

2008.1.1.1.1.172

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

26 Ste. Famille St.
Nov. 12th 1901

My dear old darling,

Your three dear letter [sic] of Oct 4th, 5th & 7th reached me yesterday morning & brought me happiness once more. As you evidently wrote me none between the dates of Sept. 21st & Oct 4th, I will not bother you with lamentations over it. I understand quite well it must be extremely difficult for you to pen any letters when you are going from one place to another. I only hope the photo's I sent have reached you ere this, in good condition

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

& that you were pleased to see the faces of your little family once more. I must endeavor to get a S.A. map so that I can keep track of your wanderings & know as much of the country as possible. You are I know kept very busy & as you usually want your men to be up to the standard you cannot have much leisure. How strange your knowing anything of Col. [Berton]! Your memory is certainly not failing you, dear. Had you known the family before, it would be different, but to remember Col. Macleod mentioning it, is remarkable I think. So Capt. Ogilvie is at Kroondal, I suppose I now. How you must have

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

enjoyed the oranges & lemons; the youngsters especially Flora are building all sorts of "castles in the air" over all they are going to enjoy when down with you.

I saw about Col. Kekewich's wounds, but as nothing further has appeared in press reports I suppose he has recovered or is, at least out of danger. I think if you were within scolding distance I would go for you, for leaving Bokfontein alone with only Kerr for company, when the country is in such a state & the proclamations one reads of in the papers are in force. You must be exceedingly prudent my dear & not expose yourself unnecessarily – think of me & our dear little ones who depend solely on you for our daily

bread, my darling. I know you have lots of spring in you yet dear. I often see Gen. Barton's name mentioned. I now take up your dear missive of Oct 5th, but before I go further I must tell you, my own pet, that letters are not necessary to remind me of your existence, for day & night my thoughts are with you. I think of you all the time & consecrate every moment of my life to you. What do the Dutch sing like? – are their voices musical? I know their language

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

is not so. So you were caught en déshabille! well, that is nice for an old sedate married man, Sir! I fear you are getting rather frisky & you require your poor old wifie to look after you a little. It must have made those eyes of yours brighten up, particularly if the lady was a pretty one & I suppose there are all kinds, sauntering on hotel balconies at all hours. I begin to think it was a very unwise proceeding on my part to permit you to leave me once more. They seem to live well down there & I begin to think it was rather foolish on my part to send you a plum pudding for Xmas.

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

I was under the impression that you were out on the veldt & might be where you could not get such little luxuries that it might prove welcome. However I feel sure some one will relish it. They are the very best made & I know I can safely recommend it.

It is nice to hear Mrs. Greenwood so kindly spoken of. I do not know her, still the others do. Captain Anderson might meet others whom he might find just as sweet-tempered when travelling. Who is the man who was a Corpl in Dean's division? I cannot understand the name. It is pleasant to meet men who are old ex M.P.

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

I remember Miss Williams telephoning you – so you have met at last. You gave her a few of your old time sarcastic cuts I suppose, or you must be getting quite tamed down, if you did not – there must be a great difference in you from this time thirteen years ago, eh! dear do you recall all the little incidents that occurred then to mind? The cup of tea must be a great thing for making people friendly, my dear. Indeed, I object to your saying it would not be a loss to me to be cut out by any one – you know quite well, I should never get over it my dear.

I wrote this much last night, when as the mystic hour of midnight approached, I concluded it would be better, to seek my couch & resume

this today, the 13th. We had a fall of snow last night & it is snowing still – fancy the delight of the little ones who have been out with their sleighs & reveling in the first glories of winter. I hate to see it commence – it is so long & cold. I am feeling better than I did some time ago. When we have no servant it is extremely difficult for me to go to the Drs. & be attended, so I hope if this one goes, we will not be long without another.

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

As I told you in my Sunday letter, Flora had four teeth extracted on Saturday. I hope the others will push down & get into their places without too much trouble – one of those in the gum was taken out – her mouth has healed up very quickly & she went to school today & feels very happy that it is over. Our days are getting much shorter & have been dark lately – we miss the sun so much when it does not shine.

The photo's of the lovely Zulu types came in good condition & we have admired them exceedingly. They are much like the ~~sqaws~~-uaws in the far north & do not need to bring their cows about, if perchance

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

there are any babies in the family – how very different civilization makes the figure. Marie was horrified & really I enjoyed a good laugh at the consternation she was in when she found people dressed like that every day in S. Africa - & that you were not terribly shocked. Your dear letter of Oct 7th is now before me. I do hope you feel all right & that you will keep quite well for you cannot afford to be ill. I thought you rode to No. 7 hospital for remedies but find it was simply a social call & cup of tea that took you there – how lovely! – no doubt the horse & saddle excite comment!(?) how about the

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

rider, my dear? do you think me green? – So Lord K. is nice to you. So much the better dear & I hope that he will soon be able to end this horrible war. Of course the men you had killed on the 6th were not Canadians – you have not many of them with you. Is Sam Steele one of yours now? So you are going to get Kruger's house for quarters! how strange that you should be there? You are fortunate in generally being able to have a garden some way or other. Yes, I have no doubt the house will need a thorough Canadian cleaning before you enter it – they say the Dutch are not a very clean people. [Landon] was here last week, but I had no chance of seeing him. You must look fine & how I wish I could see you, my darling. You will

have ceased to be a night hawk by the time you return to Canada – that will be funny indeed. I know you can enjoy a nice sleep at very short notice, my dear old pet. You have not yet re-commenced smoking I see – well, I suppose your health is all the better for it, dear. We have asked Capt. Main to spend a quiet evening as this is his last trip for the season as far as here.

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

We have had no answer & hope he will come – very sans cérémonie of course. He seemed so much disappointed at not seeing me when he last called, that I thought he would like to come & that you would be pleased that we should show him a little attention.

Well, my dear boy, all the dear little ones send many sweet kisses to dear old Papa & as usual, I mingle mine with theirs. Heaven bless & protect you my dear one & may we soon

[/pg 10]

[pg 11]

meet again is my daily prayer. All the family are well & desire to be remembered. Hoping to hear from you soon, with many a fond embrace, begging pardon for the two blots that disfigure my paper, believe me, as ever,

Your own true devoted
lonely little wifie,

Maye.

[/pg 11]