

D.—No. 2.

# P A P E R S

RELATIVE TO

## THE REMOVAL OF THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT

### TO COOK'S STRAITS.

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PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BY COMMAND OF HIS EXCELLENCY.

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AUCKLAND:

1864.



## PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE REMOVAL OF THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT TO COOK'S STRAITS.

### No. 1.

COPY OF MINUTE BY THE HONORABLE MR. WHITAKER ON RESOLUTIONS FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RELATIVE TO THE CHANGE OF THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

All questions relating to the Seat of Government were, at the formation of the present Ministry, as with all former Ministries, left open questions.

Under these circumstances, the Ministry trust that they may be excused as a Ministry from giving advice on this subject, and request that His Excellency will be pleased to take such action as he may think fit to carry out the wishes of the Assembly.

FREDK. WHITAKER.

2nd December, 1863.

### No. 2.

*Minute.*—

The Governor herewith forwards to his Responsible Advisers the copy of a message transmitted to him by the House of Representatives regarding the expenditure to be incurred in selecting a new site for the Seat of Government.

The Governor requests Ministers to advise him as to the rate of remuneration which should be given to each of the three Commissioners which he is to request the Governors of certain Australian Colonies to appoint.

G. GREY.

Government House,  
January 28th, 1864.

### No. 3.

Ministers have the honor respectfully to acknowledge the receipt of His Excellency's Memorandum dated the 28th instant, requesting the advice of Ministers as to the rate of remuneration which should be given to each of the three Commissioners which he is to request the Governors of certain Australian Colonies to appoint, with a view to the selection of a new site for the Seat of Government.

Ministers are unanimously of opinion that it was the intention of the House of Representatives when it placed £50,000 at His Excellency's disposal for the purpose of effecting a change in the Seat of Government, that His Excellency should expend that amount on the object specified, and its preliminaries, without the advice of the Ministry, which was known to be divided on the question, and who had made it an open question in the House. It was in conformity with this view that Ministers, on the 2nd December last, on His Excellency's referring the Address of the House of Representatives to them, wrote, "Under the circumstances the Ministry trust that they may be excused, as a Ministry, from giving advice on this subject, and request that His Excellency will be pleased to take such action as he may think fit to carry out the wishes of the Assembly." The advice thus tendered and accepted by His Excellency was communicated to the House, and no doubt weighed with it in inducing it to place at His Excellency's disposal the liberal amount provided.

Ministers therefore conceive it to be their duty to abstain from advising His Excellency specifically on the steps to be taken by him in this matter, and merely to state that the amount voted by the House, or any part of it, is at His Excellency's disposal whenever he requires it.

WM. FOX.

2nd February, 1864.

## No. 4.

*Memorandum.*—

The Governor has received the Ministerial Memorandum regarding the appropriation of a part of a sum of £50,000 to be expended if necessary for the purpose of effecting a change in the Seat of Government.

The Governor regrets that he should differ in opinion with his responsible advisers on this subject. Although Ministers may have made the change of the Seat of Government an open question in the House, the Governor thinks that what is now to be dealt with is an actual decision of the House to which it is his duty, and that of the Government, to see that effect is given in the usual way, and through the ordinary channels.

He must, therefore, decline to take what he believes would be the unconstitutional step of spending upon his own responsibility, a large sum of public money. He would have no means of explaining to the Legislature in detail the reasons which made him expend each item of such sum, and no legitimate channel for defending, in the Assembly, the course he pursued in reference to this expenditure if it was impugned.

The words of the Resolution of the House of Representatives on this subject are, "and praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause a sum not exceeding £50,000 to be expended for the purpose of carrying out the wish of this House." The Governor does not understand the meaning of these words to be that he was expected to spend the money himself. He thinks, on the contrary, it should be expended under the usual constitutional checks and control.

The Governor trusts that a consideration of these circumstances will induce his responsible advisers to change their views on this matter, and to give him the advice for which he has asked, or at least to appoint some person possessing their confidence to give him advice upon subjects regarding which he is quite ignorant.

G. GREY.

Government House,  
Auckland, 5th February, 1864.

