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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste. Famille St.
July 7th 1901.

My own darling boy,

Your dear letter of June 20th written after your arrival in Liverpool received a warm welcome on the 1st. You seem to have had the same kind of weather as we were favored with at the time. You evidently prefer our Canadian hotels, my dear. Your letters cheer me up considerably I assure you, so continue writing as often as you can; otherwise you know what will happen. True, I have the children with me, while you

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are alone, comparatively speaking, but I am all the more lonely. They are a great responsibility & under the circumstances, I often wish I had a little home of my own – then again the servant question is such a bother, that were I keeping house, I could not get out to even do my marketing, as I could not leave the little ones alone. O! what a bitterly black day it was for me, when you were ordered away to the Yukon! – true, it has given you every opportunity of distinguishing yourself & letting the world know your worth, but it destroyed our happy, little home

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& Heaven alone knows when we shall ever have another – the best years of my life are gone, the few charms I once possessed are fading away, helped by the anxiety I have felt during your long absence, & the loneliness I have had to endure owing to this cruel separation – the children will have lost many of their sweet, winning ways before they live with you again: in fact, everything connected with home life has lost its charm & there remains nothing but the past to look back on!!.... I tell you once more, dear, do all you can when you are away this time, for I will never again consent to your going away without me. I would far rather have an eternal separation, if this has to come again. I would work the very flesh off my finger ends, endure any hardship, put up with any thing as long as I am near you, my

dear. It is cruel ~~the~~ to have to live this life & at times I feel..... but no! I cannot tell you. You will tell me I write sad letters I suppose, but I must unburden my heart to some one & if not to my husband, to whom? I do not seek sympathy any where else – no one knows

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but you how I feel. I could get on all right with Mamma & the boys but three families in one house are too many, especially when there are children. Flora is exceedingly hard to manage at times – there are many to correct her, at a thing she resents & she does not get on with Duffins – she comes naturally by it, as the year I was in Vaudreuil, his father & mother treated me shamefully as you may remember. I should not go over all these old scores, but I cannot help it. You know, but no! You cannot know what life can be under these conditions. I will say no more. perhaps things will better themselves in some way & enable me

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to go to you. So far, Mrs. [Alec] Clarke has not written to renew her invitation. I am preparing & will certainly have to go somewhere, to give the little ones a change. I now turn to your dear letter of June 21st written at the Hotel Cecil. My letters were in your hands & you found them sad. It is too bad, I should pain you by writing in that strain, but forgive me, dear & be lenient with me, please. Thank goodness, the little ones can sometimes forget & can be happy, that is one comfort. They speak of you very often & Gertrude has wept several times when just about retiring, over your long absence – it is useless to try & comfort her then, for she makes me weep too.

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I am glad you like Mrs. Clarke & hope you will continue the friendship so nicely commenced. It is as well you wrote re the officers you had from the N.W.M.P. full Colonel in the C. Militia is not much of an honor, still will do no harm, I suppose. You must have been pretty busy during your stay in London & I hope enjoyed your visit. I have scanned the papers & have not seen your name mentioned at all. Gilbert Parker is a Canadian & so is his wife, is he not? They say he is very nice. Cousin Henri Joly is a friend of his I believe. Thanks so much for the Convent prospective – the children are still too young to go from me, particularly when you are away, but later on, when things are more settled we will decide. I too desire that they all be thoroughly well educated. Your next dear letter of June 22nd from Cecil hotel

is now open. I hope Lord. L. was very nice in every way to you, my dear old darling. Of course, draw on me for what you wish – it is all yours. I hope you will understand my last letter & that the copies of the two statements from Alec & Belcher will be understood. There is always some drain on one, it seems to me.

