

[Supporting information for Mt Victoria Historical Society's Nomination for Registration of 7 Paterson Street with New Zealand Historic Places Trust]

The Catholic Presbytery (Former), Paterson Street, Mount Victoria, Wellington

Research by Mount Victoria Historical Society members, Joanna Newman and Natasha Naus, 2010.

The house at 7 Paterson Street is located on Wellington Town Acre 673 and built for the prominent Wellington merchant William Waring Taylor in 1869. The building was the only structure on that Town Acre for over 30 years and became a significant landmark on the southern end of Mount Victoria.

William Waring Taylor

William Waring Taylor was born around 1819 in Yorkshire and arrived in Wellington in 1842. He established a general business and importing agency and dealt in land, wool, cattle, clothing: “and piece goods and commodities of every kind.” Even leeches appear now and then in his advertisements. In 1848 he married Mary Knox, aged 21. He bought Customhouse Wharf in 1860. He had estates in the Rangitikei districts as well as property in Wellington.

In 1868 Waring Taylor bought Town Acres 672 and 673 in Mt Victoria, although he had been occupying them since at least 1863 (possibly horses because the land was fenced). In January 1869, tenders were invited for construction of a Villa for W.Waring Taylor, designed by Nicholas Marchant, architect.¹ The house was built on Town Acre 673 and valued at £750 in 1869. At this time Paterson Street had not been formed and access to the house was from Brougham Street, which was the address for the house until the formation of Paterson Street in the early twentieth century.

The architectural historian Terence Hodgson describes William Waring Taylor's house as a fine example of “fancy colonial” style, “The verandahs have been given a juicy assortment of decoration including brackets, lattice work, pierced balustrading and bold expanses of glazing’ although the walls were sheathed with corrugated iron.”²

In 1878, the City Council discussed the issue of Waring Taylor building on the Te Aro foreshore on land which he did not own.³ On November 21 1884 Waring Taylor was arrested for fraud at his home, Carnarvon, near Bulls⁴. The charge was that he “converted to his own use 25 fully paid-up shares in the Bank of New Zealand (£250 worth), the property of Ernest Arundel”. In fact there were three charges against him, “the total amount of monies alleged to have been misappropriated being about £10,000”, which were to be laid a few days later.⁵ The most serious charge related to fraudulently appropriating money as a trustee or agent and the others for wrongfully endeavouring to obtain a loan from a loan company and obtaining money by falsely representing the discovery of a goldfield.

When he came up for sentencing the Evening Post reported: “During his incarceration in the Terrace Gaol Taylor has grown much stouter, and his whiskers and moustache have become much longer. As he advanced to the prisoner's stand it was seen that he was trembling in every limb and wearing a very anxious look.” He was described as being an old man in his 66th year and as having spent 43 years in the city. He was tried, convicted on only one indictment and sentenced to 5 years jail.⁶

¹ Evening Post 15 January 1869, p.3 (Papers Past)

² Terence Hodgson, *Proud Possessions*, p.11. A photograph of the building dating from c.1900 is published on this page.

³ Evening Post 30 November 1878, p.2 (Papers Past)

⁴ Evening Post 21 November 1884, p. 2 (Papers Past)

⁵ Evening Post 22 November 1884, p. 3 (Papers Past)

⁶ Evening Post 7 July 1885, p.2 (Papers Past)

Waring Taylor's sister was Mary Taylor. Mary was born in 1817 in Yorkshire and, while attending school in 1831, became a close friend of Charlotte Bronte. Mary's life took a dramatic turn in 1840 when her father died and the family household was broken up. By 1841 her unorthodoxy became apparent when she declared that she proposed to emigrate to New Zealand with her youngest brother, Waring (after whom Waring Taylor Street is named). The family were confused by this decision, but Charlotte Bronte clearly understood Mary better. She wrote to her sister, Emily:

“Mary Taylor and Waring have come to a singular determination, but I think under the peculiar circumstances a defensible one, though it sounds outrageously odd at first. They are going to emigrate – to quit the country altogether. Their destination unless they change is Port Nicholson, in the northern island of New Zealand!!! Mary has made up her mind she can not and will not be a governess, a teacher, a milliner, a bonnet maker nor a housemaid. She sees no means of obtaining employment she would like in England, so she is leaving it!”

