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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

[July 27, 1899]

[pg 1]

26 Ste. Famille St.
Montreal.

My own darling boy,

Tonight although suffering from a severe headache I must at least commence to you, my own dear old darling, a budget, which I must not make too long, for I at times fear they tax your patience too much & writing oftener would be better. Your dear letters of 12th May, 24th, 2nd & 7th of June lie near me just now. Your aim & ambition seems to be to get thin, mine to grow fat – how contrary human creatures are, my dear!. As for the operation, it is still in the future; have not succeeded in having it done yet, but do not

[reverse]

worry, I may be brave enough to have it done in the autumn. Our days are beginning to shorten & the twilight here seems so short after the west. The little ones have scarcely any time out after supper but our meals are late as a rule, that may be the reason. You are indeed a very busy man, but it prevents your being too lonely. You still have the good taste to admire nice ladies & are not not [sic] so easily satisfied after being away from civilization for so long, but you talk of pretty girls – “if Miss F. F. were only pretty one could put up with nonsense” hear! hear! – I suppose the old flirt is tame now, that is why you are trusted & tried so by the fair sex my dear. Your letter is continued on the 14th

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

& I know you won the \$25,00 in [bets] concerning the ice, as you sent me that amount in one of your next letters. I got the photo's all right as you will know ere this reaches you & find them very good, but you have that far away longing look in your eyes, my darling, as if you were really thinking of us. You must indeed be sorry to lose so many of the men this summer. Mr. White mentioned the fact to me when in Ottawa & said he was not surprised, especially as they could have no claims – surrounded by mines

& miners on every side, it was hardly fair to expect them to see the gold & not endeavor to get some. George de B. may say what he likes – he made a fool of himself flirting

[reverse]

& carrying on & they are separated in a way – he had a number of debts as well, I am told. I do not think Regie will leave his present quarters. Just fancy he has been fool enough to propose to Antonia Lyons & of course, she accepted him. Mamma is indignant & furious at the match & is determined not to sanction it – she is years older than he is & Mamma has always disliked her intensely. I wrote him as soon as he informed Mamma of the affairs, as she was too ill from the shock to write. I did not spare him or her either & suppose he is furious at me, but I do not care. If he marries her, he cuts himself off from the family entirely. I thought so much of Regie & am disgusted.

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

Judge Dugas wrote [Gross] a letter which the latter published in “The Star” & mentioned “having bought claims & was making money” – foolish of him, I must say as every person was speaking of it & they will think the present officials as bad as the last. This ink seems to be so pale that I will not write any more, buying more tomorrow so I will say, good night & pleasant dreams, my laddie.

Tuesday. Although I found this ink too pale to continue last night, this morning having a few moments to spare I come to resume my confab with you, my own sweetheart. I am so pleased the hens are doing so well & trust you will enjoy a few chickens this winter.

[reverse]

You always do what you can to amuse & entertain people & hope the tennis court turned out a success. The garden as well be of great benefit & pleasure to you all. I hope you will not loose [sic] your new ebony cane as you did all the others; you are particularly unfortunate in that line I think. Were you successful with your school? it is hard to start one & satisfy all denominations, is it not? You must tell me whether Mr. White sent the note paper & pens you wanted for your own special use? he promised he would, in fact wished to do so, as I mentioned in my last letter. As things are looking

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

at present, it is not likely you will have any visits from members this summer, they are so busy yet, that they will not find the leisure to go on a

tour of any kind. Indeed! I do not think of I am much of a treasure, but try to do all in my power to help you in every way. No! I did not hear anything of Mr. Wood – no doubt his wife will return East if he comes back – she will remain I suppose, but he is sure to go up again. I only hope the claims I have will be like those owned by Mr. Starnes & the others – why should we not make money too? Your letter is then continued on May 21st & the weather glorious. It is a blessing that the climate is so nice & tends
[reverse]

to make one more contented with the country, does it not?

Now that our little ones are in dreamland & things pretty quiet, I come to resume my talk, but you know how often I was interrupted in the old days & things are even worse now, as I have three who require attention constantly. Your letter of May 24th is now before me – indeed! yes my dear I did shed many bitter tears at the thought of your not getting my letters, as I did not know what you might think of me. I trust there will be no more trouble re mail – we have had enough of it, I am sure. I have not yet met Mrs. Hebden – she called I was out & I called twice – out once & ill the next time

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

so I did not see her. I called on Alice [Gossage], Mrs. [Brierley] last week with Flora – she was delighted to meet me & after conversing with me for some time informed me that “she felt much more friendly & as if she had known me for years, a feeling she could not entertain for Mary Hebden, although her mothers first cousin” – Mrs. H. is very fashionable & stiff I believe. Mrs. B. is very interesting just now & looks forward to Aug. with dread. She is a tall, fine looking woman – asked myself & children to lunch but had to put off, as she has been feeling very miserable for the past eight months. When Mary H. returns from the seaside, I shall call again.

