

2008.1.1.1.1.184

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste. Famille St.
Dec 22nd 1901

My own darling boy,

It is evening & as our little ones are now sleeping I come to commence my usual Sunday chat with you, my own dear boy. Your dear letter of Nov. 11th is the first one I must answer today – in it you acknowledge receipt of the poison sent you, so it arrived in good condition. The last sent was what you wished for, is it not? It is nice to learn you have your warrants as M.V.O. & C.B. all right - & your decoration? did you get that also? no doubt the clasps are also in your hands so altogether your breast must be

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nice decorated. I was shocked to learn by press reports on Friday of Major Ogilvy being seriously wounded & am anxiously awaiting further news. I do hope you were not out too – oh! how pleased I shall be when this dreadful war is at an end & we are together again, my darling – it keeps me continually worrying over you, my own dear pet. You said you were going to inspect the posts & would perhaps be absent a week!..... I hope you will have all the men & horses you need soon, you have I feel sure much to do. The children are suffering from colds – Flora & Dubbie, I should say, Gertrude being well. I am doing all I can for them, so I hope they will be much better tomorrow morning.

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I took them to see the windows of the stores yesterday & it got damp at dusk & I fear they took cold then. I think the bank accounts are all right, the only amount sent since Sept 9th being that of Nov. 6th & wired to Belcher, as you told me to do. You enjoyed your dinner with Col. Birdwood I am sure. Wilberforce is kept on the go all the time, I suppose inspecting, the distance being long. Yes, Mrs. [Coupar] is a sisterinlaw of the young lady who was governess at the Redpath's & who is now in B.C. The single lady in question is Miss Coupar & not young by any means. I made inquiries as

you desired when you wrote & found out she has been away from Montreal for some years. I am better, but have been too busy to follow my treatment for some time. I will go to Dr. Macdonell again after Xmas; The children are always immensely amused when you say you love them a lot, lot, lot. This blot has just been done by my [tricking] my pen as I dipped up ink, but as I have so much written I hope you will forgive me, as I do not know when I could take it up again if I attempt to write it over being so very long & having so much to do before Xmas. I do hope the "Stars" arrived all right, as they would interest you much. I will certainly subscribe & hope they will reach you safely, but I fear newspapers will be rather neglected

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as long as the country is so unsettled. Did you like the Notman pictures? the finish is better but the photo's do not do them much more justice than Bennett's. As I said before there is no use making inquiries about a place, until I am sure of your not remaining there. There may be a great deal to contend with & I feel sure there is, still I know you are not faint-hearted & will stand a lot. However, it is all in your hands & whatever you decide, I will abide by, my dear one, so it rests entirely with you. Richard has turned over a new leaf & given up his evil ways, you will be glad to hear. You know I commenced to have Flora's teeth fixed. I am sure that will be a comfort: she is anxious to have the

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work done, but the teeth cannot be straightened until they are well out of the gum. Do not say you are past good photo's now – "too old & stern looking" unless you have altered considerably since you left in June. Yes, indeed, your eyes brighten when you are going to tell a nice spicy story or of things witnessed by you unknown to the actors. I can so often recall you, under those circumstances. I laughed outright when I read your letter & the children were so eager to know "what funny things Papa was saying to me, that made me laugh so much". Mrs. Mac is I fear lonely on the ranch – she is not accustomed to such a lonely

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life & misses people around her, although as usual people from town are there at all times & meals must, I suppose be prepared. I note what you say re clothes so will get what you say will suit should we go. You must be noticing the ladies even more than I imagined to notice their costumes & parasols so attentively & I fancy it is about time for me to go & look after my interests a little more closely. No! indeed de [Blaquiere] would never do –

he would be hand & glove with all the fellows & besides is not, I believe exceedingly smart. You tell me "you have not spoken to a lady since you arrived in S.A" now! now! stop that chaff! how about all the charming young nurses you have had the pleasure of meeting?

Monday. Auguste, & Marie came in last evening & after writing this much I had to cease in order to go & speak to them for a short time & it was then too late to pen any more to this. Baby was so hoarse that I got the Dr. in & had to go to the drug store after eleven for powders for him, in case of necessity. He is ~~however~~ better today & I trust he will be quite well in a little while. They however keep me anxious & do not give me much time for leisure: do not wonder at repetitions as they are all chatting in the room & I can scarcely know what I am writing. I have just made up my Xmas

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parcel to the Millers & I hope they will like them. I sent fascinators to Grace & Essie, pink & blue from the little ones & a pair of rhine stone ribbon ends to both from myself attached to a nice piece of ribbon velvet for the neck – a new fad & very pretty too. To Mrs. Miller, a nice plated bread tray (she likes things for the table), to Johnston a pearl pin – also a group of ourselves for Auntie Millah! – To Mrs. Moon, a plated soup ladle, to Rachel a plated trinket box, the boys, ties & [Edmund], a silver Scotch [pebble] pin. It is so very hard to buy for so many & try to please all. To Jane who had a daughter on the 15th I sent a lovely baby wrapper, & a plated pin box – the former I made & it is so cute & sweet, even if I do say so myself. I have also made one for Mable, but will send it up later.

Xmas Day. This is almost like a journal, as I have been unable to find a moment to finish this, although commenced on Sunday. I however will wind it up & write soon again. The children are all delighted with their gifts. Flora got three books & I gave her a small silver watch & pin. Gertrude some games, a book & I gave her a silver chain & locket. Dubbie, some games a book & I gave him a plated goblet. They are simply charmed. Mamma's gift to Flora a book, & a doll to Gertrude. They are now at the [Reiffensteins] at a Xmas tree so are happy. Richard, Gertie, Auguste & Marie dined here – Frank came home on Friday for some ten days or so; the last family

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family meeting for some time, if we should go to S.A. I suppose. Mrs. Sanders wrote me a nice letter & sent photo's of her girlies & Mr. S. sent one of himself & wants yours. The little ones got cards from them. I sent spoons & a photo of the children. Mrs. Moon sent me a fine turkey – I only wish you were here to help us eat it, my pet. My day has been a lonely one

I assure you & you have been in my mind all day, my darling. I hope you have had a pleasant day & that the plum pudding reached you safely & in good time: that you found all good & thought of your poor lonely little wifie a wee bit. I enclose Mr. Moir's letter which will tell you how I have succeeded re the regimental records & Diary of S.H. Tell me when you answer this what to do in the matter. – you note he says Mr. Taylor has the papers.

I now take up yours of Nov. 12th but upon perusal I find it has been answered my dear. I found when reading over my letter that I spelled Mrs. Couper's name with an a instead of e. but you will know whom I mean. The children are feeling better, although Dubbie coughs yet. Your last is that of Nov. 16th for I got no letters on Monday at all & was, of course in consequence, very much disappointed. however, I know you were going out on a tour of inspection, so fancy that may be the cause of your

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silence. It is now evening & wishing to mail this so as to get the train to N. York in the a.m. I fancy I had better close. All join me in wishing you the Compts. of the season & very many happy New Years, my own dear pet. I am so grieved over Major Ogilvy's death & know how you must feel it too. am so anxious to hear particulars. God bless you, my darling.

Again good-night. The little ones join me in many sweet kisses & with my arms entwined around your dear neck, I leave you my darling.

Your ever loving, devoted, warmhearted little wifie

Maye.

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