

M111 Shopfront at 401 Sauchiehall Street

Introduction

John Honeyman & Keppie designed a new shop front for this tenement building of c. 1870, for premises occupied by the stationer Robert Lorimer.

Authorship: There is no written evidence that Mackintosh was involved in this project, but the drawings show unusual decorative details that recall his contemporary work at the Glasgow Herald buildings and Craigie Hall, and it seems highly likely that he was responsible for the design.

Cost from job book: £285 10s 11½d

Status: The building survives, but not the 1895 shopfront.

Current name: Variety Bar (2014)

Current use: Bar

Listing category: B: 401–427 Sauchiehall Street and 67–73 Elmbank Street

Historic Scotland/HB Number: 33180 (401–427 Sauchiehall Street and 67–73 Elmbank Street)

RCAHMS Site Number: NS56NE 789

Grid reference: NS 58135 65954

Chronology

1895

June: Drawings for new shopfront made by John Honeyman & Keppie. ¹

1 August: Drawings approved by Glasgow Dean of Guild Court. ²

5 August: Work commences on site. ³

12 September: Windows being put in. ⁴

28 October: Robert Lorimer's new shop at 401 Sauchiehall Street described as 'just opened'. ⁵

1896

April: Robert Lorimer examined for bankruptcy. ⁶

Description

401 Sauchiehall Street forms the corner of a large, uniform block of shops with flats above, extending from 67 Elmbank Street to 427 Sauchiehall Street. The building dates from c. 1870 and was designed by Horatio Bromhead. ¹

In June 1895, John Honeyman & Keppie were employed by the owners of 401, the Trustees of James Raeburn, to design a new shopfront for their tenant, the stationer Robert Lorimer. Drawings were approved by the Glasgow Dean of Guild Court on 1 August, and by the end of October the shop had opened. ² Within six months, however, Lorimer was bankrupt. ³ Parts of John Honeyman & Keppie's shopfront still existed when the building was photographed in September 1929, but there is now (2012) no trace of it. ⁴

Dominated by large plate-glass display windows, the design is fairly simple, but it includes decorative details that suggest the involvement of Mackintosh. On the Sauchiehall Street front, the central part of the fascia has a pair of spindly balusters, and filling the panel above the door is an abstract pattern of rising and falling curves, features that recall the stone carving on Mackintosh's contemporary Glasgow Herald building in Mitchell Street and the interior woodwork at Craigie Hall. In the partly-glazed door there is a roundel of green and purple stained glass incorporating an inverted heart, while on the Elmbank Street front, Lorimer's name is framed by abstract curvilinear motifs.

The records of the Glasgow Dean of Guild Court name James Raeburn of 2 Hawarden Terrace, Partick, as one of the Trustees responsible for commissioning the new shop front. ⁵ This was either the father or the older brother of Lucy (1869–1952) and Agnes (1872–1955) Raeburn. ⁶ Both women studied at the Glasgow School of Art in the mid 1890s and were friends of Mackintosh, James Herbert McNair, Jessie Keppie (John Keppie's sister) and their circle. ⁷ It seems likely that the commission came to John Honeyman & Keppie through this connection.

People

Clients:

- Trustees of James Raeburn

Contractors:

- Archibald Anderson
- Matthew Henderson

Other:

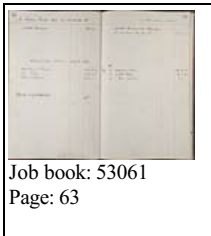
- Robert Lorimer, stationer

Job Book

The job books of Honeyman & Keppie (later Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh) are now held by The Hunterian, University of Glasgow and include four volumes related to the Mackintosh period. The books were used by the firm to keep a project-by-project, day-by-day record of contractors, suppliers and expenditure. The name of a project and/or client is usually at the top of the left-hand page, followed by information about tradesmen who tendered. The name of the measurer (quantity surveyor) is usually at the top of the right-hand page, followed by information about payments to contractors and suppliers. All of the data for M111 is entered in the tables below.

Page numbering is not consistent in the job books. Sometimes a single number refers to a double-page spread and sometimes each page is individually numbered. Here, each image of a double-page spread is identified by the number given at the top of the left-hand page. (Images of all of the pages from the four job books can be found at [Browse Job Books](#), [Visit Book and Cash Book](#).)

The following information about M111 has been extracted from the job books:



Job book: 53061
Page: 63

Client: Trustees of James Raeburn

Measurer: Archibald Anderson

Tenders:

Contractor	Type	Date	Value	Accepted
Matthew Henderson	wright work	no data in job book	£304 14s 0d	yes

Payments (trades):

Name	Type	Payment out sum
Matthew Henderson	wright work	Payment date: no data in job book £285 10s 11½d ¹

Documents

Images



View from N.E.



401-9 Sauchiehall Street,
1929

Bibliography

Published

Notes:

- 1: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild plans, B4/12/1/4033.
- 2: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, Register of Inspections, D-OPW 25/7, p. 35.
- 3: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, Register of Inspections, D-OPW 25/7, p. 35.
- 4: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, Register of Inspections, D-OPW 25/7, p. 35.
- 5: *Glasgow Herald*, 28 October 1895, p. 11.
- 6: *Glasgow Herald*, 28 April 1896, p. 6.
- 7: Elizabeth Williamson, Anne Riches and Malcolm Higgs, *Buildings of Scotland: Glasgow*, London: Penguin, 1990, pp. 244–5.
- 8: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, Register of Inspections, D-OPW 25/7, p. 35; *Glasgow Herald*, 28 October 1895, p. 11.
- 9: *Glasgow Herald*, 28 April 1896, p. 6.
- 10: Glasgow City Archives Collection: D-CA 8/2932, negative 3126-7 (3N).
- 11: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, Register of Inspections, D-OPW 25/7, p. 35.
- 12: Census, 1891.
- 13: Jude Burkhauser, ed., *'Glasgow Girls': Women in Art and Design, 1880–1920*, Edinburgh: Canongate, 1990, p. 76.
- 14: 'less back glazing to windows done by Lorimer.'

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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