

2008.1.1.1.1.232

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St.
June 8th

My own darling boy,

Your three nice letters of May 1st, 2nd & 3rd came to me yesterday as a very pleasant unlooked for surprise, I assure you & very welcome they were being the first since those received the day of the cablegram, viz May 26th & which have all been answered. I got maps of the Transvaal myself from London as I told you before - they seem fairly good. I know where all the places you mention are, Springs, [Leeuw Kop] etc. I am delighted to learn there are a hundred men in a div.

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as I can now answer the question when asked. All must be pleased that the war is at an end & Boers & British will be chuming [sic] it in a short while. You will be quite a spokesman by the time you return to Canada no doubt, & will think nothing of making speeches in public on very short notice. I remember your mentioning Sergt. Tweedie before. Taylor always said "The discharges not returning through the Dead Letter office was positive proof that [Moir] had not mailed them. It is queer there has been so much trouble about them, is it not? I found it strange he

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should mail some & not all - between ourselves, Taylor imagines he found it too much trouble, although he has been so well paid for all his work. (I mean Moir) he (Taylor) says they did not reach next of kin either. Mrs. Frank [Bond] (Col) was telling me her niece Jessie Scott was engaged to Capt. [Swift] & expected to go out soon, that is late in the summer now that peace is proclaimed. Miss [Kiltzen] of Ottawa engaged to Armstrong goes out also. He is on the railway & a brother of your friend of Ft. Steele I believe.

I have been on the lookout for the Bartram boys, but so far they have not come.

Indeed! my laddie, I fear Miss R. wants to be too near for my peace of mind & it is really time that I should be there to look after you, if I want to try & keep you. So very many pretty, young attractive ladies want to dispense [fam] that I shall have no chance whatever & be on the shelf completely, even before the time. She aims high & has chosen a good-looking fellow, only do you not think her very foolish, not to be all she should be, for her chances of winning him, must be

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slimmer by her indiscretion! Men, as a rule prefer a pure, good woman when it comes to a question of marriage, no matter how much amusement they may find in a gay, frisky butterfly! We have been having so much rain & today is damp & almost cold - so unseasonable in fact. The result is the awful colds every one is suffering from. Flora's & Dubbie's are better, their cough being looser. Gertrude fortunately has so far escaped & will, I hope not take it. Almost an epidemic, it has been - young & old are afflicted.

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Louise is busy packing up, as Regie moves into his house tomorrow. Their frieght [sic] came on Thursday from the west & Tillie is anxious to be settled & Reg wants to have his sign up as soon as possible. The house will be much quieter as five at once leave it. I hope Louise will get on, but, both the ladies are firebrands, & it takes only a very small match to set them aflame. [Tillie] is a sister-in-law & not a sister, consequently Louise will be meek & not always asserting herself as she has done. She will find out there are

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worse places than her mother's roof, I fancy - she may not have had luxuries, but had all necessary to live, was fairly well dressed, as well as her boy & it never cost her a cent, more than I can say, eh? We all could expect as much, for why should we, if she made a foolish match, notwithstanding all advice to the contrary, expect much more than the others? it is not fair, anyway you take it. I know one thing, I shall never if I can help it, live under the same roof with her again. I hope & pray she will get on with them. Reg is hot tempered too & will stand no fooling with the boy, I assure you. He has annoyed me more than I can say & thank Heaven it is an an end. Your next of May

2nd now lies open before me & I must acknowledge the three photos which came yesterday & are very nice indeed. You have the new collar & had, I suppose, to buy new uniforms. With all your humility, I really believe you always had a good opinion of yourself, no matter what

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you may say to the contrary. Are you alone in your quarters? no other officer near? You must then be lonely, but will soon make friends. Is the mess far from your present abode? So Ogilvy rests in the cemetery in Pretoria too? poor fellow. The Gordons seemed fond of their late Capt. although they cannot have known him very well. Yes, [Nanton] married a de Lotbiniere or Joly she was then. How does he treat you? standoffish & any airs? he is a connection of the Jarvis'.

