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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

[page 1]

162 Hutchison St.
Sept. 10th- 8 p.m.
[1907]

My own darling Boy,

Yesterday brought me two letters dated the 4th & two dated 5th as well as that informing you of Col. Cameron's death & J Barker's a/c, which I did not know of.

I shall have a photo taken of our dear Torla as you wish & which has been my great desire - one thing only has prevented my doing so before - the cost of it my dear. The fellow from Lethbridge to whom you allude must be young Mair for I cannot recall any one [sic] else at the moment & who seemed to find her rather attractive. It seems to me Mrs. Dr. Rouleau is an Ottawa girl, Alphonsine [Rachsy], whom I knew when a youngster at school & who was a very pretty girl.

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

I do not suppose she ever mentioned me & most likely does not remember me, however, I fancy I am right & she may bring me to mind when we meet. I sincerely hope your cold is better - be sure to take care of yourself, my darling, for I am not yet there to look after you. You say "the weather is fine!" Well ours is still unsettled, Saturday being our only sunny day for the last twelve - it is now almost raining & it is predicted for tomorrow, so you see we are getting enough of it. I meant Capt. Macdonnell had just come from Quebec I suppose, when I said he was en route: from there it must have been as I know of no other trip lately. You are aware ere now of the interest he has taken in the bridge & its fate.

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

He has many interesting views of the structure before & after the disaster. Torla will write Miss [Duncan] when she has the photos, but her time is fully occupied, I assure you & Saturday is the only leisure

time she has now that class has commenced. I suppose there are a few nice Catholics in Calgary & we will mix with both no doubt. I now take up your second one of the 4th in reply to mine of 29th. Torla is in good spirits & Friday got the utmost limit of good marks, so you may be sure she is pleased. She studies well & will, I am certain, get on all right.

I read her parts of your letter where you referred to the Macleod children particularly & it impressed her - she gets lonely fits for her dear old Papa, "there lives not such another as he, Mamma" - she is attached to you, dear & you may rest assured I do all I can to encourage her in her affection & reverence for you. I too think Jarvis had not much to speak of when he told her husband that Marguerite sat on your knee - she did it once to my knowledge but I was not present, as I was putting my boy to sleep - she was not quite a child, being older than she was supposed to be, my dear, however, he need not have alluded

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

to it, so many years after - she did it before him you see. I remember Alice telling me about it as well as yourself. As she had so little education when she came west, Minnie & Lex made her out thirteen or so, when in reality she was nineteen or twenty, I believe. I can read "[illegible] you & me" & see that duty is still a pleasure & that you are looking forward to our meeting. Well! It is quite right & so am I, if I must tell the truth.

I do not recall Rogers, but always think of those in Pretoria when I hear the name & wonder how they are getting on. I too retire late. I cannot sleep sometimes & endeavor to court rest by tiring myself. However, mesmerism has its effect upon me when you are near & I am soon lulled to dreamland!

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

I can see that you read my veiled remarks with accuracy & are getting into training by degrees, so that work will not tire you too much & you as you say got me there!

I never saw a word in the "Star" about Cameron's funeral & expressed the deepest surprise, as he used to be a favourite with many here. I cannot imagine why the Hd.qr.s staff was not represented. It was not in the "Star" but in the "Daily Witness" that he died of "perforation of the bowels" & many wondered why no mention was made by the obsequies. I now take up your social letter of the

5th. Mother will miss us all this winter, particularly when the cold will prevent her going out as often as she

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

feels inclined to. I do not like the idea of her being without a daughter near, however it cannot be helped & Frank is really very fond of her. She has been in bed for two days suffering from a bad cold. I had Dr. Macdonald last night & was so busy with mustard blisters & linseed poultices, that I could not write you a line - she feels better tonight & the wheezing is less - she has to be careful & will not be - the Dr. said she would not have to come again, as she had improved so much. Where is Bethune, I wonder - not the Mayor of Vancouver anyway, I suppose. You knew him before, did you not? Was he very intimate with Sir James? I knew they lied about the flat. Bagnall always said they had no inventory & that they said so when you moved in - we will have learned from experience, how to deal with such people!. Have you heard lately of the Ritchie's, Mr. Duncan's friends? I did not see Dr. Lockett, but Frank was charmed with him - so pleased you met him! Frank fixed part of my teeth today, putting caps on two & a bridge - it is a painful thing & the gums are sore, however, I suppose it will be all right in a little while - the work is well done.

