

# Houston Francis Logan (1839 – 1922)

Houston Francis Logan was born in Glasgow and was only a few months old when he came to New Zealand with his parents. His Ayrshire-born father, Francis Logan (1784–1862) studied medicine at Glasgow University and in 1808 was admitted to the navy as assistant-surgeon. After various Atlantic postings he made voyages to Australia in 1833 and 1837, in charge of convicts. His return to England via New Zealand may have encouraged him to emigrate; in 1839 he left the navy, and in February 1840 he arrived at Wellington on the *Bengal Merchant* with his wife Janet (née Wallace) and infant son. Their first home was a cottage built and shared for two years with their shipboard friends Ebenezer and Agnes Hay, probably in the Petone area, and Logan later selected land at Porirua. Houston Francis Logan was their only child.

The boy reached manhood, and displayed a wide range of interests. Until the mid-1880s he lived at several addresses in Wellington, including Lambton Quay, where he established a grocery and provision store; he also owned other property. He took an active interest in local welfare, serving on the City Council from 1870–1883, and as chairman of the reserves committee was instrumental in getting planting work done. He founded the Star Boating Club, was a committee member of the Athenaeum Club, honorary member of the Early Settlers and Historical Association and a member of the Wellington Philosophical Institute.

Like his father, whose contribution of interesting plant specimens had been acknowledged by J D Hooker in his *Flora Novae-Zelandiae* (1852–1855), Logan had a keen interest in New Zealand plants, and in particular, ferns. The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa holds several specimens collected by him around Wellington in 1861–63, and he also displayed fern collections at the Dunedin, Sydney and Melbourne Exhibitions. In December 1881 Logan and John Buchanan climbed Mt Holdsworth in the Tararua Ranges, making three ascents on three consecutive days. Logan's account, which was the first botanical record of the Tararuas, contained a list of species seen, including two that were new, *Haastia loganii* and *Raoulia rubra*, collected on 27 December. *Haastia loganii* was first described in 1882 by Buchanan and was "named in honour of H F Logan, whose zeal in botanical science has added to our knowledge of the flora of the North Island". It is now believed to be a hybrid of *Leucogenes leontopodium*, the North Island edelweiss, and *Raoulia rubra*.

Logan was also involved in several unsuccessful antimony and gold mining ventures in Marlborough, and from 1863 as an ensign until his retirement in 1905 with the rank of captain, he served in the No. 2 Company of the Wellington Militia. He lived in retirement at Ellis Street, Wellington, where he spent much of his time gardening, and died at Wellington Hospital on 11 August 1922.



## *Raoulia loganii*

Where subspecies of *Leucogenes* and *Raoulia* grow together, plants that show evidence of hybridisation often occur; flowering specimens are rare, and most appear to be sterile. Some forms have been described as species. Because of its woolly habit *Raoulia loganii* was originally thought to belong to the genus *Haastia*, but Kirk referred to it as *Helichrysum* in his 1899 *Students' Manual*, and Cheeseman placed it in the genus *Raoulia* as described in his *Manual* of 1925. The plant forms cushiony masses of branchlets 8–10 mm in diameter, in appearance distinct from either of its supposed parents. The leaves are intermediate in size and the whole plant is clothed with whitish-grey tomentum. The florets have a pinkish tinge. Uniform specimens as described have been collected in a number of places on the Tararua Range.