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Marie Steele to Sam Steele

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26 Ste Famille St
April 2nd, 1902

My own darling Hubby,

Your lovely long letter, supposed to be the very longest that I ever received in my life, even from you, came to me on Easter Monday & gave me a great deal of pleasure I assure you, my own darling. All yours of that week came to the number of seven, one a day! Well, you are truly a most delightful kind of a husband to own & I appreciate you, as you know. Yes, I do feel very keenly when I do not hear from you for a fortnight or

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more & you cannot wonder at it, surely. No news is sometimes to be taken as good news, but under very different circumstances. Were you in safety all the time things would be very different as you understand.

I knew the clipping re Army & Navy would interest you & was sure of the conclusions you would come to. I do not know very much about the matter, but fancied they were far fetched & written by people who were dissatisfied about something. England is a wonderful empire & the whole world must admire, although jealous

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of her powers. I would love a trip to England, but it is an impossibility – a mother must sacrifice herself for her children & it is out of the question for me to go. No one would undertake the care of the three & I could not go & leave them to a servant to see to. They would die of loneliness during my absence & all the rest of my life would be a long remorse if anything happened, for we only have the three poor little pets & are never likely to have another, so it behooves me to take the very best care of those I have.

It will be the most difficult thing to procure a place to view the procession & almost all the steamers are filled now – oh! no! when I go I must bring the children too, so I will think no more about it. I have the usual amount of woman's curiosity, but it is counterbalanced by motherly love, I suppose. I know quite well you would not leave your division under any consideration & I am not surprised. I know what trouble you had with the Macleod division whenever you were away for any time, so

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can judge pretty well, what you would have ahead of you where you are. Yes, I could have lots of company on the way. Minto sails in the Parisian on June 7th just a year after your going on the 8th – that might be a good opportunity!

Yes, our little ones are quaint & smart in their remarks. I am feeling fairly well – still, go on with the massage & electric treatment, & will until the summer as I must try & get some fat on my bones. Your district must be very large & keep you busy. Well, as long as it comes up to your expectations & your

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trouble is repaid by the efficiency of your men, I feel sure you will be fully satisfied. Wherever you go I am content to follow, so do not worry. I will be pleased to be near wherever you may be obliged to locate your headquarters. You made me smile in your remarks re Cameron – no! I did not care very much that he did not call, still I thought that perhaps he might favor me, as there was a remote chance of his seeing you in S. Africa. I have heard several speak of “bridge whist” but have never played. I sent you Grady's letter acknowledging

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your photo etc, knowing it would amuse you. No news from Mabel so far. Tillie wrote today, saying they were to rent their house for \$25.00 a month, sell their furniture by auction & leave for here as soon as Mabel is well over her trouble. No more re M. P. bill, although I have watched the papers attentively. Our old home in Vaudreuil I did not see. It was very cold & I did not go out. It is all right, only the vandals cut some of the trees. It is rented during the summer I am told. The boys are all Co - Seigneurs, my dear. It is too bad to see old families losing their prestige, but it cannot be helped.

Men as a rule do not remember anniversaries, so I fancied the date of our marriage would pass unnoticed. The little ones are well & have been to a birthday party at the Reiffensteins – the eldest girl was ten today. I got her a nice little purse on a long chain to wear about the neck – they are fashionable, so she was delighted. They had a grand time & talked like machines when they came in. Dubby & Duffins were anxious to get the [boogie] prize but failed to do so, to their great disappointment. You are long ere this aware of our decision re house – we could not be

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bothered moving. Mamma did not wish to purchase a house, as the family is getting smaller & she always lives in hope of being able to give up keeping house someday. Uncle John has answered my letters – he slipped on the ice & hurt himself, it seems, but is all right now. I remember hearing you speak of the [McCullough's] more than once. The press hints at peace arrangements again tonight, but as you say, many who have been doing a great deal of good work

will not get the credit of it. The reports say that the days are pleasant where you are, but the nights cool, so in reality if

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we ever do go over, our fur coats could be worn, for I certainly have no coat as warm as the one you got from Hicks & Sons, except the raccoon one.

[Dobell's] death was due to heart failure – the Dr. had strictly prohibited riding & his horse was frightened by a train & ran away. You did right to let Dr. Borden know what you have done & will do re the other Canadian Officers & men – others do not hide their light under a bushel why should you?

So the nurse who is fond of the [groom] is regretting Wilberforce's departure!

