



New Zealand flag facts

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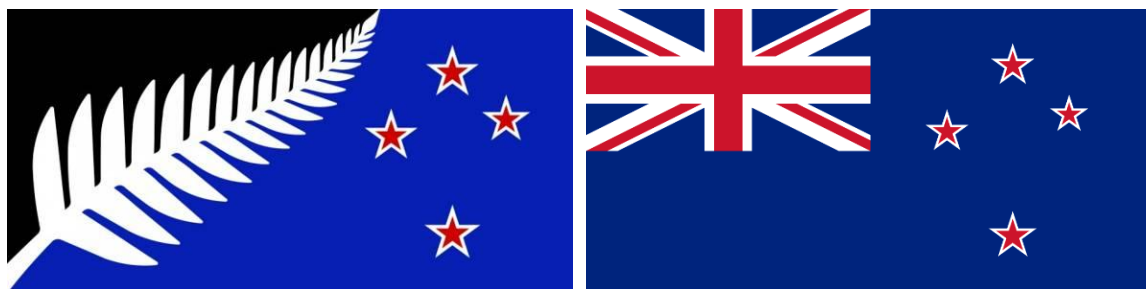
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New Zealand Flag Consideration Panel

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INTRODUCTION TO NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS



Roman Mars, the host and producer of *99% Invisible*, a radio show in San Francisco on design, said: ‘Sometimes I bring up the topic of flags and people are, like, “I don’t care about flags,” and then we start talking about flags and then, trust me, one hundred percent of people care about flags. There is something about them that works on our emotions.’¹ According to the late Sir Raymond Firth, a New Zealand-born ethnologist, the national flag ‘performs a symbolic function’ because it is a ‘condensation symbol’ and ‘a focus for sentiment about society’.² There can be little doubt about the purpose of a national flag, which is to invoke a deep sense of belonging that facilitates an emotional connection between the country it represents and the person who is affiliated to that country.

Between 3 March and 24 March 2016, New Zealanders will make an historic decision. Those of voting age will be asked if they want to stay with the current New Zealand flag or to have a new flag—the silver fern flag—which New Zealanders voted the most popular alternative design in the first flag referendum that took place between 20 November and 11 December 2015. The aim of this publication is to provide information to New Zealanders about the flag, and to answer questions people may have about the referendum process.

THE CURRENT FLAG

Publically available material about the history of the current flag is limited. Avid New Zealand flag historian James Laurenson, who accumulated much material on New Zealand’s flags during the 1930s and 1940s, lamented: ‘Our centenary takes place in 1940, and I am shocked at the lack of enthusiasm in the development of New Zealand nationhood, and the history of our flag; ask the majority of people the history of our flags and you will find out the deplorable lack of knowledge.’³ Three small

publications have been written since then on the flag, but many New Zealanders probably still do not know that New Zealand has had three official flags (see facts 11 and 21) and that the origins of the most familiar of these, the Flag of New Zealand, is more recent than they might suppose.

THE NEED FOR A NEW ZEALAND FLAG

This need first arose in 1830 when customs officials in Sydney, Australia, seized the trading ship *Sir George Murray*, built in the Hokianga. Under British maritime law, a ship not built in Britain or a British colony could not sail under a British flag. Other nations could therefore seize merchant ships not flying a flag and take their cargo. New Zealand at the time was not a formal British colony, so vessels built in the country could not register as a British ship, and therefore could not fly a British flag.

NEW ZEALANDS' EARLIEST FLAG: THE UNITED TRIBES OF NEW ZEALAND FLAG

In 1833, James Busby arrived in New Zealand, charged by the colonial authorities in New South Wales to bring order to the then principal European settlement in New Zealand, Kororāreka, which at the time was a particularly wild frontier town and seaport. Given the title of British Resident, Busby also had to ensure that the more disciplined British settlers among the European population received protection and that settlers were respectful towards Māori.

Soon after Busby arrived in New Zealand, he met with a collective of twenty-five northern Maori rangatira about the need for a New Zealand flag. Māori served as owners, crew and traders on ships plying the Tasman, and so had an interest in ensuring cargo was not confiscated. Busby wrote to the colonial authorities in New South Wales, stating that a New Zealand flag would not only solve the shipping dilemma but also encourage Māori chiefs to unite and provide some type of collective governance of the country.

