

2008.1.1.1.1.185

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste. Famille St.
Dec 27th 1901

My own darling boy,

Your dear letter of Nov. 16th still awaits an answer, so having a few moments tonight, the little one's being in dreamland I come to have a chat with you, my dearest. In the first place I must mention that press reports tell us that you captured a laagar on Dec 18th – this confirms my fears that you were not far when Major Ogilvy was wounded on the 17th from the effects of which he died on the 21st or thereabouts. I wonder if the "Stars" ever reached you, after all! it is almost

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useless sending papers, they never seem to reach you, especially when the country is so unsettled. I trust you have the Notman photo's long ago – they are not flattering, for I find I look like a Japanese with my slanting eyebrows. The accident to myself has not made me thin, but worry will, I feel sure: but, do not scold, I try hard not to give way to it. You know dear, it is perfectly useless for me to make inquiries about a place when you are not sure of your future movements. As I told you many times before, wherever your home is, there will be mine – so until your future decision is taken

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I will not give the matter too much thought. As for their not wanting you, I do not think there is any fear of that – a home in Canada would suit me, but what will you do? there seems to be so few openings for a man like you. As long as we are together, that is all I want. I am very much tempted to take a run up to Ottawa when the session opens & see Oliver, so that he may rush your pension business on among the first things. I shall weigh the matter carefully & do what is best. I told you Richard has turned over a new leaf & takes nothing now. I only hope he continues to improve: he looks thin but is bright & cheerful anyway. It amuses me to hear you say the women there seem to know so little about Canadians or Australians – they

will, no doubt sharpen their intellects a little later on. Strathcona did not forget me after his memory had been refreshed, but that was not to be wondered at in a way – so many called & so many did not call who were invited that they became muddled.

Yes, I have not the least doubt S. is sincere, for his conversation when I called denotes that. You of course did what you should do to call on him in London.

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Having now answered all your questions of Nov 16th I must tell you that two of yours of 17th & 18th came today – written the day after a letter that came almost two week's ago.

I have suddenly got very tired & cannot keep my eyes open so that I must say good-night. I only hope you are well & will keep so my own darling – being out fighting, makes me feel terribly anxious about you & how I pray God to protect & bless you, dear.

Again good night – many sweet kisses, but no! I must try & keep awake a little longer, as tomorrow being Saturday I should mail this so as not to lose any

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time, having been three days penning my last. The children, having been in bed two days kept me so busy that I found no time to finish my letter. Then I was preparing Xmas presents as you know. The little ones had bad colds & I kept them in as safe a place as possible, bed, but Dubbie had a fine time. They are now almost quite well. The Miller's are delighted with their gifts, at least they write in such a way as to make me believe it firmly & I trust such is the case for I tried hard to get everything that would please.

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Jane is doing splendidly & the baby growing like a weed Grace says.

Gertrude was quite disgusted that "Cousin Jane should be so foolish as to go & buy another baby, when she has four others to look after – really I thought big people would have more sense" – funny, old fashioned mite.

The Millers sent me a pretty fancy white muslin apron, Torla a handkerchief, Gertrude a baby doll & Dubbie a book – they were much pleased. Mrs. Moon I must write to soon to thank her for the turkey. I hope they liked their gifts. I paid your life Insurance "Federal" on Monday as you know.

I have also been buying some silver plated ware for our home – a firm from Toronto is going to open in opposition to Birks & in order to become known

have been & are having an auction sale. The articles are splendid & cheap, so I thought it a wise plan to purchase things we will need. I got a beautiful pair of French bronze figures worth \$63.00 for \$16.00. also some fine terra cotta heads – plated & stirring [sic] ware for the table, cut glass etc. You will have no reason to feel ashamed of asking a friend to dinner, if we

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ever keep house again & I feel sure you will think me wise in what I did: They have a magnificent complete cabinet of stirring [sic] silver, I cannot tell you of how many dozen, which they value at \$800.00. They would let me have it for exactly half price. I tell you this, but of course, I have not said anything about it – merely admired it immensely & as I bought quite a lot from them & so did my mother, have told many people & encouraged them to purchase, they want to give me first chance. For the fun of it, I must go into Birks & see their charges for the same thing.

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You know our little cabinet would need re-plating & is very far from being complete. My bank account has decreased considerably between these purchases & the Federal Life – much reduced, I must confess. You know I wired Belcher all the \$480.00 of Nov. 6th & none at all came in Oct, none since Sept. 6th or 9th the date it reached here. do not forget that, my dear. As I said before, Frank is a drain, but I know positively my mother could never afford to do it, so as we have commenced I suppose we must continue. I only hope it will prove of some benefit.

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he finds it hard not to be making money. I sometimes think he made a mistake, for it will cost much more than he thought – much more than it did the last time he was there. He is now home, for his holidays which are up on the 3rd or 4th & enjoying himself generally. We spent last evening at Auguste's, the first time since we were there a day or two before you left in June. You see how much I go out from that fact, my dear.

There is not much news. I sent Uncle John a photo of the children today & wrote my best wishes for a happy New Year in a short, newsy letter.

Having written so much more, I must tell you that your two letters received today afforded me much pleasure. The photo's taken by Nurse Nicholson are not very distant & are small, still they are better than none, my dear. I am anxiously expecting the larger ones, I assure you. The little ones, if awake would, I feel sure load me with all sorts of loving messages for dear

old Papa whom they love so dearly & speak of so often. Kiss your dear self, if possible, for us all. Trust Kerr is feeling better – with many loving embraces, believe me,

Your own true hearted devoted wifie,

Maye.

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