

# THE LION CHAMBERS

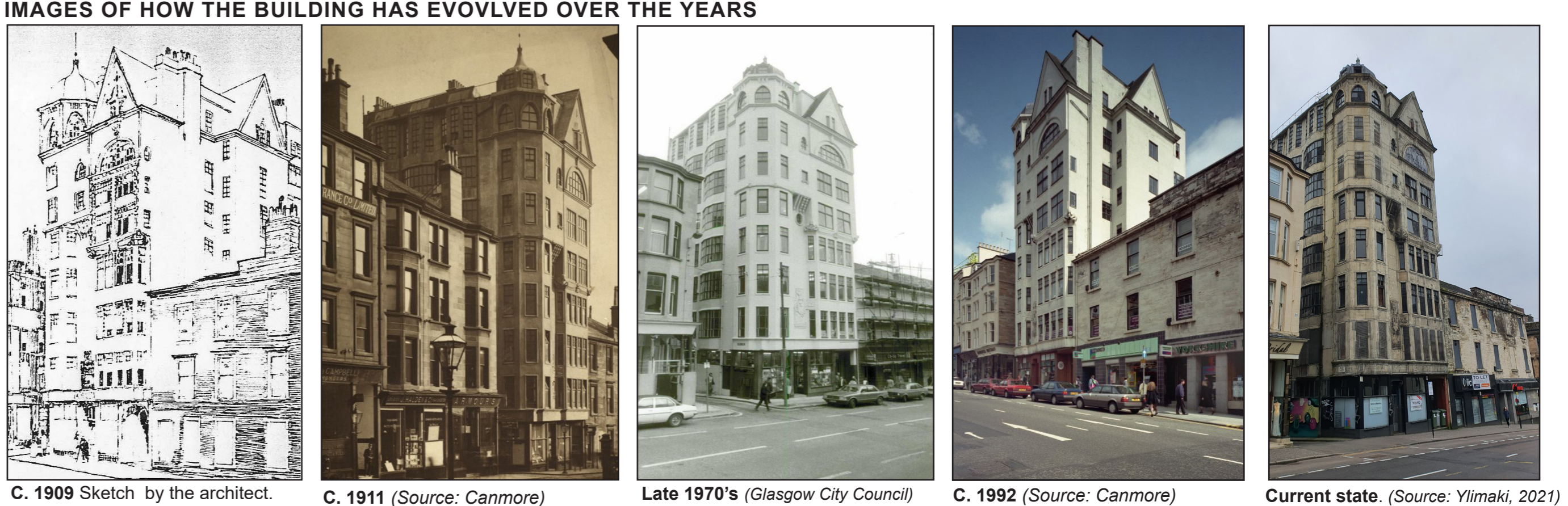
PROPOSED CREATIVE CO-WORKING & LEARNING SPACE IN GLASGOW

*Heritage Roots*  
- Reflect, Celebrate & Revive -

**ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN & SIGNIFICANCE**

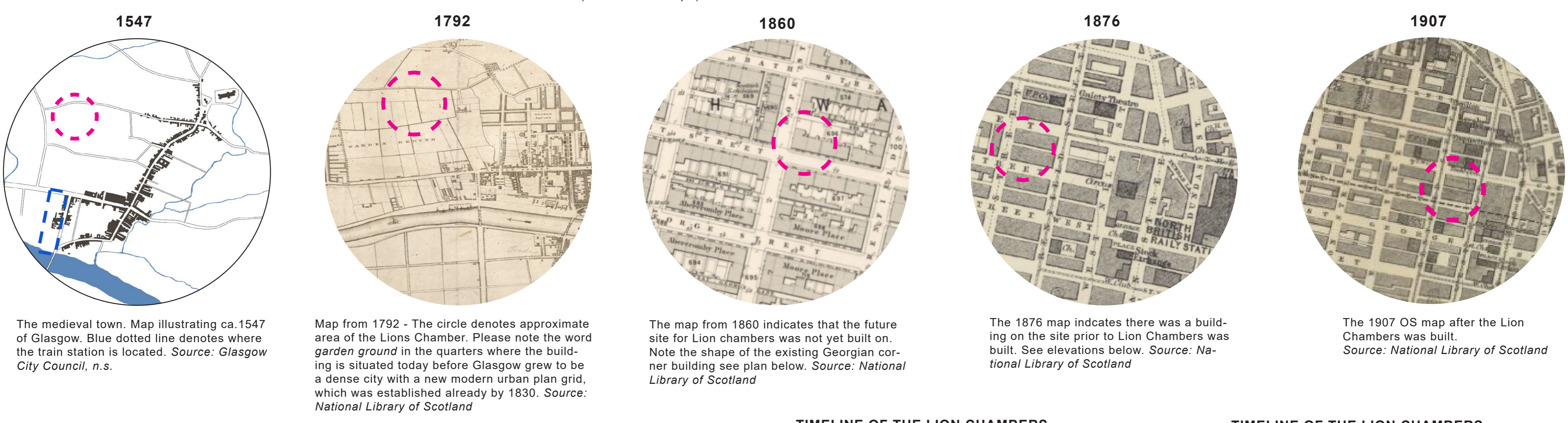
---

MSC ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BUILT HERITAGE UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE - GLASGOW  
CONSERVATION DESIGN PROJECT - ELINA MARIA YLIMAKI - 2020 / 2021



C. 1909 Sketch by the architect. (Source John Gillespie)    C. 1911 (Source: Canmore)    Late 1970's (Glasgow City Council)    C. 1992 (Source: Canmore)    Current state. (Source: Ylimaki, 2021)

**HISTORIC MAPS OF THE SITE**



1547: The medieval town. Map illustrating ca. 1547 of Glasgow. Blue dotted line denotes where the train station is located. Source: Glasgow City Council, n.s.  
 1792: Map from 1792 - The circle denotes approximate area of the Lions Chamber. Please note the word garden ground in the quarters where the building is situated today before Glasgow grew to be a dense city with a new modern urban plan grid, which was established already by 1830. Source: National Library of Scotland  
 1860: The map from 1860 indicates that the future site for Lion chambers was not yet built on. Note the shape of the existing Georgian corner building see plan below. Source: National Library of Scotland  
 1876: The 1876 map indicates there was a building on the site prior to Lion Chambers was built. See elevations below. Source: National Library of Scotland  
 1907: The 1907 OS map after the Lion Chambers was built. Source: National Library of Scotland

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Lion Chambers was only the second building constructed in Glasgow in the innovative ferro-concrete system. It was built between the years 1904 to 1907. The client, William George Black, was a solicitor and art aficionado, commissioned architects Salmon and Gillespie to build and design an office for lawyers with art studios on the top floor and a shop on the ground floor.

