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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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Auguste sends paragraph
re "Pension bill".

26 Ste Famille St
March 5th 1902

My own darling boy,

I was more than delighted when Monday's mail brought me four of your dear letters, Jan 25th, 28th, 30th. & 31st. as well as that to Flora enclosing the Kaffir bracelet which she is so pleased with. Naturally I will first take yours of the 25th. to answer – it is written from Naauwpoort & acknowledges mine up to Dec 24th. I was not surprised to learn Maj. Gen. Baden Powell had been out to inspect as I thought from the

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length of time since his departure from England, that he was about due. I am delighted to learn he found things in pretty good condition & hope he was satisfied with everything.

If De la Rey was concentrating then he has been rather busy since judging from the reports we get of the Klercsdorp [sic] affair. I wish you would not bother about us as long as you are so much occupied & it is more than unkind of me to bother you with my small worries, when you have so much to think of. Yes, dear I received the draft for £1.75

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as you know long ere this, as I acknowledged it in a receipt to Capt. Strutt, as well as to yourself. I have, as I told you in previous letters, sent three hundred dollars (\$300.00) of that amount to P. H. Belcher, who wrote asking to be paid as soon as possible, as he could not wait until Spring for the amount still due. Do not bother about us. We have rented this house for another year & will try & make the best of it – I could not think of going out until the war office sees fit to help us in paying expenses & as long as house & living is as high as it is – it would be folly on my part, I see well. I know it would give you any amount of work to get us there, so until things are more settled we will say nothing more about it. Only bear in mind one thing – even if I do not allude to it, never fancy that I have given up the hope of going or that I can ever be happy living away from you, for such can never be. I will not mention it too often so as not to weary you by requesting you to bring us over, but I will sigh & wish to be near you day after day until Heaven sees fit to reunite us once more.

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As I feel sure you will understand how very reasonable I have always been, I need only say again, do not worry about us & do not think of taking or even looking for a house as long as the present high rates continue. Whenever you bring us, wherever you wish us to go, we will be ready, my dear. I enclose the first notice re Pension bill which you will see in Star of Mar 4th. last night's. Uncle Henry has promised to do all he can to assist you in any way & I think he will. When the bill is decided, we will apply for leave, I suppose. Frank so far has had four hundred

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& seventy five (\$475.00) dollars since Oct. His term lasts until June I believe. When here in the summer, he will, I suppose, endeavor to make something, but so many people are away that there is not much doing – his expenses may be a little less next year – I hope they may be. Antoine comes up for his finals next week & I sincerely hope he will be successful.

Auguste came in to spend the evening so I had to read extracts from your last letters – he is always much interested in all your doings & keeps well posted.

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I will save all I can – you know dear, I never spend a cent [needlessly] – on the contrary you always found me too close. I will not go out until the war is over & the govt. ready to defray part of the expenses – it would be simply ridiculous on my part to wish to do so, as it would take a small fortune before we would be comfortably established in some district.

No word from Uncle John re the sixty dollars (\$60.00), but I suppose he received it, all right. It is nice of you to desire more honors, but I am quite content with you as you are. Please take good care of yourself & all will be well & I shall be as happy as possible under the circumstances, if I can be sure such is the case. Well, my darling, as it is eleven o'clock & I have a great deal to do ere my head touches my pillow, I believe I shall have to say good-night. God bless & keep you safe until we meet again!

Sunday p.m. Good morning, my darling, I hope you had a good night's rest & enjoyed it. I was out this a.m. & to my surprise, while quickly walking near the P.O.

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met Father Lacombe – he was delighted to see me & seemed so – he is looking very well indeed & found me the same, younger than ever though. He says he will not leave for the West until spring, but he is away from the city a great deal & this is the first time I have seen him for a very long time. I also brought & mailed to you in Pretoria “The Man from Glengarry” Gordon's last & “The Right

of Way” Gilbert Parker's last. I hope you will receive them in good condition & thoroughly enjoy every word of them. Both are fine – am reading the former first now myself. The books you asked for being

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in small pamphlet form I am having bound & when they come, accept them, as a present with my very best love, dear. Before we go, at no matter what date, you must let me know what we are to bring out, furniture, etc. but we will not speak of that now. You say “if you could stay in the house you are in until Spring it would be a good thing” - is it the Spring of 1903 you mean, for Spring is just dawning here now, as you know. However, we have taken this for another year, that is until May /03 & by paying the rent could leave it before I suppose. You see there is no

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alternative – we must give warning on Feb 1st without fail & either take the house at once or make up our minds to leave & my mother dreads another move as she hopes to go to S. Africa some day.

I do pay out quite a lot some way or other & I find it difficult to save although I am most anxious to do so, my dear. People here seem under the impression that you will some day be in command of the S.A.C. who knows? B.P. will likely not care to remain there, as he has lots of money for one thing. Lord S. certainly changed very much since his stay here a year or more ago. Cartwright is in Calgary is he not? he is the Cartwright you mean, Insp. in the N.W.M.P. The Ogilvy's are home & I intend calling. I have been out a great deal – calling & shopping for summer. These days keep one busy & we are getting through with our visits – I hope Bartram's knee is better by now & Kerr behaving himself & well again. Colonel Nicholson's purchase has appalled me & I do not want you to think of bringing us over until rates are less. We will

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visit our good Ontario friends this summer & try to pass time pleasantly. Regie will, I believe go & take a post-graduate course in New York, then come & settle East. In fact, it is well nigh impossible to know exactly what he will do – he does not know himself. I knew Fall had told the men that they would be under you – for the report went around & they were disgusted when they had to leave before you did, for they knew then they had been deceived. I am charmed to learn that my poor effusions please you

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my darling. I always have to pen them in a hurry & usually with all our little [chicks] & one or two other youngsters in the room, talking or quarrelling as the case may be. Girls are nice enough to appreciate men like you, even if they are

a little over forty. Why they are nicer then than ever!!! I hope you will keep all the [sweets] for me dear, for I assure you I can still appreciate them & think by the time the massage & treatment are finished I shall feel & look younger than I did ten years ago. You will have seen Miss Scott long ere this reaches you – I regret so much that I missed her.

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I hope you are getting the Star's [sic] regularly – they commenced sending them on the 21st of Feb so be sure & warn me in time when you change your address. I subscribed for six months on that account, so will renew it then. Poor old Uncle John – he has my address but I fear his memory is beginning to fail him. Oliver Smith has sold his house & is moving out at present. I do not know where he goes.

I am going to the Academy in a little while – the Calisthenics finish today & Torla is anxious that I should see the final physical culture performance. She will not be short by any means – do not fear. I will measure her & tell you results. She is looking well & so are the two others. Studying hard & getting on. Gertrude reads very fluently & amuses Dubbie, as he is bright & fond of listening to stories.

Well, my darling, I still have three of your dear missives to answer, but this is such a long one you will not have time to read any more so I will kiss you & so do the dear wee ones. With love from all, I am as ever, your own true, devoted, warm-hearted [loving] wifie

Maye.

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