Collaboration between 25 northern Māori chiefs, British Resident Busby, New Zealand-based missionary Reverend Henry Williams and New South Wales' Colonial Secretary Richard Bourke led to the submission of three potential designs for the flag and the eventual adoption from these three of what came to be called the United Tribes of New Zealand Flag. This flag served as New Zealand's flag until the signing of the Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) in 1840, which marked New Zealand's

formalisation as a British colony. William Hobson, Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand at this time, ordered his authorities to take down the United Tribes flag flown in the Bay of Islands and to replace it with the British Union Jack. He also ordered a version of the United Tribes flag flown at Port Nicholson (Wellington) to be hauled down.

By 1845, the new colony was at war. The fighting, now known as the New Zealand wars, was a series of battles and skirmishes that took place over two decades between a number of Māori iwi and British government forces. The latter, made up of British and colonial troops and their Māori allies, fought under both the Union Jack and various British ensigns. Their Māori adversaries either maintained allegiance to the United Tribes flag or devised their own (based predominantly on religious symbolism), which explains why Ngāpuhi chief Hōne Heke and his men repeatedly cut down the flagpole flying the Union Jack at Kororāreka during 1844 and 1845. Many Māori considered that, under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi, the United Tribes flag and the Union Jack should have equal status and therefore both be flown.

THE 1869 DESIGNED FLAG THAT BECAME NEW ZEALAND'S THIRD OFFICIAL FLAG

In 1865 British authorities passed the Colonial Naval Defence Act, which permitted ships from British colonies to fly the Royal Navy Blue Ensign with a seal or badge on it of the colony's choosing. Four years later, the then New Zealand governor, Sir George Ferguson Bowen, asked British naval lieutenant Albert Hastings Markham to design such a flag. Both men had come to New Zealand because of the ongoing war. In 1902, that flag became New Zealand's national flag.

Until that time, the Union Jack had remained the official New Zealand flag on land, and the Markham-designed flag the one to use on the water. The recognition given to the Markham flag in 1902 made it the flag to use on both land and water.

New Zealand at the turn of the twentieth century was a different place from what it is today. New Zealand was a British colony with the vast majority of the population coming either directly from the United Kingdom or being second or third generation British settlers, and its soldiers were fighting in South Africa as a part of the South African (Boer) War. The public wanted to show its support for these troops, but they were confused about which flag to wave. Should they wave the British Union Jack or

the 1869 Markham-designed Royal Navy Blue Ensign with the Southern Cross and the Union Jack in its canton (upper left corner). It was at this point, in 1902, that Premier Richard John Seddon's government passed an Act that made the 1869 flag New Zealand's official flag. It is known today as the New Zealand Blue Ensign, the Flag of New Zealand or just simply the New Zealand flag.

Both before and after the 1902 legislation, schools throughout New Zealand and the British Empire conducted flag-hoisting ceremonies to demonstrate allegiance to the British monarch, God, Empire and Country. These ceremonies lasted until the mid-1960s and were designed to engender a deep sense of patriotism in New Zealand schoolchildren towards both New Zealand and Britain. The ceremony consisted of flag drills, patriotic verse and song, with perhaps a speech from a guest of high standing in the community. However, even after the New Zealand Blue Ensign became New Zealand's official flag, some schools continued to fly the Union Jack. That they did so may have been due more to difficulty locating supplies of the official flag than to ongoing allegiance to Britain.

FROM BRITISH CITIZENS TO NEW ZEALAND CITIZENS

Before 1949 and the advent of the British Nationality and New Zealand Citizenship Act of that year, New Zealanders were labelled 'British subjects' and held British passports. Even with the change in definition of citizenry within New Zealand, passports continued to label New Zealanders as both 'British subjects and New Zealand citizens' until 1973. Also in 1973 New Zealand was granted full law-making powers with the passing of the New Zealand Constitution Amendment Act.⁴ New Zealand did not have its first home-grown governor-general until 1967 when Sir Arthur Porritt took up the role,⁵ and God Save the Queen remained the official anthem until 1977 when God Defend New Zealand was added to the former, so giving New Zealand two national anthems.⁶

A similar story emerges when we look at the use of flags in the military. During World War I, the official flag of use appears to have been primarily the Union Jack. The current New Zealand flag was used on occasion, but when this did occur it was due to the actions of the New Zealand soldier rather than the military per se. The New Zealand flag does feature during World War II, along with the Union Jack. During both world wars, the pall (the cloth covering) on military coffins was the Union Jack,

and official government policy in the early 1960s required the Union Jack rather than the New Zealand flag to be flown at half-mast during funeral services for ex-servicemen.

