

2008.1.1.1.1.220

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
May 1st, 1902

My own darling Boy,

I missed writing my usual letter last night, owing to the excitement consequent on the arrival of Regie his wife & baby. We did not expect to see them until Mabel had done her duty & made John a happy father, but she made a big mistake in her calculations & as Regie had rented his house & it was costing him almost one hundred dollars per month at the hotel, he had

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to leave, as he could not afford it. He left her with a good nurse & to the best Dr. there, so we hope all will go well.

I must now acknowledge your dear letters of Mar 23rd, 27th, 24th, two of 29th & Mar 30th, all of which came on Monday last & keep my spirits up until now. Well, dear I wonder how the meeting of the Boer leaders will end! at times it seems as if peace was near, then again one is disappointed. Tonight's "Star" contains no news whatever on that subject. Aunt Alice

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sent Gertrude a Valentine, so she got one after all & was delighted. She came home tonight with the ribbon of honor pinned on her shoulder & was as proud as a peacock. There are none in Torla's class, she has bulletins & does well. They lost a little schoolmate from appendicitis this week & were much affected thereby. I bought some nice cut flowers & put a card & sympathetic expression therein & sent them in their name – they were much pleased. Elmes has not to my knowledge got anything in the present contingent – I hear Mackie has, but from enclosed you will see they are having trouble about pay. You are right about Taylor, only I hope you will not get me into any trouble by my telling you, as it was because I questioned him closely that he told me about the squadron leaders not being business men. So you think Mrs. Campbell's plays would give a few tricks to one who

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was looking for a divorce – it never struck me, but certainly a few lessons could be learned that way. The ladies I see, occupy separate rooms in Africa – that must be somewhat difficult when houses are so small – however one can always find room if necessary – strange, they should forget servants are not

beasts & have eyes, tongues & ears to see & hear things – such is life – made up of deception, eh, dear? Oh! dear I learnt patience long ago, but

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no one can beat me at it now. I have learnt it in every way since you left me in Macleod. Richard has all along sympathized with the Boers & thinks they are being badly & unfairly treated, but we very seldom mention war, when we see him. Gertrude does not look very French, I assure you & is at times as pretty as a peach. There would be no use seeing Dr. Keenan, as Louise is over the age they take nurses. Dr. Riddick had all arranged, but

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forgot to tell her she must not be over thirty-two so when asked said thirty-four – that settled it – in New York, it was not being legally separated from Willie that prevented her going there. Yes, dear I too wish we were well enough off to live in the west. Barrie & Orillia are very pretty spots & I would dearly love a nice home in Niagara district where fruit is plentiful.

I hear pretty regularly from the Millers & keep up a flourishing correspondence with them. any time you want to go there, I am ready as you know. I see Dr. Borden was hurt last week by a cyclist riding over him – he was hurt badly but nothing serious. You are right to insist on Canadians being well treated by those in power – They will find they are not going to stand by in silence & not get their deserts [sic] & I hope [Odlam] & Stewart, if deserving, get what they were looking for long ago. I had a copy of the Pension Bill from Fred White this morning & it has passed.

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He will likely forward one to you – what are you now going to do? it comes into force on July 1st, 1902. Have you another years leave granted? you have said nothing lately about the matter, so I do not know.

Your next of the 24th concerns “Soldiers Three” which has to be Crown granted, etc. I will have to borrow the money (\$200.00) from my mother, as I have only a few dollars in the Bank & must draw them out to pay the schooling etc. for the children.

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I will have to send the money to Dawson I suppose, there being no other way of getting it there. I will attend to the matter as soon as possible. I am very busy getting Torla & Gertrude ready for the 7th & the house is so full, as you know. They are both studying French, but are not fond of the language, I must confess. You will be sorry to hear that Hilliard, Sergt., is under arrest & will be dismissed, lose all his pension etc. It seems that about a year ago, a steer wandered across the boundary &

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has been in the vicinity of Standoff since – a short time ago some one told Hilliard to take it for Police beef & they would divide – he did so very thoughtlessly, an Indian saw the hide, recognized brand, reported it to hide Inspr. etc. etc. Some tried to hush it up, McKenzie & his partner, the lawyers doing all they could to help him, but it had gone too far & he must pay the ~~pendy~~ penalty of his folly. Is it not too bad after his long steady service? all he has will go they say. You know the ins & outs of an affair of the kind..... I am sure had you been in the district that would not have occurred. Regie told me about it. Your next is dated 27th & in it you ask for all the books, criminal codes etc. Auguste was pleased to attend to the matter & I will pay charges. Something in the vicinity of \$50.00 before they reach you, my dear. You will have an immense district, my dear, & will indeed be kept very busy – it will be nice for you to have Pretoria for your headquarters, will it not?

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being so central. I will go any time you want me, but not while things are so expensive. As we have this for another year, we will not be without a roof over our heads, anyway. The press say Lord Dundonald comes out & I think such is the case. I suppose they do not think the Canadians well enough qualified to comd. the militia here, also think it binds us firmer together, by having an Englishman in the position. I am sure poor dear, you are anxious to take a good rest, as

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your life has been a trying one. If you are anxious to leave, my dear just do so – you know anything you do in the matter will please me & I am as eager to have a home & be together as you are my pet.

Regie met a Mr Gill a [minister] on the train who spoke so well of you. Some one asked if you were married? “ah! yes, said Mr. Gill, & he has a little wife who makes him toe the mark – he is not the same man since he married – has improved wonderfully” - what do you say to that, my darling?

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I did laugh over my making you toe the mark!!... It has rained so much lately but vegetation is coming on & the green leaves growing well. Regie is anxious to decide on where he is going to settle & will, I fancy decide on Chambly or St. Lamberts, where he was before. Mrs. Mac sent me a pretty tie as a birthday present today – no letter, but I suppose they are all well. I am dropping asleep & cannot keep my eyes open so will have to say au-revoir.

Have seen no particulars re Boyd's death so far. Young Sam [(Lherry)] must have been very ill – his mother said nothing about it but she writes me very

seldom I assure you. The little ones are in dreamland & all sleeping quietly, thank goodness!! but I know they would give me all kinds of affectionate messages for you. A big kiss from all & many warm loving greetings. Be sure & take good care of yourself. God bless & protect you.

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With many true loving kisses & love, believe me,

Your own true, devoted, little wifie,

Maye.

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