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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
Jan 26th 1902

My darling boy,

Well, dear here I am again to have a chat with you but my heart is heavy & sad, dear. O! how I miss you & long for a sight of your dear face & sigh for the sound of your voice! I cannot tell you how heart-sick & lonely I am at times – what would I not give to see you, my own darling one. Is this cruel separation never going to end? It is no wonder that four years ago today I was [weeping] my [very] heart out in

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Macleod. True, it was the 29th but it was Sunday, the day after your departure for the Yukon. I felt then years would pass before we would have a little home of our own, if ever again & I was not mistaken – at times I get so lonely & homesick for you, dear, that I really do not know what keeps me up – people think me very courageous: could they only see into my poor heart, they would find a very weak woman, instead of the brave one who seems to bear her griefs & trials so well! it is fortunate they cannot read my heart & thoughts at times.

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When is this ever going to end? we poor women have had our hearts torn with grief & anxiety during this terrible war & it seems to me living will seem like paradise if we ever are reunited! Then again our poor little children – life will be so different with them too, poor dears – we want you dear & I pray & beg of you to have us with you or come to us as soon as you can.

Your last dear letter written from Bokfontein on Dec 10th I answered on Wednesday last, so I have none of your dear missives before me. I went up to Vaudreuil on Thursday noon bringing Dubbie with me – we remained with Auntie Angelique & enjoyed our stay, returning last evening by [four] train. Our boy made himself very agreeable & they laughed heartily at his funny sayings. Auntie is not well but was much better & brighter when we left. [Luce Bonit] was in good health, but of course the place is so very quiet no excitement of any kind to disturb them, that they live that [is] all. I never was so much reminded of “Sleepy Hollow” or “The deserted Village” as when we drove down the street when we arrived – even the smoke

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smoke seemed too lazy or too sleepy to come out of the chimneys. I called on Uncle Henry & found them well, he spoke of the "pension" bill & said it would surely be put through this session – when he asked me if I was going out & that I said "when the war was ended" he laughed and replied "I need not expect to go for some years" - he is very pro-Boer you know & sympathizes deeply with them. We saw Aunt Emma who called. She is looking very well indeed & beaming - desired to be particularly remembered to you when I wrote.

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Auguste & Marie have just left having [arrived] here at one. They are both well & jolly. You will appreciate the enclosed as much as we did no doubt, it is very gratifying is it not, to see your old corps so well & favorably spoken of, even at this late day. Flora is spending the day at her aunt Gerties' so is not here to write her letter. Just think that Regie is thinking of moving from P.Creek if he finds prospects better in Seattle, or some other place up West, so Louise has decided to go into the hospital & take a diploma: which means that Mamma has to look after her boy during that time.

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I feel very bad on poor Mamma's account, as she is too old to be [illegible] with a child again: everything to do for him, wash, dress, look after him in every way – she will have to bring him everywhere, as I have enough of my own to look after, so you can perhaps imagine the thunderbolt that fell upon us when that decision was taken. Louise has studied some months & they are to count that time, but she has to put in fourteen months more, which will be until April '93. Mamma told her that as long as she was here she would keep him, but if I want to Africa she would come too & that she would have to find some other place for him. I feel sorry for the mother & the boy, but think when people marry they should be able to provide for their own – surely she sees now the folly she committed in marrying Willie; she says "were it to do over, she would do the very same thing". It may seem hateful & selfish of me, but I did look forward to the time when they would be west – he is such a trouble at times & life is so hard when one is continually living in an atmosphere of bickering & quarrelling – it makes life hard for everyone, especially our little ones, & there is no remedy but

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going to you or your coming & our having our own home – now, do not get angry & inwardly swear at me, dear, but I really cannot remedy things in any other way. There is no use talking of it. I must endure until you see fit to change – but it means a miserable existence at best – life is hard with one's husband away all the time & the awful uncertainty which appals one.

It is again snowing hard – the snow is now very deep. Mrs A. B. answered my Xmas letter &

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was delighted to hear from me. They are all well & were to attend the Scotch Ball on the 24th. I wonder if they spoke of us? Mrs Hyde is spending the winter with them – Jim had small pox at the University in Ottawa in Nov. but said nothing of it until all was over & ~~they~~ he was quite well again. Archie is a big boy & goes riding with the girls, Lizzie & Margaret. Mrs A. B. says she will never forget our hospitality & speaks nicely of old times.

There is not much news & I look forward to a letter tomorrow, but

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almost fear to hope too much. I have been disappointed so often & have had to wait a fortnight of late, so I dread being disappointed once more. I see that Lady Helen Stewart [jilted] Lord Kitchener as enclosed will show – she is a very lovely girl.

All are well & send you much love. The dear little ones [sic] are enjoying good health & anxious to see our dear old Papa once more. God bless & protect you my own darling one & keep you safe until we meet again. With ever so much love & a fond embrace

believe me, as ever,

Your own true, devoted, loving, warmhearted lonely home sick for a glance of you little wifie,

Maye.

I forgot to mention that thirty western men having been discharged from the [Mted.] Rifles in Halifax they incited the rest to mutiny & they were to fix some of the officers after being a few days out – they had a lot of trouble with them the papers say. Miss Scott, the nurse called on Friday when I was away – she was much disappointed at not seeing me, but went to see Gertrude & Flora at the

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at the [convent], as she is going to S. Africa & expects to see you, she wanted to say she had seen them. I was so sorry to miss her, as she seems a very nice person. I fear [Evan] may find the Western men somewhat hard to manage. Col. Gorden comes to take command of his old district – I will call on him & his wife. Be sure & do not forget to answer my questions re your visiting cards – I will have to get you a plate here you see, as I need your cards.

Yours lovingly,

Maye.

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Gertrude wrote every word of this herself & spelt it too, so you see she is learning, poor wee mite.

Do not forget to send me some more money. I am at the very end of my cash & have very few dollars left now. None for me since Sept 9th, you know – only the draft I sent to Belcher has come since & all went to him.

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