

2008.1.1.1.1.221

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

Do you get "Star?" Sent regularly since Feb. 21st.

26 Ste Famille St
May 4th, 1902

My own darling boy,

As I reserved yours of Mar 29th & 30th to answer today, now that Torla & myself have been to Mass, I come to have my usual Sunday chat with the one so near & dear to me. It was lovely a while ago, but it is clouding up again & I much fear we are going to have more rain, of which we have had sufficient for a time. Strange that you should have to work down your weight, while I do all I can to try & get some fat on my poor, old bones.

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

Where is Major Birdwood? I thought he was with you dear. I hope Leckie will prove that he appreciated what you did for him better than the majority of the others. I have thought of the furniture & figured upon the price, but I must have a nest egg to go on ere I can think of it, as things are so very expensive just now. It really frightens me I assure it you & I am sensible enough to know it would be perfect folly to think of it now. Do not imagine from that, that I am not eager to go,

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

for I am as anxious as ever, but I must curb my impatience & wait – Several large firms here are anxious to have me purchase, as they say it will enable them to make more sales & will give me the very lowest figure, taking freight into consideration as well. They told Auguste, as I have not been up myself, not [desiring] to do too much in that line, as folks are so talkative & it spreads about so very quickly – why I know not, as I do not trouble about other people's affairs, but they do about mine, so I am beginning to believe I am a somewhat important person after all. It would not be a wise thing to go out for a trip, until the eve of your return home, should you perchance decide not to remain any time – we could meet in Cape Town & come back by Australia as you suggest. Do not imagine I would like that "beastly country" as you say because it is hot. I have lived in cold countries – as long as I am with you, I can keep warm.

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

Loneliness just kills me & I feel your absence so keenly all the time, although I never say anything, as I never trouble others with my grief as you are aware. It is something I have scarcely ever done & will not begin now. Yes, your name is good in Canada & I wish sincerely that you could find something to do here, as I do not wish to leave the country as long as you are in it & have something to occupy you. I leave all to you & as I have told you a thousand times, I am ready to abide by your decision.

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

If you want to farm in Ont. or ranch in the N. W. you will, as always find a willing helpmate in your little wife, who is ready to go anywhere with you, my own old darling. Flora does not speak French well – she hates the language & the nation – thinks none are equal to the Scotch & none as good – They both learn it at school, but do not wish to speak it here. It is very kind of Dr. Sam to wish us to visit them, but you know that is impossible as present. The little ones are growing & getting more reasonable every day, but I would not think

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

of going to visit your friends without you my dear – think of running the gauntlet before so many & may be such particular folks. It frightens me & I need you to lean on, I assure you – together I could face the world – alone, I retire into my shell..... You are an old fraud! Miss Lily [Ireland] an old friend, a sweetheart of yours! I suppose you wrote a very nice letter in reply & granted her request. Indeed! I do not want you to have any sweethearts anywhere but here & none but myself. I fear very much that I might be inclined to resent it more than you anticipate. Have not seen the Jack McGillis since the night they were here before your departure – took offence because they imagined we had invited those who were here then which, as you know is not the case – even Uncle Jack has played the fool, sued the estate for a small sum of money he loaned them some time ago & behaved like an ass generally – his wife is to blame & he feels bad about it, still he must abide by the

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

the consequences of his very foolish marriage which he regrets when too late, as is often the case. As you know Dundonald is coming out. He seems a very great favorite & people expect much from such a fine man. I hope young Sam will do well, he was so anxious to go to S. A. - hope he is now quite well & feels no ill effects from his enteric. Remember me to him when you see him.

I suppose Steel of [Blaenavon] has the true military spirit in him & will not be long learning scouting thoroughly – it is a

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

study in itself & one needs to be wide awake to do it well. It will be nice if quarters are built for the officers later on & it will be easy for us to join each other then. If peace is declared, I hope they will commence to build at once, as the S. A. C. will be kept some years in the country no doubt. England is rich enough to build barracks for men who do such good work for the empire, I am sure. Who is McGinnis of Moosomin to whom you refer in such very flattering terms? I do not remember ever hearing of him. Yes, I am sure a man

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

can be made or marred by the woman he marries – we have seen endless examples of the same, eh, dear? the Casey's are back in Macleod, but he does not rise, poor old chap – he no doubt was not a gentleman & had such awful manners at times. I will never forget Torla once using her fingers instead of her handkerchief & when reprimanded said “Mr Casey does that” & could not see why she might not. Trust you enjoyed your 5'oclock tea at the Hendersons. They seem very nice people.

Mackie goes with this contingent as you know, so there is no use asking him to raise a subscription for deceased members of the “S. H.” in Calgary.

