

# First Māori MPs electe MCH, 2020m

15 April 1868



1868 p.80

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The Maori Representation Act 1867 established four Māori seats in the House of Representatives, initially for a period of five years. The act gave the vote to all Māori males aged 21 and over.

This innovation was intended to bring Māori into mainstream political life and help ensure lasting peace between Māori and Pākehā. It was also, initially at least, seen as a way of rewarding those iwi who had fought alongside government troops during the New Zealand Wars.

The first elections were held in 1868, with 15 April the nomination day in all four Māori seats. Frederick Nene Russell (Northern Maori) and Mete Kīngi Te Rangi Paetahi (Western Maori) were elected unopposed. In Eastern Maori, there were two candidates and Tāreha Te Moananui was elected after a show of hands. In Southern Maori, there were three candidates and a poll was demanded. This was won in June by John Patterson (also known as Hōne Paratene Tamanui a Rangi).

The experiment was extended in 1872 and, four years later, the Māori seats were established on a permanent basis.

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