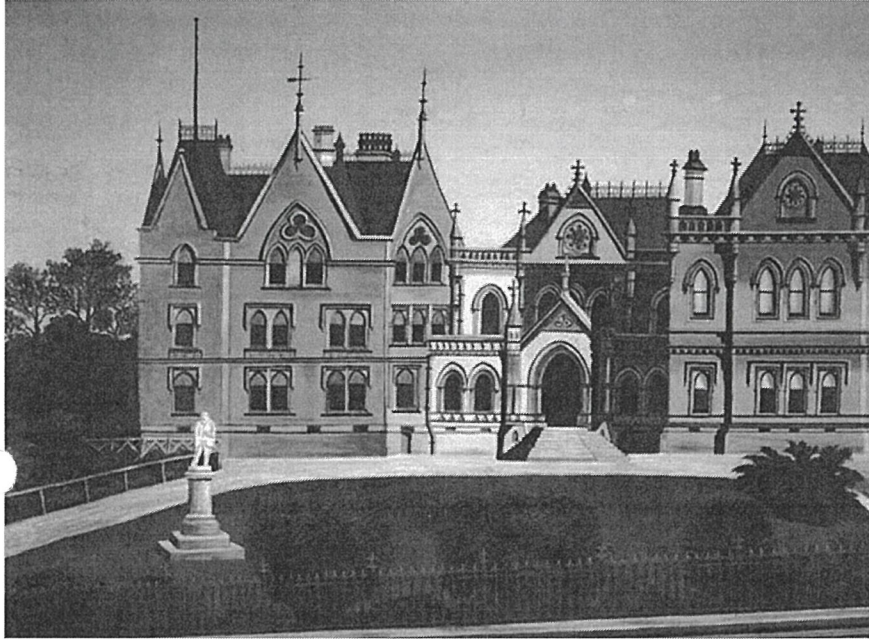


Parliament moves to Wellington MCH, 2020

26 July 1865

1865 P.77



The capital moved from Auckland to more centrally located Wellington on the recommendation of a specially appointed Australian commission. The former Wellington Provincial Council chamber became the new home for Parliament.

The location of New Zealand's Parliament had been a matter of debate for some years. For South Island members the long sea voyage to Auckland was a genuine trial. The issue came to a head as the populations of Canterbury and Otago grew rapidly in the 1860s.

Eventually an independent commission chosen by the governors of the Australian colonies was charged with selecting New Zealand's capital. After visiting Wellington, Whanganui, Picton, Port Underwood, Havelock and Nelson, at a cost of £4085 (equivalent to \$475,000 today), they opted for Wellington. The move – a substantial logistical exercise – took place in early 1865, at a total cost of £54,665 (\$6.3 million).

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