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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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May 13<sup>th</sup> / 00.

26 Ste. Famille St.  
Montreal.

My darling Sam,

All your dear letters written on the steamer on your way out as well as the last dated April 10<sup>th</sup> just previous to your disembarkation [sic] at Cape Town reached me on May 8<sup>th</sup> & I cannot tell you all the pleasure & comfort they gave me. It filled me with delight to see your dear familiar hand writing again, although I did not know where you were when they came into my hands & I still am in ignorance of your whereabouts. The reports we get through the press are not very satisfactory & they seem determined not to say too much about "Strathcona's Horse". Your dear letters are so interesting to

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me, my darling that I treasure them most carefully. I felt certain the loss of so many horses would worry you very much, but as you say, it could not be helped for I know everything possible was done under the circumstances. Did you lose your mounts? It must have been hard for some of the men to see their horses die, they get so much attached to them sometimes. I am pleased to learn the trip was such

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a very pleasant one in every way – it must be nice when such harmony reigns among so many – very different from what they said of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Batt. I hope you got the few lines I penned to you previous to leaving Halifax & gave to the Capt. of the tug which was going out – it was in a way, my farewell, for our good bye was such a cold, hurried one that it well nigh broke my heart. They tell me I am a brave little woman. well! I hope so, but I fear if they could see my heart they would not think so highly of me. Your first is dated Mar 21<sup>st</sup>, so I suppose you did not write before that - the

weather being so rough must have been very hard on you all. Mr. & Mrs. Percy have gone to Paris, so I have not seen them since your departure, although I called once but Mrs. Percy had gone to church, it being Friday p.m & they have services for the troops now on active service on that day.

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Elmes must have been pretty sick as he is not very strong at the best of times, still if he comes through all right, the trip may prove very beneficial. His mother was brought up to Ottawa on Wednesday last – she was well enough to be moved & they thought she would be happier among her old friends. I brought Gertrude & Baby to see her & she was charmed with them. Flora had not returned from school & it rained all next day & she could not go to see her. She asked me to go up, inquired about you & Elmes very affectionately. she fears she will never see the latter again. I found her very much

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altered – the change was very great in a fortnight I found. I try to bear up but I can assure, you have fully made up my mind that if you come back safe & sound, that you will not leave me again, for no matter what reason – neither Queen, Country or anything else will part us. We have our little ones to bring up & educate & I need your helping hand to do my duty well. Life is too short & its pleasures too few to live away from the one you love best for years at a time. You must not ask me to submit to another separation, for I cannot & will not do it. so you know in time & when I once make up my mind I am not given to

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changing it easily. I did not know any one would take sufficient interest to tell you we got off well the next day. true, Col. Macdonald remained behind! – he may have told you. You did not enclose a copy of the newspaper published on board & will not likely have any when you come back. I regret it, as I would have liked one for my scrap book. I was proud of you all in Halifax, although as I said before, my heart was almost breaking when I heard your last order “Men of “Strathcona’s Horse,” quick march”. Mrs. Hope asked me to lunch last Saturday, the 5<sup>th</sup> but I could not go – she asked me to go to The “Gibson Pictures” with them on Wednesday evening last & I accepted – they were fairly good. amateurs of course, but the world of fashion was all there. Mrs. Jarvis left for Toronto on Thursday a.m. she invited me to go & visit them & was exceedingly nice in every way – in fact,

they all are. Your letter is continued on Mar 26<sup>th</sup> – the Capt. seemed very nice the few moments I saw him. I watched the papers & seeing no ship reported having met you, did not expect any letters until the 11<sup>th</sup>. Your next is dated Mar 30<sup>th</sup> & you begin by telling me how much you miss me – how nice it is to be told that by one who is on the other side of the world & to know that there is one who thinks of you, although so very far away. Though you never were very partial to the fragrant cup of tea in the old days, I think you enjoyed it

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when on board & rather fatigued with your duties & the trip in general. The family are well. Auguste's Marie is going to distinguish herself once more so you must try hard to return in time, as they may want you to be God father. it will be in Oct, I fancy.