[reverse]

The Steele's are as you say good stuff & their history will be interesting – your career so far not the least interesting of the lot. I hope the miners certificate will reach you safely & that all will turn out well. Am glad Mrs. Davis appreciated my letter & that it reached its destination safely. You had a gay time at the races evidently, but it is a good thing some pleasure comes to you at intervals. Either Miller I have not heard from or written to for some time – she does seem to be a nice girl & writes amusing letters. Your last photo's, the one's seated are those we like best. they are more like you than any others sent from Dawson we find & Vivian likes them too – he says you “are all right”. Your sword is here

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

here in your military case – will that not do instead of a new one? I do hope the scarlet cloth jacket will be O.K. as I was so particular in details. I have also mentioned it to you several times, so fancy it may have reached you ere now. Yours of June 2nd acknowledging mine of April 23rd came by the same mail as the others. Yes, every one knew of my anxiety concerning the mails. Miss Scott's friends are the Rutherford's. You know one of their boy's used to be in Macleod & came to our house several times. Richard's case is not yet finished, but they expect it to end every day – after that, he will sue St. Pierre for a good sum, I assure you. The whole affair is favorable to Richard. I heard

[reverse]

from Elmes since he left, but have not as yet answered his. I am so busy & all my leisure moments I like to devote to you, if possible. Did you not get the "Star's" sent about all the praise you got in the House? I hear nothing concerning them & would really like to know if they reached you & the famous Xmas box of sweets, ties, handkerchiefs, etc. I found it very queer myself that my letters did not reach you, & that you got letters from others – I certainly thought they were tampered with & as they were all sent c/o N.W.M.P. Vancouver B.C" was very suspicious. Auguste could not find [Leadley's] letter when he first wrote Mr. White, but he wrote a second time after finding it & is or has written Mr. White again concerning it. He also intends writing

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

intends writing Mr. Perry. Alec is to write "in full" re "Empire" for ever so long, but I do not know the cause of his silence unless he is too full to write legibly about it. Mrs. Mac tells me that every time she writes, poor [soul] – mines are a terrible failure in her opinion. You know how the money & cheque came in most beautifully as I told you in my letter written on my return from Ottawa. The June pay came on Saturday – it was time, I had not a cent & Mamma has not had a son from the States since last August, so if I were not here with my little ones, I do not know what they would do. The children are well & seem happy. They seem to be well liked & Baby is a great pet. We have not got a servant yet. Mamma will not

[reverse]

get one until the estate is settled & she knows how much money she has to go on. The house is large, every thing is convenient, still as I will not let Mamma do all, I am kept very much occupied. John has just returned from

his holidays & I will find out from him the best place to go for a first class pea jacket, & send word in my next letter, so that you may have it in time for Autumn. Be very particular re measurements so that no mistake will be made. You will see Mr. Ives' death in the papers. The late minister, W. B. [illegible], also Mr. Geoffrion's death which was a sudden affair too: gastritis killed the latter in the prime of life.

Wednesday. I was suddenly overcome by sleep last night but as it was near

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]
near midnight you will not be very much surprised. I now take up your letter of June 7th, I received the papers you sent all right – yes, I remember Capt. Woodside, although I did not meet him. You must be kept awfully busy & have no time for loneliness of any kind. The crowd is evidently a bad one & you must be on the alert all the time. I hope the photo's I sent of the children will reach you safely & not get damaged in any way. I will try & get Morgan's book of A.D. 1860, but Auguste says Mr. Masson has it & he can borrow it from me later on, if I cannot purchase a copy. Yours of 7th June contained draft for \$25.00 already acknowledged & thanks sincerely for the same. I sent photo's of yourself

[reverse]

& children to Vivian since my trip to Ottawa & he wrote a nice friendly letter saying among other things that "he hoped my ladyship would make a longer visit next time". Through inadvertence I missed your letter of Apr 30th but take it up now to reply to, for it afforded me much pleasure – it was a particularly affectionate one – also spoke of the fire of Apr 27th. I am sure fighting fire up there must be a difficult task, the houses are small bandboxes & the water supply poor. Your next letter is dated June 26th so you see you were almost as bad as myself, allowing so long a time to elapse without writing. So far the summer has been pleasant – we have had a great deal of rain & severe thunderstorms, consequently

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

have suffered very little inconvenience from the heat. The house is nicely situated & we get the benefit of the cool air from the Mt. It is hard for all the wives to be separated from their husbands who are in service in the Yukon – but your report contains a little paragraph which went far towards convincing me that there was not much chance of my going up to Dawson. You know of course, what I refer to. You must not say "if I go, you will have something besides the life Insurance" – how under Heaven could I ever live or enjoy life without you, my own darling – work hard so that we can soon

be reunited & enjoy it together with our dear little ones near. Well, dear if the claims turn out all right we will

[reverse]

soon be able to pay all our debts. I sent Cowdry another \$50.00 as I had a letter from the firm which I enclose. I have not paid them as regularly as I would have wished, but in Feb the \$150.00 life insurance crippled me for a time. I have to pay current expenses as well, so do all in my power. I wrote Mr. Cowdry after the reception of the letter asking him "to be patient for a while longer, that I should certainly pay every cent owed the firm by my husband" – do not be angry at my mentioning it. next month I will send McKenzie \$50.00 towards the Macfarland note. Your dear letters dated July 5 & 7th came in today as well as papers mentioning the Greek danseuse so anxious to exhibit her seductive charms to my matter of fact

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

cool old boy. You must find it hard to resist such charms???? I will not answer those letters tonight as I must keep some for next time. I hope you are enjoying the very best of health, my pet. Did you like the ties I sent up in the parcel? – you do not mention them. Gertie & her youngest have gone to Aultsville for a fortnight to visit a friend of hers – the change will do her a great deal of good. [Concoune] & [Tootsie] are spending the time in the Point Claire convent where [Concoune] is going as boarder next Sept. The [supervisor [sic]] is an old teacher of Gertie's, who has always been very fond of her. Mamma sends her fond love & hopes we may be millionaires at the end of the next year. Well, my

[reverse]

dear old pet it is time for me to cease this talk so I will say good-night. The children send many sweet kisses to dear Papa. Hoping this will reach you in good condition, with many wishes for pleasant dreams, believe me,

Your own true, warmhearted,
devoted wifie

Maye.

July 27th 99.

[/pg 10]