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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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Macleod, Apr 21st 1898.

My own darling Sam,

Your letter of the 8th sent by Mr. Godson as far as Skagway reached me on the 19th & you cannot imagine how pleased I was to hear from you but how worried I am to learn that my letters do not reach you. I write regularly & as I have told you several times, sometimes twice a week. I address them "c/o Officer [Comdg], N.W.M.P. Skagway, Alaska" & since you told me have put "c/o O.C. N.W.M.P. Vancouver" in one corner – now, why they fail to reach you I cannot comprehend. Alice is in the same fix for her letters to Fred going astray, so she went down to Mr. Campbell this a.m. He told her he would write the Inspector in Vancouver & the one in Mexico to make inquiries – also sent me word to write & he would enclose this in his with instructions to forward without delay. I wrote & mailed you a long letter & papers on Tuesday which will, I hope reach you. I really cannot understand the whole business – my letters were all important in more [reverse]

ways than one. most of them contained other letters as well & I feel very bad at their not reaching you. You will have had a letter from Mr. Jarvis if we did not see you, as he said he would surely write & tell you how things are. I have heard nothing more about being moved nor have I had an answer from Uncle Henry, but things are going to the mischief here as speedily as possible. Mr. Sanders is here to demand an investigation & as the Comr. is at present in Ottawa, it may not take place for some time. many side with Mr. S. who has I think been hardly treated & received very insulting letters from the O.C. he is determined to push matters & if necessary, will leave the Force afterwards. We feel it too. I sent for the Sergt. Major the day before yesterday & asked him if Alice could get a horse for herself & one for Miss Ives, for a short ride that p.m. he said he would speak to Capt. Deane, but from his manner I told Alice she would not get them – the answer was, "Capt. D. would think it over" with the result that he did not deem it necessary to be polite enough to send her an answer of any kind. then we heard there were strict orders that no lady in

Barracks was to be allowed the use of Govt. horses, as Percy Deane had got his father into trouble before on ac/ of using horses belonging to L. post. It caused quite a talk & Alice saw Mr. McKenzie in

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turn & he lent her a pony with the greatest pleasure. Every one is surprised & I can assure life is anything but couleur de rose in this place now. It is simply unbearable & I hate it – how long do you think you will be away? The [S].M. said yesterday “that he hoped you would be away until Nov as it was the best thing that could happen to you – that the Comr. would be the Lord knows where, Capt. McIlree asst. Comr. down here & you would have charge from Skagway to Dawson”. I told him I hoped such would not be the case, as if I had to live the rest of my life away from you, I did not know how I ever could exist – he is a perfect weather cock, Sam, & is not to be trusted, remember what I say: he has acted like a perfect fool sometimes & surprised me many times – he is thick with the present O.C. & tells him many things that go on. I sent for him yesterday as Moore leaves on the 27th & I wanted to know whether I was going to be allowed another man – he told me “Capt. D. said I was the only Officer’s wife whose husband was in the Yukon who had one” – I assumed that “Major Steele was a Supt. & entitled to two men” we had a few words & I said “well if I have to milk the cow, I must learn while Moore is here” – he was surprised & said

[reverse]

“You want it down in black & white” I said “I do”, so a short time after Capt. Deane sent over a slip on which was written “Mrs. Steele can have another servant”. [Condon] wants to come & he is a good steady man. You see they make such a fuss about [teams] that I cannot get one, or at least, hate to ask for one. when I go to the butchers I cannot bring meat home, so need a man to run messages for me. also on a/c of the cow – Marie could milk, but could not run for the cow at all times & in all kind of weather – ah! darling, life is hard without you near to console me in trouble!!. I hope my previous effusions will reach you, for I have told you all my worries & want your advice & sympathy in my trials. You know the rations were stopped on the 1st of Mar & I get what I need on repayment – my canteen bill is not large & I pay butcher monthly. [Mannsell Bros] have bought out Stewart & Macmaster, the latter running the shop for them. Stewart had too much business down East to attend to the killing here. I am sorry as it simply means paying the same price as before – they also have an hotel as you know called “The Klondyke”, the old restaurant. They tried every possible way to get Marie from me, Harry Mannsell himself speaking to her, but she

snubbed him well, not knowing who he was & is determined to remain with me, as long, I suppose, as I pay her regularly & give her the \$15.00. One is surrounded by dirty, mean, sneaks of people anyway, I must confess. They wanted Marie as Diningroom girl - \$25.00 per month. Of course, so far I have been unable to pay canteen anything but having paid The Great West \$33.45 cts. this month, I will have [nomore] insurance

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to pay for a couple of months, anyway. Mr. Casey is kind, but oh! dear, how I hate to have everybody know I have only so much to go on per month. I hear he talks sometimes & it galls me terribly. If I only knew a little more, I could do things better myself & would not be so dependent. You see, he pays all & brings me what is left, so I can say nothing. The children are still suffering from that vile whooping cough – some nights they are very bad, Gertrude & Baby, Flora being much better. Mrs. A. B. Macdonald came & spent the night with us, leaving this noon. she is well – her mother & sister are coming to spend the summer & they are simply delighted. She gave us very cordial invitations to go out & visit them. Well, my dear, old darling, how I love you & miss you, my own pet – as much as the first day you left me & I do hope we are soon going to see your dear face again. Gertrude asked me “please send Papa money [for] him to come home to us, Mamma”. Flora says “she will give all her money (50 cts.) to the Govt. if they will let Papa come back”. they pine for a sight of you, darling. As for myself, I cannot write what I feel. God bless you & keep you safely through all & pray come back to us soon. With heaps of love & many kisses, from all here, believe me

Your own, true, warm-hearted, affectionate,
Maye.

[reverse]

I could find ever so much more to write you, but as I have to pen this off in a hurry, in order that Mr. Campbell may get this to mail with his, I had to write speedily, & hope my others will reach you, in order that this one may not be too incomprehensible. With warm love,
Your own wife.

Mr. Sanders told me Mr. Galbraith asked him whether I could tell him whether you had got your Miners licence for this year. I said I did not know, but that he had better get one, in case of accidents. Mr. Galbraith says “the Empire is the first mine in the country”. I hear Alec dare not go back to B.C. & every person is talking of the way he is drinking & talking. The B. Diamond per Tribune, Nelson of Apr 16th shipped 36 tons of Ore that week.

Good bye, dear.

A big kiss from Gertrude & God bless Papa.

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