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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
April 16th, 1902

My own darling boy,

Your two dear letters of the 12th & I suppose Mar 14th (the letter being undated) came to me on Tuesday, the 13th & as usual received a warm welcome. You are nearing winter & our lovely spring & summer are advancing – the country looks nice, everything further advanced than it was here in May of last year – the buds are on the trees, although the leaves have not yet appeared. The horses will be far nicer to drive with than mules –

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were we near enough they would not languish for want of exercise. Your men will be pleased to get the remounts as there must be plenty of work for all to do! I do hope you are getting the “Star” regularly now – if not, I do not know the reason as I have done all in my power to have it reach you in safety. The same with the “Globe” - Also the two books “Right of Way” & “The Man from Glengarry” - besides Col. Cruikshank’s works. You will have so much reading on hand that I fear you may be tempted

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to neglect your poor little wife in your pursuit of knowledge. The Yeomanry should be wiped out or sent home for the way they have disgraced the English Army – it is a shame to allow such men to fill responsible positions & endanger the lives of so many others by their neglect of duty, etc.

So [Mrs.] Cartright quarrels with the people of Calgary! that is too bad, for it will make his life unpleasant, to say the least of it. Do you ever hear from George Hope Johnston? strange that he should not write now & then. I remember quite well when they said Sanders was dying of galloping consumption – in fact, it went so far that the authorities in Ottawa were only awaiting a cable to confirm the news, before wiring his wife of his death. It is terrible to know men will do so much harm, jealousy the cause of it, I suppose. I hope Elmes will get a commission – I have no idea of his whereabouts having had, as I told you before, no answer to my last letter.

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I took our boy for a walk this p.m. & bought him a Prince Charlie Cap & a pr of gloves – he put on such airs & wanted to sport a cane as well – just fancy!

Tomorrow is my mother's birthday – I bought her a nice hand glass in ebony – her set is almost complete I fancy. We commenced house-cleaning today with a good woman from Terrebonne – all will go quickly - she is a nice smart person. mamma & myself went to [Pre---] yesterday p.m. We enjoyed the play, a very amusing one & the living pictures

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are a great success too. The children are well – Torla is as usual, studying hard, eager to get on. Gertrude is the same. Your last of Mar 14th talks of the coming of mine of Feb 3rd & 10th – If I am unhappy at times you cannot be surprised – there are many things to make me so, you see & your absence & the grief it gives me is not the least of my trouble. No dear, you may never be excited, still excitement runs high in the country & your work & all keeps you almost too busy to think.

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I do not dislike Montréal – on the contrary have always like it, but I find the society people awfully snobbish. Perhaps you are right – I may care for you too much, but now that I have loved you for so long & instead of trying to diminish the loss I have gone on fanning the flames more & more, until it is now impossible for me to change, so I presume, it must remain so until we meet again. If absence makes no difference to you, it certainly has not altered my affection.

True, I have our three little ones & they keep one busy – I would not for the world that anything should happen to them – they are all we have & are the firmest links that bind us together I know – if you really & truly fear anything may happen [them] by my going to S. Africa, why I shall simply listen to you, abide by your decision & remain here. I know you cannot help but feel the deepest loss for the poor little mites, who are so fond of you, so that should

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you prefer our remaining here it will, no doubt be because you consider it the best thing.

Nothing more re Pension bill – am watching papers attentively. I believe the Force is not improving as years roll on – you will certainly make something of your division if you do as you always did & the officers & non-coms will know their duties thoroughly.

I see the war office is getting particular & insists that men should know how to attend to their horses, that being their first qualification. Flora is tickled

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to death that Lt. Frances McDonald Steel should have the very same name & initials as herself. He certainly has done well & will, I am sure, get on. I am

thankful you got the Xmas parcel at all, as I much feared it would never reach you. You see they send these things in the way they can without expense. The Canadian Govt. were shipping hay & they availed themselves of that steamer to send the cases – otherwise, freight would have been too heavy for them.

Yes, I hope from Belcher's

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statement that we shall have a little profit – or at least pay expenses – Indeed! I think all the world has awakened to the fact that we are a pretty fine people far from being benighted & could teach many of them a thing or two. Yes, Lady Minto took the idea from “The Daughters of the Empire” about the soldiers' graves – they quarrelled among themselves, she has withdrawn her patronage from the society & has started a society for that purpose on her own account. I am sure it will keep you busy.

Auguste has just been in & tells me he wrote you today & asked for you to do something for Horace Panet who is a Vet Sergt. He is Uncle, Judge Taschereau's brother-in-law & he (Auguste) wrote at Uncle Henry's request, not that he wants you to do anything, but to please Uncle. Considering that Judge Taschereau never called on you or myself at any time & never extended the least politeness, I hope you will make a point of doing nothing in the matter. Horace Panet is at present in “L” Division, S. A. C. & wants to be transferred to “B” -

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in fact, Uncle has been very queer since poor Papa's death & you need not think you owe him anything or need do anything for him, because his first wife was my aunt.

That is the way when they want a favor, they know where to go, eh? dear?

Uncle Henry might have written you himself, but I think he feels rather ashamed of himself since the affair of the letter when you were in the Yukon.

There is not very much news to interest you, there seems to be

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an epidemic of suicides in Westmount – several of their prominent men have ended their lives that way lately. The Horse show will soon be on, but I do not think I will go – it does not tempt me, I must confess. All our little ones are well & happy – Dubbie is delighted with his new coat, it is a success & he thinks he will be pretty fine. It is getting late &, as I have to help clean my room tomorrow I must retire.

I read “The Visits of Elizabeth” & enjoyed them very much – I could picture the twinkle in your eye vividly, particularly during her visit to France & the yachting trip – you would relish the nice situations & speeches made immensely.

God bless & protect you, my dear. All send love & many fond kisses. I had but two letters on Tuesday, but as the summer comes on, mails may come oftener than once a week.

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The little ones are in dreamland, but were they awake I am sure they would load me with loving messages. Again Heaven protect you, my dear one.

With very many loving kisses, believe me,

Your own true, devoted, warm-hearted loving little wifie,

Maye.

Capt. Nash is anxious about his son, Tom, whom he has not heard from for months. I think he used to be in "C" Heidelberg – should you hear anything of him, let me know, please.

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Horace Panet is no connection of ours in any way – the present Mrs. Taschereau is his sister.

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