

MILTON BARNES to RHODA BARNES

Huntsville Alabama.
March 10th 1865

My dear darling,

I have been waiting and waiting for a letter this week but no letter comes. the roads have both been out of repair for a week and we have had no kind of mail until last night a very large one came. I thought surely now I will get a nice good fat little fellow, so watched the Chaplain as he distributed the mail, expecting every minute to see him look up and say "here, Col's your letter" but nary a time, then I thought[,] well I'll wait till morning and may be another mail will come that has mine in it, so this morning Dick came back from Brigade HD.Qrs, saying "no mail today", but I will try to be patient. I think perhaps Doc. Stewart will bring me one, and he is due here tomorrow[.] The time for grand reviews has come. one day this week the 1st Div. had a review, and we were to have one yesterday, but as every-thing was ready to go out to the field, it commenced a regular old fashioned rainstorm and rained and blew all day and night, so that put an end to the review till next week. This morning it cleared up very cold and today we are crouched down around our little fireplaces, trying everyway possible to amuse ourselves. The Chaplain has been reading Goldsmith and every now and then raises up with one of his characteristic guffaws. I smoke a while - then pick up the remnant of an old newspaper and try to extract some new item that I had overlooked in reading a week ago, - then dinner was announced[,] then another smoke, and - then I will try to write a letter^{l,}} thought I, but in fact it is difficult to catch an idea in this camp prison, this isolation. But although there is so little to interest us here, yet time seems to be passing rapidly.

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The ides of March are upon us - one third of the first spring month is gone. the spring birds are singing and the buds and flowers are struggling into open life, while all things give signs that winter is about over. these cold spells are the exceptions rather, for we have had some very pretty mild spring weather. O I so much hope that the long cold winter at home is nearly over ~~at-home~~ also, so that my loved ones can get out of ~~the~~^{their} little disagreeable winter cage and get the warm sun lit smiles of spring. How cruelly long seems our separation from each other! but the future is bright now with better prospects. let us hope and pray that the end of these things may soon be.

The Chaplain is putting up the mail and I must tear off this leaf as it is. if I get a letter tomorrow I will write again immediately a longer and better letter. My love to Muzzer and Tirza and lots to my own dear darling, from your loving and true Milton.

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I dont know whether this will go through for some days as the road is not yet repaired and may not be for some time to come. The last mail was brought in a wagon train from Nashville as far as Murfreesboro, and this may not ~~ever~~^{ever?} get back as well.