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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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Macleod, May 1st 1898.

My own darling Sam,

Your letters of the 10th, 11th, 12th 13th & 17th of April all came in last night by the same mail my darling – two of them went by the Humboldt line of steamers to San Francisco, so they were longer on the way on that account. Via Seattle is much the quickest route, I have noticed & have sent my last that way. You now see all the trouble I have had since you left me, my pet, still I am not disheartened & your dear words of love & comfort are prized, I assure you. My letter to Uncle Henry re quarters has, so far remained unanswered. I cannot understand it, I must confess. I hope your letter will have a good effect, but I hear, Capt. Deane has made no hot beds in Lethbridge & expects to have his family here soon. He has not come in here for over six weeks or two months. I am glad you wrote Major Walsh about the quarters – it may cause them to reflect. Well, dear, your suggestions about my going up have given me lots of food for reflection. I would give anything to be near you, my darling as you know, but I really do not know what to say. I regret that so many perished in that awful slide, but thank God! you were safe – oh! Heaven alone knows the agony I went through when in doubt, & how I waited for news!!! You must have enjoyed Pat [Galim's] visit & [illegible]! I hope he will give you a big nugget – too large for a breastpin!. It is nice to have your name & reputation so highly thought of, I must say. "Brothers & the rest of
[reverse]

them" have not forgotten you. You must have a great deal of writing to attend to – can you not get help sometimes?. You must be getting very thin if your limbs have decreased four inches in size – so have I got thin, very thin, my waist is on a fair way to being as small it was when I married eight years ago. Surely you are not getting thin fretting over us! As I told you in one of my last I could not give Cowdry his money this month, as there were too many calls on my purse. I now turn to your letter of the 11th re [Godsal] business. I had Mr. MacKenzie up this afternoon & told him what you wished him to know. On showing him the power of Attorney which you sent

me he said that the Courts would not recognize it as there were no sworn affidavits [sic] on it & that the Courts would only give it the smallest amount of power. he said, upon my asking, that he would prepare one himself & send it to me, so that I might send it with this letter & you can return as speedily as possible. I promise you I shall see Mr. Godsal righted & shall do all in my power to see that he gets all you promised – after that, I think it would be a good idea to transfer the rest of your interest in “The Empire” to Mr. Galbraith, & get a receipt of trust from the latter. You see that was another idea of mine & he said it was a good one. Mr. Galbraith being such a warm friend of yours, will not, I think refuse me that favor, as he is on the spot & can look after it well. The receipt of Trust would be a protection to me, in case anything sudden happened him & the heirs would want “The Empire” included in the estate. Mr. MacKenzie says that the Bank is going to sue for the \$6.000 note & to tell you the others are going to defend. He wants to know if you would like him to defend you as judgement might

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all fall on you if no steps are taken in the matter. He has a very poor opinion of Alec's business qualities & says ~~for you~~ that he really knows that he was always full when in B.C. He is under the impression Gibson kept him under the influence – that he (MacKenzie) understood when Clary Steele gave up the books, The Black Diamond – was closed – however Gibson was reinstated & the mine shipping – that perhaps the people ~~were~~ or stockholders were being more heavily involved. he thought a meeting would soon be called & explanations demanded from Capt. Mac – who is no business man & should never have attempted mining. that you could get at no real facts when he is talking..... He was very kind & said he would do all he could for me. Elmes was present at the interview. MacKenzie will get the transfer ready, so as soon as the power of Atty comes, it will be done at once. I could not go up & leave Flora here – she cried herself sick when I mentioned it, saying, “Papa is mine as much as yours & I won't be left here”. She got quite savage & showed the stuff she is made of, I assure you. I am glad that although separated from us all, there is some compensation in the fact that you are an important man up there. two years are a long time to be apart, my darling, but you must really advise me – you know the country, its perils & dangers & know our little ones. Can they get the necessary food? can I get milk & butter? I do not think Gertrude & Baby can get on without them? His whooping-cough has pulled him down very much & he is very thin, poor little man! but he is plucky. I could teach Flora all

[reverse]

right & she is only six any way, so quite young enough to begin school when we should return in two years. Queen of the country would be nothing to me for Queen of your heart is all I desire to be. You must tell me everything I must do, what to bring etc, etc. What am I to do with the furniture, carpets etc what kind of clothing, to bring for the children. Marie wants to come too & is very eager to do so. We would need three bedrooms, a diningroom, kitchen & den for yourself & pantry I suppose. I will tell Regie you have asked for another Surgeon & that he must get it. I would not be able to bring my Piano – what would I do with it? no use storing storeing it for two years, as the cold would harm it. You see I could not put the furniture in the Q. M. Store, as it would only get spoiled & destroyed by mice. I could make a log house comfortable & be very happy in it, but would you have to be away very much, with so many posts to look after & so much ground to go over? I do not mind for myself, it is the children I think of, & if they could subsist on the food we might have. I will continue this tomorrow, as it is very late & I feel weary. Good night, God bless you, my darling & in fancy I kiss you a sweet good night & wish you many pleasant dreams.

Monday. Well, darling, good morning. I went up at midnight so you see I too spend the late hours writing you my dear. I have not your letters by me, but will go for them so as to be sure & answer all you desire me to. Can we have a cow there & how about hens? It would be a good thing to have & with nice meadows a cow would revel there. that might be got in Skagway or could it not? You will think me a perfect ignoramous [sic] but I want to know all I can.