When Britain succeeded in joining the EEC in 1973, debate raged within New Zealand and most other former British colonies and dominions as to whether the Union Jack should still dominate their respective flags. Nearly all British Commonwealth countries decided to replace the Union Jack with symbolism that they considered better reflected their own nationhood. Within New Zealand, those who argued for change championed native symbols such as the kiwi and the silver fern, with many also wanting retention of the geographical locator of the Southern Cross. That debate has continued up to the present day.

THE DECISION

The final referendum in March 2016 gives New Zealanders the opportunity to make a decision on the flag. And to help us make it, the following pages present information about the flag and the referendum in the form of 'flag facts'. There are ninety facts in all. They are grouped in blocks of ten, with each block focusing on a different flag-related theme.

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION ONE: THE REFERENDUM PROCESS

INTRODUCTION



Figure 1: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

New Zealanders have debated whether or not to change the New Zealand flag ever since it became the official flag at the turn of the twentieth century. Historically, the public have been reluctant to change this flag, with many citing the lack of an alternative as their reason for not supporting change. On 11 March 2014

at Victoria University, Prime Minister John Key of the National Party announced his intention to embark, should National be re-elected during the general election later that year, on a binding referendum process established to decide the future of the New Zealand flag. National was re-elected, and the government formed a cross-party MPs group responsible for providing recommendations on the legislation and for nominating New Zealanders suitable to be part of the Flag Consideration Panel. The Deputy Prime Minister appointed the panel of twelve in February 2015, to lead a public engagement process and for recommending the alternative designs for inclusion in the first referendum to the Cabinet.

The panel began the engagement process by inviting the public to tell them what they thought New Zealand stood for in the hope that those values and principles could be reflected in alternative flag designs. Large numbers of people responded. The panel then invited the public to submit designs for an alternative flag. Of the more than 10,000 designs received, five alternative designs were presented to the New Zealand public. The public then had opportunity to rank, in order of preference, the five alternative designs during the first postal referendum held between 20 November and 11 December 2015. The most preferred flag was Kyle Lockwood's silver fern design. The next stage of the process will be a second and final referendum, also conducted by post. The final referendum will ask us to choose the flag we New Zealanders want to have as our official flag.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 1

THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG REFERENDUM PROCESS IS A WORLD FIRST



Figure 2 By NASA/Apollo 17 crew; taken by either Harrison Schmitt or Ron Evans [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

No other country in the world has embarked on the process that we are presently using to select a national flag. When selecting or changing their flag, countries have done so either through legislation (having parliament pass law), royal or presidential decree, or revolution. In 1901, the New Zealand government passed legislation that made the flag developed in 1869 to represent New Zealand ships and boats the official New Zealand flag.

Admittedly, one other country, Belarus, has gone down the referendum path to select its flag, but comparisons with New Zealand's referendum process are problematic. The question put to the Belarus voters during the referendum was one of several, and it was widely misunderstood. In addition, voters did not have opportunity to submit drawings or have a say on the flag design, and their decision on their preferred flag was not binding.

New Zealand can therefore safely be regarded as the first country to have an open and transparent process, made up of the two-staged binding postal referendum, to select a national flag. This process has sparked particular interest amongst the populace of New Zealand's closest neighbour—Australia—as well as among vexillologists (flag experts). Other examples of New Zealand leading the world include have included women gaining the vote in 1893 and being the first Western-allied country to ban (in 1987) nuclear-armed and powered warships from its territory.⁷

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 2

PRIME MINISTER JOHN KEY ANNOUNCED THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG REFERENDUM PROCESS IN MARCH 2014



Figure 3: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

responsible for encouraging the New Zealand public to engage in the debate and submit flag designs.⁸

When Prime Minister John Key announced his intention in March 2014 to hold a referendum to potentially select a new flag for New Zealand, he signalled that the process would involve establishment of a cross-party MPs group to 'focus on the draft legislation' and the formation of a steering group of New Zealanders

The cross-party group was chaired by National's Jonathan Young and consisted of the co-leader of the Māori Party Marama Fox, Labour's Trevor Mallard, ACT leader David Seymour, Kennedy Graham of the Greens, and United Future leader Peter Dunne. The New Zealand First Party opted not to participate in the group.

