

2008.1.1.1.1.52

Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

Vaudreuil,
July 9th / 89.

My own dearly loved Sam,

Yours of the 29th charmed me today & afforded me intense enjoyment while attending to the many household duties which fall to my share. I am with you in spirit most of the day & when your dear letters come, they seem to bring you nearer the little girl who loves you so fondly & looks upon the sweet vows they contain with as much affection as possible. The only thing they lack is the "music of your voice" which would, if anything only tend to make nearer & dearer to the heart of your Queen, my King. Time will make me more reasonable my pet, & teach me duty is the first thing in a true soldier's heart & the arrival of my letter proves the truth of my assertion. I am pleased to know that I have not lost the warm place that I desire to hold in your love &

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

esteem. I feared for a time that the temperature might have cooled somewhat & the thought made me quite heartsore. I think to be very candid with my darling, that I loved him even better when I fancied he was very angry with me & that such a distance was between us & that no words of mine could reach him, however ardently I wished to right myself. I worried myself almost ill over it. You perhaps have never known what it is to have perfect peace, happy in the knowledge that the one whose affection you desire, loves you. When that stage is reached, Love slumbers, as it seems & in a manner is unfelt – but let one little word disturb the pleasant dream & the whole heart is a furnace of living fire, burning into your very soul from the depth & intensity of the passion you deemed at rest. You may be able to form an idea of the pangs I endured during the period I believed you provoked with me, my pet, for I could never tell you. I will send the views, but they are not

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

very successful as photos. The one in which we are visible is the old summer house at Grandmamma Harwood's residence, where we so often played as children. The artist not being very proficient, did not know the right light required & the sun, being too much to the side, caused our hats to throw a shade over our faces, especially over mine, as the brim of mine was wide & it looks like a thick black veil. Still, though our faces cannot be seen very well, the surroundings make it pretty & dear, owing to old associations. It is the only copy I have so treasure it carefully for me. The ruins are pretty too & Mrs. Mac will recognize them well. The house was burnt down in '74 after being bought, completely renovated & furnished as a summer hotel, by the Molson's Bank of Montreal. Mr. D. may get the camera again & I trust will be more expert next time. Your dear one does not look very sweet & I have lost flesh lately – heat generally does that & fatigue sometimes acts in the same way. I trust you will be my lover all the rest of my life & I can safely say I shall never weary of having too much affection lavished on me – a woman who is tired of being loved, is a woman tired of loving, so having craved for it, will always cherish the feelings I have been fortunate enough to inspire, & respect the deep love my darling may feel for me. Mrs. Mac must have received a letter long ere this, for I wrote quite a while ago & am on the lookout for her reply just now. Miss H. will make a sensational entrée into Lethbridge & impress the majority, coming as she will, in the company of Lord Claude. The elopement has been very nicely settled. Uncle allows Mrs. Beard forty dollars a month pocket money & his salary is over that monthly - his father gives him four hundred dollars a year, so they may manage to live comfortably after all. They are both young & she very indifferent, as a rule. They may

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

in consequence, both grow weary of each other before many years go by!. I enclosed a printed extract about it in the letter I last wrote Mrs. Mac & told her to pass it over to you for perusal – did you get it? Strange as it may appear, I know you far better since we correspond than before. What I imagined might be fancies, are now facts, my pet, which your dear missives have proved to me. I was not so difficult to read..... Our house has been quieter as we have had no strangers remaining with us. it is gayer now that our boys are home once more, though many things sometimes cast a gloom over our happy family. I send "Yolande" which will have reached you ere you peruse this no doubt. It is quite a while since I read it, still I think it a pretty story. I have several others which will come to you now & then to assure you how often your own little girl thinks of her pet & darling boy. I

had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Scobie once or twice & found her very nice – he I saw when camped

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

at the Creek on our way to the Mts. & knew at first sight, he was fond of liquor. If his accident did him good in the way of a lesson, but such as he, are past redemption, I suppose. I looked upon her as rather middle-aged, caused I know now by her trouble. She invited us to spend the evening with her, but being fatigued we did not accept. it was the time we saw him. Your dreams were peculiar & being inclined to superstition I immediately said to myself “My pet is superstitious & will attribute it to my illness at the time” – did it strike you? What was the name of the young lady who [liked] your neck so affectionately? You did not tell me to put me on my guard – woe betide the one who comes between my love & ! There is no fear for me, my heart is yours forever & [for age] & I am not one of the kind who plays fast & loose with an honest man’s affection merely for the sake of amusement. You are convinced of that long ago, are you not? the last was worse than the first, my

