

Charles Morrison,
Scots Magazine.

CUS417/35.27

Letter from Prof. T. K. Monro to W.O.

12, Somerset Place,
Glasgow.

July 20, 1918.

Dear Sir William,

It is now some time since you suggested to me an interesting little research on the later history of Charles Morrison. I made a good start, as it seemed to me, but after a time I got held up, and now I feel I must send you an interim report. The most important cause of delay has been the holiday season in Greenock and Glasgow. Thus the Librarian of Greenock Public Library wrote me on the 9th inst. a letter in which he says: "I find on enquiry since receiving your letter most sources of information are not available at this time, owing to many of the citizens being from home, during the local holidays. So far I have been unable to get any information from the volumes contained in this Library about Morrison, but I am hopeful of unearthing some interesting facts concerning him in another institution."

Working in the Mitchell Library here, I came across two writings which I should commend to your notice, if you have not already seen them. As a result of a conversation with Dr. David Murray, the well-known lawyer here, I looked at the books on Greenock, and one in particular, which Dr. Murray specially recommended me to consult, refers to Morrison. This book is:-

"Old Greenock" [1st series], by George Williamson, published in 1886 by Alexander Gardner, Paisley and Paternoster Row, London.

Williamson refers to Morrison in the text at p. 35, Appendix J. (pp. 286-291) contains reproductions of 3 writings, viz.

- (1) A. P. Paton's Sketch of Morrison's Life;
- (2) Morrison's Paper in the Scots Magazine;
- (3) Correspondence on the same subject presented to Watt Monument, Greenock, by a representative of Sir D. Brewster.

"Old Greenock" is out of print. I have tried in a good many second-hand shops to get a copy, but without success. It was Dr. David Murray also who suggested the "Glasgow Herald" Index. The "Glasgow Herald" published an index yearly, for the years 1906-1916. A search through the index led me to the other writing

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which I should recommend you to look at. It is an article entitled "Electric Telegraphy. An Ancient Scottish Invention", by Charles R. Gibson, F.R.S.E. It appeared in the "Herald" of Tuesday, 20 Dec. 1910, p. 11 and occupied $1\frac{3}{4}$ columns. This is 16 or 17 years later than the D.N.B.

After some inquiries I found out who Mr. Gibson is, and I have written him asking for further information.

I am sorry again that I cannot get a copy of the "Herald" for you. I was told at the "Herald" office that they do not keep the back numbers for more than a year.

I shall write again when I get more information.

It is years since I have been in London, but I shall remember to visit you when I get a chance. Military duties tie me down pretty closely, but the authorities readily gave me permission to go to Dublin for 3 days at a time to examine in Trinity College. My wife and family are in the Highlands just now, and I hope I may get leave for the first 2 weeks of August to join them; but I am not quite sure. My C.O. applied some time ago for 3 weeks, and up till yesterday he had not got any granted.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

T. K. MONRO.