

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Nineteenth Century Wellington Rich List Houston Francis Logan (c. 1838-1922)

Measured by property, Houston Francis Logan is estimated¹ to have been among the top ten richest people in Wellington in 1882. He was by far the wealthiest person to live in Mt Victoria in the 1880's. Most wealthy people at that time, and for quite some time after, lived in Thorndon. Logan had inherited property from his father, had two grocery shops, a number of rental properties in his own right and rural properties running two flocks of sheep.

Houston was the son of Dr Francis Logan, who had visited New Zealand as a surgeon in the Royal Navy in 1837. He must have liked what he saw because he returned to Glasgow but immigrated to Wellington in 1840 on the Bengal Merchant with his wife and the infant, Houston. The family may have lived out of the city for some of the 1840's but they were settled on their two town acres at the junction of Webb and Hopper streets at a fairly early date.

Houston Logan ran grocery businesses in Lambton Quay and Cuba St from 1866 until 1884, when he retired. In 1868 he was gazetted a Captain in the New Zealand Militia and was still on the Unattached List (made up of those who had served their country and "retired on their laurels"², but who could be called on to assist in the event that there were insufficient officers on the active list available for an emergency) in 1897. He also represented Te Aro Ward on the City Council from September 1877 to September 1893.

Logan owned substantial property on Town Acres 672 and 673 in Mt Victoria from some time in the 1870's until some time in the 1890's as well as other Mt Victoria properties. He lived in the large house on Town Act 673 (at the extreme south end of Brougham Street across Ellice St) from about 1880 to 1887. Then he returned to Mt Victoria in the late 1890's to live the last 25 or so years of his life in a house where No 72 Brougham St (Embassy Court Flats) now stands. His mother Janet lived close by, or at the same address, until she died in 1903. It is not known whether he had a wife or children himself.

*To the Town Clerk
Wellington*

*Sir
Please lay before the
Public Works Committee
the accompanying Application
for new roads as per plan
on behalf of the undersigned
Your Obedient Servant
H. F. Logan*

*Wellington
16th Sept 1878.*

1878 letter signed by Logan requesting the creation of new roads.
Unfortunately it is not known which roads!
[Wellington City Archives 00233:2:1878/1070]

Calendar

Clyde Quay School has put out another of its fabulous calendars with scenes of historical Mt Victoria. If you haven't yet had little people knocking on your door to sell you one, and would like one, contact Clyde Quay School

¹ By Jeremy Lowe, researcher, Thorndon Society. Many thanks to Jeremy for sharing his research with us.

² Cyclopaedia of NZ Volume 1, 1897