

2008.1.1.1.1.112

Marie Steele to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

Macleod, June 6th 98.

My own darling Sam,

Your letters of the 11th, 16th, 21st & 22nd all came together by Saturdays mail, after keeping me two long weeks without any news from you. Yes, you may have all my letters for sometimes from want of leisure, I have only been able to write once a week. Mrs. Godson will be with you long before you get this letter, as she left on the 2nd of June. She wrote me a nice letter, which came too late to enable me to reply before her departure – kindly tell her so, also that I am going to write her sister, Miss [Trew], who was thoughtful enough to send me word she would do all in her power to help me in Vancouver. You also know ere, this, that Skirving's brother is to accompany me on my trip up which in a measure reassures me somewhat, as I must say I did dread it very much without any help at all on the boat & at Skagway. From your letters I came to the conclusion when I read them first that † you did not want me to go up. I was very much put out about it, as my one aim is trying to do the very best thing possible for one & all. Had there been a telegraph office near, I verily believe I would have wired to find out what you really wish me to do.

[reverse]

one sentence leads me to think you would like to have me go, & the next that you would prefer my going to Montreal, so that I got so mixed up that I am quite at a loss. The letter addressed care of Major Perry, containing the two hundred dollars I ~~put~~ got on Saturday, as I wired to have it forwarded to me here. Thanks so much for it, dear. The Sergt. M. I see seldom & my requests are few & far between. Yes, the little ones are very anxious to see you again – the other morning I was giving baby his food on one side of the table when he suddenly said dada! threw his arms out to your large picture & burst out crying – he seemed to think of you all at once & he has kept it up since, talking & crowing away to the picture all the time. I propose starting early in July & trust I will be able to get through then. You see dear I do want to try & settle up things in a way before I go, as I do not wish people to say we left a lot of unpaid bills behind us. I will go up & if we find

that it does not agree with us, well, we will return in a few years, when our finances are in a more flourishing condition. You see dear, I thought the registered letter was the power of Atty, that is why I wanted it here.

McFarland has paid the note I hear – I wrote him to come up & see me the first time he came to town. He did not touch the furniture in any way – I did not think he would. Mr. Casey said the other day “it was them women gossiping – he was that sick of them!!!” –

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

I told him he would hear far more of that than I did as I so seldom go out. I now take up your second letter of the 11th in answer to mine of the 31st. I will be away from Macleod very soon now. I have not commenced to pack up yet but will this week I fancy. Too bad Mr. Armstrong did not go to Bennett first for I suppose there will be no steamers on those lakes this year & we will have to go in row-boats all the way, a very tiresome journey you will give in. A good thing the place is orderly for when there are so many you would have a great deal of worry were it otherwise. Your letter of the 16th now lies open before me with all its sweet expressions of love & sympathy. You say I could live on less money down East. well, no! I do not think I could, for the rations are a great help to us & almost sufficient for our wants. I will economize as much as possible so that we need not remain longer than you care to up there & perhaps we can get a nice place down east afterwards. I sincerely hope I will not have any more bad news to write about – if I can arrange things satisfactorily, all will go well. I think my duty to both yourself & the little ones is to go up, & many agree with me. If other women live there, so can I & the children may get quite strong. Regie says Baby might be far better up there than here. he is getting quite fat again & very lively that is one thing that pleases me. Your letter of the 21st I now have here in which you acknowledge mine of the 1st & 3rd. I was awaiting your power of Atty & wanted to fix matters up a bit ere I depart, so it will be July

[reverse]

before I start. I will leave your papers carefully put in a tin lined packing case with Regie who is going to buy or build at once, if he does not hear immediately from Ottawa re appointment. He is doing well there & is getting all the work. I have seen Mr. McKenzie about furniture etc long ago. My sewing machine can be taken apart & put in a box I think – it would then go all right. Of course you know from my previous letters that the Comr. gives me transport for everything & he told me to bring all I could as a car would be at my disposal. The hens left on Saturday – there were twenty-five (25)

hens & three cocks – I hope they will reach you in good condition & sing a warm welcome to you when they see you. Alexander is a good man & will I think take good care of them. I might have written by him & knew too late that he was leaving that day. Marie as you know, is not coming owing to her little fortune – she will marry [Congden] or Cummings I think, from the way things look just now. She leaves at the end of the month for Spokane. Your last, dated 22nd of May, came like a big black cloud over the sun, for I was sure you did not want me to come. If I thought the exposure getting things over the Pass would be much, I would certainly, for the sake of economy go East, but O! Sam, life would never be the same again if we are separated for years. Try as you will, the heart accustomed to absence will get indifferent & our dear little ones will with time, get indifferent too – they love you fondly, devotedly now, why let them grow cold? Loss is too precious & life too short not to be together if we possibly can.

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

I really do not think I could be perfectly happy if we are apart & I would worry over you all the time I feel sure. Vancouver would be much too damp a place for me to reside in & the children would feel it very much. I do not want to go only because I pity your loneliness, for I would have said I wished to go long ago, only feared it was an impossibility so kept quiet. I do not think there is any chance of your returning to the N. West. Mr. A. B. Macdonald came in to see me Saturday night – he said he gave Dan McIntosh particular orders to pick out the 93 steers in case you might want to sell. they wintered pretty well, but Dr. [Warnock] said two of that brand had been found in a spring on their range, mired in the mud, both dead. I wrote Alec a week ago & heard from him today – he said that the steers could not be sold just now, now that any one could not say how many there were, as they had to be sold & the proceeds divided. I enclose his letter. I knew Cowdry had a mortgage on the Cattle & proposed paying it off, if we sold. Mr. McKenzie came up tonight, & is going to write Mr. Godsal in order that we may settle this “Empire” transfer all right. You see what Alec says re that mine – well, you have no more interest in that I suppose, until the mine is sold & Mr. G. is repaid. It is getting very late, in fact was ten when I commenced so that I must say good-night. God bless you, darling.

June 5th. I have just sent an order to Eaton's getting all I think necessary for the children & myself for the time I will be away. It takes a lot of money, but I never was extravagant any way –

[reverse]

It is very late & so near mail hour, that I cannot write any more. God bless

you – any letter written after June 20th I suppose had better be addressed to Major Perry's care as I will leave as soon as possible after the 1st. In haste & with deep love, ever

Your loving, devoted wife,

Maye.

[/pg 3]