

RHODA BARNES to MILTON BARNES

*NOTE: This is the last of the Civil War letters in this collection. Milton's military personnel file states he was "mustered out on separate rolls to facilitate payment" on June 10 (he had last been paid only up to September 30, 1864); however the regiment's mustering out date was June 12, 1865.*

Home June 11th 1865  
Sabbath Evening

My darling

Last night my heart was made glad by the very best letter I've had for a long time - best because it brought me the best news I ever received by letter, and you too[,] "poor sing"[,] seemed so glad too - Oh! I almost quake with the fear at times that our blissful anticipations that seem so near may yet be snatched from us - It seems so good to think of you coming - I fear I've kept this holy day in a sad manner - the very welcome thought would steal in - no matter where I was or how I was engaged - I find myself reading away verse after verse in a mechanical way - my mind wandering away to our meeting - which your fine loving letter brought seemingly so near

Oh[,] my Milton[,] how good God has been to you & I [sic] - We forget him too often - I feel my proud vain spirit oft murmuring for the glory & the praise of men for my darling soldier husband - but I feel now as if that was naught but any [sic] airy trifle, in comparison with a life so precious to me, spared - My husband spared - with an untarnished reputation, and his physical form & strength unimpaired - I am alone - trying to write by twilight[.] Mother has just gone to church - Jane is up home - & our "petness" is asleep - This morning Mother was fondling & playing with Tirza in the kitchen [-] she came running into to [sic] me[,] looking so cute [and] saying ~~se~~ "Mamy is Daddy coming home?["] - she was asleep when I read your letter last night - & Mother had been teasing her about your coming[.]

Rhoda Barnes to Milton Barnes  
Home June 11th 1865  
Sabbath Evening

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I have'nt been making a practice of writing letters [on the] Sabbath, -- but you asked so prettily for one to be awaiting your arrival in Columbus that I was persuaded to do so this one time, but how shall I address it[?] - shall I never dare write ["Lt Col"] again[?] - well[, ] well[, ] I am slightly sorry - but rather think I am fully compensated in other attending circumstances -

Won't it seem strange for our tongues to take the place of our pens? is this my last letter? to my soldier husband?

Oh let us praise God - who for Jesus['] sake is so good to us - I pity the friends of the 15th [Ohio Regiment] [-] they feel so disappointed -

If I get your telegram Tuesday evening - I shall[, ] if nothing occurs to prevent, come Wednesday - or Thursday - Wednesday if possible as you will be expecting me - if anything should prevent [mè] you may expect an explanation by mail - I hardly expect you will reach there quite so soon[, ] though. I will come as soon after I hear from you as I can - as to company[, ] I dont want any - I would not object to Col[onel] Lofland going up in the same car - I see some of them often - & I shall see how he feels about going first - then I'll tell him your wishes - I think he'll go - & I think Sade would have gone too - if they had'nt engaged to take two members of the Court & their ladys [sic] to board - As to the Mrs Dr [Stewart,] I dont fancy her company enough to seek it - but if thrown together I shall be good to her - Do you refer to Charley & Wat going? If they should go on the same train -

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Home June 11th 1865  
Sabbath Evening

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You know I cannot help it - but I should not expect to be annoyed with them myself - Moore's are boarding Col[onel] Warner & family - no danger of missing the Court Martial - if you get home within six weeks - I guess - About the Yellowish dress my love - I cannot promise - I dont think there is any here & Mother thinks I dont need it - I guess she is right [-] you know we must be economical[, ] my darling - I will bring you some money from the bank - but you mus'nt [sic] scold when I tell you - I owe [\$]100 already that I drew by littles [sic] since last fall - but did'nt disturb the [top of page 1:] bonds - I am almost wild when I think how much money has gone, when I am trying to be so saving - & owing some to Rameys & Hutchisons too - but I mus'nt write about this tonight - I am afraid if you are not paid off pretty fast I'll have to come home & leave you [because] you know tis so expensive - I can't take our pet - she is safer at home - & you'll have to do with me instead till you get HOME - poor Mother is joyful & sad too - smiles & tears are almost blended - May God comfort those who mourn & bless those who rejoice - [Top of pages 3 & 2:] I want to get Mother a decent mourning dress - she has none fit to wear - & cant get the [right] kind here - so I had rather do without one - If you get a letter in Louisville - dont be vexed at me - I was out of sorts - when I wrote it but not at you - Your own waiting Rhoda

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May God in love guard thee & thine & bring thee safely - to those who love you[.]