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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
April 13th, 1902

My own darling,

It has been raining for two days, but there seems to be a likelihood of its clearing sometime today, for it is getting brighter, although a fine scotch mist is falling at present. Everything is getting green for the rain is warm & the birds are chirping & calling – in fact, it makes me lonely to see spring advancing, for I miss you more than ever. Flora & myself as usual, went to Mass – now that the little ones can be left I seldom miss it. They are far

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more reasonable & as Gertrude reads fluently she amuses herself & sometimes Dubbie & Duffins during my absence. There will not be much to interest you, I fear. I have been out very little this week & have commenced making an overcoat for our boy out of one of the dark green serges. When he saw the badges & ribbons he began to weep because I would not consent to put them on. I said “the police would run him in if he wore the King's colors” he replied “that the King is not here to see & that he is going to serve his King just like Papa” - he will, I fancy

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be a soldier all right enough – it is in his blood. You know when they are naughty Mamma says “she won't give them any diamonds when she is married to Mr. Kruger” - Dubbie said “Grandma, Mr. Kruger is only a pretending man – a paper man - “not at all, for your Papa is living in his house” - “well, then, God wasted a lot of good skins when he made him” - I certainly agree with him, but you see how very original & witty he is & he knows & understands what he says too – sees the point as well as we do. Had you seen the scene, the expression of his face & the tone in which it was said, you would have enjoyed it immensely. I now take up your's [sic] of Mar 9th the one kept over from Wednesday. Furniture is indeed very dear, but I suppose freight on anything from England or Canada would be heavy – I believe there will be a line of steamers going direct to Cape Town from St. John in the near future, for freight any way – however there is no use bothering about that so long ahead. Westmount is a nice place, but so far from church, etc, that one has to take the car continually & the result is that extras make the amt

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expended the same as higher rent – servants ask more wages, car fare is extra, schools are far, so as we might be without a man in the house & my mother is often alone in the summer, the prospect is not inviting. We had all the water taps in the house fixed yesterday, so they are in good order now, one comfort.

Houses with stables etc are more & we do not need them – I do not intend to keep a horse you know. You would think me crazy if I were so extravagant & really, no matter how willing I might be, why I simply could not afford it. One thing you

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are sure of, is that I will do my very best for all. No! I know you are not & never could be one of the grabbers! no matter where you are, people cannot accuse you of that. A letter from Col. Ross to [Newly] came out the other day. In it he says “Col. Steele is still in Pretoria, living in old Oom Paul's house. He is one of the best officers in the police & I only wish that he could get to be the head of it for I am sure that he would make a first class outfit out of it”! - Watch last weeks Star sometime about the 9th or 10th & you cannot fail to see it. What will B. P.

think of that? Say the Canadians entertain

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the very highest opinion of each other & he is right. You may have heard there are four regiments going out in the 4th Contingent & that Major Perry is to be in command of one – Buchan is mentioned, Turner of Quebec, D. S. O. also. Sanders is reported to be going, also, in fact, a number of the N. W. M. P. but we know few particulars as yet. Yes, Dubbie does look like you dear, & has a pretty profile & well shaped head – he is clever there no doubt. He carries himself well & walks very erectly, shoulders well thrown back – slight, but built to be a strong man some day. I think we have every reason to be proud of them all & should thank God every day for giving us such fine children, bright, clever & pretty. If you would like to change Harwood's name to Robert, I am willing. Are there no other Steele's by that name? Having a family name, people know at once whose son he is you see, but I am quite willing to do as you please, dear. Regie's boy is Robert, still the family name is different. I am very proud of our boy's name & think it very

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uncommon - “Robert Harwood Elmes Steele” - Is that not a name to respect, to be proud of & to hope great things may be done by the one who bears it? I received a short note from Bartram enclosing an account from Hicks & Sons which I shall attend to as soon as possible. Also had an a/c for cable sent to you by “Wm. Gray & Sons Co., man. of fine Carriages. Chatham” of \$11.00 – that also I will see to as soon as convenient. The cable was sent on Apr. 2nd, so

presume you received it all right. You have never mentioned dress boots & spurs sent last August, although

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I have asked you repeatedly if they ever reached you. Do you get “Star, Globe, Military Gazette” regularly? was the parcel Xmas pudding, etc? I asked for [Colmes] to send me a small map of recent date as I could not get one here & he goes & sends two which I have not yet received costing [\$12.6cts] – I was just furious at him, as considering our politeness he might have given me a small one – that’s just like people anyway – take all they get & give nothing in return. I did not want a large map – only a small one in book form that I could have in my desk to refer to if I wished.

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I think it was pretty small of him & if I have any duty to pay, they will be rather expensive. Belcher writes under date Mar 15th acknowledging my draft of Feb 12th for \$300.00. says “everything is going nicely at No. 18 above on Sulphur Creek, but has to help Gillespie who has the lay financially as he has not ready cash & had to get machinery etc. There are about 40, 000 buckets of pay dirt out there now – estimating it at 25^{cts} a bucket, the very lowest, it would mean \$11,000.00 of which we get 30% - most other lays on the creek only give owners 20%, so our share would be \$3,000.00 - \$750.00 Steele, \$750.00 Gillespie, Belchor \$1500.00 – they may take out as much more & it may run up to 50^{cts} per bucket, etc” - he hopes “the turn in the tide has come” - he has worried a good deal but hopes all will be well – he says he wrote you & expected an answer soon. I will send him more as soon as I can – months pass quickly insurances soon come round – the amount still due Belcher is \$534.68^{cts} – Marguerite wrote last week – she is well & is doing her duty for her country as she is to increase the population in June, once more. The family will be a large one at that rate

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& her husband will need to make money to keep them all going. I think she did not relish the idea of my writing Mrs. Davis & not favoring her, that is the fact. Maybe she wants something & will ask later on, in a second epistle, such is the world, eh, dear? Fred White & Mr. Oliver both answered my note – the bill came up a second time as you see in “Star” - I hope it will be satisfactory to you anyway, & am anxious to see debates in the House on the question.

Some of the lady teachers who

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go to Africa this week are quite pretty & will, I fear, be teaching their own little ones in a short time, as they will be married almost at once. All men are

captivated by a pretty face, be they Boers or Englishmen, so the idea & choice was a wise one to help settle the country & to prove to the enemy, Britain wished to treat them fairly & do all in her power to make them happy once more. No news re Bond – the papers kept the matter out of on account of his father, but the French ones had the whole affair – some say he is truly dead, others assert positively he is not. Anyway, no human bones were found in the coffin by the Scotland Yard detectives brought out by the Insurance Companies – only a dog's jaw bones! - Gertie & Richard are preparing to move to Vaudreuil on April 25th – I hope it is not an unwise move. it is for a few months, he says but he may do as before & keep them there for years. I have not much faith in him! they are storing their furniture – it is a very uncomfortable proceeding for

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her, as she has hard work and few comforts – she is willing, however & the country may do them good, as long as they return in Sept. & are not obliged to spend the winter there. There is not much more to say. All are well & join in fond love to you, my darling – God bless & protect you dear, until we meet again is my daily prayer. with many sweet kisses from our own dear little ones, believe me, as ever,

Your own true, warm-hearted, devoted lonely little wifie,

Maye.

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