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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

26 Ste Famille St
March 19th 1902

My own darling Sam,

Your four nice letters two of the 9th, Feb 12th & 15th all came in Monday the 17th & as usual gave me unlimited pleasure. The letter enclosed also came safely & needless to say I enjoyed it also. As soon as Col. Henderson's book of the war comes out I shall not fail to purchase it as it will no doubt be the most correct history of the war from the very beginning. Officers will be men & woman's wiles plays the very mischief with the best of them at times –

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

too bad such is the case, but it has been from the very commencement & will continue on through endless ages I fear. I remember hearing that [Foster] got into trouble in Ottawa – how foolish, it is, after all! I disliked his looks so much. Dixon seems a very clever man & writes an interesting letter, my dear. He is right about Canadians! They are fast nearing the top & will make themselves well known, I can tell you. It came out in the papers during the year you were away with your “Strathcona's” how fond the British officer was of sport & he was sharply handled, I

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

assure you, by the press correspondent. Dundonald seems the [favorite] re command in Canada & every one would, I believe, welcome him very warmly. He is, as you say a splendid man & I like him, because he seems to be sincere where you are concerned. You will know long ere this that [Moir] reached Capetown going with the last contingent in January. You have very likely seen him by now. I will get “Elizabeth visits” as you say it is good & true.

Your next of same date as last, the 9th I now take up. You mention the eighty dollars house, etc. You know by now, that we have taken this house for another year not being sure of what you might decide on & not desiring to be unsettled for ever so long. It is pleasant in summer, the street being wide & shady – the house is large & the air fresh from the mountain, so we thought it better than moving. You know I am a reasonable woman & of course I at times grumble, still I am well aware that I shall have to wait until it is all ended, before I can go up into the country & join you, my darling.

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

We learned the good news of Hamilton's & French's successes today, which comfort us for Methuen's trouble. It is better to be sure that you will suit the powers that be as you say, before we "take up our beds & walk" & then we can be certain as to the things we will need to bring out – besides, trade between the two countries will be improving all the time & we might be able to send packing cases, etc. direct to Capetown in some months.

I would not want the ladies to like you, my dear – I am selfish enough to wish to do all

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

that for myself.

I always believed Kerr was bad-tempered & tyrannical & what you tell me does not surprise me. I trust you did not spare him – what a shame to have him treat the poor man Hendrick so – enough to make them turn to enemies! that was horrible of Kerr & I am glad he was caught before he inflicted punishment the second time. It is [brutal] of him & I am sorry for any man, black or white who is under him – lying is another bad defect & he might some day do you much harm by talking too much.

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

As you say houses will be even more difficult to get later on, still we must trust to fate, may be they will build quarters for the S. A. C. if they are to be kept in the country for any length of time. Yes, I learnt from Mr. Taylor that your names are in the army list, but Elmes is not I believe – Ketchen too is out, not having served long enough. Well, his wife is truly vulgar, but I felt sorry for her, poor thing – one cannot wonder at his marrying one of her sort, just think of the mouth he has! I detest a lower lip particularly when of that kind. I am surprised at Boyd's leniency & regret he has missed his chance of promotion through it. It will however, be a lesson he will not forget & will have good results in future, I am sure. The two Capt.s who have to resign are English I presume, as you have not many Canadians with you. What a number of your old friends are rallying about you. I remember your speaking of Jack Dennis & his brother, ex [Gold Comr.] in B.C.

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

Do not bother just now about the house, my dear. I sent two bottles of poison by Moir & hope they will reach you safely. I wrote him at the same time concerning it. Will send more shortly. I had the pleasure of seeing George Taylor for a few moments at Morgan's today – we had quite a pleasant conversation for a short time. I find him thin, poor fellow – he asked about you, in fact, our whole conversation was of you – he desired to be remembered & said he had been sending the "Star" to you in

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

Capetown for months. I told him you had never received it, as I had subscribed for you myself. I today mailed you "Butlers Rangers" etc & hope you will like it & enjoy it as much as anticipated. The whole collection seems interesting. We had another snow-fall today, just as the streets were getting nice & dry – it was also quite cold. I had very nice letters from Hon. R. W. Scott & Mr. Fred White re Essie. As the Ont. Govt. has the selecting of the Teachers they could not help me, but

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

wrote nicely. Essie has lots of friends in Toronto, who will help her, I am sure. Her mother & Grace will miss her terribly if she succeeds in going. Mr. Harland's letter came & I am trying to locate him, to send it on. Major Dixon is right in all he says re Canadians etc – he must be smart – we will see what success Evans will make of his new corps! I trust your new horses will prove as good as the last & as the winter is coming on, will escape the disease that is so common in your district. The pro Boers thought de Wet very clever to get off among the cattle as he did & rejoiced in it, I assure you. Perhaps when the country is settled servants will be easier to find & keep. Ugly women will be tempted to try the country knowing so many men are there that they may have a chance of getting husbands.

Col. Birdwood is Capt. Birdwood's father, is he not?

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

He came to England during the last summer, did he not? So many praise the Tommies & do give very nasty disagreeable characters to many an officer – another thing pro-Boers like to cast up to a patriotic person & which does England much harm! Yours just answered has the first new stamp we have seen – none of Edward's are in use on this side of the water as yet. People are making great preparations for the Coronation. Lady Laurier is

[/pg 10]

[pg 11]

having a tiara made which will have one hundred & ninety seven fine diamonds – pretty fine, eh? still, as she is not a very striking person, she required lots of good clothes to be noticed among the many beautiful, aristocratic English woman [sic] who will be present. The Biggars are there but I do not know if they will remain for the ceremony. I know they would like to very much. Many Canadians who have money

[/pg 11]

[pg 12]

will no doubt cross. I am told Haultain among the number. There is some talk of every regiment being represented. I wonder who will go as "Strathcona's Horse" - one worthy of the distinction, I trust. I met Mr. Fred Taylor on the street

yesterday just to bow to. I hope you received my explanation re Ryerson's cheque long ago & that every thing is all right. What does Dixon mean when he says he "Nicholson has said nothing about your G. S. O re gifts".

There is not much news. Have not seen Mrs. Hope yet, but know she is well – such is life! when Jarvis was with you I saw her often – now that you can do nothing more for him, at least, that she knows of, she does not trouble about me. Well, my darling, I have wearied you long enough for tonight so I will leave you – nothing more re Pension Bill. All the little ones are well & send many fond loving kisses to dear old Papa. Heaven bless & protect you until we meet again. With many a fond embrace & loves by the thousand

[/pg 12]

[pg 13]

from our little ones, believe me

Your own lonely, devoted, warm hearted little wifie,

Maye

[/pg 13]