

[Letter from Alice Drinkwater to her sister Olive Drinkwater; Alice is working in a hat factory in South Framingham]

Feb 23 1873
South Framingham

Dear Sister Olive

It is about eleven oclock in the morning and I am in bed yet and don't dare to get up for fear of freezing it is a fearful cold day. the coldest I believe that I have seen this winter, Rose and Bert came very near freezing dressing and so I am dreading to get up we had a very severe snow storm Friday. They brought us home from the shop and I thought I should freeze before I got here it was drifted so that some of the girls had to get out and walk how it is down there are you having very severe storms down there I hope not for it makes it so dull and lonesome. I am working very hard and should be doing nicely if it wasn't for such sore fingers the acid and sugar of lead in the braid is poison and just as sure as I get a scratch on my fingers or prick them I am sure to have a very painful sore. I have got three fingers done up now and they are very sore indeed. I have made more than any other machine girl yet. And Rose says she heard Metcalf say to some one the other day that Miss Drinkwater was the smartest machine girl that he had. There are twenty machines running now and they expect to do a good business I believe. How are you all? Well I hope and what is the news. I should have written home last Sunday but had such a headache I could hardly sit up I suppose the singing school is done by this time. did it have a good ending? Have you seen Johnnie since he got home? What is he doing? If you hear from or see him you will please tell me. I run my machine ten hours a day and finish hats thrice hours more so that I don't have much time to fix up or do anything but sleep. How does Allie [Nellie?] get along tell her not to forget [??].

I wish I had a peck of apples to eat to day I think I should make quite a hole in them. But have I told you that we have changed our boarding place. We have got board in a private family. Have much farther to go quite a long walk but it does not cost us so much and we have more privileges than at the boarding House before it cost us \$4.00 now \$3.50. Bertie talks of leaving tomorrow we have tried to coax her to stay but her shoulder troubles her and she can not make it pay to stay. We shall be very sorry indeed to lose her she is a very nice girl and she hates to go but she is not used to the hardships of life away from home and is getting pretty homesick I guess. Don't let Mother work too hard. It makes me feel rather strange

when I think how you might all enjoy the comforts of home while you have one if you only would

I don't know as you can read this but my finger is so sore I can hardly hold this pencil but read what you can and guess on the rest. Write soon as you get this and write all the news and now good bye your loving Sister Alice Drinkwater
Tell Mother and Lillian that I will write to them in a few days I would like for some of you to write once in two weeks if not oftener