## No. 5.

Ministers have given His Excellency's minute their most serious consideration, and are decidedly of opinion that it was the intention or expectation of the House of Representatives that His Excellency should make all arrangements connected with the removal of the Seat of Government at his own discretion, and without the advice of Ministers.

In deference, however, to His Excellency's opinion and express desire, Ministers will accept of the responsibility of advising His Excellency on the point on which he now requests their advice, trusting to their being able to satisfy the House of Representatives of the propriety of their doing so under the circumstances.

They beg to advise His Excellency that the amount of remuneration offered by him for each Commissioner should be Five Guineas a day; that all travelling expenses to and from New Zealand and Hotel and other expenses while in the Colony should be paid by the Government; and that a Steamer should be placed at their disposal for such time as they may require it for the purpose of visiting the different places in Cook's Straits which they may wish to inspect.

WM. FOX.

5th February, 1864.

## No. 6.

Government House,  
Auckland, 5th February, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to enclose herewith copies of addresses passed by the General Assembly of this Colony at its recent Session, from which it appears that majorities of both Houses of the Legislature are of opinion that the time has arrived when it has become an imperative necessity for the good government of the whole Colony, and for the maintenance of its unity, that the permanent position of the seat of Government should be placed in a more central position,—that is to say, somewhere upon the shores of Cook's Straits.

The Legislature desires that the actual site of the Capital should be submitted to some independent tribunal to be formed by Commissioners having no interest in, or relations with any part of this Colony, and whose high, social, and intellectual standing should guarantee a full enquiry into, and an important decision on the subject. Such commissioners to be appointed by the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania, and I am requested to move the Governors of these Colonies to lend their aid in the selection of such Commissioners.

In compliance therefore with the wishes expressed in the enclosed addresses:—I have the honor to request that Your Excellency would be good enough to render your assistance to this Colony in this matter by appointing some Gentleman of character, and for the purposes above indicated.

The New Zealand Government will be prepared to pay such Commissioners Five Guineas a-day, besides all travelling expenses to and from New Zealand, and all Hotel and other charges whilst in this Colony, and arrangements shall be made for a steamer to be placed at their disposal for such time as they may require it for the purpose of visiting the different places in Cook's Straits which they may wish to inspect.

I have, &c.,

G. GREY.

His Excellency, the Right Hon.

Sir John Young, Bart, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,  
Sydney, N.S.W.

A letter similar to the above was also written at the same time to His Excellency Sir Charles Darling, of Victoria, and His Excellency Col. Gore Browne, of Tasmania.

### No. 7.

Superintendent's Office,  
Auckland, January 4th, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to forward herewith a copy of a Resolution transmitted to me by the Honorable the Speaker of the Auckland Provincial Council, under date 23th December ultimo; also the three Addresses (original) received therewith, which were unanimously adopted by the Council, and to request that you will have the goodness to lay them before His Excellency the Governor, for transmission to their Excellencies the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania, with as little delay as possible.

I have, &c.,  
ROBERT GRAHAM,  
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.  
Auckland.

### Enclosure to No. 7.

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNALS OF THE AUCKLAND PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

Monday, 28th December, 1863.

*Resolved.*—

That Mr. Speaker be requested to forward the address to His Honor the Superintendent without delay, respectfully requesting him to communicate with His Excellency the Governor with the view to the said address being forwarded by the out-going mail to their Excellencies the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania.

(True extract),

WM. POWDITCH,  
Speaker.

### No. 8.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Auckland, 15th February, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the number and date quoted in the margin, and in reply, to inform your Honor that the addresses forwarded therewith have been laid before His Excellency the Governor, and that His Excellency has forwarded them to the Governors of New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria.

4th January, 1864.

I have, &c.

WILLIAM FOX.

His Honor, the Superintendent,  
Auckland.

No. 9.

Superintendent's Office,  
Auckland, 23rd, February, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 35, of date 15th instant, announcing that certain addresses had been forwarded to the Governors of New South Wales, Tasmania, and Victoria.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT GRAHAM,  
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,  
Auckland.

