

2008.1.1.1.1.30

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil  
April 9<sup>th</sup> /89.

My own darling Sam,

Today's mail brought me a very short letter from my "gallant soldier boy" in which he expresses his disappointment at no news from me - surely my letters have not gone astray! I write you regularly twice a week mailing them Monday & Thursday & as I keep a strict account of the dates will tell them to you. You have acknowledged that of the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, but not those of the 24<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> April & 7<sup>th</sup> as well, so you see my own dear boy I would not neglect writing for a great deal. Illness alone would prevent me from writing, if merely a few lines & I would have to be very sick not to fulfil, what to me is such a very pleasant task. I received the usual number of letters last week so you could not attribute my silence to neglect on your part. No! pet blame the mails, not your own little girl who love you too dearly for that. I think of you all the time, my own one & look forward to answering your dear letters with such pleasure. Your letter tells me how busy you still are & likely to be for the summer months. Thank you, dear, for your consideration in writing me when so much occupied, for, if you were not very prudent I should be always anxious lest anything happen not to my stare, but to the one my heart hold's [*sic*] dearest. Tell me all your doings, pet; you are interesting me by letting me know the geography of the country which is to be my future home &

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Which I do not know on my finger tips - then as you are the weary traveller I follow on his journey's they are of even more concern to me, my darling. The friend in the Kootenay merits the name, I am glad to see, for his wise advice proves, he is, unknown to himself, a friend to me

- others might say the contrary & hold a different opinion on the same subject & it is nice for a man to have the approval of one of his own sex on a thing so near his heart & which will prove either a blessing or a curse. I pray it may be the former every day & ask God to bless my darling very, very often. Mrs Mac's letter I also received today, but she will have had one from me as well so her wrath will be somewhat appeased. She does not say much at not hearing from me, but I think I might drop you for one mail & favor her - tell her I do not write every mail like a good boy & even if I did!!! I am kept pretty busy & the time passes so quickly one scarcely realizes where it goes to! it seems to be always Sunday. You see my old pet, you did not get a letter giving you [fits] & just to disappoint you in your sweet expectations do not intend to write on in that strain. What do you say now? If I judge you by myself, not hearing from your little girl must grieve you, for it makes my heart very sore when your dear missives fail me - but knowing you favor me when you can, I write whether you do or not. Well, my own pet, I really think you had better not send the saddle, though it would please me to see it. You are aware that Papa has no horses I could ride & even if he had, I want to ride with you the first time I go again - it would cost something to send it on & would give you more to look after when you return & I am sure you will find you have too much when the day comes.

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You must be like the rest of your sex & will find ladies need a great deal & travel with a number of trunks, so all taken into consideration, perhaps you had better keep it up there. I know of no horse a lady could safely ride in the place, as it is a pastime not at all indulged in. If you are looking so well, I must try & improve in order not to disappoint your friends. You do not seem to remember that my position will be as trying as yours, as we are strangers to each others family, but mine, having heard so much of my darling, fell as if you were known to all of them. Mamma was speaking of you today & wondering if two years would elapse ere I first visited them. I said "she could perhaps imagine my feelings at leaving them all here, but my love for you was such, that if anything parted us, I should never marry". She replied, "that you seemed

in every way worthy of me & was happy such was the case". So you see, my own darling, your Maye is not likely to change. It pleases me very much to learn that you are feeling well, but cannot believe it is because you "have won such a dear little girl". Your side is not aching & the heart feels glad - sufficient time has elapsed to get the former quite cured & you are becoming accustomed to my absence - that is really the true reason. M<sup>r</sup>. Starnes' engagement is not given out in Montreal & it does not seem to be known, as I have inquired of several. She is pretty, but insipid looking I find & has not much to say - much smaller than I, so will suit him as to size & looks. I never could fancy him an ardent lover - his nature is such, that true love is impossible to him. I do not think he could admire a woman of sound sense, judgement or talent - he is not noble enough for that & would seek more what would please the eye, than what would tend to elevate the mind. He thinks a great deal of his mighty self & must consider he confers a favor on the young girl he has chosen for his wife - he is good enough I suppose, all things carefully pondered over & will, I have no doubt, make her happy as he possibly can. If you did not wish me to share your lot & bring me up with you, I should not think you cared a straw about me, so you see, my pet how wrongly you judged me. Your little girl knows what the life is up there & since she is willing to make your home, hers, it is because she is confident you love her as you ought to, & will make her happy. I am a ready victim, going of my own free will, so you need not reproach yourself as to what I might think "some day". I told you about the Piano in the letter written on Sunday, & tell you again pet, it is a luxury I can wait for, so do not be extravagant for my sake, my darling boy. I can well understand what a difference your marriage will cause in your expenses, as you have so much to get, not to mention the trouble of caring for the little girl herself, so once more say, not to wish for too much. We will practice a little economy & will thus be able to supply what may be lacking, in a very short time - see what I will do! - I trust you will succeed in having a ball on the 24<sup>th</sup> May & that all the beauties may be on hand to share the honors with M<sup>rs</sup>. K. I was so sorry to hear of M<sup>r</sup>. Likely's illness & trust it will be nothing serious - it is getting such a common malady, it seems to me. The dear names you give me, my love, fill my heart with delight, &

