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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St  
April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1902

My own darling Sam,

I now have your dear letters of Feb 26<sup>th</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> & note of Mar 9<sup>th</sup> which I reserved to answer today open before me. They all came as you know, last Monday at the same time as those I answered on Wednesday evening, the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Yours of the first date mentioned is in answer to mine of Jan 21<sup>st</sup>. You write bright and early in the morning before your breakfast so you feel fresh, after I hope, a good night's rest.

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The latest reports bring no news of the way Canadians in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mtd. Rifles have again distinguished themselves. They were not long in coming in contact with the enemy. They are without doubt a brave lot! - we as yet do not know the list of casualties, but there are several killed & a much larger number wounded. The Quebec Carnival did not tempt me in the least. There is talk of having one here next year, but it is not settled, of course. There was a terrific storm the first day & traffic was almost stopped in consequence.

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I would not need a chaperon you know, but there things have not the least fascination for me now. Miss [Powell] was at the State Ball which took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> – every person knows of it I believe, is it not horrible? I cannot see how she can face the people. I really think she (the lady of the House) is not what they say – surely when she has her young daughters, growing up she is more careful, surrounded as she is with servants & different people, she can have no opportunity of amusing herself. High life does not tend to morality, it seems. I fancied the French minimal, but thought the Englishwoman too cool & indifferent to care for the like of that. Were fashionable ladies more occupied with home duties & their children, they would find less leisure for falling into temptation – a social meeting of some sort, a few glasses of wine & the rest soon follows! Thank God! I am not one of that sett – I am often found fault with for not going out more, but I find society so shoddy, so empty that I cannot take pleasure in it. They judge you by your

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dress, your appearance in every way & no matter what your qualities or talents may be, they are not taken into consideration at all! - money, money! nothing but money!!!. it fairly makes me ill, but I do not care for them. There are very few worth cultivating – I take the Hope's for instance – why this year she has paid very little attention to me! last year when her brother was with you she came ever so many times, invited me there etc. She gave a tea this winter – never asked me. I owe her nothing, that is a comfort –

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she has not even called on our day & she has no day, so her excuse cannot be that the day is the same – no! no! you can do nothing for Buzz, so she has no use for me. Well, we were kind to Mrs. Gamble & they cannot return all we did for her: that comforts me, I assure you. Do you mean to say that although the Xmas gifts came so near, they never came into your hands? All were eatables except a nice red silk handkerchief – I was tempted to send more, but feared they might never reach you. I regret it very much.

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The parcel Moir had was two bottles of poison that will keep you going for a short time – I looked over the parcel Moir sent & it consists of a book with some telegrams which you sent while in the field with “Strathcona's Horse,” a parcel of answered correspondence, & a diary filled in here & there in short hand – that is all. I told you Mr. Taylor said some time ago, that Mackie wired the War Office told him to get the books – indeed! dear I very much fear that owing to Moir's negligence they are mislaid or lost to you anyway. I will see Mr. Taylor again about them – it is too bad such things happen – I will see Mr. T. & endeavor to get the diary & order book from him & have them copied – send the copies to you, as you desire. Notman must have the faculty of making shadows look stout, for I was thin when the photo was taken. I was stooping over to Gertrude that is the reason I seem stout, for no one could say that of me, I assure you.

I do not think Frank calls himself French & will be less apt to than before, after his course in Phil.

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I believe I never told you Antoine was plucked again. The exams which he failed in last year, his practical work, was perfect this year & those he passed well last year, they plucked him on this. They are a queer lot! The Dean does not pull well with the professors, I fear. Antoine is with Dr. Giles' brother, another dentist & will work with him until he comes up again. I do hope this warfare will not last much longer – surely they will come to some kind of terms soon. Has Critchley left S. Africa? he has not come home yet to my knowledge.

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I will write Mrs. Sanders re Harper today – he is horrible! - You must have been pleased to get rid of Kerr – I never believed he would turn out so badly – I hope he will behave better else, I fear he will end in a way that will not bring credit on him. Your going to any [house] with him, could be for no good purpose, so he never should have said it – people could only come to one conclusion when he said such a thing. It is too bad he is such a liar!

