

1827
DEC 20
NIGHT

G. L.

Mr. Allsop
251 Regent Street

2.6

Acc No. 12,253

Dec. 20th
1827

My dear Allsop, I have writ
to say to you that I hope to have a
comfortable Xmas day with Mary, and I
cannot bring myself to go from home at
present. Your kind offer, and the kind
consent of the young Lady to to come, we
feel as + we should do, & pray accept ^{all of you} our
kindest thanks. At present I think a visitor
(good & to excellent as we remember her
to be) might a little put us out of ~~her~~ our
way. Emma is with us, and our small
home but just holds us, without obliging
Mary to sleep with Becky &c. —

We are going on extremely
comfortable, & shall soon be in capacity
of seeing our friends. Much weakness
is left still.

With thanks & old rememb^{ts}

Jam. C. L.

This letter by Charles Lamb, one of the most lovable characters in English literature, is addressed to his friend Thomas Allsop, the silk merchant, whom he had first met in 1820. He (Allsop) was a friend and benefactor of Coleridge.

The Lambs probably met Emma Isola on their summer holiday at Cambridge, in 1820. She was then a girl of eleven, and motherless. When her father died in 1823, Charles and Mary Lamb adopted her. In 1833 she married Edward Moxon the publisher.

Becky was the servant who had been with them for many years. On account of her ill temper and tyrannical conduct they were obliged to get rid of her in 1829, though one account (Patmore) alleges that she left them to be married. She had come to them from Hazlitt, whom she had managed, and in many directions managed the Lambs and their household.

At the date of this letter Mary Lamb was in process of recovery from one of her mental upsets.