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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
May 18th [1902]

My own darling boy,

It is a beautiful, bright, sunny day & it feels like summer at last much to my great delight. I fancy I see the twinkle in your eye when you read that, but it is really true. I am such an [icicle] that I only warm up when the warm season is at its height. Do not wonder at my repetitions [sic] but your two daughters are busy discussing the note paper they are to use to write to you, so do not wonder at my mistakes. We three have been to church &

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feel as if we had done our duty. There is a big parade this p.m. & of course we shall have to see it. There is too much military spirit in us to miss that particularly when the mother is so favorable.

I now take up your dear letters of April 11th to answer & thanks so much for your cheery "how do you do" so early that morning - you evidently meet all the Canadians who go to the country & are there for several years. It is a nice thought of theirs to wish you to be a vice president of the Can. Society in Jo'burg - So you enjoyed the concert! - well, you

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are improving for in the good old days you did not care very much at having to sit for two or three hours without a good whiff of your pipe. The people who are in trade are often as a rule much more highly educated than those who are society people - they lack refinement at times, I must confess. Red hair is a relief I suppose. You see black hair & brown too all the time - too bad your little wife has not red hair!! If you think of me all the time, indeed so do I, as you know. I shall be glad when we will not be compelled to speak always with the pen - I so long for the sound of your voice & a sight of your face!! God bless you my dear & may we soon be reunited is one of my most ardent prayers.

If the peace negotiations fail this time it will be a long fight to the end & the happy moment of our meeting will be further off than ever - I suppose I must say nothing, for thousands of other women are in the same position as myself, eh! dear? Where is Laidlaw living now? Is he a brother of the [Mr]

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Laidlaw who used to be in Macleod in the old days? I met George Taylor of the "Star" the other day & had a long chat. he was anxious to learn all he could about you & your district & asked me to give him any news that would interest people. You know I am discreet so you need not fear that I shall say anything that I should not. Am pleased to learn you have such fine sick stables & for your [recruits] it may help ward off that horrible sickness. I do feel so bad over poor Boyd - his death must have made a great void in his family! -

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Stephen Maule Jarvis, aged 80 died in Toronto the other day - Mrs Hope I met in the car yesterday when out with the children, & she came over & spoke to me - said she was going to Toronto to see them although the Uncle was dead - she seemed friendly enough! - She is beginning to fade & oh! horrors do not give me away! looks greasy [?] if you can understand - her nice complexion is gone & she is dark & sallow! We say these things with bated breath as society ladies never lose their good looks. I see Cameron has been promoted over Merritt's head - strange the same story should come about Merritt as came about Jarvis &

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Cameron the man both times! Why should Merritt "have to take the Command" as [illegible] says - they must be a queer lot! The same old things! Why do not your officers act as his do? It is peculiar is it not? Your friends do not forget you, as you get lots of letters. I trust they always contain good news - I am glad your Lt. Jarvis is such a nice fellow & such an efficient officer. Having a fine troop will be an inducement for him to keep it up to the mark & the men will be ambitious to continue their good reputation for proficiency. Surely you knew long ago what a good dutiful wife I am & that I am never unreasonable. These five years are not without proving what I say. I am sure the [Constables] books I sent will prove useful in many ways & be a great help. Zach Wood is a disappointment to me as well as to you, but his wife I never had much use for as you know. You see, dear, I did not belong to the same stylish set! Yes Mrs. Davis was certainly very kind to you & I appreciate it as much as you do. I see Mrs James Ross has returned

from England. Their trips are many & evidently they think no more of a sea voyage than I do of a trip to Ottawa.

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It is hard for young Steel to have to begin at the bottom in Cape Breton but as you say he will soon be at the top. There is good stuff in the name, is there not? You accuse me when you say "I have given you leave to wait" to rent a larger house! - truly, you must have known all along that I would not ask you to bring us out now, for I have no money to go at present & that is a very great consideration, is it not? Well, so far have heard no more from Elmes re "Will draw one hundred tomorrow" - I do not think they are doing any work or at least not much, but they would not draw on me for that reason I hope.

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Were it to bring him to S.A. I might not mind so much, but I certainly cannot do anything else to help them. I am hard enough pressed myself, I assure you & as I said last Tuesday I have a great deal to pay in June, your life Ins. which must be paid the very day or else it is all lost & it's a large sum -!! So your face & arms are free from bites! The mosquitoes last a long time, it seems to me & other things sometimes bite harder than the poor little mosquitoes which warns one of its approach. So you never had such arms! Too bad I am not near to fill them, eh, dear? I am the

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best judge of their beauty & usefulness. Yes, Dr. Macdonald finds me better but not quite well yet - it takes a long time. Met Col. & Mrs Cole yesterday & both gave me a nice pleasant [bow]. They looked happy & smiled when they saw the youngsters. I am glad my head is too level to swell at your honors, although I am very proud of you. I see Edward Rose has made Sousa an M.V.O. He has just been touring England with his band & is the only American with that honor. The Star mentions it yesterday. Regie is still here - negotiations [sic] not settled re house. The boy is a dear little fellow & the children are fond of him. It seems to me I remember [Baines] - was he not in Mac. before we left? Mrs Hyde of Pincher Creek died some weeks ago - she had a child, did well for twelve days, paralysis came on & she died leaving two little ones. Mabel is doing well, I suppose. Have had but one letter from John so far. The birthday is the same as Antoine's [sic] & Dubbie's. There is not much news - must write Sir Wilfred re your leave as enclosed letter suggests, but will not send F. Oliver's letter - it is

short & merely mentions my [doing] it & that he had seen Co. Fred White. All are well and send love. Mamma feels better. The little ones are fine & send their usual letters. God bless & keep you until

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we meet again in the daily prayer.

Your most devoted warmhearted affectionate lively, little wifie

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