

2008.1.1.1.1.122

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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508 St. Urbain St.  
Montreal.  
Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> 98.

My own darling Sam,

I have tried every day & evening since my arrival now almost a fortnight ago to write you & have really not been able to do it. Tonight, come what may I am determined to let nothing prevent me doing what until now, ~~nothi~~ was always a pleasant & easy task. Elmes wrote me that he had written & told you of our departure – well, I will tell you of that, & will then acknowledge your letters, one after the other. In the first place, Capt. Deane never sent me a man until Thursday Aug 25<sup>th</sup> – when Johnson, the carpenter came. You remember my telling you in my last, that Congdon had returned to duty. Perry, Mr. Casey's man then came, but he was working for Mr. Cuthbert as well, who was doing duty in the post & was always attending to him, to my great disgust. At last, I could stand it no longer, so went to the Sergt. Major & complained. He asked Scrimshaw who came on conditions that it was for a few days only, Perry going to the Creek to help the Cuthbert's [move]. Johnson, the carpenter & Scrimshaw worked well, but for all that I could not get everything ready for the 29<sup>th</sup> so Saturday evening, Smith the old farm instructor, now a special came too. I worked hard all day Sunday, in fact worked until I was very ill. On Monday they began to move things out early & sent in a lot of men – had they only given me help sooner, it would have saved me much discomfort & hard work – as it was, many of the old men were indignant at the treatment I received & I feel sure Mrs. Deane would never turn in & do the same amount of hard work. Mr. Sanders who was in & not at all well

[reverse]

give up on account of a severe sick head ache – this morning I went & had an examination made by Dr. Helen Macdonald, who has a very good name & seems to be very painstaking. She found me in a pretty bad state & has commenced by giving me a tonic to build me up, before undergoing any operations necessary. Sister Margaret came to Montreal the Monday after I

arrived on her return from her summer jaunt to Georgeville & around. She wanted me to go up in the evening to call, a very difficult thing to do with my three little ones, as she is always out during the day. She looks well, but has aged considerably since we saw her in 1890. She inquired about Elmes all the time & of course, I spoke of him in the most flattering terms – she has become very deaf & one requires to speak very loud. she called to say good bye as she leaves tomorrow for Ottawa, being anxious to get settled once more. I took Mamma & Antoine to the matinée yesterday to hear Black Patti & her Troubadours – we enjoyed it very much, the voices being good & the spectacular part of the performance particularly bright & saw a cake walk for the first time. The car containing our household goods arrived today & tomorrow I must go to the Freight Sheds to see about them. I wrote Hicks & Sons ordering your peajacket, 2 pair of breeches, one light, the other heavy, your mitts, side spring boots, ½ doz neckties & Kaki suit, all as you asked, very particular & minute directions being given, about ten days ago & hope all will be satisfactory. Be sure & let me know if you are pleased with the goods when they come. You asked for a tuque but did not say what size – I might be able to get it here, if you tell me the kind, size & color. The moccasins Major Perry wrote he sent as I asked, two (2) pair some time since. By the by, did you own the desk with revolving cover that was in your smoking room? I had lent it to Regie & he intended bringing it up with his other goods. Sergt. Pattison spoke to me saying the Officers said it had been bought for the division. I spoke to Mr. Sanders & informed him that had I for one moment known the desk was not private property I would have turned it into the Q.M.S. However, I said I would write & ask you & you

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you might send the answer to the O.C. in Macleod. Please do not forget this, it being very important. I of course, acted in good faith & regret if I was mistaken. Owing to lack of help, I had to leave the house in a very filthy condition & it worried me so much that I could not sleep on my way down & even after I came. I wrote Mrs. Sanders & Sergt. Pattison as well, about the house & asking the latter if his Q.M.S. articles had all been returned. Marie to whom I gave orders to have them perfectly cleaned & all put on a [table] neglected carrying out my orders, & I found, at the last moment that they were lying around all over. The house, in some places, was littered up with papers, but, try as I would I could not clean up. Marie's head was quite turned by all the men about. & I had so much to attend to that something had to be neglected. Alice & Mabel came in after I had written this far &

have only just gone – it being now after eleven, my letter will not be as long as I intended, as I am determined to send it off tomorrow. I must tell you that several of your letters have reached me in very bad condition, the envelope completely open at one end & for all I know, the letters may have been read. Try & use the blue canvas lined ones, as the ordinary ones are not of much use. Alice tells me Mr. Cowdry's engagement to Miss Thompson, the school teacher is announced. Elmes writes her often. he enclosed your last to him to me & says I can acknowledge it, if I please, he never will. He is very indignant at my having told you of his spre, but I feel no remorse whatever about it. He may say what he pleases, but he did not ask right & I will never give in that I was wrong to tell you. Your dear letters of the 10<sup>th</sup> (2 of them) 11<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> are all here before me, but I will not answer them tonight it being so late. I want you to know I am in the land of the living, as I have been silent for so long. Capt., Mrs. & Lily Deane went off on the 1<sup>st</sup>, on a month's leave & Joe Howe takes command. I must try & be a swell for the wedding. I am having the silk blouse I got at Eatons over

[reverse]

two years ago fixed for the occasion, wearing the black brocaded satin skirt I got there at the same time. I must be well dressed for your sake as well as mine & hope to keep up the credit of the family. I must have a hat trimmed up to date or get a new bonnet. The bracelets are much admired. I intend having "Klondyke" & the date of each wedding engraved on the other two. Auguste's pin is made into a claw holding a moonstone. It was too large & flat a nugget for a pin (to be mounted in nugget style) & is very nice. Of course I told Birks I would pay for the making of all. Mrs. Mac says she meets no one she knows & is getting homesick. The children are looking well & getting fat. I trust they will keep so, both on their account & mine. Well, my dear boy, you will think me awfully selfish. I have not found time to ask how you are or to use one endearing term. I have to write so fast & have so much to say, but, you know my darling, how dearly I love you & trust you are enjoying the very best of health. Be sure & write often. I will answer all yours in a day or two. God bless you, my pet, & keep you safe from all harm. The children seem to like the change, but Flora is too scotch to be surprised at anything she sees. Gertrude is thought cute & pretty, the boy lovely & Flora very handsome & fine looking so they will be favorites, I fancy. Your poor old woman, will I hope soon pick up & fatten, so as to be presentable – I have got so very thin, that I am nothing but skin & bones. Write soon. God bless you, my own love. With sweet kisses from one & all, believe me,

Your own true, warmhearted, devoted, affecate  
little wifie,  
Maye.  
Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 98.  
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