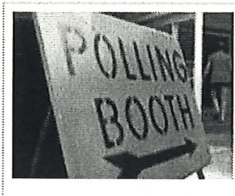




Today in History

5 December



1890 First 'one man one vote' election

Electoral law had been changed so that no New Zealander (except, for a few more years, Maori property-owners) could vote in more than one electoral district. This ended the longstanding practice of 'plural voting' by those who owned property in more than one electorate.

The 1890 election is widely seen as one of the most significant in New Zealand's political history. Although the result was not clear until Parliament met in early 1891, the Liberal Party government that ultimately took power was to dominate the political landscape for the next two decades. Led by John Ballance (until his death in 1893) and then by Richard Seddon, the Liberals introduced a number of laws designed to improve life for 'ordinary New Zealanders'. The industrial arbitration system, old-age pensions, and restrictions on working hours for women and young workers led some observers to champion New Zealand as a 'social laboratory' and 'working man's paradise'.

Electoral rights were still in a period of transition. The law allowed property-owners to enrol in each district where they qualified, but come election day they had to choose the electorate in which to cast their solitary vote. This 'plural registration', and the dual vote for Maori property-owners (which had existed since 1867 when the Maori seats were introduced), were both abolished in 1893. The introduction of New Zealand's landmark women's suffrage legislation that year established the 'one person one vote' principle which was to become a fundamental feature of democratic electoral systems in the 20th century.

Internal links

Political and constitutional timeline Cleaning up elections

External links

The right to vote (Elections NZ)

Timeline Section

Month Calendar View

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What happened

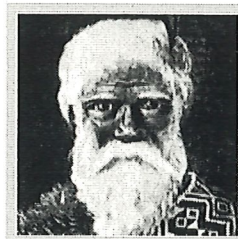
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Kiwi of the Week



Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki

Te Kooti fought for the government in the New Zealand Wars before being exiled to the Chatham Islands on charges of espionage. On the Chathams he founded the Ringatu church, later escaping back to the main land where he fought a long guerilla war against government forces.

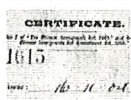
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This Week in History



4 July 1902 NZ Boxing Association formed at Christchurch



5 July 1881 Poll tax imposed on Chinese



6 July 1923 Main trunk express train disaster



7 July 1924 'Tom Watson' wins bronze for New Zealand



8 July 1893 NZ Racing Conference established



9 July 1986 Homosexual Law Reform Bill passed



10 July 1985 Rainbow Warrior sunk in Auckland harbour

THIS WEEK'S
QUIZ

Test your knowledge of NZ history

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WAR MEMORIALS

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