No. 10.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Government House,  
Sydney, 14th March, 1864.

SIR,—

In reply to your two communications both of date February 5th, 1864, I have the honor to inform you that I shall be prepared to appoint a Commissioner accordingly. I shall do all in my power to select a Gentleman of the standing and ability requisite for so important a task, and I shall feel obliged by your informing me of the date at which he is expected to present himself in New Zealand.

2. It is right that I should add that I make the appointment at your request, but, without any reference to the merits of the question or the views of contending parties.

I have, &c.,

JOHN YOUNG.

His Excellency, Sir George Grey,

No. 11.

Government House,  
Sydney, 14th April, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to inform you that I have secured the services of Mr. Joseph Docker to act as Commissioner in New Zealand.

Mr. Docker is a distinguished member of the Legislative Council of this Colony, and his character and ability fully guarantee the efficient discharge of the duties he has undertaken,

I have, &c.,

JOHN YOUNG.

His Excellency, Sir George Grey,  
&c., &c., &c.

No. 12.

Government House,  
Hobartown, Tasmania, 5th April, 1864.

SIR,—

In reply to your Despatch dated 5th February, 1864, I have the honor to inform you that I shall be prepared to appoint a Commissioner to act in conjunction with two others appointed by the Governors of Victoria and New South Wales.

In making this appointment it is right that I should state that I do so at your request and at that of the General Assembly of New Zealand, and without reference to the merits of the question at issue.

I have, &c.,

T. GORE BROWNE.

His Excellency  
Sir George Grey, K. C. B.,  
&c., &c., &c.,  
Auckland.

## No. 13.

Government House,  
Hobartown, Tasmania,  
5th April, 1864.

SIR,—

In reply to your second despatch, dated 5th February, enclosing a memorial from the Provincial Council of the Province of Auckland, I have the honor to request your Excellency to forward the enclosed reply.

I have, &c.,  
T. GORE BROWNE.

His Excellency  
Sir George Grey, K.C.B.,  
&c., &c., &c.,  
Auckland.

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Enclosure to No. 13.

Government House,  
Hobart Town, Tasmania, 5th April, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of an Address, signed by and forwarded to me by His Excellency Sir George Grey, in a despatch dated Auckland, 5th February 1864.

In reply I desire to express my regret that I am unable to meet the wishes of the Provincial Council of the Province of Auckland. You will observe that the merits of the question you state so forcibly are not submitted to the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania; they are simply informed by Sir George Grey that the Legislature has decided that the Seat of Government should be placed in a more central position—that is to say, somewhere in Cook's Straits. The Legislature desires that the actual site of the Capital should be submitted to some independent tribunal, to be formed by Commissioners.

I have informed Sir George Grey, in reply, that in appointing one of the Commissioners I do so at his request (as Her Majesty's Representative) and that of the General Assembly of New Zealand, and without reference to the merits of the question at issue.

I have, &c.,  
T. GORE BROWNE.

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No. 14.

VICTORIA.

Government House, Toorack,  
6th April, 1864.

SIR,—

I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's letters of the 5th February last, with their respective enclosures, and I beg to acquaint you that, while giving my respectful consideration to the Representation of the Provincial Council of Auckland, I have felt it my duty to comply with the wish of the General Assembly of New Zealand, supported as it is by your Excellency's request that I should adopt that course.

I have been so fortunate as to obtain the services, as a Commissioner, of Sir Francis Murphy, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria; but as the Parliamentary Duties of that gentleman will probably not permit of his proceeding to New Zealand before the end of the month of July, or beginning of August next, I can only express my hope that that period will suit both the views of the New Zealand Government and the arrangements of the Commissioners who may be appointed from the other Colonies.

I have, &c.,  
C. H. DARLING.

His Excellency  
Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

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No. 15.

Government House, Auckland,  
18th May, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th April, 1864, with the information that you had obtained the services of Sir Francis Murphy to act as Commissioner in New Zealand.

I am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in this matter, and I beg to request you will be good enough to direct him to communicate with Mr. Joseph Docker, member of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, appointed by the Governor of New South Wales, that by so doing they may appoint some time as soon after the end of July as may be convenient to themselves to meet at Wellington, New Zealand.