Too bad, he may have

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been her very best & prime favorite, you know dear & think of all she will miss!

Very hard on both, is it not?

It is a good idea of mixing up Colonial & old country officers in the same troop, so they must agree & if they take pride in their work will get on amicably together. I have now finished answering your long letter so will give you a little news, ere I take up your next. We went to a tea at the "Chateau de Ramezay" given by the "Ladies of the Antiquarian Society" - We got there rather late owing to my having to dress the little ones for the party.

There was a large crowd. I saw Mary Hebden & judge of my surprise when she introduced Mrs. Scobie – of Pincher Creek – She is boarding here, she says & has her little girl at school. She told me "she was devoting herself to the education of her child so did not go out," when I made some remark about not knowing she was here. In fact, I almost thought, as much as told me she did not care to have me call. She treated Regie very badly after doing what she begged him for a long time to do, have her husband interdicted

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& may feel somewhat ashamed of herself. Mary Hebden & herself are old friends & she was surprised to learn you were Mary's Uncle. We have had lots of rain for the past few days & it is not over yet. They say the ferries will be running tomorrow, fully more than two weeks earlier than last year. No new developments in the Bond affair – it has not come out in the press yet, although the talk of the city. I wonder if it is true? I was told today that Mrs. Bond had left the city, but cannot say if it is really so. Yours of Feb 24th is a very short

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note asking me to send twenty (\$20.00) to Macleod & I will get it the first time I go down tomorrow. Your next is dated 28th, three written on that day, so I must say you do think of me very often. "Sandow's developer" must be a fine thing &

when I join you I intend to go through the same performance, it will I feel sure agree with me. It is quite late, so I will have to say, good night & finish this in the morning. God bless & protect you, my darling.

Apr 3rd – Well, my pet, how are you this morning? we are well, the day is not very bright & is rather cool. Yes, your news of the Yeomanry

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is exactly what I fancied they were, for they have surrendered so many times & in reality been a disgrace to the army – the laughing stock of the whole world! it is too bad such [illegible] were engaged, but every one knew what they were. The officers are at times much to blame, I am sure: it is hard on the infantry though, to be, literally speaking, led by their own, into a trap. I see the Boers have been at their old tricks of stripping wounded dead & leaving them perfectly naked. They are heartless & do not deserve much mercy. The Yeomanry are now a libel on the name! - Yes, when I look & feel all right I shall have another picture taken – but do not expect it too soon – it is not convenient just now. My mother did not buy your large picture at Notman's I bought it, my dear – it is mine you see. One must look well to be photographed, for Notman does not flatter one & all the defects are very glaring in a picture. I will write Frank & ask him to go to Stetson's & attend to you message. He will,

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I feel sure, be charmed. You are a darling old boy to find time to write me so many letters, & I verily believe, I am the envy of many a wife ~~from~~ for the devotion & courtesy I meet with at my dear husband's hands. I crow over them when they ask me in a doleful voice, "well, poor Mrs. Steele, have you heard from your husband lately"? "O! yes I had four or more on Monday – he still writes me almost every day & I appreciate them, I assure you, as he is always so busy" - They envy me I tell you.

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We met a number of folks at the Tea yesterday. Amelia, my fair cousin was there in all her flesh & glory – she was speaking of Torla & finds her such a lovely, aristocratic looking girl. I was immensely amused when speaking to Mrs. Scobie I heard Amelia say to Mary Hebden, "do you know my Cousin, Mrs. Steele?" "O! yes, why she is my Aunt!" "Your Aunt! well! you must be pleased at having such a distinguished man as Col. Steele for an uncle! for you know he

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really is a distinguished man!!..... I was so much amused & thought of the day, when they would not care to own the relationship – such is the world, eh! dear? I had a nice letter from John Clarke, thanking me for the large picture – he is delighted & speaks so nicely of you my dear. he does not say a word of not

being well himself. Stewart has his office in his dining-room & walks with a crutch – he is getting heavier in consequence – too bad, is it not? Well, my dear laddie, you will be tired perusing this long epistle, but when I commence to write it is such a pleasant task, that I do not wish to leave you, dear. God bless you – be sure & read the “Star” of April 2nd & see what [Antoine] says of the success of the Canadian officers etc. it is on page two (2). All our wee ones join in sending dear old Papa very many loving kisses & sweet messages of deep affection. Again Heaven protect & guard you until we are re-united once more. Such is the daily heart-felt prayer of your own true

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warm-hearted, devoted loving

little Wifie

Maye.

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