

RHODA BARNES to MILTON BARNES

NOTE: This letter, six pages long, <sup>is written</sup> ~~begins~~ on a double sheet, folded to make four pages, and a half double sheet (torn from the whole). The flow of the text from the first to second parts (i.e. from page four to page five) is interrupted by a marginal note at the top of page four introducing a new topic - the whereabouts of "Uncle Joe" (mentioned in several of Rhoda's earlier letters dated May 10 and October 19, 1862). The second part (pages five and six) flows logically from this.

Home Dec | 8th 1863

My own dear Milton

Your dear kind letter of the 27th giving us a glimpse of the horrors of three days battle - & your grateful rejoicing over the great victory - & more that your life, my loved husband[,], was saved through all that fearful time - God only knows (for I cannot tell) how blessed the news is to me - his kind care does indeed seem almost miraculous - & for what is it? am I, are we any more worthy than thousands who have been bereft? ought we not to devote our lives henceforth to the service of such a God & Father<sup>[?]</sup> - Will we ever again forget Him who has so signally proved that he ever remembreth us[?] - I have tried to pray that my darling husband might be protected from every & all danger[,], that he might go forth with a brave true heart & a strong arm looking unto Jesus for help in every time of need - & Oh may I not hope & trust my feeble petitions have not fallen to the ground - nay more[,], that such a Saviour will spare us to each other & teach us both to love him in some degree as he hath loved us[?] - Let us be thankful my Milton - Major Moore & Capt Roseman [sic. Rosemond] arrived safely last night - [the] Major & his very much rejoiced Father came up this morning, he came rather unexpectedly & reminded me so much of another great big fellow in uniform who [sic] I would give so much to see - that I could hardly control my feelings [and] the tears would come, I was considerably wrought up by the scenes depicted in your letter - I had read & reread & Mother had read it very carefully - it was the last thing last night in my mind, I thought it over in the

Rhoda Barnes to Milton Barnes  
Home - Dec 8th 1863

- 2 -

silent watches & then thought & talked all morning about it -

Mother reads your letters occasionally [sic] herself -

I want her to - It makes her love you more to see for herself

what a good kind loving boy you are to write to her baby Rhoda -

'tis natural you know - - We were very much interested in your account of poor Selim - we almost cried over his spunk & bravery - & then - I was so sorry for fear he would fall into the enemy's hands - he was'n't going to be sent to the rear until Mission Ridge was taken & leave his poor tired master to trudge on - if he was wounded Mother thinks he deserves to be brought home with you & taken good care off [sic] all his life, when he is such a battle scarred veteran. Wat corroborated your account exactly - called you a brave man & said you had been complimented for your conduct by some of the Generals - Said you told him to tell only me [sic] that you had done your duty - God bless you my own - May I ever be as proud of you as now - would any other thing make me prouder than that you'd done your duty[?] -

But my dear I beg of you not to rush into danger needlessly or rashly - think of our little darling daughter who is growing daily more & more in the image of her poor absent Pa - think of one who is growing prematurely old waiting, hoping[,] praying & longing for the return of her much loved husband - I sent you a small package of clothes in a barrel the [Aid] Society were sending the 97th [-] <sup>[to Captain]</sup> Hunters old Co - intending all the Guernsey [County] boys in the 97[th] - officers included [-] should have a share of the

[at top of page 1:] ->

Rhoda Barnes to Milton Barnes  
Home - Dec 8th 1863

- 3 -

Contents - each member of the Society sent a loaf of toast. I wish you could know which was Mother's - What shall I send you with Wat when he returns<sup>3</sup> [?]  
He reports your health as good notwithstanding your fatigue & exhaustion [-]  
I received those congratulations & your note - I was so vexed to find that you were going to move again so soon [-] it is strange how you stand it - I feared a battle but Wat thinks not - Oh I hope not ever again [undeciphered word]

[At top of page 4:]

We think Uncle Joe is in Sherman's Corps - could you ascertain, easily?

I dont feel much like urging you to to take much more trouble hunting him, only for Grandmothers sake - he is so mean & neglectful with ~~him~~ her that he has never written one letter directly to her - allows his family to keep her posted - was at home on 40 days furlough & did'nt go to see her, & <sup>[the]</sup> poor old body vexes so about him - & none of us can ever know his address - I wrote to Sade[sp?] when I was in Penn[sylvania] enquiring about him for Gran[d] Mother but she never answered me - If you should ever see him be as independent as he dare be [sic] - unless he is suffering - I had a letter from poor Cousin Will in Libby Prison - he is well but very much depressed in spirits - Oh how I pity him - I received your check for \$550 all right - Dr Clark is to loan \$500 to somebody for you & give me his note<sup>[A]</sup>

I would have written to you sooner but was waiting until I could get it fixed - it is in the bank - I am going to put myself on short allowance this winter to save more - As you havent got your suit yet - & as he is charging you a very extravagant bill - I shant be in a hurry about paying him [-] I want to have all the money possible at interest - if I should have to borrow some to

Rhoda Barnes to Milton Barnes  
Home - Dec 8th 1863

- 4 -

help pay him - after <sup>[a]</sup> while - aint I right <sup>[?]</sup> -

Wat says it will be your turn next to come home, or have you concluded never to come on furlough again? I wrote to Barnesville last week & told them of the despatch - I will write again soon - Ellen has a little daughter --We all send our love - Good bye <sup>[.]</sup> Trust in God -  
Your own Rhoda

[At top of page 5:]

Wat could'nt fool Tirza, she said ["] no-tai'nt Pa["] - she is so cute -