Lawrence Boyd,

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son of Sir John, marries Charlotte Jarvis, daughter of Stephen, just dead, next Saturday - a very quiet affair owing to the recent deaths in the family. Too bad I shall not have the pleasure of gazing on the snapshot taken by one of Britain's true-blooded daughters of my "reserved but wicked worse-half"? I would hand it down to posterity also. You need not describe Cherry to me. I think I know him well my dear. Capt. Swift is rather gay, is he not. I just recall what I have written a few pages ago & read what you say

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of his being almost engaged to a lady was was much on a secret mission etc - rather tough on Miss Scott here in blissful ignorance. Well, things must be found out & if secrets are divulged the guilty ones must be discovered, so as you say, I suppose the end justifies the means. Really, I am so sorry you have become timid about water, particularly when it is in a bath & must always have some one in the room on that account. Your nerves must be terribly shattered after your experience of late years, & you will need a course of treatment to restore your health, I much fear. Actresses are peculiar. There are no doubt good ones among them, but how many are the contrary? So young Sam does not like soldiering & will, I am sure, be glad to return to his home life after five years of it. The discipline will do him good, anyway. Vivian broke his arm playing cricket & Ted his wrist playing

hockey. Viv's arm is still in a splint, at least was a week ago, when Jopes wrote.

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She has had a very time of it nursing them & hopes to see me ere we leave. a probable thing, as it will be some time ere we start on our journey. I received a letter from [L] A. [Meanea], Saddler etc.

Cheyenne, Wyo. yesterday saying saddle, bridle, bit, spurs etc will amount to about \$100.00 - desires to know if it is satisfactory to me, before going on with the order. I shall, of course, answer in the affirmative. Mr. Taylor will I hope come to my rescue if you do not send

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enough. You know Hicks & Sons drew on me for £40 (\$194.00). Your life insurance Federal is due on the 21st of this month, \$221.68, which makes almost \$415.00. Then the Great West is due in July, to the Convent I owe \$20.00 for three months, a quarter, my [worth], now backward for almost three months, - etc, etc. O! dear what a curse money is, & why is it that we cannot live like the birds without it? besides that, the saddle etc - \$100.00 almost, \$700.00 - from this you see how easy it is for me to prepare for S.A. Why I have not a cent to get anything or even

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pay a sewing girl. Do not think I am complaining - it is not that, but I do want you to understand where the money goes & to realize that I cannot have a cent ahead, let alone a few hundred dollars - if you put the items in a book & so keep trace of them, you would see for yourself, my dear boy. I do not see how we can get ready to go down for some time under these circumstances, do you? The furniture would have to be paid at least some of it, before I leave, so taking all in all, much as I wish to go, you see for yourself how difficult it is.

I am anxiously awaiting your letters to learn particulars & whether the war office will help us, etc. Give me all particulars please. This letter will tire you & you will hate the sight of me for discussing money with you, but I really cannot help it & must mention it. Is the furniture you now have yours & if so, what is it, so that I will know what to bring with me - shall I take my piano? I ask in order that I may be prepared - my mother you know comes too - she is just crazy to get down - in fact, even more eager than myself,

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if the truth must be told. She is anxious to shift the cares of housekeeping from her shoulders & it will, no doubt, prove beneficial in every way. This letter, being so long will be thrown aside in disgust I fear, to be finished when you happen to have nothing to do, so I had better cease. Torla has just read me her letter - if she does not write well, her mind is all right & pretty clear n'est ce pas? Smart she is & tells you rather cutely - she will do. All send fond

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love & many sweet kisses. Torla & myself received communion this morning & prayed for you dear. I hope you will feel the benefit of them. With many sweet embraces, which has been given in spirit only for a good many years now, believe me

Your own true, devoted, warmhearted, loving, lonely
little wifie,

Maye

I already [owe] Mr. Taylor.

The £40 drawn by Hicks & Sons, you know.

I mention if, for fear the other letter may go astray.

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