Frank said the trip to Sherbrooke was not a pleasant one, the dentists there who had the affair in hand, not knowing how to do things. The party who went were some of the most prominent of the Board & they were disgusted at the ignorance displayed. He returned at seven

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

Sunday night & it will be a long time ere they favor that place again. I went with Gertrude to see Flossie Harwood, the nun at the Hotel Dieu on Sunday p.m. & had a very pleasant visit, going all over the hospital as well for the first time - it has improved immensely & they are trying hard to keep up with institutions of the same kind, belonging to other denominations. Aunt [Emma] called to see us this morning & looks well. I had not seen her since before we left for Africa - her life is a lonely one - she spent the whole of last winter entirely alone, a very imprudent thing I find, as one never knows what may happen: she finds me so well & fat & was charmed with the children -

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

the girlies I mean, as Harwood was out playing about somewhere. Now to business - I sent you a statement of the expenses ahead of me, in a previous letter. It will show you in black & white what has bothered me for so long & which I have tried in every way to lessen dear. I went again to Morgan's yesterday & had a long conversation with Nixon who manages the bills or credit part of the business - he asked me if I could pay \$100.00 down & the same monthly - I said no! I might pay \$50 but would not say I could do more, although I might be able some months - he told me of the new system & I at last informed him that I did not want more done for me than they did

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

for others - he asked me to call today & he would see Mr. James Morgan, whom I saw the first time I called & who said that Mr. Nixon managed that part of the business. I telephoned today not feeling equal to running the gauntlet of perhaps sixty or more pair of eyes, as there are a large number of employees in the office & I must confess, it is most embarrassing. Mr. Nixon said "that Mr. Morgan had been very busy all day but that he would see him & ring me up" - you see my dear, they want too much cash down & too large monthly payments to suit us. I answered the telephone when he rang & he said "Mr. Morgan ~~said~~ wished to know if I could pay \$150 down" I replied, "no! & I think we had better call the matter off. I do not want you to do any more for me than you would for others - thank you very much" - he assured me that they were anxious to oblige me yesterday & repeated it today - once more I thanked him & was leaving the phone when he called me twice & said "please do not decide anything today - leave the matter over till morning, when I will ring you up at 9:30". I thanked him & again repeated that I wanted no more favours than they would grant to others, thanked him & withdrew. I prefer the phone, as I hate going down & facing the

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

crowd of clerks. You will see from this that I have as yet purchased nothing - they are making such a [farce] of it that I cannot stand it! I have to tell you, so that I can right myself in your eyes & that you may know the cause of my delay. I intend going to "Labelle" who is a large French Canadian furniture dealer. I may meet with more consideration at his hands - however, do nothing until I write & tell you results of my next interview. I feel confident many of Morgan's old

customers cannot pay monthly, so they are apt to lose many who stayed with them because of the credit they had. They are more expensive than others, so

[/pg 10]

[pg 11]

people if they must pay cash will go where things are cheapest. I sincerely hope Mr. Godrall's mine will turn out a success & that you will get a small sum anyway - it will help out, I am sure. I cannot remember the date of the letter in which I sent a statement, but suppose you have had it. What did Morrison's father do? it seems to me there was a furniture dealer of that name whose son was with you. I have looked in the directory but cannot find it. I fear I have mixed up business & pleasure very much in this letter, but it is a case of saving stamps, my darling, so you must forgive me. I am, of course, very busy as usual - sewing is long & must be

[/pg 11]

[pg 12]

done. There is not much news. We do not see many people as a rule. J. Barker's a/c must be for crating the two chairs, for I owe them nothing to my knowledge & still it seems to me it was paid when brought to the house. You must not imagine from the way I write, that I was not as polite & nice as possible when I went to Morgan's, really, they seem to make such a favour of it, etc that I cannot bring myself to craving them to oblige us. The youngsters are well & are at last in dreamland. Gus & his are well. I owe Minnie a letter, but am really so bothered & have so little leisure, that I cannot find time to write - she will be disgusted with me, I fear, but I truly cannot help it. God bless you, my darling & keep you safely until we meet again. Do not worry - I sometimes lose heart but your letters fill me with hope & I persuade myself all will be well. With many sweet embraces & fondest love from the children, believe me,

Ever your true, devoted little wifie,

Maye

[/pg 12]