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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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1513, 1st St. W.  
Calgary, Dec. 6th

My own darling boy,

It is several days since I last wrote, but I simply have been unable to pen you a line - not one moment of leisure to call my own, so I trust you will forgive me, my darling.

I have yours of the 29th, 2 of the 30th, & one of the 1st to answer, as I do not think I have written since they came. You tell me of a pleasant dinner with Dr. Good & friends. Your chums look upon you evidently as a walking encyclopedia & turn to you for reference every time - a good reputation to have, I must say. I cannot tell you how much it pleases me to know the men in Winnipeg appreciate you & that they are civilized enough to call upon you. In that respect, Calgary is a failure & has much to learn, I think.

G. Hope J. has been quite ill he says & was confined to the house & bed more or less for a month - however it did not keep him from the 15th L.H. Ball, as you know. Walking out & seeing all the pretty stylish women you are apt to meet, will help you to forget that you are so far fræe home or maybe it will have just the opposite effect!!..

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It is too bad that you miss us so much! I am sure that being in that large house & occupying but one room must have a depressing effect on your spirit at time, & it is not to be wondered at. The excitement of the war & being surrounded by many nice affable people made you feel the separation far less in Africa - like yourself, I hope we shall not be compelled to live apart again.

Things do not look promising in India. Do you not think that the treatment meted out to the Hindoos [sic] in Africa, & B.C. has but helped to increase the unrest? They are clever, are they not & inclined to be loyal, but for the seditious speeches of such men, as Kier Hardie & his set?

Esther Miller's letter are always so clever & full of fun, that everyone enjoys them. Indeed! I think you would make a very handsome [Hielander] & would dearly love to see you in the kilts - some of the tartans are difficult to get, but please God if we are all well next year, you shall have at least a rosette of the Clan Ranald plaid to wear on St. Andrew's night. I thought of you so often on that evening & saw you in spirit at the banquetting [board].

I now take up yours of the 30th. I do not wonder you cannot read Minnie's writing - it is at times a puzzle, I must confess & she writes so quickly too - a little more care would be better.

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a jolly time. The Bagnalls seem to be getting on all right. The baby is good & the children fond of him. I have left all arrangements about Flora to you, my dear, as she said she had written you & I did not wish to upset any plans.

I would like to give the Mackie's a Xmas box, as she gave me a very handsome centrepiece last year & is making something for me now - besides, they are so kind to the children too. Something for the table - I know they are short of things of that sort - a fish knife & fork, for instance - it need not be the most expensive kind, you know & there is more choice where you are & they are cheaper. 1/2 doz nice plated forks, spoons, or anything in that line - I mean of one kind only, of course. Tell me what you think about it, when you write.

Flora wishes to leave on the 19th. I suppose that suits you, as I hope we are to have the delight of having you home for Xmas. Having to write another letter re the all important question of the move, it is time to end this one. God bless you, my darling - all join in fondest love to you, my own dear one. Hoping you are well.

Believe me, as ever,

Your own true, devoted affec'ate little  
wifie,

Maye.

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Attached letter

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1513, 1st St. W.  
Calgary, Dec. 6th

My own darling boy,

Yours re Gen'l Lake's letter received & after perusing that of the 1st, I replied by wire as you desired. The Gen'l says "Whatever choice you were to make, therefore would not effect [sic] the possibility of your being selected for the command of the West, when the time comes" - of course, I thought it might be better to remain here after yours first came, but after perusing that of the 1st & figuring out the cost of living at both places & thinking you are a little inclined to Winnipeg, being a larger field & more scope for work, I wired at once " [Antoine] is coming etc". The house being free, saves \$900.00 at one slap - then the telephones \$20.00 Light will be cheaper there also - living also, so I suppose the move will be for the best. \$950 saved on house, ~~high~~ phone, house [horse?], coal etc is a consideration - we might perhaps be able to save \$1000.00 a year which we can never do here, try as I will. At first from the paragraph quoted above, I thought if the command was made in a year or so, it might not be advisable to move - on considering the matter, I fear several years will elapse before Barracks are built & a change made, so we had

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better not let the chance go by, if is agreeable to you. I am only a secondary consideration in the matter, in this way - you have to do the work, meet & work with the officers who may not be congenial, meet the people etc, so are much more to be considered than I am. Whatever you decide on, I will abide by, for I know you will weigh the pros & cons carefully. We may get some help from the Govt. when the move comes; as it is, the cost is a consideration, is it not, dear? I am sure, vegetables, dry good, etc. groceries will be cheaper in W. than here. I suppose I shall get a letter tomorrow having had none since the 3rd, Thursday. God bless you, my darling & help you in your choice - may it be for the best.

Your own affectionate; lonely, anxious-to-see-you  
little wifie,  
Maye.

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