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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
Mar 12th 1902

My own darling boy,

Your dear letter of Feb 2nd. reached me on Sunday as I told you in the letter written on that day & I cannot tell how or why it came on that day as Monday brought me two more – yours of the 5th & 6th. at times, you see there is no delay & very little over a month elapses ere I receive them. other times they are six weeks en route. Of course, dear you could do nothing else in the evening of the 1st of Feb, but go to the theatre. Where the party is so very anxious,

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tempting & all who form it are so eager to have you with them! - too bad the play was wretched. How very young some of the nurses are – Miss Jones only 20 – why I cannot imagine how they can face everything at that age. The plays must be short when they are over by 9:30. They are never finished here much before 11. People have gone crazy here over “Ping Pong” & have been playing it for some time. I have never tried it. I do not go out enough for that – now do not pretend you did not relish talking to the 20 year old, especially if she had any pretence to good looks.

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You have not got above enjoying a nice little flirtation when you know the wife is far away & cannot pop in & surprise you – well, well.. I am sure after reading my letters you must have had a good sleep. They are prosy enough at times to be good night caps. Glad you have a good ointment to prevent mosquitoes devouring you – how is it that they are so numerous at so late a time in the season – ours are generally over before the very warm weather & you are approaching autumn. Your sleep does not last long, only from 1.00 till 5.30 – four & a half hours – not enough for me I assure you. Mules seem to stand the climate better than horses – do they travel as well? They are sure-footed I know. I will see about the cabinet – cannot buy it now – have not sufficient cash on hand. Belcher has not yet acknowledged last \$300.00 but expect him to do so shortly. I suppose he will keep bothering until I finish the whole payment. Since we are not likely to go out for another year I need not be in a hurry, that is very evident. What man must you pay an account to, whose cheque was not met,

through a mistake of Mackies? I ask not through curiosity, for I paid here in one of the banks money you had drawn twice through

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some mistake. I think it was from a Winnipeg man – cannot remember his name just this moment. There is no use looking for a house. I shall be able to stand this for a year longer, I suppose & we cannot afford it – one must do a great deal for the sake of economy, you know. I will write for a Catalogue of the Army & Navy stores. I could get from there now, if I find things suitable. I regret very much that you find your second in Comd. hard to get on with. It must be a source of great annoyance in every way. If the Govt. wishes you to learn; why come home

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of course. We will always be able to get on in some way, I fancy. It is very aggravating not to find all the comfort one wants in a person so very necessary, is it not? Jealousy reigns everywhere, even in the British Army & they do not like the idea of Colonials getting on or being better in any way. Mamma has had to draw on her capital most of the time – her family is a large one & she has been obliged to help them all for so long. Alice & myself are the only two who have not required assistance since we married – Louise has had it all the time. Gertie for a number of years

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& the boys, each & every one every year. She had to start John in the West & it took two thousand almost for that – hard cash. Regie needed it too, Antoine also as you know – that is the way. Auguste also until after his marriage. Indeed, I think you got the hardest district, because you are the one most likely to succeed in making it what it should be – it is hard on you, though, my dear. I hope you will get good horses & manage to keep them for longer than a few months. I am so sorry for your sake, one gets so accustomed to their ways & attached to them too.

I now take up yours of the 5th. Enteric must be very prevalent, although we hear so little about it. No! the nurses are not beauties by any means, still, I suppose they are charming in many ways & their amiability more than makes up for their lack of good looks. Your drive home from Mrs. Henderson's must have been rather exciting, I must confess. How very stupid of the Civic police – surely they must know the uniform by now; still one cannot always go by that, after Methuen's capture, the bad news

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given by all the papers on Monday. It is a shame that the Boers should wear Khaki & mislead the British in that way - "All is fair in love and war" but that is

against the rules of civilized warfare, I believe. If you are getting the "Star" previous to Feb 18th some one else must have subscribed for it for you & I do not think so – As I said before I did not know they would send papers to their destination. I will see about the American Cavalry drill book & telephone McEachern about the others the first time I go out. It has been raining hard & the weather extremely disagreeable – I hope you will be fortunate

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enough to get Hilliam – he is a good man, well trained. It is too bad Elmes does not go out. I have not heard of him for some time – wrote him a long letter on the 2nd but no answer so far. Mrs. Ross has gone to England with her husband. The mines in Sydney or down there he is interested in have turned out splendidly & they will [earn] money. Jim] Clarke is interested in them too, you know – some people are very lucky, are they not? Alice Brierley has been away on a nice trip – returned about a week ago – went to Bermuda. her mother looked after the little girl; she left her at St. Thomas

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as she passed through. I have not seen her yet, but have telephoned. Dubbie is no doubt a clever lad – Dr. Macdonald was talking of him the other day & says he is very bright indeed – she remarked it during his illness a year ago, seeing so much of him. He knows his letters, can spell lots of words too. The girlies are well & studying well – both are bright & quick. I wrote a long letter to our old friend "Buzz" on Sunday in answer to the one I enclose for your perusal. He is a good fellow [seems] true to you dear, & I knew you would not object to my cheering him up a little. Also wrote long letters to Grace & Essie. I do my duty with my pen, I assure you & never lose a minute. There is not much news. I am going to find out if there is any truth in the story of Mrs. Cole & Greenshields – she is treasurer or Sec. of the S. Wives League. Mrs. Busteed is President. If there is no truth in it, well then, it will right an innocent woman – she does not seem at all like a person who would be guilty of such an act, but "appearances are sometimes deceptive", I know well.

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Bob & Jessica spent last evening with us – they are all well & were in good humour. Alice wrote today – Fred is in Montana & as he is away quite frequently, she is at times very lonely. Her boy is improving all the time. Louise has not yet had a reply from New York hospitals – she still hopes for a favorable answer. I am reading "The Man from Glengarry" - there is not much of a plot in it, but the story is well told & is exactly what they were, in fact, still are. I am certain you will enjoy it very much.

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I sent you a [Pueblo] paper last week which came addressed to you, but as it was sent to Calgary first, I had to change the wrapper. In doing so I looked over it & could find nothing marked or any clue whatever as to the sender. I tell you, so that you may not sit & ponder for hours as to my reasons for sending it – you may find something of interest to you, I did not. Well, my darling all are well & send their love. The children are all in dreamland & I think, as it is late I must join them. They would send many sweet kisses to the Papa they love so very dearly. God bless & keep you safe, until we are clasped in each others

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arms once more. Nothing more so far re Pension bill. God bless you. Very many loving embraces from

Your own true, warmhearted devoted little wifie,

Maye.

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