were I tempted to doubt your affection, the epithets you use towards me, would convince me of its truth & sincerity, for I cannot believe you could write that way, if you did not mean it. M<sup>rs</sup>. Mac writes me such a nice letter & gives me all the

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news, as everything interests me at present. She seems anxious to have me back again & may be I am not anxious to go? If I had a sight of my darling now & then! but deprived of the pleasure of hearing his dear voice even - it is dreadful. The time is going on, though, my darling, & you will be here in eight months sure - that keeps me, bright, though a letter written last week, will have told a different tale. You cannot fancy me always gay, for had I not a few trials to bear, your absence would make me heartsick, my love, so forgive the clouds which will darken my lightness now & then. Were you nearer, they would be soon dispersed. The reason I thought it better to get what we require for our little home, together, is because I can shop pretty well & can spin out money better than many another woman - they could not fool me on the price & value of things & we would be together - that is the best of all, is it not? You must not imagine I am extravagant in my tastes & would wish for the best of everything. We are a large family you know, & as such, have not had all our whims gratified, so your little girl would not aim at having the grandest house in the district - happiness is what I wish for, & grandeur does not always bring that. "I could live in a desert, if only with thee" - You must not worry over the furnishing of the place, my pet, & promise me faithfully not to allow your thoughts to dwell on the subject. When the time comes, it will be ~~time~~ soon enough to settle all concerning our reserve, which will really be that to you & I.

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It is getting late my own true love, so I think I will leave this, to continue it tomorrow after the mail comes in. I prefer writing a long letter & think you like it as well, I trust the others have reached you safely, as I should not wish them to get lost or fall into others [*sic*] hands. Louise is coughing very much & is not well - her cold is obstinate. I am the strongest &

healthiest of the girls, though not very big or formidable looking. I have been well also since my return home - my visit proved beneficial to the little girl who met "the true love of her heart". Pleasant dreams, my own pet, - my ears are burning & judging from the hour, I conclude you may be discussing you poor correspondent at a great rate, perhaps with Mrs. Mac & Lex. With very many sweet kisses which I would give a great deal to be near enough to Steele ~~from you~~, I suppose, or that you could steal if you pleased from me, I will leave you & kiss "Good-night". Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup>. Your dear, loving letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> has given me many moments of pleasure today & I rejoice to know you have received mine of the 24<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> all right, but find it strange they should come together, when one is mailed three days after the other. I never omit telling you the dates of yours & answer them without fail, keeping the one which now comes Thursday, to answer on Sunday, in order to make my letter interesting. Antoine came in from singing practice last night, just as I was about finishing my chat with you & talked so much that I could scarcely think, as you are sure to notice - he takes delight in teasing & speaking to me when he knows I am writing you! so like a boy! two letters must have been unexpected & given you more pleasure as your are convinced

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the little one does not neglect her darling so far from her. I mean all I write my own pet, for if not, I should not dare to pen such loving sentiments. I do not expect another of your dear epistles till next Tuesday. As you were absent all last week, so will not be disappointed my love, if none comes to me ere that. Your wrathful little girl was completely disarmed as she told you at the time & knows you think, perhaps far more of her than she deserves. Keep my letters & produce them later, but do not condemn me to such a punishment as eating them - they would be sure to make me very ill, being far too sweet - but I may experience pleasure in perusing them when our dreams are realized & we come back into this matter-of-fact world of ours. I know yours are dear, so dear to me & will give me many a happy hour's reading, even after we are married, for will you not then, if it possible, be even dearer as my husband than betrothed? - it would be sweet to be kissed to death