On their arrival, a steamer will be placed at their disposal, and the Sub-Treasurer at that place will be instructed to pay all sums that may be required to defray the expenses incurred by the Commissioners.

I have, &c.,  
G. GREY.

His Excellency  
Sir Charles Darling, K.C.B.,  
Government House, Toorak, Victoria.

[Two letters of similar tenor and date sent to the Governors of New South Wales and Tasmania, Sir John Young having appointed Mr. Joseph Docker, and Colonel Gore Browne being prepared to appoint a Commissioner, but not named him.]

## No. 16.

Athenæum,  
Dunedin, April 4th, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to forward to your Excellency a Memorial from the Province of Otago relative to the removal of the Seat of Government to Cook's Strait.

Trusting your Excellency will give the matter your most serious consideration,

I have, &c.,  
G. P. CLIFFORD,  
Secretary to the Political Committee.

To His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

## No. 17.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Auckland, 19th April, 1864.

SIR,—

4th April, 1864.

By direction of Mr. Fox I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the date quoted in the margin, addressed to His Excellency the Governor, enclosing a Memorial from the Province of Otago, relative to the removal of the Seat of Government to Cook's Straits.

I have, &c.,  
W. GIBBORNE,  
Under Secretary.

G. P. Clifford, Esq.,  
Secretary to the Political Committee,  
Athenæum,  
Dunedin.

## No. 18.

Colonial Secretary's Office.  
Auckland, 25th May, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to transmit to you the accompanying reply, which has been received from His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania to an address from the Auckland Provincial Council in reference to the removal of the Seat of Government to some more central position.

I have, &c.,  
FREDK. WHITAKER,  
In the absence of Mr. Fox.

The Speaker  
Of the Provincial Council,  
Auckland.



## No. 19.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Government House,  
Sydney,  
2nd July, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to introduce to you the bearer of this letter, the Honorable Joseph Docker, M.L.C., whom I have nominated to act as Commissioner in New Zealand, in accordance with the request contained in your communication to me of date February 5th, 1864.

I have, &c.,  
JOHN YOUNG.

His Excellency  
Sir George Grey, K.C.B.,  
&c., &c., &c.

## No. 20.

Government House,  
Hobartown, Tasmania.  
20th June, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to inform you that the bearer of this letter, Mr. Ronald Campbell Gunn, is the gentleman I have named as Commissioner from Tasmania, for selecting a place in Cook's Straits for the future Capital of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,  
T. GORE BROWNE,

His Excellency  
Sir George Grey, K.C.B.,  
&c., &c., &c.

## No. 21.

FOR HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

The only step now necessary to be taken by His Excellency the Governor appears to be to ask the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania to request the Commissioners to communicate with each other, and appoint a meeting at such place in Cook's Straits and at such time as will meet their convenience.

On arrival, a Steamer will be placed at their disposal, and the Sub-Treasurer will be instructed to pay all sums that may be required to defray the Commissioners' expenses.

FREDK. WHITAKER.

9th May, 1864.

## No. 22.

General Post Office, Auckland,  
21st July, 1864.

SIR,—

As the Commissioners appointed by the Governors of the Australian Colonies, with reference to the site for the seat of Government in Cook's Straits, will meet in Wellington soon after the end of this present month, I am directed to remind you of the arrangement made by you with the Hon. Mr. Whitaker, to have a steamer ready at the disposal of the Commissioners on their arrival.

I have, &c.,  
G. ELIOTT ELIOTT,  
Secretary.

R. J. Duncan, Esq.,  
New Zealand Steam Navigation Company,  
Wellington.

## No. 23.

Superintendent's Office,  
Wellington, 25th July, 1864,

SIR,—

I have the honor to request that you will be pleased to tender Sir George Grey my best thanks for His Excellency's kind consideration in placing the Government House here at my disposal for the accommodation of the Commissioners for deciding on the Seat of Government.

I have, &c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,  
Auckland.