A French engineer with the name François Hennebique received his first patent in 1892 for his innovative concrete construction system. He was also a businessman and introduced the system to the UK. The British-based representative of François Hennebique was the structural engineer Louis Gustave Mouchel. The construction was a pioneering system with reinforced iron bars with better tensile strength and inherent fireproofing. The method also reduced the overall thickness of the concrete walls compared to traditional solid wall construction, which maximised the area of the interior space. The site had a relatively small footprint of only 33x46 feet.

The early modernist wall of glazing on one of the side elevations lets a lot of light into the building. This was an essential key feature of the design.

This design innovation was in the middle of the era of the Glasgow Style where there was an explosion of creative activity in the City. The Glasgow Style was influenced by the Aesthetic and the Arts and Crafts Movements and European Art Nouveau.

The architecture of the building itself was innovative with regards to both its construction and its aesthetics. It celebrates Scottish heritage, with its Scottish baronial turret and the love for the arts with concrete busts of the prominent barristers' Sheriff William Guthrie and Judge Lord Scott Dickson by the sculptor Johan Keller.

The building appears to be a cross of the early skyscraper and the traditional Scottish baronial building with elements of modernism principles with the extensive use of large areas of glazing to let light into the building. The Lion Chambers has a high value of significance within the built heritage of Scottish architecture.