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

my sweetheart & I hope such horrible dreams will not disturb your slumbers, till I am near to kiss you to reality again! – Mamma gave me several jars of strawberry jam, which I told her I should keep in reserve to sweeten my pet, should he be any way sour with his little pet, now & then. My father & fourth brother, Reginald, left today on a short pleasure trip – they have gone to visit Mr. Joly de Lotbiniere, the ex-premier - & my father’s Cousin. They will I am sure have a delightful trip, if the weather is propitious. He resides at Point Platen in the county of de Lotbiniere, where he has a beautiful summer h residence. We did not spend Sunday evening out, as it commenced to pour rain as we prepared to depart. I suppose we will be obliged to go next Sunday, as the lady receives that evening & particularly wishes us to be present. I must tell you something which may make you laugh. Mamma & Mr. D. were conversing the other day & very naturally Mr. Freddy came on the [tapis] – she asked if he thought his brother liked the N. West well enough to remain there. “Yes! was his answer, Freddy expects to be the next Commissioner & as such will be the first man in the country”. Not at all ambitious is Master Freddy now is he? “You see, Mrs. Harwood, Sir John is working for him & Sir J. can do anything he pleases & he has promised Freddy all his influence” – “Old [tomorrow]” would be different to what he is thought, if such fops & empty

heads were at the head of your force, as Master H. has led me to imagine he is! – this is, of course, *entre nous*. Louise believes every word, while I listen & smile. He is keeping his promise very well so far, & I hope that it may continue for her sake. Well, my pet, you will say I must be trying to find something more to have you do for me, but in the alterations I desired made in the house, I forgot to ask for a nice lockup cupboard in the cellar, a good sized one with at least half a dozen shelves. it is very late, so I fondly kiss my darling, goodnight.

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

July 10th. I finished up my letter rather suddenly last evening, but I was tired & believed I could write better this evening & cherished the fond hope of reading another letter from my own old pet today. Vain hope! still it may have been delayed en route. I have just packed up the humble present I told you of some time ago & which I trust will prove useful & recall me to your mind, should your thoughts play truant, whenever your eyes fall upon it. I also enclose two of the views you wished for. we are in that of the ruins also, but I will pay you well if you can find us out. Notman who finished them up found the summer house a perfect picture & said we looked so natural although we imagined we would appear very stiff. I sincerely hope the next I have taken will be somewhat more flattering. They will amuse you however, so I send them, knowing it will give you an idea of how pretty a place I live in. The manner in which I ended my letter last evening makes me smile – [just] looks as if I hurried up to ask for a

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

favor, was throughly [sic] ashamed of myself & then kissed good night. The cupboard will be very handy, & every housekeeper requires a thing of that sort. I had a note from Grandmamma today – she tells me that she is not well & is being attended previous to her departure for the west. The whole place is [en fete] just now – his Lordship Archbishop [Tablue] is here for a day & a half & had quite a grand welcome, the band playing, bunting flying & etc. Alice was speaking to me & must be blamed for the blot just below. She says “tell the Major it’s a kiss & he will not mind it” – I forgot to tell you in my last that I had quite recovered from my indisposition & trust I shall be some time without being troubled in the same way again. Well, my own dear pet, my letter though not very long I must close. I hope you are very well & not worried by any more desertions & things in that style. I made a little pincushion for your dressing room the other day but which I shall keep until I put it there myself. Gentlemen

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

do not as a rule require pins, but when they do, it is nice to have them near – besides, it was a labour of love, you see, so it pleased me very much to make it. With fondest love & very many sweet kisses which I may say I almost long to be able to give my dear old darling, believe me Ever
Your own loving

Maye.

I enclose a few verses ~~which~~ that often gave me consolation in the old days when I was “unnoticed & unknown” & “my heart with longing torn” to find out whether you would “own Love’s magic power” – perhaps you will like them a wee bit for the sake of the one who so frequently perused them,

Your own

Maye.

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

In reading over what I wrote last night I find that I did not express myself quite well when I say “that I loved my darling even better when I fancied he was angry with me”. I was disturbed at the time & got mixed up in what I desired to tell you – it was, that fully realizing the depth of my warm, deep love, the thought of your displeasure grieved me so, that it, in a way, awoke the many fond memories I cherish so dearly & made me feel how very, very much I loved you, my own old darling. I hope you understand & will not imagine my affection is lessening – on the contrary, it increases day by day & I know what that is!.....

Au revoir, my own pet – once more I wish you pleasant dreams. Write soon to

Your own

M.

I am ashamed to let such a missive go

[/pg 10]

[pg 11]

to my pet. it is very untidy looking but seems destined to meet with every mishap. pray forgive me for it & will promise to do better next time.

[/pg 11]