

2008.1.1.1.1.247

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

26 Ste Famille St.
Aug 17th/02

My own darling Boy,

Your letters of July 10th & 12th reached me on Monday last, but as usual since my work has commenced I have no time to write during the week, Sunday being the only time I have for pleasure of any kind whatever. Hence, my dear, you will fully understand my reason for not afflicting you with any

/pg 1]

[pg 2]

of my stupid epistles during the week much to your great relief I feel sure. I will write Tudhope Bros. for price list & cat. since you say you will foot the bill - otherwise, I fear I would not do so. I have tried to telephone Col. Gordon several times, but have been unable to get him. I will again ask Auguste if he succeeded as he & Marie come to dinner today. Owing to Marie's

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

condition they have had to come in from the country this week past, as Marie had a stumble of some sort & they fear the consequences. The children come in tomorrow. Tillie may have by now added one more to the family, as we expect the news any moment. My dear boy, do not fancy it was through economy Col. Gordon brought the books. He said he was going straight to Capetown [sic] as was the steamer & he wanted to bring them. I did not intend to save money - it is a thing I never do where you are concerned & I give the very last cent I have for you.

They were all packed for expressage - but there is not express from here & they were much too heavy for the mail - what is one to do in a case like that? You do not seem to realize that at times you give me hard tasks to perform.

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

If I could make people do as I wish, things would be very different. I told Gordon if he did not expect to see you to express them from Capetown [sic] & you would pay expenses; I could do no more I fancy. I regret the books very much I assure you as they were expensive & I left nothing undone to have the matter well done. It is too bad the men of the last contingents behaved

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

so very badly. Very little has appeared in the papers here concerning them & nothing detrimental so far to my knowledge. Jealousy is, I suppose the cause of the officers acting as they did - perhaps Mackie may go back later on. The powers in Ottawa worked against Elmes he told me - Poor fellow! he feels bad over his bother in connection with the paymastership. You know now why he drew on me.

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

It is due to pressure from the War office & for you. His letter of explanation (the first) was lost - it was written when he was on the [line] & lost then. The Lewis family are fortunate to have received so much attention from Lord S. Too bad he does not treat me with the same consideration. He has so far not answered the letter I wrote asking him a few questions concerning our proposed trip. It is very awkward & I shall not forget it. Mrs. Hilliam writes asking what I cannot answer - all about trip, furniture, etc. I can answer you, it is the last time I undertake anything of this kind without unlimited means in my own two hands. You do not know, cannot realize what is is [sic], as you have always had the Govt. to back you & pay expenses. Your tickets are put into your hands, etc, etc.

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

There is a steamer going direct to Capetown from here on Oct. 18th - if we can save by going in her, I suppose we shall do so, but I must first find out whether she is a good steamer & what the accommodation is. There is not much use in my being half dead when we reach there for the sake of a few dollars. The children must be considered & their comfort studied a little. The trip is a long one & if uncomfortable, will be unbearable.

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

I do not suppose it makes much difference to you when you see us. It is very difficult to get information concerning things as this is the first

steamer, as you know. They are to sail monthly I believe - in the winter from St. John.

Courteney has influence you see - that is how he had command of S. Horse! - it is very useful indeed. The steamer is not to go with army supplies, so Borden

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

will have no say - it is the Manufacturer's Association that control this, I believe. Nice little contretemps happen down there to change the routine of one's daily life - kissing another man's wife must be very nice at times!!... There is not much of the [imposter] about you, to be caught if you do such things. They have learnt to be sly & on the alert at all times. I much fear I shall have to take a few lessons in dancing, ere I can enjoy such dissipation again. I hope you enjoyed your tea with Sister Mc Phadden at the hospital - it is just such things that makes Torla make the remarks she does & which I know you attribute to me, so very unjustly. She has a great deal of your old cutting way about her & you can blame yourself for that my dear.