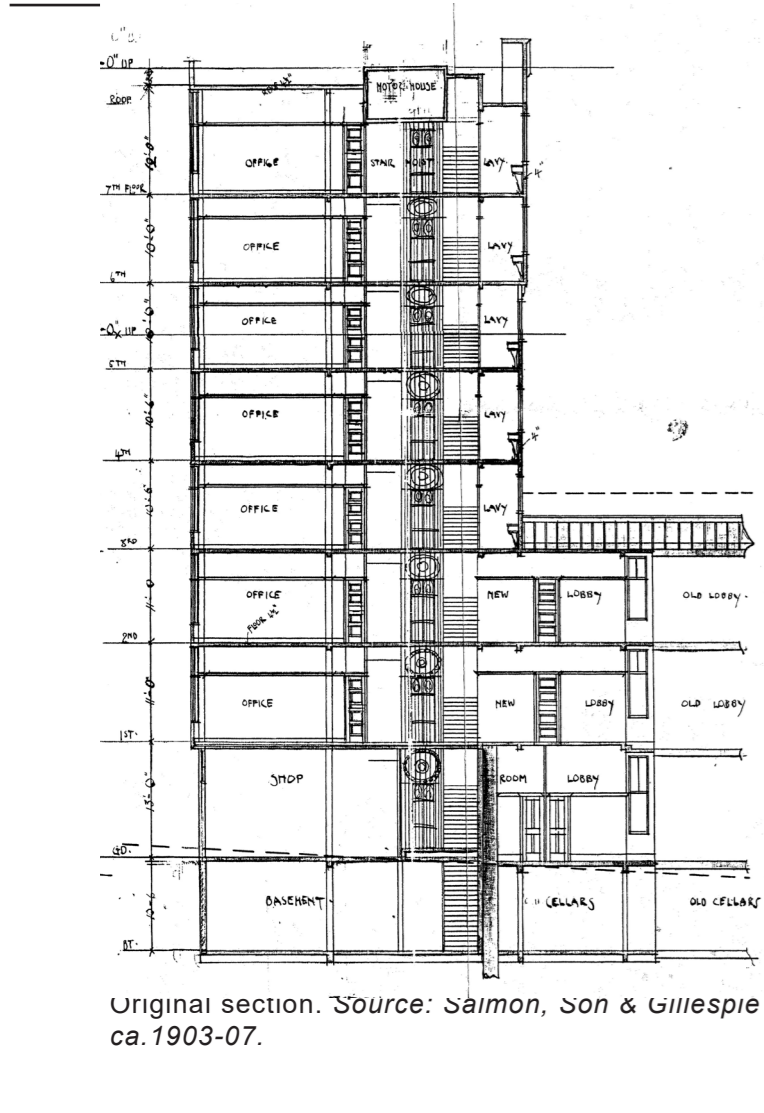
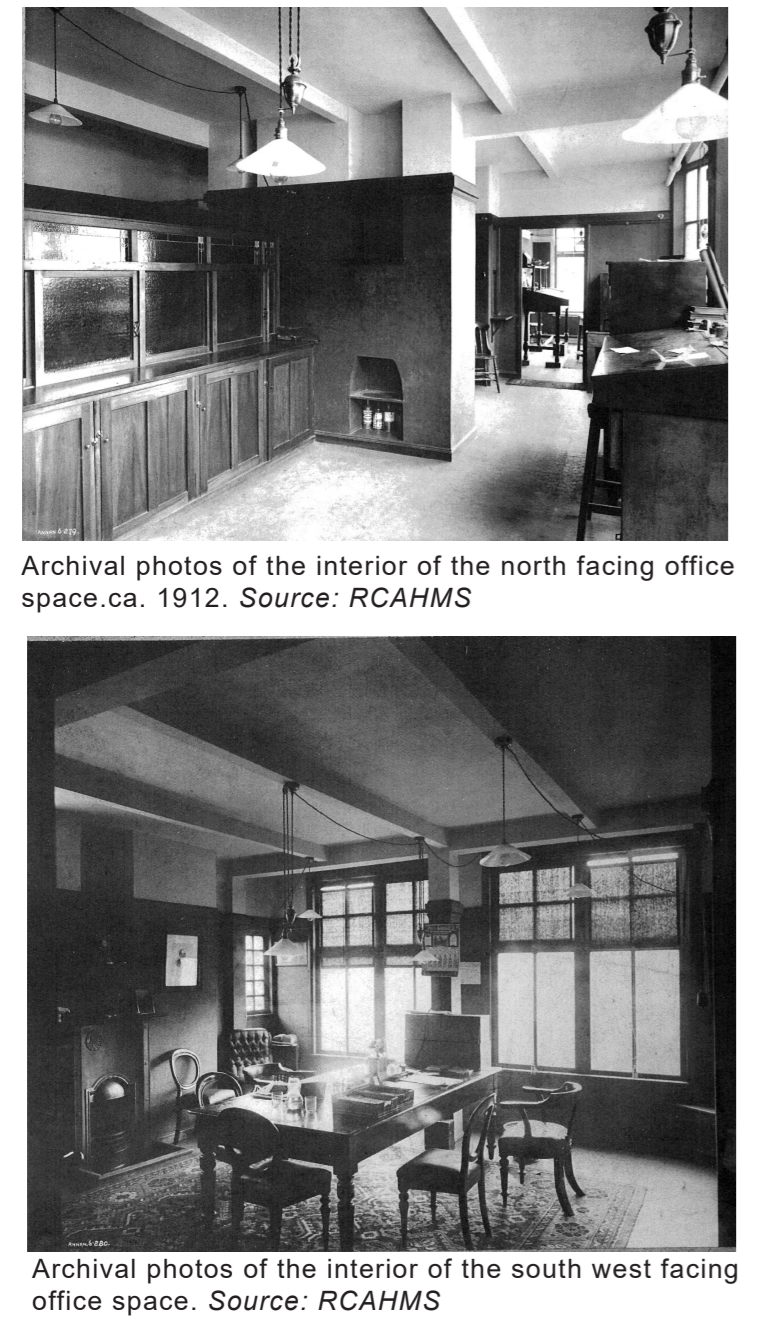
**TIMELINE OF THE LION CHAMBERS**  
*Pre- dangerous Building Notice*

