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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St.
Aug 3rd

My own darling boy,

Your dear letters of June 27th & 28th reached me on Monday last & received the usual welcome. You were evidently kind of cross when you wrote the first in answer to mine re cable. You must not wonder at my saying "I did not understand!" Were you near & could peruse your own letters you would not say any more that my

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"wonder was a surprise." You have constantly & repeatedly told me

"you would not remain, that Canada was your home etc etc."

However, it is neither here nor there - I am preparing & will come as soon as I can. I am working hard & doing all in my power to hurry.

This confounded money is the question all the time. I can do nothing without it & I have no more left. Just as soon as Bartram returned he asked me if I could let

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him have £50. Of course I could not do so - now he asks for \$25 as he is very short & you owe him the first amount. Well, it is the very last cent I have to my name & I do not know where to turn to - it is awful to be like this all the time. I paid the Great West & had to pay the [L.O.F.] \$11.60 in advance this week, so that I am always short of money. I have to buy for the children & have it made & everything [costs?], although the cheap sales are going on & I try to do my best. I need more than you imagine in the way of dress. I did not go out here & simply did not care - well! if I go to you, I must dress a little so as not to have you ashamed of myself or your children. Yes, you are plain enough on your explanations now, but had you given me hope of going before your cable, I would have been preparing all the time, & not have ceased hoping ever to go, as was the case.

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You know well I want to go & know what detains me. I have as yet had no answer from Lord Strathcona. Another disappointment is that Capt. Main's dates of sailing are changed & his next will be Sept. 20th & Oct. 25th. I will still try to sail on Oct. 17th or may be [sic] before but now after perusing the dates of sailing, I see we cannot leave before the 17th. I am much disappointed over this, as Capt. Mail is kind & would be nice to us on the trip - such is life! my plans are

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always spoiled by something. I could not refuse Elmes' draft when it was money you owed as you will see from his letter which I enclosed in one of mine. You see the trouble he was in, so I could not, in honor refuse him. I am so glad your division has turned out to be so good & is such a pleasure & comfort to you. Your bothers on my account are enough to put up with. Heaven knows, I am not extravagant & I do the very best I can with the money you

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send me. I keep account of every cent I spend on myself & children, never indulge on any pleasures or extravagances of any kind, so I cannot do any better, my dear. You cannot imagine how anxious I am to give over everything into your hands once more & be free from these worries. I shall feel years younger, although I have tried so hard to do well. Your men, I am sure looked very well when they paraded for Lords K. & Milner. I suppose the ball, etc will come off - hope you will enjoy it. My letters must not dash all your hopes to the ground, else I shall have to cease writing. I suffered much from toothache & did not sleep for two nights, consequently with all my work, am much fatigued & played out. However, I hope to get some letters from you tomorrow, which will cheer me up & help me bear my burden for another while. Yours of June 28th tells me of the way in which your division is divided. I have long wanted to know. Bartram says your

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division is the one in which all the rest are modelled. I hope you enjoyed your ball & danced to your heart's content - my dancing days are over, I fear - never mind, I shall enjoy seeing you. I fear you will find me but a shadow of my old self & will have hard work to make me look well. I am altered, I must truly tell you - may be when all this

bother is over & my trip & all is a thing of the past, I may pick up. The change will prove beneficial too, I suppose.

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I expect wonders from the trip & rest on the steamer - surely, it will do me good! Yes Dubbie is smart, thank Heaven - & will I hope get on. They are all in good health at present. Dubbie is better since his illness - his appetite is better too. Gertrude was seven yesterday - how time flies! Flora is growing every day & will be a tall girl. I shall come you may be sure. There is not much news. I am too busy to see anyone or go anywhere. In fact, too tired

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to hold my pen. Zach Wood is gazetted Asst. Com'r. of the Yukon as last night's "Star" will tell you. I heard from Mrs. Mac that Starnes had been forced by the people in Dawson to leave the N.W.M.P. but cannot say how true it is. No word from Col. Fred White lately, so know nothing re pension - suppose your letter resigning reached him safely. Bartram seems to entertain the idea of returning, as he can get but \$50 per month in Ottawa he says & if so, will accept the offer he had from a man in Jo'burg. He brought me four large photos of yourself & staff: almost the same as those I had. Well, my dear boy, I have been figuring out & endeavoring to count up my expenses until my head aches, so I must give it up. God bless you - good bye- take good care of yourself until we meet again. All join in much love & many kisses. Hoping you [sic] in the best of health & that you will excuse this stupid letter believe me, as ever Your own true devoted wife Maye

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Received Col. Biggar's letter [so] you are right - see that our trip will cost me 6/ per day - will figure out cost, - will have to pay trip [now] from here to London, I suppose.

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