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

I bought more poison & will try & send it at once. The one you had when you left here is by far the best my dear though you will not believe me. It is much more expensive & better in every way - does not stain the skin in any case & is not a dead give away at times. If you have kept it, I will prove what I say when I join you. Lyons has told me so over & over again, although he does not know

[/pg 10]

[pg 11]

who I am & what I really believe, he thinks I buy it for myself. You overheated yourself at the ball it is very evident & in that way caught cold. I am sure I will like the country when I get there - it is the getting there that is the hard part of it. Harry Nash of 5th C. Mt. R. called a week ago. I was out, but he said he would return - leaving suddenly he did not do so. I am sorry, as I would have liked a conversation

[/pg 11]

[pg 12]

with him. In yours of July 12th you mention the Stuart affair. I hope he has accepted his son's draft. I have not yet written as I know no particular's of the affair, amount, etc & may only make matters worse by interfering. I do hope & pray he will straighten the thing - surely a man of sense will be honorable enough to know that there would

have been no reason for you to do a thing of the kind without necessity! His son is not a child or ne'er do well, is he? if so, there is very little chance of you ever getting the money back. You did cable of course, but that was a great surprise - you know the reason. Your letters were a month coming & as I say once more, you surely cannot wonder at my being surprised when I had all your previous letters to go by, my dear boy.

[/pg 12]

[pg 13]

what has put in your head that I may "think it not advisable to join you" - why! I asked you, begged of you to bring me, until you commanded me to cease mentioning the subject. I then gave up, being guilty of the offense seldom after that. Money is not everything, but is [sic] certainly is a great deal. You know full well that the little ones are very eager to live with you & that I need your help to make

[/pg 13]

[pg 14]

good people of them - at times, they require a word from you to make them what they should be. The furniture I shall bring will be very little, unless I can make some kind of satisfactory arrangement. I shall see & go prudently you may be sure. It was indeed very kind of Lady Strathcona to knit the scarfs & send them. I am sure your very nice letters must be something worth receiving. Mrs. Cole is accustomed to

[/pg 14]

[pg 15]

love letters, I fancy. She is quite a pretty woman & looks bright & young. You will find out for yourself Flora is very observant & her remarks may at times surprise you my dear boy, very much. You must have misinterpreted the child's remarks in some way, for I do not remember that she said anything so awful. Muriel Panet called on Friday - she came to meet her father & mother who returned on "The [Tunisian]". She looks fat, plump & rosy - very well indeed! She spoke of her Aunt, [Miss] R. I told her she was to be near you & seemed pleased "Auntie is so fond of Col. Steele" - very nice, is it not? It is indeed! time for me to put in an appearance, else I shall lose all hold on your affections, I fear. Auguste is delighted to know you have put his name in the papers (the firm's I mean) - & I am sure will appreciate anything you do.

[/pg 15]

[pg 16]

How lovely of Mrs. Greenwood to meet you & have you drive her in Kruger's old carriage. I hope she will not forget to tell her father. Did she mention my name? or maybe she does not know who your wife is, poor boy! only a little country girl, I am to be sure. I cannot get the Federal Life to do much I fear, but will try. Popham is not very obliging I fear, wish I knew some of the others. I think it would be crazy of me to sell

[/pg 16]

[pg 17]

my piano. I would not get \$50.00 for it here. I will see about it - if it costs that to bring it, it is less than 70 pounds. I have no voice left - it is gone with the rest I fear. I will practice when I have more time & leisure.

I know quite well, dear that a troop is supposed to number a hundred men - surely, I never said your division for I know better. It is nice to know that "Strathcona's Horse" is to get it[s] due & be thought the best of all Colonial corps.

[/pg 17]

[pg 18]

You do well to go to everything- concerts & balls used to bore you once - now they amuse you.

Mrs. [Munro] seems very nice - she is clever, I suppose. Well, I shall meet them all some day & I wonder how we shall all get on! Will they like me, or dislike me? That often amuses me, when I sit here thinking, which is, I must confess not very usual. We are having a very cold summer - can count the warm days. I am almost an icicle today & have even been compelled to put on a wrap. Gertrude & Dubbie went up to Vaudreuil on Friday with Richard. It was a picnic for them, I assure you. Antoine went too & they come home with him tomorrow. Duffins was here when we came in from early mass this morning, owing to Tillie. Mamma, Flora & myself went to communion & I prayed hard that all should go well with us. I much fear you will, in disgust throw this away if I do not cease, so good bye.

[/pg 18]

[pg 19]

When you send me money it will be very welcome. I shall economise when we are together & make up for my expenses here: Having to get so much in the line of dressing the children for two years, as well as myself. I cannot do anything without money you see, my dear boy & I need it very, very much. I have many letters to write so once more au revoir. God bless & keep you safe until we meet. Torla sends her

[/pg 19]

[pg 20]

usual letter & much love & many kisses. Write soon & keep it up until there is no chance of my getting your letters ere we leave. I shall, I suppose soon be able to tell you exact date of our departure.

Your own true warm-hearted, devoted wifie

Maye