- 1890: G A H Douglas & Co Ltd, the stationers, started trading on the site (Swain, 2009)
- 1892: Hennebique system innovated by Francois Hennebique in France
- 1898: First entirely reinforced concrete building in Britain was the Weaver Building in Swansea, using the Hennebique system (Demolished in 1984)
- 1903-1904: The Sentinel Works was the first building in Glasgow to employ the Hennebique system
- 1904-1907: Designed and built
- 1905: Proposals to date passed by Glasgow city authorities (Cusack, 1985)
- 1907: Article on the Lion Chambers in The Builders' Journal (The Builders' Journal, 1907)
- End 1905: window wall as executed designed (Cusack, 1985)
- 1910: January 1906: Copia shaped and rendered (W.Noble Twelvethrees 1907) may have later been covered with copper as noted in 1985 (Cusack, 1985)
- 1920: 1966: Lion Chambers designated category A listed building (Pardee, 2012)
- 1930: 1960: 1970: 1980: 1990: 2000:
- 1991: The building is affected by water-pooling, cracking and spalling (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 12 April 1995: Dangerous Building Notice served and demolition application submitted (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 1890: 1920: 1930: 1960: 1970: 1980: 1990: 2000:
- 1991: The building is affected by water-pooling, cracking and spalling (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 12 April 1995: Dangerous Building Notice served and demolition application submitted (Buildings at Risk, 2014)