## No. 24.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Auckland, 1st August, 1864.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to transmit to you the enclosed Commission under the hand of His Excellency the Governor and the Seal of the Colony, confirming your appointments as Commissioners to enquire into, and report upon the best site for the Seat of Government of this Colony on the shores of Cook's Straits.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM FOX.

The Hon. Joseph Docker, the  
Hon. Sir Francis Murphy, and  
Ronald Campbell Gunn, Esq.

## Enclosure to No. 24.

His Excellency Sir GEORGE GREY, Knight Commander of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Governor and Commander-in-Chief, in and over Her Majesty's Colony of New Zealand, and its Dependencies, and Vice Admiral of the same, &c., &c.

To the Honorable JOSEPH DOCKER, Member of the Legislative Council of the Colony of New South Wales.

The Honorable Sir FRANCIS MURPHY, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of Victoria.

RONALD CAMPBELL GUNN, Esquire.

WHEREAS on the thirtieth day of November, One Thousand, Eight Hundred and Sixty-Three, the Honorable the Legislative Council of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, did resolve that the address hereafter set forth should be presented to me, and the same was accordingly presented, that is to say :—

"May it please Your Excellency,—

"We the Legislative Council of New Zealand, in Parliament assembled, desire respectfully to express to Your Excellency our strong conviction that the time has arrived when it has become imperatively necessary for the good government of the whole Colony, and for the maintenance of its unity, that the permanent position of the Seat of Government should now be settled.

"We are of opinion that the just claims and varied necessities of all parts of the Colony require that the Seat of Government should be placed in a central position, that is to say, somewhere on the shores of Cook's Straits.

"We desire that the actual site of the Capital should be submitted to some independent tribunal by which the interests of the whole Colony may be impartially considered, apart from those local claims which are sure to be asserted by the several settlements of Cook's Straits, in the discussion of a question so important to their respective interests.

"Impressed with the conviction that continued delay in the settlement of this question will only tend to keep alive those feelings of rivalry and jealousy between different parts of the Colony, which seriously impede the action of Responsible Government, and which threaten at no distant period the dismemberment of the Colony, we respectfully, but earnestly pray that your Excellency will cause no time to be lost in giving effect to the foregoing resolutions in such manner as to your Excellency may seem expedient."

AND WHEREAS on the Twenty-fifth day of November, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-three, the House of Representatives of New Zealand in Parliament assembled did resolve that the address hereafter set forth should be presented to me, and the same was accordingly presented, that is to say :—  
May it please Your Excellency,—

"We the Commons of New Zealand in Parliament Assembled, desire respectfully to express to Your Excellency our strong conviction that the time has arrived when it has become imperatively

necessary for the good government of the whole Colony, and for the maintenance of its unity, that the permanent position of the Seat of Government should now be finally settled.

"We are of opinion that the just claims and varied necessities of all parts of the Colony require that the Seat of Government should be placed in a central position, that is to say, somewhere upon the shores of Cook's Straits.

"We desire that the actual site of the Capital should be submitted to some independent tribunal, by which the interests of the whole Colony may be impartially considered, apart from those local claims which are sure to be asserted by the several settlements of Cook's Straits, in the discussion of a question so important to their respective interests.

"Such a tribunal would, in our opinion, be best formed by Commissioners having no interest in, or relation with any part of the Colony, and whose high, social, and intellectual standing should guarantee a full enquiry and an impartial decision, founded solely upon a consideration of the advantages which the different sites in Cook's Straits, present for the administration of the Government of the whole Colony.

"We venture to think that the Governors of the neighbouring colonies would, if moved thereto by Your Excellency, readily lend their aid in the selection of such Commissioners.

"We, therefore, respectfully pray that Your Excellency will be pleased to request their Excellencies the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania, each to appoint one Commissioner of the character and for the purpose herein referred to, and that Your Excellency will be pleased to submit for the consideration of the Commissioners so appointed, the question as to the best site for the Seat of Government within Cook's Straits.