Mary delayed her voyage to New Zealand a few years, arriving on July 24, 1845 aboard the *Louisa Campbell*. Waring Taylor helped his sister Mary and her cousin set up their shop, including teaching them bookkeeping.⁷

Mary continued her correspondence with Charlotte Bronte and after 1848 it increases markedly, prompted by her receipt of a first-edition copy of *Jane Eyre* from Charlotte. After receiving the book, Mary wrote to Charlotte:

“About a month since, I have received and read *Jane Eyre*. It seems to me incredible that you had actually written a book. Your novel surprised me as being so perfect as a work of art . . . Such events did not happen when I was in England. After I had read it, I went on to the top of Mt Victoria and looked for a ship to carry a letter to you. There was a little thing with one mast, and also *H.M.S. Fly* and nothing else. If a cattle vessel came from Sydney she would take the mail, but we have had East wind for a month and nothing can come in.”

Houston Francis Logan (b c.1838- d.1922)

Taylor owned the two town acres until their conveyance to Houston Frances Logan in 1878.⁸ Measured by property, Houston Francis Logan is estimated to have been among the top ten richest people in Wellington in 1882.⁹ 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.

Houston Logan ran grocery businesses in Lambton Quay and Cuba St from 1866 until 1884. 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”, 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

⁷ Joan Stevens, *Mary Taylor: friend of Charlotte Bronte*, Letters from New Zealand and elsewhere

⁸ Deeds Index, Wellington Town Acre 673, Wellington Land District Office. Jeremy Lowe, researcher, Thorndon Historical Society, states: “Logan owned substantial property on Town Acres 672 and 673 in Mt Victoria from 1879-85, as well as other Mt Victoria properties. He lived in the large house on Town Acre 673 (then Brougham St, now on Paterson St) from 1879 to 1885.”

⁹ Information from Jeremy Lowe, researcher, Thorndon Historical Society.

1897.¹⁰ He also represented the Te Aro Ward on the City Council from September 1877 to September 1893. Logan owned Town Acres 672 and 673 as well as other Mt Victoria properties. He lived in the large house on Town Act 673. 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.

Frances Grant

In October 1885 a certificate of title was issued to Frances Grant for part of Town Acre 673 and part of Town Acre 672. The title notes that the land was owned by William Waring Taylor in 1879.¹¹ A historic photograph dating from the 1890s shows the house elevated and surrounded by established trees. The building looks to be in its original form and notation on the bottom of the photograph calls it 'Laureston' with the name M.L. Grant.¹² An advertisement in the *Evening Post* wanting a general servant for a small family appears in 1891. Applications are to a 'Mrs Grant, Laureston, Brougham Street'.¹³ The Thomas Ward survey plan of 1891 shows the house alone on Town Acre 673. It records the house as two storeys with 15 rooms and a verandah surrounding the north and west sides.¹⁴ In 1901 the land was transferred from Frances Grant to Harry Crump of Wellington, Builder.¹⁵

Harry Crump

Harry Crump was born in Yorkshire and spent some of his early life in America. He served his apprenticeship as a builder when he returned to Yorkshire and came to New Zealand in 1880. "He has been developing important leaseholds round Wellington, and has acquired a considerable area of land not far from Government House where he has created a suburb during the past five years [c. 1892-97], named Clermont."¹⁶

In addition to his own building projects, Harry Crump was engaged in the construction of estates and buildings with the partnership of John Thomas Hawthorn and Colin Campbell Crump. Hawthorn and Crump were responsible for developments in various areas of the city. One example of the trio's work is Kensington Street, which was developed between 1903 & 1904, under the name of the Kensington Estate Company. The Company is recorded as consisting of Hawthorn & Crump and Harry Crump¹⁷.