**TIMELINE OF THE LION CHAMBERS**  
*Post- dangerous Building Notice*

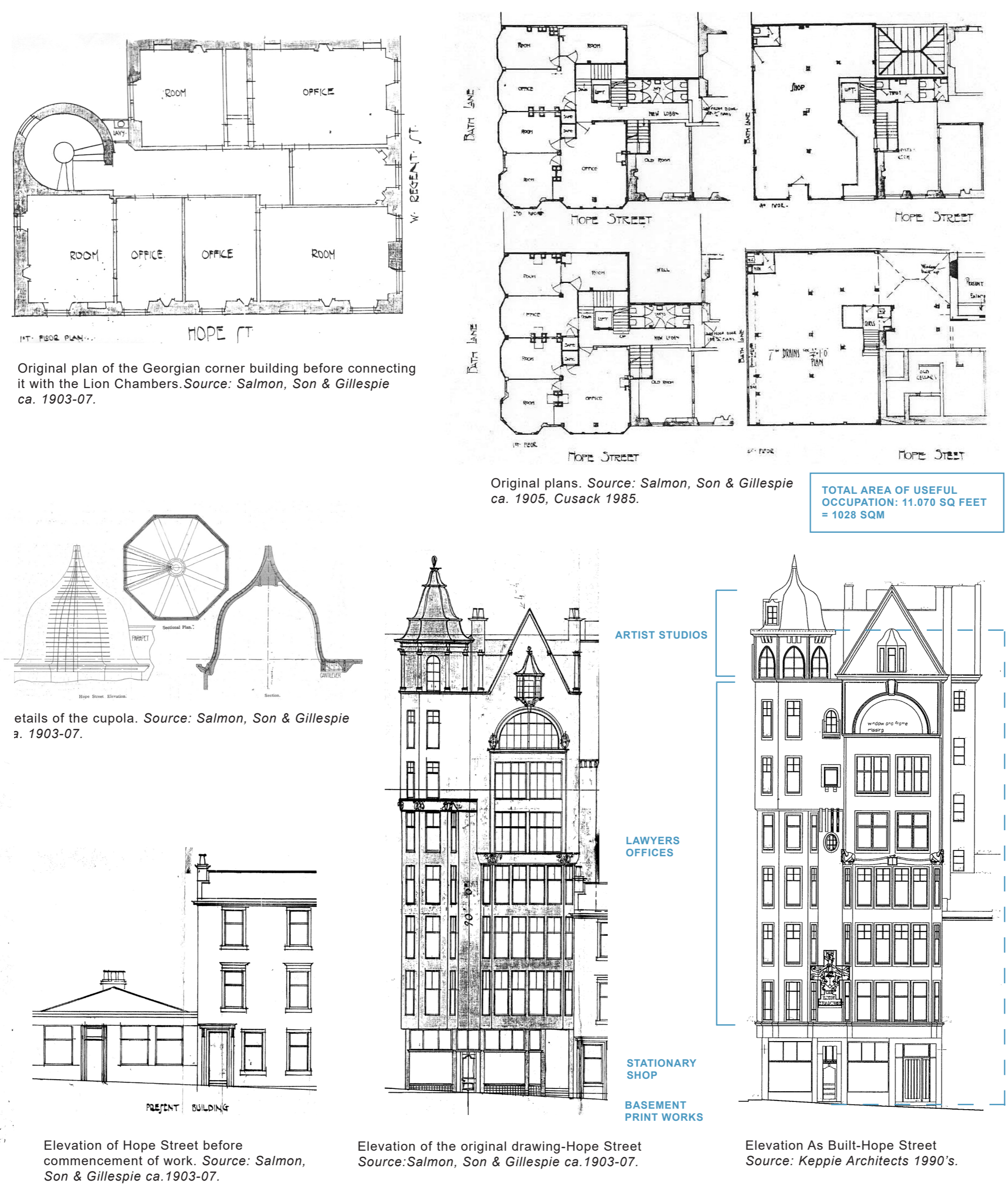
- 1995: 29 August 1995: Permission to demolish refused (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 1999: £5,000 has been granted for a feasibility study by AHF (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 2000-2009: 2001: Engineering report carried out by Weeks Group (FACT, 2011)
- 2004: June 2004: External inspection reveals that the scaffolding has been taken down (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 2006: December 2006: GBPT report that they are no longer involved with the building (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 2009: December 2009: Douglas & CO, original occupants of Lion Chambers since 1907 and of the site since 1890 vacated (Dimitrijevic, 2011) and by the start of 2010 the building is reported as empty (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 2010: December 2010: Lion Chambers, Hope Street Glasgow Hotel Feasibility and Escape Strategy by Purcell Miller Tritton for FACT. The windows are noted to be in poor condition (Purcell Miller Tritton LLP, 2010).
- 2011: 17 April 2012: Site visit report by Capeling for FACT to investigate condition and change since Weeks Group Report (2001) (GCSI, 2012)
- 2013: 14 December 2013: Ground floor retail unit being marketed for sale/let. External condition as last seen - covered in steel mesh and secured (Buildings at Risk, 2014)
- 2016: 2016: Photographic inspection
- 2001: 2001: The scaffolding is allowing vandals to access the building (Vivienne, 2001) A protective mesh is placed around the building, at a cost of about 160,000 (Scottsman, 2004)
- 2004: November 2004: Local planners report that the property is now available, though not for lease (Buildings at Risk, 2014).
- 2007: 2007: Approximately 25% of the windows are boarded over; others are open to the elements (Buildings at Risk, 2014).
- 2010: 2010: Project Development Grant of £7,500 offered by The Architectural Heritage Fund and Glasgow City Council offers to purchase the property from the multiple owners for £1 (unsuccessful) (Buildings at Risk, 2014).
- 2011: 2011: The Four Acres Charitable Trust (FACT) develops appraisal options for conservation and reuse (Buildings at Risk, 2014).
- 2012: 2012: A study of early reinforced concrete conservation with the case study of Lion Chambers by Marnie Pardee (Pardee, 2012)
- 2015: June 2015: Preliminary Assessment of the Environmental Conditions by Tobit Curies Associates (TCA, 2015)

