

ST JOHN'S TOWN OF DALRY

LOCHINVAR HOTEL



*S.R. Crockett.*

S.R. Crockett stayed at The Lochinvar Hotel several times. In 1894 while writing *Men of the Moss Hags*, one of his best loved novels set in Covenanting times, he writes from here to his publisher T.Fisher Unwin:

*The Lochinvar Hotel*

*Dalry*

*Galloway*

*July 3rd 1894.*

*Dear Unwin*

*The drawings (reproduction) are exceedingly satisfactory and the book should be a very beautiful one. I shall set to work immediately.*

*I shall write a list with a note or two on the drawings severally.*

*I am wearying to see Mad Sir U. We stay here till Saturday. If you have a copy ready you might send one here. You had better send five dozen to Penicuik (Note for the sake of your young men) who say - in 'un 'e is always a wantin' summat!!*

*You might have a copy but in vellum for old Masson (Dedicatee)*

*Ever yours*

*SRC*



Five years later in 1899, two letters to 'Mr Drainie-man' are also written on the hotel's headed paper, in Crockett's typically incomprehensible handwriting! The following transcriptions are as accurate as possible... and who 'Drainie-man' is remains conjecture. All efforts have come to naught thus far.

*August 10, 1899.*

*Dear Drainie-man,*

*Here's my statutory guinea with a great deal o' pleasure. We've been 'building extensions' and paying for them at Penicuik this year a new library and dining room 'with furnishings and carpets most galorious' Or it would have been more.*

*The lyric stirs and ache away back in my heart - I know not why or where or how, something connected with one's lost youth for the days that are no more.*

*I like your 'long gone the amorial gold' and 'In the dim unheard of seas'*

*'The Coasts of Ease' is the only flaw. It doesn't seem to belong somehow.*

*I bought a copy long ago when I could ill afford it - as wise men would have told me. But in my transmigrations from Continent to Continent I lost it. I am glad you have let me replace it. I have read it all again, every word. But being wise I won't say which I like best, lest this should be (some or most) of the other small foules simping.*

*As Barrie sadly said when he and Hardy went to see 'Walker-London' and Hardy knew how to find anything to like and said now and again 'That's good!' 'Yes' and Barrie sadly, 'but it was Toole that put that in!' I am [ ] to my ears in a Kid's book you will like. I am nearing the confines of 40 and little more than a trinity of years with another one for the third decade - yet my heart is boyish and I would like a pillow fight with all my critics.*

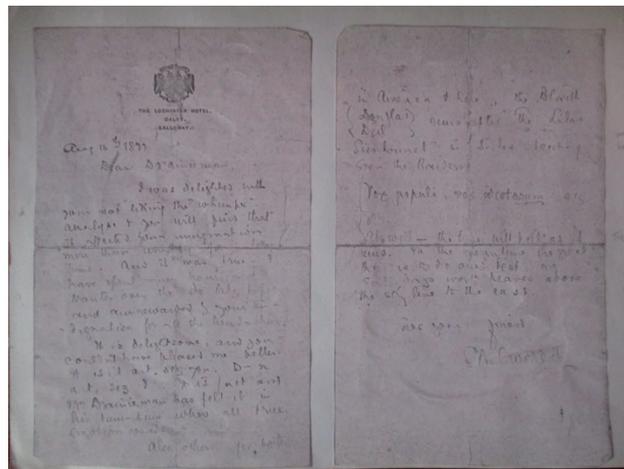
*Heavens but d-d give them some find dauds about the lugs!*

*I wish very gladly to meet you and your wife. Sometime you will come here and eh- man, what a nict we will hae amang the buiks.*

*My greetings to you [ ] fellow singer (with the clearer voice) of twenty four.*

*Your comrade of the tooth comb S.R.Crockett.*

*And on August 16th 1899*



*Dear Drainieman,*

*I was delighted with your not liking the 'whimper.' Analyse and you will find that it affected your judgment in more than anything in a long time. And it was true - I have spent many hours in Nantes over the de Retz paper and am rewarded by your indignation for all the heartache.*

*It is delightful and you couldn't have pleased me better. D-n o'nt, sez I. It is fact and Mr Drainie-man has felt it in his tum-tum where all the true emotion resides.*

*Alas, others for both in America and here, the Black (Douglas/Deil) runs after 'The Lilac Sunbonnet' in the sales, beating even The Raiders.*

*'Vox populi, voc odcotorium' sez you.*

*Ah, well, the time will tell as it runs. In the meantime the great thing is to do our best as each days work leaves above the skyline in the east.*

*Sir, your friend S.R.Crockett.*

In *Raiderland* (1904) Crockett writes specifically about The Lochinvar Hotel as follows:

*'One may spend, as I have done, many hospitable months in Dalry, housed somewhere in the bright smiling village clambering up its long slope, or, better still, provided for in the comfortable Lochinvar Hotel. It is a fine centre for excursions—yet better as a starting-place for the hill-climber, the botanist, the photographer. There is interest on every side—the strange, sweet solitudes of the Garpel and Jean's Waa's; the wide moorland expanse of Lochinvar Loch, Knockman lying far up, lost among the hills—and, best of all, the old Castle of Earlstoun, the home of Sir Alexander Gordon, the famous 'Bull of Earlstoun,' of his scarcely less famous wife, with her 'Contendings' and 'Witnessings,' and the house, too, from which came forth Mary, the wife of John MacMillan, 'the Cameronian Apostle,' and the first minister of the United Societies.'*



THE LOCHINVAR HOTEL is a key location in #GoCrocketteering Literary Tourism Project 2019.

Find out more at [www.gallowayraiders.co.uk](http://www.gallowayraiders.co.uk)

From Dalry you can explore many of Crockett's Glenkens locations and it is well placed as a base from which to embark on a trip west into the Galloway hills where there are even more Crockett adventures to be had.

*Discovering Crockett's Galloway* (Volumes 1 and 2) by Cally Phillips and Crockett's own *Raiderland* are useful guides. These, and all Crockett's Galloway novels are available from [www.unco.scot](http://www.unco.scot) online bookstore (Crockett Collection) Amazon, and other retailers.