"Impressed with the conviction that continued delay in the settlement of this question will only tend to keep alive those feelings of rivalry and jealousy between different parts of the Colony, which seriously impede the action of Responsible Government, and which threaten at no distant period the dismemberment of the Colony, we respectfully but earnestly pray that your Excellency will cause no time to be lost in carrying into effect the measures now submitted."

AND WHEREAS their Excellencies the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania aforesaid have, in pursuance of the aforesaid Resolutions, respectively appointed

The Honorable JOSEPH DOCKER, Member of the Legislative Council of the Colony of New South Wales ;

The Honorable Sir FRANCIS MURPHY, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of Victoria ;

RONALD CAMPBELL GUNN, Esquire ;

to be such Commissioners as aforesaid.

AND WHEREAS it is expedient to confirm such appointment under the hand of the Governor and the seal of the said Colony of New Zealand. Now know that I, reposing special trust and confidence in your knowledge, ability, and discretion, and in exercise of all powers and authorities in this behalf enabling me : Do by these Presents constitute, appoint, and confirm you the said

Honorable JOSEPH DOCKER,

Honorable Sir FRANCIS MURPHY,

RONALD CAMPBELL GUNN, Esquire,

to be the Commissioners described or referred to in the said Resolutions : To have and to exercise all the powers, privileges, and authorities, and to discharge all the duties therein severally set forth.

Given under my hand at the Government House at Auckland, and issued under the Seal of the Colony of New Zealand, this Twenty-ninth day of July, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and sixty-four.

G. GREY.

By His Excellency's Command,  
WM. FOX.

## No. 25

Colonial Defence Office,

Auckland, 2nd August, 1864.

SIR,—

I am directed by the Honorable the Colonial Secretary to inform you that the Government have appointed you Secretary to the Commissioners for selecting a site in Cook's Strait for the Seat of Government. This letter was addressed to Mr. Eaton from the Colonial Defence Office, in which he was then temporarily employed.

You will place your services entirely at the disposal of the Commissioners, and will accompany them during the continuance of their functions in the Colony for the purpose of acting as their official and Private Secretary.

Your pay will be at the rate of One Guinea per diem, and your expenses will be paid by the Government.

The Sub-Treasurers have been instructed to advance, on the requisition of the Commissioners, such funds as they may require ; you will have to keep all accounts of payments made from these advances, and be careful to obtain all necessary receipts for this expenditure.

The accounts to be sent in to the Colonial Secretary's Department at the termination of your employment in the office to which you are now appointed.

You will not be required to report in any other way, unless directed by the Commissioners, from whom you will take your instructions on all subjects.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM SEED.

F. J. Eaton, Esq.,  
Secretary to the Seat of  
Government Commissioners,  
Auckland.

No. 26.

Superintendent's Office, Nelson,  
10th October, 1864.

SIR,—

On the 3rd instant the accompanying packet was placed in my care by the "Seat of Government Commissioners." with a request that I would take the earliest opportunity, by post or otherwise, to forward it to His Excellency the Governor.

The present being the first opportunity that has offered. I have now the honor to forward it to you, and to request that you will be good enough to lay the same before His Excellency.

I have, &c.,

S. P. ROBINSON,  
Superintendent.

The Honorable  
The Colonial Secretary,  
Auckland.

No. 27.

Government Buildings, Nelson,  
3rd October, 1864.

SIR,—

We have the honor to transmit to your Excellency a report upon the site for the Seat of Government of New Zealand in Cook's Straits, a subject which was submitted for our consideration in the commission with which your Excellency honored us on the 29th of July last.

We have, &c.,

FRANCIS MURPHY,  
JOSEPH DOCKER,  
RONALD C. GUNN,  
Commissioners for selecting a Site for the  
Seat of Government.

His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B., &c., &c., &c.  
Auckland.

Government Buildings, Nelson,  
October 3rd, 1864.

The Commissioners, acting under the above recited instrument, have agreed to the following Report :—

In order to guarantee a full enquiry and an impartial decision, founded solely upon a consideration of the advantages which the different sites in Cook's Straits present for the administration of the Government of the whole Colony, the Commissioners determined to lay down a principle of enquiry which should be rigidly applicable in the examination of every site submitted to their investigation. This principle comprised enquiries into :—

1st. The central position of the site :

Its accessibility, either by land or sea, from the adjoining Provinces of New Zealand, from the various British settlements in the Southern Hemisphere, and from Europe and America, and also the existing and projected means of communication.

