

[Typed]

1893 22nd Sept and 30th Oct 1893

FCM,
Penicuik,
NB

My dear Friends,

Many a day I have said that I would today write a note to my kind friends in the hill country, but each day has hardly sufficed for the things of itself, and has fled away so that I could not tell how it has gone.

But I have not been forgetting you both nor all your kindness to me when I was with you. I have been busy since I came home, I have begun my big book and am now a little more than half way through it. I am living as it were all my morning hours in your part of the country. But the manners and customs of its inhabitants were far other to what they are now, and whereas in the old days the Marshalls, Millers, Macatericks and Faas slit one's hals, the Macmillans only fill your pechan. I prefer the Macmillans and the guid at meal and buttermilk to ony o' your gypsies and broken men.

I think I am getting on pretty well, but Dr Whyte has asked me to begin his winter class at Free St. George's with a couple of lectures – I am to be there two or three Sabbaths – morning, 2nd evening – so I have had those lectures to do and they have kept me away from my story this week, so that I am not quite so far on as I would otherwise have been.

I see that it is more than a month since I put finger to typewriter to send a line to my friends whom I seem to know so well though our acquaintance was, as far as time goes, of the shortest. But these things do not go by time measure. We were I think fitted to understand one another before I came, for by training and nature we were fitted to have much in common beside a liking for oatmeal porridge.

It is now nearly the end of October, this is Monday, the 30th and the 'Galloway Raid' or whatever the name of the thing is to be, is finished and away to London. I think it will be out in the spring. Then I shall not forget my promise to the man who took me to Loch Enoch. There is a great deal about the district in it, and a great deal that will interest you, and the good mistress.

I would gladly come awa now and see you, but the Mistress of the Manse is now not well enough to make it advisable to be very far frae hame. But in the spring I hope that I may be able to look down if you can 'be doing with me' as the Macormicks used to say when they came to the Duchrae asking a night's lodgings in the old times.

Now a word to the Mistress. I am sending a Geology book – Geikie's which is far and away the best on the subject. The wife can study it in the winter time. There is a deal in it, that won't be must use. Tell her to skip all the mineralogy – indeed, all from page 40 to page 194. From that point on it is quite easy and very interesting right on to 636. At that point, begins the history of the formations. As you have not access to fossils up at Glenhead, don't bother with them, except so far as the show how far the world had got on by the kind of beasties that were popular in the different periods. Skip freely and never read anything against the grain, nor bother with details and it is wonderful how good a working knowledge of Geology you may get. This book is a little present from me to the wife, if she will allow me. I'll soon 'eat aff her' the worth of far more than that if once, I got down. You know the story of 'Old Scroggie' 'There's a man doon

in Rerrick that owes me three days peat leadin” said Scroggie. ‘his horse is a’ deed, sae I’ll even gang awa doon for a day or twa an’ eat it aff him!’

The bairns are well, all of them, and Mrs Crockett pretty well also. Mr Brown is busy at the college and comes to do his work with me every evening – which is as much for his own good as mine. We often speak of the happy days that we had on the hills, and he never ceases to say that the next trip he take, he is determined to stick in and not be left behind. I am working hard as ever, I am up every morning – not when I hear the ham in the pan – for I take only porridge, but at 4.20am. What would they say to that in the parish of Barrhill, mistress? That is almost good dairy-farm time. But when I come to Glenhead about half past eight or maybe nine is sune aneuch for SRC
With all affectionate remembrance

Ever cordially yours

Samuel Rutherford Crockett.