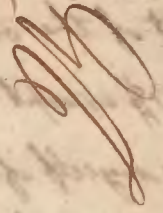
I will soon write again. My love to all.

From your ever affectionate and dutiful Son

Arch. Dunbar



Received by 1817
an amount of 11th July



Mr. D. Dunbar

Forb. near

Natchez

Mrs. Carr

mail



the
this
with