[/pg 2]

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We now have hens setting & the rest are looking very nice. I now take up yours of the 12th in which you have changed your mind about our going on account of the children. well, dear as I said before, I would go & think they could do it also. Marie says she will do all in her power to help me & they are very fond of her. Any business proposition of Alecs [sic] is always hard to understand & he never tells me anything. I told Mr. MacK. that I thought it was my fault that I never could understand Capt. Mac. but if he said “not at all, it is that the Capt. cannot express himself, in fact, has no head for business”. Mr. Godsall must have called on Friday evening, to learn whether I knew anything of the business, but having no letters, I did not mention it. He will come in, when the new power of Atty comes. The papers, Victoria have a letter written from Lake Bennett by one [Bacon], he praises you all

up, speaks so highly of you all. When we are re-united, we will forget all the little mistakes we may have made in the past – we will be almost like a newly married couple, only the experience of our eight years of wedded life & the ties of love that bind us to one another, will make us more lenient & forgiving towards each other, & whatever small clouds obscure our happy sky will soon clear away. Yours of the 13th is now in my hand to be answered, as well as Mrs. [Moon's] letter which is a very nice one. I am delighted to know you feel better. It must make it more pleasant for you if Mrs. Godson is a nice person & in a way, make you think

[reverse]

oftener of me, if such a thing is possible. French Canadians are very kind & hospitable I always found & I know lots of them. Did you get the tobacco & photo's [sic] I sent by Mr. Jarvis? they seem to be rather anxious about him here, as no one has heard anything of him since he left. The black bag seems to be a favorite dear, it must be because I owned it & I am glad it turned up all right. Where is your sponge, for I got you a nice bag for it the day you left us? have you lost them? how about the clothes you want – if I go up, will I bring them with me – will I order them from Hicks as soon as I hear from you? I could bring socks, & underwear, with me anyway as well as a service cap. Anything else, such as heavy cavalry breeches, & soft grey cord coat & vest would have to be got in London – how about boots? – Your dear letter of Apr 17th lies open before me perused, as have been all the others, several times since received by me. Mr. Stricklands letter is very reassuring & inviting. You would, I suppose, come to Skagway to meet us, if we did go. You must tell me what to take up & whether we could get all the cooking utensils we would need for our long picnic, without bringing too much from here – with good fuel, hay & being able to raise a few ~~go~~ vegetables would be a great help. If in two years, we can come back to civilization, I will not mind it. You know darling, you have tried in every possible way to hide your loneliness, but it can be read easily between the lines & I hate to be away from you dear, when your kind, loving heart is bleeding for a sight of your poor little wife & your little ones. Would it be more expense for us to go up than to go to Montreal? –

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We could put up with some discomfort if we are all together again. Flora is young & will, if strong & well after our long trip, only make better use of her time at school. The children were delighted with their letters & Flora has carefully put hers away among her dearest treasures. We had commenced spring cleaning but I felt in my heart we were premature. Morgan has just

brought over all the books, letters, telegrams, in fact everything in connection with all the mines – what will I do with them? Alec wanted papers in connection with “B. Diamond & Empire” but Morgan did not give them I believe, & I found none, for I looked myself in your small desk here. Will I give Alec the B. D. Papers he may want? Should I go up, will I bring my saddle & sewing machine? – you will say I never was intended for a pioneer, but I do not know what kind of transport there may be. Morgan has a place in town somewhere as book-keeper at \$2.75 per day. He told me he would not be surprised if he joined you & asked if I go up, might he travel up with me? I said, certainly. Where will I store anything I wonder, for if I find sale for some of the furniture I suppose it is better to let it go, if prices suit, as well as for carpets. This may be a disconnected letter, but I have to mention things as they come to mind so as not to forget them in my hurry. Alice wants me to take a flying trip to Montreal to see them all before I go as my mother will feel very bad, if we leave for that far away Country [reverse]

without seeing us. I might ask Mr. Haney for a Pass for Alice & myself & when there, see Mr. Van Horn or Sir William, I should say, as Auguste knows him & he might give me one to Vancouver. do you think that could be done? Then you would have to tell me what to do in order to see all is right – it is so hard to manage without a man to help you.

Tuesday, May 3rd. My birthday, my darling & you are not near to give me a warm loving kiss or to wish me many happy ones! still, in my mind I know ~~wh~~ you would do so were you near, so will endeavor to bridge over the immense distance which separates us & if your lips feel a trifle warmer just at the present moment, know that my spirit hovers near you & that my lips have touched yours in a tender kiss. I have sent down for the power of Atty which, I hope will be ready, as Mr. MacK. said it would be. The morning has given me more time to reflect & I now think it will be out of the question for me to go to Montreal first if I do go out to you. However, I will wait for more news from you, my darling ere I do anything. David Gairns died on Saturday & was buried by the ex-Policemen on Sunday p.m. There is not much going on. Well, my own sweetheart I will say good-bye. Write soon & I trust you will receive all my letters written in the past few months. God bless you dear, The little ones & Alice send love & kisses. Your own true, devoted warmhearted wifie,
Maye.

Power of Atty was Samuel Benson S. so Mr. Davidson has kindly taken it down to have it corrected – you are to change the name yourself & initial it, Mr. MacK. says –

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