

2008.1.1.1.1.211

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St  
Mar 30<sup>th</sup>, 1902

My own darling Boy,

This is Easter & my darling, how much I would love to get a glimpse of you & hear the sound of your voice if only for a few moments! still, no! were I to see you, I would not want to ever leave you again, Lo! It's better so! - Flora & myself have been to Mass as usual – the youngsters have had several eggs, & feel quite happy – they have often this morning wished you were here, poor dears. I boil at times though, for I can never get rid of them, especially when

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I write. I have them all & really, it is almost an impossibility to pen a decent letter. My own are bad enough, but when Duffins is added to the number, it is more than I can stand. Louise & Mamma have gone to Grand Mass at the [illegible], you see. When Regie & Tillie come, they are to give Louise & her boy a home, I believe – we will see how long Aunt Tillie will stand him then! - If this letter is a stupid one, do not be too hard on me, like a dear boy. I will now take up yours of Feb 21<sup>st</sup> which I kept over to answer today. I hope your horses will turn out all right & will escape horse sickness – does it last all year?

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When you have all your troops, your division will be a very large one. I will be pleased when you get the Canadians, for they no doubt, are good men. They speak of sending another contingent – no particulars are known yet, but Sam Hughes is particularly anxious to have command & I do not think he will, the powers at in Ottawa seem to have a grudge against him, although he is a brave fellow & would likely distinguish himself. Your reputation for strict attention to duty, kindness & justice to your men has gone ahead of you, dear, & all feel they can trust you. I have written a letter of introduction for young O'Dell – he has served in “Kitcheners Horse” & is anxious to return – he has been working with “The [G. Weeton Co.]” here, who are the people I bought so much plate from before Xmas – in reality “The Toronto Silver Plate Co” & who will make me the Cabinet of sterling silverware when I want it. They seem to have been pleased with him & he is, at least has been, nice & polite to me. He desires to go back to Africa, but does not know what he will find to do – it is only in case of need

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that I write the letters to you. I hope Scarth will turn out well & not be like many others in the N. W. M. P. I telephoned McEachran & got the names of the two books you wanted – searched all over & cannot get them here, so have written direct to one firm in London & they will send “Stable Management & Exercise” direct to you. The other “Manual of Veterinary Hygiene” has been sent to New York for, & will be addressed to you by first mail. I hope they will be what you require, for I have done my best. “American drill books” Elliott has not got & says he does not know of it.

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I saw the letters you wrote the “Star” & attended to that at once. I hope Col. Cruikshank's pamphlets which I had nicely bound, reached you safely – your name is on the book itself, so no mistake can be made. I also bought a lovely sterling silver cup for Eric Davis & had the following inscription nicely engraved thereon. “To Eric Steele Davis from Col. S. B. Steele. 1902” no more – is that right? I know you are not fond of airing your honors & thought you would prefer that – afterwards I feared I had made a mistake in not having “C. B. M. V. O” added.

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It is a handsome plain cup, gold lined, the very best I could get, you may be sure.

I am anxiously awaiting particulars of the fight with de la Rey & others on Monday, the 24<sup>th</sup> – we only know the number of prisoners taken, guns, cattle etc. captured by the British & the desperate [sic] way in which five Canadians fought – four surrendered but one fought to the bitter end, poor fellow! - Your's will, no doubt, come tomorrow as usual. I sent Jim Clarke a large group with the house, as an Easter Card. Also wrote [Lina] a few lines – sent one large of the officers seated, to Mrs Miller, one of you on the horse to Jane, one to Mrs. [M---] & one to Mrs. Lizzie Clarke, a pr. of gloves to both Essie & Grace, a tie to Rachel, a pr. of gloves to Lizzie, a tie to my mother, easter-eggs to all the youngsters, sent Mrs. Mac some trifles for her birthday, so you see, my dear, I am not as close as you really believe. I know they will all be pleased at my thinking of them – they are kind to us & I do not forget it. You would be surprised at the money one can spend on such things, although

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not the most expensive. I still keep pretty well. I never knew whether Joep had ever received the photo, for she never acknowledged it. Gertrude's eyes are like your father's – so many find – she is cutting a double tooth, her gum is swollen & she cries bitterly at times. I get desperate [sic] – it is better today, I fancy. By the by, I am told the Clary Steele's have left Winnipeg & Elmes also. Clary got a

situation somewhere & they have all gone. I wrote Elmes almost three or four months ago & have had no reply & do not know their destination – I told Katie to be sure & let me know, if they left, but she failed to do so. If they are in San Francisco, the climate may agree with

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Clary better than the N. West. We are in for a scandal – Major Bond, who was supposed to have been burnt in his country residence in the [hardships] in Jan. is alive & in New Mexico. He is a son of the Arch-bishop & brother of the Col. An insurance man called Campbell committed suicide a fortnight ago & in his pockets were found letters from Major Bond of recent date. He used to be with the Bonds, but I do not know the reason of his death. Bonds' books are in a bad state & he is deeply indebted – he was supposed to be a fine, honorable man, leading in everything.

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His wife drew \$10,000.00 from Insurances, sold her house & all has gone to pay debts. People say he did not let her know & that she firmly believed him dead. They are all in deep mourning of course. Only a jaw bone was found & some wise head said at the time, "that is was strange a jaw bone would be found & not a thigh, etc. which are much larger bones." So far the affair has been kept out of the press, but it is the talk of the City – every one knows of it. Do you not think it terrible for a man to treat his wife in that way? I think it would kill me,

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the disgrace will be almost worse than death. Perhaps you know the man? We shall of course, hear more about it later on. The day is not bright & easter hats & costumes are worn in disagreeable weather. It poured all day yesterday – it has ceased, but it is cloudy. I did not wear anything new. All are well & send love. The little one's send much love & many sweet kisses to dear old Papa – Dubbie has come to the conclusion that our trip to Africa is "only a dream" - he takes the most doleful tone when he says this & really is most amusing. Louise made them all new coats this week & they are nice & becoming.

Needless to say I paid her well for the making, as I never ask her to do a stitch without good pay – it helps her too, you see. All the nursing has gone up [spent] until Regie comes – we will see what will be done then. I told you they would not take her without a legal separation for fear Willie might make her leave before her term had expired – she is handicapped by her unfortunate marriage.

Gertrude gave up & got Torla to write for her today – Dubbie sighed deeply when the others got their letters last Monday & said, "I think Papa is a mean

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thing not to write poor me a letter!" - what do you think of that – for a promising young man. You will be weary reading this long epistle – God bless & protect you, my own dear darling boy. I made my Easter duty on Thursday & you may be sure I prayed fervently for the one dearest to me in the whole wide world. Once more, au revoir with very many sweet kisses & fond embraces from our three dear little ones & myself believe me, Your own true devoted, warmhearted, lonely little wifie

Maye.

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Major Bond had quite a large funeral, although only a jaw bone represented the remains – is it not a farce? Can a man be “in his right sense” to do such things? I feel so for his wife, who they say is a very fine woman. His daughter married in a hurry some years ago & is a Mrs. Smith – an offspring appeared not long after, & these are the folks that lead society in Montreal!!!!

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