

July 18<sup>th</sup> 1894

Dear Mrs. Garden,

I have had many letters from kind unseen friends but hardly any of them have stirred me so much as yours. I feel it a great honour that the Ettrick Shepherd's daughter should love my books and write to tell me so.

I have revered your father all my life and his stories were those best known to me in my youth. Even now I declare I honestly think "The Confessions of a Fanatic" more powerful than anything Sir Walter ever wrote - save only 'Wandering Willie's Tale'. I read your father's books more constantly than those of any other Scottish writer.

I almost started to retell the old tradition of "The Long Pack".*{originally published in 1817}* It would have come out finely in "The Raiders" but I desisted lest some should mistake my motive and think that I plagiarised, when I simply wished to tell over again (for the honour of the dead and the sake of a splendid tale) the story which had thrilled me in my boyhood.

In The Raiders you will see traces of Hogg's influence perhaps stronger than those of any other. Of course the sapient critics, led away by the fact that tell a romantic story cry 'Stevenson' or Scott; but they miss the cardinal fact that I am herd and herd's son and (like James Hogg) was reared upon the hills of sheep.

I have not been in Aberdeen since my friend George Adam Smith left, but when I am again in the North, I shall gladly come and see you.

I do not know if you are ever able to come to Edinburgh. If so, let me say for my wife and myself that we shall be delighted if you could come out. It is only half an hour.

With kind regards,

Faithfully yours

S.R. Crockett