**ORIGINAL INTERIORS**



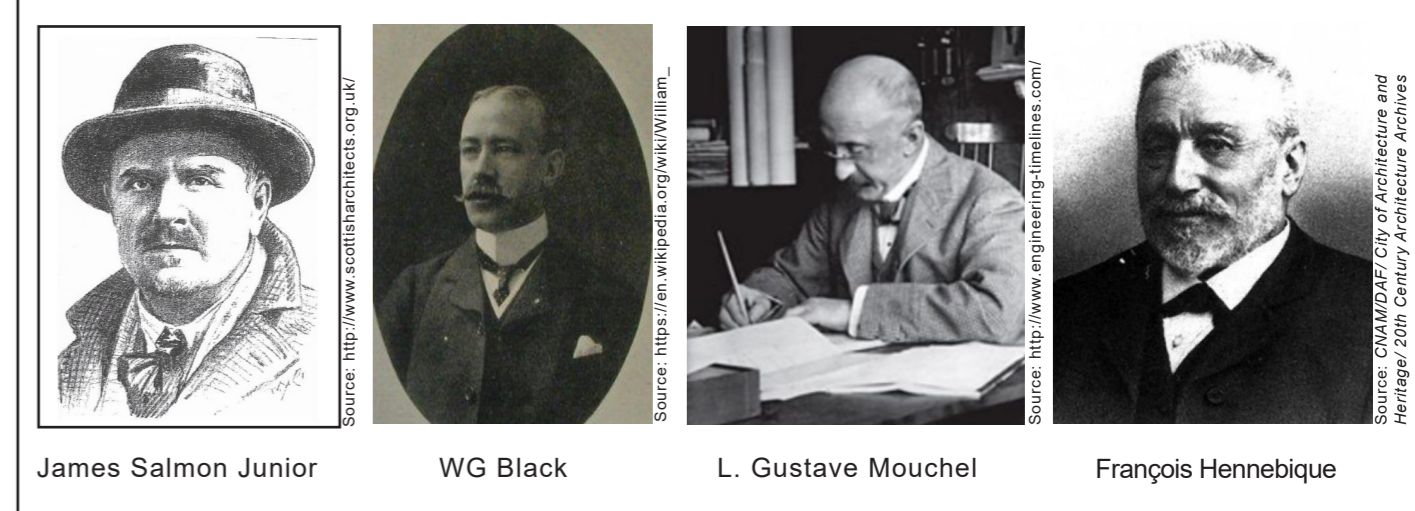
Archival photos of the interior of the north facing office space ca. 1912. Source: RCAHMS  
 Archival photos of the interior of the south west facing office space. Source: RCAHMS  
 Original section. Source: Salmon, Son & Gillespie ca. 1903-07.

**ORIGINAL DRAWINGS**



Original plan of the Georgian corner building before connecting it with the Lion Chambers. Source: Salmon, Son & Gillespie ca. 1903-07.  
 Original plans. Source: Salmon, Son & Gillespie ca. 1905, Cusack 1985.  
 TOTAL AREA OF USEFUL OCCUPATION: 11,070 SQ FEET = 1028 SQM  
 Details of the cupola. Source: Salmon, Son & Gillespie 3. 1903-07.  
 Elevation of Hope Street before commencement of work. Source: Salmon, Son & Gillespie ca. 1903-07.  
 Elevation of the original drawing-Hope Street Source: Salmon, Son & Gillespie ca. 1903-07.  
 Elevation As Built-Hope Street Source: Keppie Architects 1990's.

**THE ARCHITECT THE CLIENT THE ENGINEER THE INVENTOR & ENGINEER**



James Salmon Junior    WG Black    L. Gustave Mouchel    François Hennebique

**BUILDING ELEMENTS**



Architectural details and building elements including window frames, doorways, and decorative carvings.