

RHODA BARNES to MILTON BARNES

Home Jan[uary] 26th 1865 -

My darling husband,

Oh! tis so cold sitting by the fire trying to write[,] holding my paper and inkstand on my knee, & then Jim is so poorly [sic] I will have to take my letter away down to the office myself - tis just as snowy as ever, but so cold that sleigh bells on our quiet street are few & far between - When I think of how few comforts you have to stand this inclement weather I 'spose I ought'nt to think of complaining, I am so glad that you are in some kind of winter quarters - and may possibly get along with what a soldiers [sic] learns to regard as tolerably comfortable, still I pity thee "poor sing" [-] 'tis not home, where no loved ones are - I am "binning" (as Tirza says) to be very hopeful about the war being near an end, every thing lately seems to tend that way, Col[onel] Lofland says. Gov' Brough says that it will end in ninety days, would'nt that be glorious? I can hardly realize that such could be - then I am looking forward to the 1st of Sept. with more joyful anticipation - at times during the past year I almost despaired of the hope that I should ever live to enjoy a peace again, a peace with my loved one restored to me - just to think how small a portion of the time we have been together since we were married [-] we have often remarked what a smooth courtship we had - but our married life has been subject to many ups and downs - it is all for the best however - twill surely strengthen the mystic link that binds us together [-] 'twill almost, (not altogether[,]) that is impossible) [be] a re-marriage, to have you my long absent one come home for good as the little [ones] say - oh would'nt it be a jubilee my darling? Oh! I can hardly wait - when I think of it - I want to see you so much - Meliss' and the Capt' ^[Johnson] were over
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a little while last night, they seemed so anxious to get started home to be alone [-] I could from remembrance know how they felt - I almost envied them the good times they seem to be having [-] it makes me miss you more & more. I feel very lonely - without you, & I challenge any or all of them to enjoy themselves more than we do together - dont you agree with that my love? - Capt[ain] Jim must be much more interesting when he is alone with a lady than in company, for he seems to be very successful, & that too with rather intelligent tastey [sic] girls, some envious folks say he has no idea of marrying Meliss' ^[-] if not he is acting very meanly - for he is the most devoted gallant, more so than he ever was with Maggie, if she had not forever been throwing herself in his way - I do hope he will marry Meliss' if she can love him - & I guess she can - she has had such a time trying to keep herself - & being knocked to & fro, & abused by old Barlan [sp?] &c - I hope Jim wont leave her but enough of that - The Major is gallanting [sic] Jane Brown to Balls & sleighing parties &c - & Charlie [is taking] Mary Zahniger - & both having lady loves - elsewhere - you did'nt do that way did you my love? Tirza has such a big letter sealed, stamped & addressed that I will have to make this one sheet do me this time, there may be a letter at the office for me, unless Ben Thomson thought about enquiring, none of us have been down since Tuesday, Jim has not felt like going so far in the cold and snow for more than a week[.] Indeed we think sometimes he wont live over the Spring, he was telling Tirza yesterday that he'd be glad how soon you'd come home, he would be glad to see you, I wish you could see some of his folks but - dont go out far enough from Camp to be captured by guerillas for anybody - my love[,] be watchful & very careful - I think Roseman [sic. Rosemond] might let Charlie come to see Jim - Jim cant

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go while the weather is so cold - Mr Wisner has moved into Glessner's house, he was up to see what was the lowest we could take for this house cash down, I told him \$700 - he seemed to think his niece wanted to get it lower. I dont care, [']twould be impossible to us to give possession in the Spring, for houses are in such demand & so scarce, I would be glad to part with it before another winter season[.]

[Text continued inverted at top of page 1:]

Do you wish me to send you any papers or magazines? or will letters & Spanish amuse you? - What do you think Mrs Editor McClelland has got[?] a son - & gone to Barnesville[,] I suppose to show what they have at last accomplished - the climate of Cambridge seems highly favorable to such products, Beg pardon[.] Dont you think the Sherman Testimonial is perfect folly? I do, & would'nt give a penny toward his [\$]100,000 that is to be [collected?] - many worthier, but more [top of page 4:] unassuming men receive no such sinful homage, What has he done so heroic[?] his great raid, was unopposed - in my op- [top of pages 3 & 2:] inion those who have to go forward without praise or any such thing and execute the plans made by those Gen's are far more worthy objects for testimonials, a hundred thousand, to one man - when 100,000's are suffering for Bread & clothing, is it just - and how?

[Middle of page 1:]

God guard thee from harm

my dear one - & bring us together in peace - love from all[.]

Your own Rhoda

I enclose a few more stamps