Crump had a subdivision plan drawn up of the land he had acquired along Brougham Street and a newly formed private street out of the adjoining College Site Reserve in 1901.¹⁸ Prior to the name Paterson Crump had named the street Laureston, most likely after the name that was given to the house by Frances Grant. In 1904 Reverend James Paterson passed away. He was one of the New Zealand's leading churchmen and had retired from the charge of St. John's Presbyterian Church in 1903. Paterson was also Governor of nearby Wellington College and from 1877 to 1903 a member of its Senate. After his death three city councillors successfully sought the change of name of the street to Paterson in his honour. It was not until 1917 that it became a public street.¹⁹

Crump built a number of houses along Brougham and Paterson Street and progressively sold off the land and buildings. However, he continued to live in the house at no. 7 and newspapers advertisements record his address as Brougham Street until its sale in 1909. Irvine-Smith records Crump as living in Dunedin in 1948 and quotes his age as 92. His legacy is his enduring contribution to the built heritage of Wellington and the shape of the historic suburb of Mount Victoria.

¹⁰ Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Wellington Province, 1897 (Electronic Text Centre).

¹¹ CT WN40/53.

¹² Laureston House, Brougham Street, 189?, Reference No. 1/2-017986-F, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington (Timeframes).

¹³ *Evening Post*, 24 February 1891, p.3 (Papers Past)

¹⁴ Thomas Ward plan, 1891, Sheet No.70, City of Wellington, Wellington City Archives.

¹⁵ CT WN40/53.

¹⁶ Cyclopedia of NZ Volume 1 1897, p.602.

¹⁷ Stones Wellington Street Directory, 1903 & 1904, Kensington Street.

¹⁸ Deposited Plan 1172, 1901, LINZ.

¹⁹ NZ Gazette, 1917, p.1978.

In 1907/08, Crump tried to sell the property to Charles Odlin, but the sale fell through. In 1909 it was bought by Archbishop Francis Redwood and Father Thomas O'Shea for the Catholic Church.²⁰ A further transfer of land that adjoins Part of Lot 5 DP 1172 was made to Redwood and O'Shea from Harry Crump in 1912.²¹

Roman Catholic Church 1909-1989

In 1909 7 Paterson St became a residence for Father O'Shea, parish priest of St Joseph's, and the other priests serving the Te Aro parish. Prior to the move to Paterson Street O'Shea had bought a small property at 46 Buckle Street as a residence. In 1913 O'Shea was consecrated Coadjutor-Archbishop to Archbishop Redwood and a torchlight procession went from Paterson Street, down Ellice Street to his consecration in the Town Hall.²² With the passing of Redwood in January 1935 O'Shea became Archbishop and from that point on, it became known as Archbishop's House. Archbishop O'Shea resided at no. 7 until he was hospitalised prior to his death in 1954.

In 1915 plans were drawn up by the architect John Sydney Swan for an addition of a small cottage that would have an internal access way into the Presbytery.²³ Swan was responsible for a number of significant projects for the Catholic community in Wellington including St Gerard's Church, Erskine College and the Home of Compassion Crèche in Buckle Street.

A photograph of the presbytery in 1933 shows the building to have some dilapidation with drip mouldings in disrepair.²⁴ It was a few years later that architectural plans for major alterations to the exterior and interior of the Presbytery were drawn up by the architect Bertie Fleming Kelly in 1936.²⁵ The project also included the addition of a three storey reinforced concrete Art Deco block of flats that would provide further accommodation with two internal access ways between the buildings. Construction of the 1936 block meant that the 1915 Swan addition had to be removed and specifications for the build required the reuse of materials wherever possible.²⁶

B.F. Kelly was responsible for a number of designs for the Wellington Catholic community including schools, churches, a presbytery in Kilbirnie and alterations and additions to the Covent of the Sacred Heart (now Erskine College).²⁷ Kelly was educated at St Patrick's College, corner of Buckle and Cambridge Terrace but it is unknown where he trained as an architect. He became a practicing member of the New Zealand Institute of Architects and his practice was located on Courtenay Place.

