

2008.1.1.1.1.224

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St  
May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1902

My own darling,

This is Sunday once more & we have just come in from Mass. Gertrude accompanied Torla & myself this morning – the day is bright & sunny but there is still a cool wind blowing & it is not by any means as warm as it was early in April. We had a very severe frost on the night of the 8<sup>th</sup> – ice formed thick enough to bear a man's weight – the result is complete destruction

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of market stuff, as the gardeners had everything out – fruit trees are considerably damaged & rose trees have suffered very much too. It is too bad, I assure you & we shall feel the consequences. The awful catastrophe in St. Pierre, Martinique, when all the town was destroyed by the sudden eruption of a volcano is terrible – forty thousand souls lost & many more who were on board the ships in the harbour. You will see all about the event in the papers – it is appalling! -

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I am thankful we are not exposed to the same awful things here! I now take up your last dated April 7<sup>th</sup> & you write as “I seem to appear to like to get your letters” - Yes, you know what a great comfort they are to me & how warmly they are always returned. I hope the books I send you that you asked for will be of use to you, as they are very expensive – there are eleven in number & your name is on them, so they should get to you safely. Col. Gorden is to bring them from Halifax to Capetown, then express them to you. I have had them packed at J. Morgans & they promised faithfully that they would make the box water-proof & do them up well in every way. Auguste got the books together. Frank's expenses are more than he anticipated & it worries him – a university course is always more expensive than a Normal School, & Frank accounts for every five cent he spends also. As he is studying

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a profession, he has instruments, gold & different things to purchase you see. I have no photos I can send James as they are all gone & besides do not do me justice you say, so as he has never seen me I will wait until I have a good one. All those of the children are gone too. It takes money to have them taken & I

must wait until I am flush, as they are luxuries one can do without. You see Mr. Jarvis has to get two hundred dollars – Belcher still has almost six hundred due. Hicks & Sons

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want some on account too. June brings the Federal Life due another two hundred & twenty four, so you see how much I have to give out this month or so, besides my board, milk washing & dressing of myself & youngsters, as well as their schooling. The books I sent cost over thirty dollars, then the expressage, doing up etc. almost [\$72.70] in all – then you wonder where my money goes! You see Hicks will have to get one hundred dollars I suppose – I do my very best in every way & try to divide up equally

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between the many, but you see my expenses are not many – children's school, board & these things are mine – I tell you so that you will not fancy I waste any of what you give me, dear. Your sermon was fine, of course, but I am not by any means convinced - as for happiness beaming all over my face, all your preaching will be of no avail, for as long as you are away, I cannot be happy. You are kind in speaking as you do, but it is almost all lost & an expression of anxiety & worry is habitual now since your long four years absence & all that I have gone through, since you left me. Buzz dotes on his family & will do anything in the world for them. They do not half appreciate him. I will call on Mrs. Hope before she leaves for her summer home, but I do not run after her, I assure you. I see twenty-five of the “S. H's” are among the Coronation Contingent, but do not know who they are as yet. The Horse Show took place this week, but I did not

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not put in an appearance – no friends – also missed [Lothem]. They say it was not very good – do not be angry at me for saying this – if you are, I just will not write any more if you will not let me tell you what I wish you to know. If I cannot tell myself these things, well good bye to the letters, my dear. Yes, J. B. Bright is also a good friend – it is fortunate one meets a few of that stamp once in a while is it not? I will write him as you desire as soon as I have a moment. Just now

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the house is a Bedlam – there are so many in it that it is hard to do things – I cannot understand the Johnstons. I thought them such firm true friends of yours, especially G. Hope – there are queer people in the world, eh? Do not fancy Dubble is my pet. I love them all the same poor dears, but I feel sorry for him because you know him so little, consequently cannot think as much of him as

you do of the others. You may be fond of big girls, but they are not those belonging to the family. Thanks so much for photo's of

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Mrs. Lewis' home & [Green] Point Camp. I shall put them away for you, of course. The house is very pretty & is, I suppose a little way out of Capetown – Is that Mr. Lewis with the large Strathcona hat? Regie has decided on Westmount, but they have great difficulty in finding a house – they are building some which are to be completed in June. Locality is another consideration & he is determined to manage as I am, my dear, so be thankful & content with the one you have. I do wish it would get warm – we have no fire in the house & I am just frozen. there is no doubt I do like heat. My mother is feeling better & the treatment is already proving beneficial – I am sure you will be glad to know this, being so fond of her.

Louise & Duffins are going with Tillie & Regie – the latter will give her nursing to do & I think that change will be a Godsend to my mother. Louise is such a difficult one to get on with at times &

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the boy. oh! my!!.....

Wrote Mr. Oliver, Hon. Dr. Borden & Fred White re your leave – no answers as yet, but suppose all will be well. They will not refuse I trust, but must have been somewhat surprised that I should desire you to be away another year from June 1<sup>st</sup> & will think I am anticipating commencing proceedings for a divorce. I believe it would be a good idea if this continued absence is to go on much longer!!

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It is too bad though, joking apart, that I cannot tell my griefs to somebody – that I must always keep everything to myself! - sometimes people find & have found faults with me for not speaking much or being so pre-occupied, but you must or cannot be surprised – I can tell no one, so must keep all in my own heart & brain – the result is my silence or lack of conversation, which I suppose people fancy is due to lack of brains or talent. Oh! well – I will go on in silence to the end.....

You will certainly find these five years will have made much difference in me, if not in you & perhaps will not have improved me mais, que voulez-vous? It is time for me to end, as the dinner bell will ring in a short time. I hope you are still in good health & will write often. The children are well & send much love to their dear Papa. There is not much news that will interest you. With much love in which the family join, believe me,

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Your own true, devoted, warm-hearted little wifie  
Maye.

I see a Mr. [Ohlan] invalided home – is he the one that was with you?

God bless Papa and come home soon to us.

Dubbie

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