2nd. The Water Capabilities—comprising :

Character of the Harbour  
The approaches  
Depth of Water  
Nature of anchorage ground  
Protection from prevailing winds  
Rise and fall of tides  
Currents, their direction and velocity  
Dangers, whether hidden or visible.

- 3rd. Land Capabilities—comprising :
  - The extent of proposed site
  - Natural formation of the land
  - Water Supply
  - Facilities for drainage and sewerage
  - Facilities for the construction of wharves and piers
  - The sanitary condition of the site and neighbourhood.
- 4th. The resources of the surrounding country
  - Its extent and character
  - Quantity of available land (whether alienated or unalienated) for pastoral or agricultural pursuits
  - Its timber for building purposes and fuel
  - Other building materials
  - Mineral products
  - Roads and facilities of communication with proposed capital.
- 5th. Capabilities of Defence :
  - From attack by land
  - From attack by sea.
- 6th. Natural Disadvantages :
  - Whether capable of removal from the appliances of science
  - Whether beyond control or removal.

The Commissioners commenced their labours at Wellington, on the southern coast of the North Island. They collected all the information that could be laid before them on these several heads of enquiry, and tested the information, so obtained, by personal examination, wherever such a course was practicable.

The Commissioners then proceeded along the South Coast to Whanganui, and personally examined the harbor and the surrounding country.

The Commissioners then passed to the opposite shore of the Strait, and directed their attention to Picton, in the Province of Marlborough, and minutely examined Queen Charlotte's Sound and the Tory Channel. They then proceeded inland to Blenheim and (descending by the Wairau river) made a personal inspection of Port Underwood, represented to be the natural harbor of this district. They also examined the pastoral districts lying to the south and east of the Wairau Valley.

Leaving Picton the Commissioners examined carefully the Pelorus Sound, to the town of Havelock, in the same Province, and from thence proceeded through the French Pass to Nelson.

They made a personal inspection of Blind Bay, with its various harbors, including Croixelles on the East Shore, and Massacre Bay and Astrolabe Roadstead upon the West, and visited portions of the interior of the country.

Having thus made themselves acquainted, as far as was practicable, with the character and capabilities of both shores of Cook's Strait, the Commissioners have arrived at the unanimous conclusion that Wellington, in Port Nicholson, is the site upon the shores of Cook's Straits which presents the greatest advantages for the administration of the Government of the Colony.

The Commissioners cannot conclude the important mission, which has been entrusted to them, without recording their high sense of the valuable assistance afforded to them, in pursuing their investigation, by the authorities of the various Provinces, and also of the spirit of candor and impartiality which has been displayed by the gentlemen furnishing the information they required.

They are desirous also of placing on record their acknowledgment of the courtesy and personal kindness received by them, in every district which they visited.

FRANCIS MURPHY.  
JOSEPH DOCKER.  
RONALD C. GUNN.

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Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Auckland, 14th October, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the number and date quoted in the margin, forwarding a packet placed in your care by the Seat of Government Commissioners, and in reply to inform your Honor that it has, as requested by you, been transmitted to His Excellency the Governor. 10th October, 1864.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM FOX.

His Honor the Superintendent,  
Nelson.

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## REMOVAL OF THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT

No. 28.

Government House,  
Auckland, 26th October, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the letter dated 3rd instant, signed by yourself in conjunction with Sir Francis Murphy and Ronald C. Gunn, Esq., in which you enclose a report upon the site for the Seat of Government in New Zealand, in Cook's Straits, in execution of your Commission.

I have to express to you my thanks for the trouble which you have taken, and the labour you have undergone in the discharge of the duties which devolved on you.

I have. &amp;c.,

G. GREY,  
Governor.

The Hon. Joseph Docker, M.L.C.,  
New South Wales.

[Similar letters sent to Sir Francis Murphy and Ronald C. Gunn, Esquire.]

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