A letter from B.F. Kelly to the Reverend Dr. A.J. McRae, Administrator, who resided at Paterson Street outlines an appeal for work with Kelly noting that he had spoken to Archbishop O'Shea who was pleased to support him in 'obtaining the Catholic work.'²⁸ The commission for the alterations and additions for the Paterson Street Presbytery came in 1936.

Between 1930 and 1960 the Presbytery also served as the Chancery Office and Vicariate Office for the Wellington Diocese. Title to the land was transferred from Redwood and O'Shea to Roman Catholic Archbishop in 1933.²⁹ In the 1980s religious communities active in the parish including the Good Shepard Sisters resided at the house on Paterson Street. It was described as a 'gracious residence with big rooms'. The sisters later moved to a smaller house.

²⁰ CT WN184/156. Part Lot 5 DP 1172.

²¹ CT WN213/63. Part Lot 5 DP 1172.

²² 00233:243:1913/1493, Wellington City Archives.

²³ 00053:184:10113, Wellington City Archives.

²⁴ Parishes Mt. Victoria, Box 03, Wellington Archdiocese Archives.

²⁵ 00056:182:B15931, Wellington City Archives.

²⁶ Parishes Mt. Victoria, Box 03, Wellington Archdiocese Archives.

²⁷ The architectural plans for these buildings are held in the Alexander Turnbull Library Collection.

²⁸ B.F. Kelly to Rev. Dr. A.J. McRae, 8 June 1934, Parishes Mt. Victoria, Box 03, Wellington Archdiocese Archives.

²⁹ CT WN184/156 and CT WN213/63.

In 1989 the land was acquired for motorway purposes under the Public Works Act.³⁰ At that time Catholic Social Services had occupied the building but they moved to new premises in Brougham Street in October of that year.³¹ Since that time the house has been rented out as a shared flat with many mature, long term tenants residing there.

Architectural Description and Assessment by Chris Cochran, June 2010.

7 PATERSON STREET

The Building

The building at 7 Paterson Street is a large, two-storey house, timber-framed and clad in weatherboarding and corrugated iron. It is oriented to the north and away from Paterson Street. Today, the drive takes one alongside the west elevation of the house to a large open space on the north side; this was clearly the original approach to the house, giving access to the front verandah and main door.

The prominence of the building in the townscape is now quite slight, since the view from the road is almost entirely that of the 1936 addition – one catches a glimpse of the side elevations of the original house from Paterson Street, but the front elevation is barely visible from surrounding streets.

Architect

The house is believed to have been designed by Nicholas Marchant, Architect, who called tenders for a ‘Villa for W Waring Taylor’ to close on 23 January 1869. Marchant was at one time Wellington City Engineer, and was in private practice at this time in Cuba Street as a civil engineer and architect.

Plan

The plan today is a complex one, mainly because of the numerous additions and alterations that have been made throughout its life. In its original form, it appears to have had a conventional plan layout: an elegant verandah wrapped around the north and west sides of the house; the front door in the centre of the north elevation opened into a central hall, with a staircase to the first floor. A formal room opened off to the left, later enlarged by removing an internal wall and adding an octagonal tower in the north-east corner; to the right were two smaller rooms, these too having been enlarged later by the partial filling in of the west-side verandah. Towards the back of the house were smaller service rooms. Upstairs there were possibly six bedrooms, arranged in a U-shape around the main stair.

There are two staircases, the main one in the central hall, and a secondary (or servants) stair on the eastern side of the house.

³⁰ NZ Gazette 1989, p.5102.

³¹ 00009:1405:45/401, Wellington City Archives.

Documented Changes

Records exist in the Wellington City Archives for some of the changes, as follows:

1915

A small two-roomed addition to the Catholic Presbytery, designed by John S. Swan, was built on the south side of the house, with access from a back verandah. The builder was Murdoch and Wallis.

There is no trace of this now, as the 1936 addition (see below) required its demolition.

1926

A small addition was made to the western end of the 'out house', which stands in the back yard. The builder was J Moynhan.

1936

The house was radically altered at this time, to the design of architect B F Kelly. The builder was J H Meyer.