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no money comes from any investment so far, that I can see. Flora got your letter & was delighted. I enclose her answer written entirely by herself. Your next dear letter is dated Knebworth House, June 23rd, & proves, like all the rest, most interesting. Your stay there you must have enjoyed & in your heart, dear, did you not wish we had such a home? I know I do. I fancy I could see the amused light glistening in your dear eyes when you wrote about Queen Elizabeth's visit, the good advice she asked for & the other good things she sought – she was no doubt a connoisseur in every fine art &

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every nice thing of the time. Luxuries are no doubt, more common in England & France, than they are in Canada. Were your dreams very sweet in the Falkland room or were they disturbed by the warlike occupant of the room in Cromwell's time? sixteen pair of eyes are no [fun] sometimes! – one pair are hard to contend against as a rule! – It is a very dark gloomy day, pouring rain. Your next is of the same date – of course, the ladies' went to church. How I would love to be able to see all you have seen & hear all you hear – those fine paintings, the beautiful scenery, etc, etc. It would be hard to find a handsomer, more aristocratic looking man than your

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father, so I am not surprised at what you say. Dr. Howard was fortunate was he not? the place must be very beautiful & I can follow you all over. You still cling to your old loves I see & find the park at Orillia just as fine as the magnificent spot you were in – well! I suppose – “be it ever so humble, there's no place like home”. Be happy, my darling, if you can, but do not cease thinking of me all the time as I think of you – morning, noon & night, sleeping or waking, I think constantly of you, my darling. I keep wondering when you sailed, where you now are, etc. I hope my letters will reach you safely. I have not written since Sunday last. I am so busy during the week that I cannot find much leisure, so write long letters on Sunday. I must try & write twice a week after this. I think you would prefer it & enjoy my letters

more, if they were not so long. My sewing girl comes again tomorrow, I hope. my trip with you delayed my work, but I would prefer sewing all summer to have been with you all that time, my pet. There is not much news – a letter came from C. [Rennie] to you asking about his discharge papers. I answered in a few words, enclosing a printed

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slip from Mr. F.W. Taylor, published in "The Star" giving him the information. Skirving's name is among those who have not received theirs, no address being known. The enclosed clippings all came the other day – I think Gillespie sends them. I send sample of address – you may recognize it. Starnes has left the N.W.M.P. his wife is here now, Auguste tells me, visiting her parents. Auguste is, I am told, secretary of the Committee for the York reception – if so, it will bring him into contact with the prominent men of the place & do him good, I hope. We have not seen him all week. Antoine enjoyed his few days there – so did Frank

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relish the fresh air he inhaled in Vaudreuil. Gertie is still going about. she miscalculated I fear, very much. She wishes me to be God mother & Auguste to stand for you, my dear. I will be vaccinated soon – this week probably – the children were done, just two years ago, so they are safe, I think. Baby feels fine with his hair cut & although Gertrude has offered to glue some of her curls on to his head – he says "no thank you" – I am a man now" – just like my dear old Papa, eh! Mamma dear?." Things are quiet – many people have gone to the country – I will write Mrs. Moon & Mrs. Clarke today if possible. I hope you are

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enjoying good health & that you will have a pleasant trip to Africa. I received Bartram's note & enclosed Holbrook a/c. Am I to pay the whole amount – could you wear the suit, or had you to have it altered?. Your secretary writes a very small hand – not as good a penman as [Moir] is! I wrote him concerning the express parcel which was in Ottawa & of which notice was sent on June 12th – it turned out to be papers mailed you by Mr. Taylor & he attended to them – they were Hospital reports & [Moir] said he had telegraphed for them while we were in Ottawa. Mamma & myself went to [Lithmer] Park this week – we enjoyed the music & the jugglers were very good indeed. Well, my dear old boy, I will leave you now, not for tea but for dinner. The children are well & send fond love & kisses – the

crosses are military kisses Flora says. I told her I did not think they were different from other kisses. Good bye, my darling & God bless you & protect you, dear. With many a fond embrace & loads of love & kisses, ever,

Your own true hearted, devoted lonely little
wifie,
Maye.

Is your address correct? M.V.O.

first or last?

M.

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