- I fancy & might enjoy it very much, as it would be a novel way of meeting the "King of Terrors," robbed of all his dread, in your dear arms as the place of repose would compensate for all! - I read your writing perfectly, maybe better than you can my closely written pages, but I always have so much to say to you, my own pet, I never know where to commence. You see pet, my sisters all are prettier than I, so I never had any pretensions [sic] to good looks. The only thing which has always been in my favor, is that I looked lady-like & the only regret my lack of beauty gives me, is for your dear sake, my own one but since you are kind enough to think me nice, it is all I want & am content with that. Of course, I cannot see myself as others see me, still my mirror which is supposed, as a rule to be truthful, never reflected back a pretty face - but the heart is in the right place, my darling & is more & more all yours, as time goes on. I have never had many compliments paid me concerning my looks but, will tell of one or two later on, when we are better acquainted with other, my pet. You may be a very good judge, but in this case are not an impartial one, as love has completely blinded my dear boy. You are sufficiently nice for me, darling & if you continue to think as much of your little girl as your letters imply, I am sure to be happy as the day is long, with your warm, true love to cheer & bless me. The longer you are deprived of the sweets, the more you will appreciate them when they can be had, if that is any consolation to my bonnie lad. The young lady M<sup>r</sup>. W. was fortunate enough to escape from must regret her step bitterly today, if she is disappointed in her choice. Put all your trust in me, my darling, & I will endeavor to be worthy of your faith in every way. Loving you very dearly, it seems to me I could never deceive you in any thing, even the most trivial & my pride would come to the rescue, were I in the smallest degree tempted to do so. I would not like you to think less of me: on the contrary, desire to have your good opinion more & more, & I should certainly not win that by being false to you. My resolution of speaking no more of the fondness I feel for you did not last long & in fact, believe my letters contain more on that subject every time I favor you. Why! almost more than you say to me, when it should not be so - were any one else to see these effusions, but your own dear self, they would fancy me a very queer little girl, to commit so much to paper. You

do not confess more than I, that is visible to me at least - if you have not been good, you are now so you say & give me the credit of having had a hand in

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the change. M<sup>rs</sup>. Hubert & I are more together than the others, for Louise & Alice are confidantes [*sic*], & Gertie & I roomed together for many years; she follows me, though three years younger & is a charming woman, prepared to think a great deal of you for my sake. We always got on very well & I cannot say the same thing of Louise & Alice, who are very friendly to each other but do not always agree with Gertie & I. You will meet them & judge for yourself. They are very nice you know, & you will like them, I think. M<sup>r</sup>. Drayner, as a matter of course, is fond of Alice & I am sure dislikes Gertie & I; while we merely tolerate him, for Louise's sake. My love for you is making me bolder & I may show no timidity when we meet after all. I will master the feeling on your account. I do not remember the night you allude to about being frightened - it must be a mistake on your part, my pet - reflect well before you answer. You cannot understand a woman anyway in some things, so give it up, my dear with good grace. I do not mean you only but your whole sex in general. You always seemed nice to me, my darling, & I gave you many long earnest looks unknown to you. I suppose Woolly felt that he could not meet me on exactly the same footing as autrefois, so felt bad on that account - he knew full well, that he could not spend an evening in my society when any of the Officers were present. Say what you like, a man must feel that & M<sup>rs</sup>. Mac. is one who likes to assert her position sometimes. We often had discussions on the subject, but, you are not likely to notice such a thing - of course, I would say nothing about it to you, only that I know you are very discreet, as you have proved to me. I cannot recall what portion in either letter I was going to destroy & which you are glad I

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did not do. I will not leave you every few months unless you compel me to go - & as you do not seem inclined to act so, think once a year will be

sufficient. M<sup>rs</sup>. Mac. is dying to come down, but she would find very many changes in the short time she has been away & would be glad to return to her home in the West. She is very fond of her Lex & I am pleased she is so happy with him, but I would not exchange my boy for all of Lex's in Christendom. Lex never forgave me for telling you about the morning when we were to go riding, when on our trip to the "Crows Nest" & that he was too tired when my turn came. I said to myself "Major Steele would not have said that to me" & his refusal only made me think far more of my darling, who was ill in Macleod at the time - but no! You were on your way to Pincher Creek, as you spent Thursday night there, Serg. Roby told me - he did refuse anyway & I found him very mean at the time but was not surprised. You gave me confidence, my pet & I felt safe with you - that is why you never thought me nervous, for I am not as free from it as you imagine. I will send you a pretty book "some day" soon when Mamma has finished reading it - it is one of those M<sup>r</sup>. [Couie] sent me. You will put it away very carefully when perused, as I should like to keep it in honor of the giver. I will get it, when I return with my pet - will it not seem strange to have this little girl always near & to travel with me for company? You gave me proof of what a nice companion you will be on our trip to Dunmore & I liked you all the more for your many kind attentions. I must reserve the last two sheets of your letter to answer on Sunday in order to have something interesting to talk of & this one is already very long. God bless you, my own pet whom I love from the bottom of my heart & give you many

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happy dreams, though so far from me - take good care of yourself, darling, for if anything happened to you, it would break my heart. With many warm kisses to my own pet I remain as ever, his own loving little Girl.

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