The main elevation was altered by the removal of the decorative barge boards and the reconstruction of the verandah (with the loss of timber fretwork and the original glazing) to include a 'new balcony' at first floor level. A porte cochere was added too, but this has since been demolished. Inside, alterations were made to the kitchen and adjacent service rooms on the ground floor.

A major addition was also made at this time, on the site of the 1915 addition. It is three storeys high, and contained basement, offices on the ground floor, and bedrooms and bathroom on the first floor. There were connections at ground and first floor levels to the house. It is a typical and severely simple structure of the time, built entirely in concrete.

1977

Part of the west-side verandah was filled in, and the house was repiled. (The central section of the west-side verandah is now demolished, but a remaining bay at the southern end still has the curved rafters that show the original shape of the verandah roof.)

Other changes for which there are no graphic records include:

A two-storey octagonal tower was added to the north-east corner of the house. The finish of the gable is vertical corrugated iron to match that of the original north and west-facing gables.

A garden wall was added to the west side of the house, built in masonry with moulded capping and urns (see photo in *Precious Possessions*). This wall was later demolished, and fragments of it used to build a retaining wall in the lower garden, out to the north of the house. This wall is now of some significance, since it provides evidence of the style and construction of the original wall (and is also an intriguing object in its own right, a ruin of Classical fragments).

A first floor bathroom was added on the west side of the house (this existed in 1936).

A first floor bathroom was added as a separate structure on the east side of the house, with access from the landing of the servant's stair (this existed in 1936). At ground level there was a toilet accessible from the garden.

Style

In its original form, the house had some of the characteristics of the Carpenter Gothic style, especially in the high gables, in the highly patterned 'drip moulding' of the barge boards, eaves and window hoods, and in the trellis work and paired posts of the verandah. An early photograph shows a very liveable house, on raised ground and well sited for sun and views, French doors opening onto the west side verandah, large double-hung windows, and the patterned timberwork mentioned. It is a thoroughly well-ordered composition, and a very handsome house of the period.

While the decorative qualities of the house are now largely lost, the original form is still recognisable. Important elements of original work remain, outside and inside, providing evidence of the high quality and standard of finish of the house. The main staircase is particularly interesting, with a wide sweeping semi-circular handrail to the top floor landing; elsewhere skirtings, architraves and panelled doors attest to the quality of the building.

Materials

The house is of conventional timber framing, clad with timber board and batten (under the verandah on the north and west sides), plain and rusticated weatherboards and, unusually, vertical corrugated iron in the north and west-facing gables. The board and batten and the corrugated iron, both running vertically, may have been used to accentuate the height of the house and the gables. (Although corrugated iron was commonly used on the side walls of houses built close together as a method of fire control, this would not have been the case with this stand-alone house; nor would it have been used as an economy, given the quality of the construction generally.) The roof is also sheathed in corrugated iron.

Throughout, flooring is timber; walls would have been scrim and paper over sarking (and this still exists in some rooms), while the ceiling lining in several rooms is pressed metal.

All joinery – doors and windows, including architraves and skirtings – are in timber with moulded profiles, now painted.

The 1936 addition is entirely built in in-situ reinforced concrete.

Summary

The building at 7 Paterson Street has significant architectural value as an example of a substantial house of the 1860s; such buildings are now very rare in Wellington. Despite extensive alterations through its 140 year life, there is sufficient original fabric remaining to allow an appreciation of its form and detail when first built, also of the standards of craftsmanship and trade skills during this early period of the development of Wellington.

It should be noted that some of the changes to the building, especially those of 1936, have significant historical interest in their own right, being made for the Catholic Archbishop of Wellington, and also some limited architectural interest as work typical of the 1930s.

Contemporary Photographs



Main entrance, north west elevation, R Murray, 2010.



Rear pedestrian entrance, south elevation, R Murray, 2010.



Pressed tin ceiling, Archbishop's room, J Newman, 2008.



Vestments warbrobe, Archbishop's room, J Newman, 2008.



Main staircase, J Newman, 2008.



Servant's stairs, J Newman, 2008.