My not getting the names of the officers in the photo sooner has resulted

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in their going about the country under different names – That is too bad, but even Mr. Ogilvy took Lieut. Currie (the tallest one) for his son, so you see dear, I am not altogether the only one at sea. Capt de Havilland, we all took for Boyd & they look much alike. The next time, be sure & send the names & places they occupy at the same time. I now take up yours of the 28<sup>th</sup> which mentions sending me money on Dec 27<sup>th</sup>, as you know it came almost the end of Jan & I acknowledged the draft for £175. at once, both to Capt. Strutt, paymaster & yourself.

The next & last came in Mar. sent on Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, fifty pounds – acknowledged also. You see it usually takes from four to five weeks to reach me & I always acknowledge it immediately. It takes money to keep me going, for we must both have it you see & expenses are in a way double, when we are apart, no! do not wire it, the cost is too much. When we are together again, life will seem so different – so many things that happen to mar my day's pleasure will vanish you see – all sorts of little bickerings & trials which crop up hourly, even oftener,

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between the children & cannot help but cause a little ill-feeling between the mothers, will be a thing gone-by. That is what causes so much trouble. That worries me so much too. I have learnt patience & every thing else ~~at~~ I fancy of late years. Knowing so many other wives are watching & waiting does not lesson my task or make it any easier, my dear. It has been a hard lesson & surely will not be without its reward in some way.

I knew too that Regie would not remain in the West but when

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I said anything, I was almost told to shut up, that I did not know what I was talking about, so..... You will find my letter erratic, but upon my word I cannot write – the children keep me talking to them all the time – they are picking at each other, all the time, until I am almost crazy. I cannot write two words without stopping. I heard all you say of the M. P. before – Cuthbert who is such a fighter when he gets a drop, to [be] a coward! one does not wonder at Bliss – Baker only kept up his old reputation –

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I have almost given up thoughts of going out, for I may say, years – hope will, I suppose, keep one alive – life is not long, though my dear & time soon passes. Yours of Mar 1<sup>st</sup> only mentions & enclose the two drafts previously mentioned. Yes, you sent me more money in the two drafts than we would have had in the M. P. in a year, but I would not have so much to pay you see. Life insurance is much heavier, [March] & all the other expenses which keep coming up & I must pay. Frank also, in fact I do not spend a cent uselessly as you know – Belcher got some too you see. I opened your eyes last year dear & I can do so yet on that subject – I do not reproach you, understand, but I spend very little in any other way but necessity – Uncle John also got \$60.00. All these things soon make a good round sum – I am even a better manager than of old, having much more experience. I must also send Hicks & Sons some very soon. The amounts paid are not trifles & take some hundreds you know.

I keep account of every cent I spend, so it is easily accounted for, my darling –

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Well, my dear we have dined – Torla complained of a headache this morning & was restless during the night, but she seemed to enjoy her dinner, so she will soon be herself, I hope. I think the season has something to do with it. Auguste & his family came over this morning for about half an hour – his little ones are very cute – very short & very fat, particularly the girlie. We made a few calls this week – Mrs. Gordon (Col) among the number – did not see her as

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she was out. - Have not seen him since his return. Col. Buchan & Col. Cameron are mentioned as likely to command the fourth contingent now almost being prepared. The former lectured last week on his experience in S. Africa, but I did not attend.

The day is beautiful & spring-like. I will take the youngsters for a walk when I finish this letter to you. How I wish you were here, my darling – what a difference it makes to

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me when you are so far away – the responsibility of the children! no one to help me when I want to bring them out – no one ever to take them but myself. I envy all women who have their husbands with them & will appreciate you when you are near us once more. I never failed to appreciate you almost to your fullest value, but your worth will have quadrupled, I verily believe.

All are well & desire to be remembered. I hope Col. Cruikshanks' book reached you, as well as "The Man from Glengarry" & "The Right of Way" - You will enjoy their perusal, I am sure. This is long enough to try your patience so I had better cease. All your young family are writing you at the present moment & I hope you

will enjoy them. Dubbie is doing his almost as well as Gertrude & Torla. God  
bless & keep you until we meet again. With ever so much love from the children  
& many sweet kisses in which I join & many a fond embrace, believe me, as  
ever your own true, affectionate warm

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hearted true lonely little Wifie,

Maye.

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