Tuesday night. I commenced this on Sunday & could not continue until now owing to one thing & another. I hope you are well, for I heard through Auguste who had it from Mr. Taylor that Lord Strathcona cabled the Bank of Montreal yesterday that "Strathcona's Horse" [truly] left for the front on Saturday. Where have you been all this time, as you have been mentioned as having taken part in several engagements already? Yours of April 4<sup>th</sup> I now take up. I have

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not had any of the photo's yet, but as Mr. Campbell, local manager of the Elder Dempster-line has returned from a trip to England, & having had the pleasure of meeting & travelling up with him from Halifax, I will call & try to get as many pictures as possible. Your next is dated April 5<sup>th</sup> & continues giving me items of your daily life on board the Vessel. The correspondent of our daily mail met with a sad end, poor fellow! the shooting was accidental of course. It is hard for you to see your men die for one reason or another. Your next is dated April 8<sup>th</sup> & in it you allude to the serious loss of horses – there is no use worrying over that, it could not be helped. I do hope you will be able to write fairly often for I do worry very much over our enforced separation.

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We are enjoying good health, although I am not very strong. Gertrude & Dobbie are very loyal & were singing "God save our grocer's Queen" the other day. When I laughed they got very indignant & Gertrude said "it is'nt [sic] the butcher's Queen, anyway Mamma, so it is the grocer's." In singing

“Soldiers of the Queen” they came to “remember who has made her so” – Gertrude said “How can England sew, Mamma, & she does for “The Soldiers of the Queen say “remember who has made her [so]” – they make such quaint remarks at times. Flora is well, studies well & gets on famously in her classes – she tries to be good, but it is hard sometimes, I assure you. Your next is written on Apr 10<sup>th</sup> in sight of the Table Mt. & the last is Cape Town same date. You were no doubt glad to reach the end of your destination & I hope the time will not be very long ere you reach the end of another journey, that is, home to your poor little wifie & children who so lovingly await your return. I had a letter from Jim Henderson asking for your address which I answered in a few days. I also wrote a short note to Judge Dugas enclosing a letter of inquiry penned to you, concerning a man who had worked for him in Dawson, so I went straight to headquarters. Perry has come out from the Yukon as enclosed slips will show, leaving there on Apr 10<sup>th</sup>. You will note the many changes, so that those who went to the front are apt to be left after all. nice, is it not? Mr. Godsall called

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on Monday, having just come from England. he inquired for news of you & asked me “if you had not given the management of your business to a man called Steele – he had forgotten the initials”. I said, “no, not to my knowledge – that I know of no man of that name that you could have left. that I had power of Atty. & that Jim Clark was looking after your “Empire” interests – he just scowled at the mention of Jim’s name & said he would write to him. he wants the mine sold at any price – no matter what happens, as long as he gets his money. I do wish Howard & Morris would pay their share, for Lex is much discharged from what his wife says. I had a letter from Viv today, telling me his mother was very restless & worrying – he received Elmes’ letter & your paper from

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Cape Town & wanted later news, if I had it. I sent a card to Mrs. Cotton. I am sure they feel the loss of their eldest son very keenly – he was a fine fellow & how thankful they must be that the second did not join you. The Col. is I believe to replace Col. Vidal in Halifax – the latter will not remain at any cost. They had a horse show here in the beginning of the month – the first of the kind – it was very successful. Mr. Lighthall kindly asked me to his box the opening night. I enjoyed it. Auguste accompanied me. We have commenced the usual spring housecleaning & I am tired out – no matter how much one sweeps & dusts all year, it seems to accumulate terribly &

one finds any quantity of this awful dusts when May comes. There is not very

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much news. Mabel & John had a few in last night. Mrs. Pelletier (Col.) of Quebec wished to meet me so they asked a few others also. She is very nice & misses her husband very much – she says he has gone to the front again & anxiously awaits news. Gertie has left Winnipeg & is now spending a few days in Chicago on her way home. She will have been away three months, so has had a nice rest. Mamma is well, but fatigued – we are once more without a servant. notwithstanding the terrible fire in Hull, they are as scarce as ever, – having received so much help, they will be better off than before. All the boys are well & join in fond love to you. Mamma, Alice & the little ones send many kisses & hope you are coming home soon again. It is now quite late so I must say “good night”. God bless you, my darling & send you safe home to me is our fervent prayer many times daily. Heaven protect you – write soon – remember me kindly to all whom I know – believe me with many sweet kisses, in which the little ones join,

Your ever loving, true, warm-hearted

devoted, lonely little wifie

Maye

I did not care for Capt. Adamson at all – liked Sergt. Major Heron much better, the short time we saw both.

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