

[Letter from Arno Knight to Olive Drinkwater]

Silver Creek Mining Camp
Nov. 25th 1879

Dear Ollie:

It has been some time since I wrote to you simply because I have been 14 miles from a Post Office and snow bound by a weeks storm in the Mts. and if I had wrote had no means of mailing a letter unless I happened to know of a miner going to the P.O. at Poncha Springs I am 22 miles from Maysville and hav'nt received any mail since I came to this Camp

Perhaps no one has written to me but I guess some of my folks have and I dont like to think that you have got so many dear friends that you cannot waste your thoughts on me even though they are more worthy and deserving than I. I expect to get through with my mining job here so as to return to Maysville next week unless snow bound so that I cannot get out of the Mts.

I fear I am not blest with luck or ability to any great extent, for though as anxious as ever to get rich my anxiety dont seem to hurry matters much, and making money is slow business at the start Doubtless if I were so rich that I should need no assistance there would be a plenty to offer their aid by personal influence and use of money and opportunities My pay in the mines has been \$2.50 per day and board I am trying to be miserly and saving of money now to enable me to get above daily wages, for money judiciously used makes money you know and I think I can use some advantageously in Colorado next Spring and Summer and hope to be able to get into a civilized country next Fall and stay there I have got about enough of these wild scenes and rough life of the forest. Since coming here the last time I have been in the Camp where one man was hung by the heels till he died, have seen three men Shot, and another man about a mile away was shot and killed and I have seen the very man that done the shooting ride into Maysville and ride their horses in to the stores Hotel etc. I tell you an uncivilized white man is worse than a barbarous Indian Inflamed by evil passions and vile Liquors, and hardened by years of a wild and reckless life, some of them with nothing to restrain them have become perfect demons

You spoke of going to Cal. If you go, or have gone you will doubtless have your mail forwarded and will receive this in the course of time You have my confidence and love and best wishes for your welfare and happiness and may God in his mercy shield you over from the scenes of bloodshed, crimes, wickedness and

misery that exists in this cold wide world Doubtless as the poet says "Into each life some rain must fall, Some days be dark and dreary" – yours is probably no exception and I know many of mine seem dark and dreary and I feel cross and ugly, and discouraged, but I know that is useless so I brace up and resolve to win in spite of every obstacle and I believe I shall yet succeed as far as wealth is concerned at least as living a life that is not wholly in vain So I hope for the best and strive to deserve success and look forward to the blessings and happiness that you and I shall enjoy if true to ourselves and each other

Have not heard from home for about two months Write me about the Thanksgiving Ball The boys their broken hearts and all

So you think you have got a heart do you all right, keep it for me I'll try to be worthy of it and will keep it as a sacred treasure

Direct to Maysville
Chaffee Co. Colorado