Col. Herchmer's son joined the S. A. C. did he not? he was very ill with enteric in the autumn – Have heard no more re Col. H-'s marriage with Miss Cardell – do not know who started it at all. Mrs. [Wall's] sister of Inspr. A. C. Macdonell, N. W. M. P. told me of it – I have just been telling Torla that no matter where we are, they will have their ponies & pets –

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

The poor dears have been deprived of all those things ever since we left Macleod & it is hard on them – they are all fond of animals, poor little things & we will have to make it up to them later on.

In your second of Mar. 29th you acknowledge mine of Feb 23rd & worry over my trouble with the children, but as I said before you must forgive me dear – sometimes my patience is exhausted & then I must air my sentiments to some one, & who has a better right to know than you, my dear?

[/pg 10]

[pg 11]

A nurse is of no use now – they are too big for one. Gertrude & Torla are at school & Dubbie will be five tomorrow. It is the bickering & quarrelling that I cannot stand but, Louise & her boy are going to live with Regie & Tillie – they go with them just as soon as things are decided – so we will then have peace.

Duffins is like most boys I suppose, a tease & quarrelsome, still it makes my little ones miserable, so it is too bad we have had to put up with it for so long.

[/pg 11]

[pg 12]

No! dear you are not stingy with your money I know well, but I assure you, dear I do the very best I can with it. I did not purchase a single toilet accessory in any way this winter except a new hat & skirt – bought very little for the children either, keep them neatly & nicely dressed, but nothing superfluous, still you would be surprised how much money it takes even then. I would not be bothered with another servant. I help pay the present one's wages too you know – I prefer a little trouble, but it is trying to keep peace that is hard on me as I often said before. As I told you in the beginning of this letter I really do not care a pin where we live as long as we are together – I will go anywhere with you, my dear & I am not anxious to live from hand to mouth or spend your hard earned money on a trip to S. A. I know my interests & that of the little ones is nearest your heart, my dear so I trust implicitly in your good judgement & love, so do your best for us.

[/pg 12]

[pg 13]

I know your ambition would be to be on the trek all the time, & feel your thoughtfulness in not exposing yourself to danger for our sakes & appreciate it more than you can realize. Yes, Dickey is nice & I will write & ask for a photo, if we go to you. I do not quite understand the Pension bill, but will get Auguste to explain. Law terms are not very familiar to me you see, but I will learn. Fred White sent you a copy of it at once. I wonder if he will retire now? he must be sick

[/pg 13]

[pg 14]

of the outfit. Laurier's health is not good & they speak of his retiring in a few months if his continental trip does not prove of great benefit. I do not know the cause.

Now your dear letter of Mar 30th awaits an answer my dear old darling, & “after my doleful letter you hunted houses!!” too bad I should make you feel that way. I should refrain from writing when feeling blue, still do not wish to deprive you of one of my effusions, even if they are apt to make

[/pg 14]

[pg 15]

you as blue as a blue boy, so you must forgive me, my own dear love. Two hundred dollars per month for a house!! why we would have to live on air at that rate. Louise has become somewhat callous & I suppose one cannot wonder at it, with such a husband. The Huberts are quite happy in Vaudreuil & are enjoying it immensely – as long as the weather is nice & that there is no cold wind, as it is early in the season to move out to the country. They all desire to be remembered to you.

I bought a lot of things for the youngsters yesterday in the shape of shoes, etc. two pr gloves for each, ribbons for each & hair ribbons too – odds & ends for 1st Communion. They are well but not fat by any means – tall & slight they all will

be. Flora is almost up to my eyes & will not take long to catch up or even pass me, I fear. She has gone to the Convent to commence her retreat & is anxious to make a fervent First Communion, poor dear. I have penned a long letter so I had better close. Reg - Gus & Antoine have gone to St. Laurent to see the Fathers this p.m. It has again commenced

[/pg 15]

[pg 16]

commenced to rain as I feared. I do hope it is not going to last for several days. Well, my dear old pet, I had a birthday yesterday. Mamma gave me a pretty hat pin made out of a carnelian cuff link that belonged to our poor [Unwin] - Mrs Mac a pretty tie made by herself, very dainty & nice, also an affectionate letter. Dubbie will be five tomorrow. I bought him a hoop & stick, Alice has sent him a book – she never forgets she is his Godmother – time passes & he was only eight

[/pg 16]

[pg 17]

months old when you first left us, dear.

God bless & protect you, my own true sweetheart whom I love so dearly & who is all the world to me. An urgent request from “Soldiers Wives League” to attend meeting tomorrow - “such a nice letter from Col. Steele” Mrs Cole, sec. says to induce me to put in an appearance. Again many kisses & much love from the dear little ones to our dear old Papa. With a heart brimming over with deep, true affection, believe as ever in the warm, true love of your own devoted wifie

Maye

[/pg 17]