In February 2015, the government announced the names of the twelve New Zealanders who would oversee the referendum process. The panel would be chaired by Professor John Burrows and the remaining members were author Kate De Goldi, youth representative Stephen Jones, the former head of the New Zealand Defence Force Rhys Jones, former Mayor of Dunedin Peter Chin, te reo Māori advocate Hana O'Regan, former Olympian Beatrice Faumuina, New Zealand flag historian Malcolm Mulholland, CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi Nicky Bell, businesswoman Julie Christie, CEO of Xero Rod Drury, and the patron of the New Zealand Rugby Union Sir Brian Lochore.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 3

THE COST OF THE PROCESS IS SIX DOLLARS PER HEAD

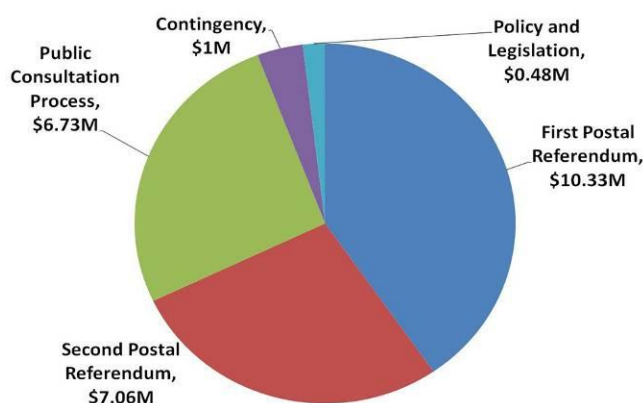


Figure 4: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

every New Zealand citizen.

The New Zealand flag referendum process will cost approximately 25.7 million dollars over a period of two years. Two thirds of the budget (17.3 million dollars) covers the two binding postal referendums; the remaining 6.7 million dollars is for public consultation. The cost of the exercise equates to six dollars per head for

In comparison with the total government spend of 88.9 billion dollars for 2015, the budget for the New Zealand flag referendum process equates to 0.029 per cent of that amount. The cost to the government to implement change should voters select the alternative option is estimated to be 2.66 million dollars.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 4

IF THE FLAG DOES CHANGE, THE ONLY LEGISLATION NEEDING AMENDMENT IS THE FLAGS, EMBLEMS, AND NAMES PROTECTION ACT 1981



Figure 5: Image courtesy of Ministry for Culture and Heritage

Some people have theorised that changing the flag could have constitutional implications. A number of comments maintain that if we remove the Union Jack, which represents the British monarchy, we will also end up removing the ‘due authority’ of the Crown. This idea is not correct. The only piece of legislation that the New Zealand government can amend if New Zealanders select the silver fern flag in the second referendum is the Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981.

Changing the flag will have no influence on New Zealand’s constitutional arrangements or on our relationship with the Commonwealth. What a change will mean is that on *official* occasions and *official* days, government agencies will fly the silver fern flag to represent New Zealand. Anyone who wants to fly the current New Zealand flag will still be allowed to do so.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 5

PEOPLE WANT TO KEEP THE CURRENT FLAG BECAUSE ...



Figure 6: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

Various groups and individuals argue for keeping the current New Zealand flag. Some common reasons they give for wanting this are the following.

First, the current New Zealand flag recognises the role that people from Britain or who are descended from British immigrants have had in developing New Zealand into the country it is today. In 1840 representatives of the British Crown and a number of Māori chiefs from throughout the country signed the Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi). The Treaty enabled the British Crown to establish a democratic form of governance in New Zealand that was based on the Westminster style of government and to institute a judicial system that dated to the time of Henry II (1154–1189).⁹ The presence of the Union Jack in the current flag reminds us of New Zealand's strong grounding in British jurisprudence. It therefore reminds us New Zealand's strong connection to Britain—the 'mother country'.

Second, the flag is the flag under which many of our soldiers have fought and, in far too many instances, died. During these times of war, the flag has acted as a symbol representing New Zealand, and so served as a rallying point and a deep sense of inspiration for many Kiwi soldiers when they needed it most. The flag was a symbol of the country they were fighting for—New Zealand. And in the World Wars especially, the presence of the Union Jack in the flag told New Zealand soldiers that they were fighting for Britain as well. For many years, the flag has thus represented and reminded us of the sacrifice of all New Zealanders who served and fought in those wars.

Third, many New Zealanders have a strong attachment to the current flag because it has represented the country for a long time and so is familiar and respected. People have developed a deep sense of pride about their country through viewing that flag.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 6

PEOPLE WANT TO CHANGE THE FLAG BECAUSE ...



Figure 7: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

Among the commonly expressed arguments for changing the New Zealand flag are the following.

First, some people believe that because New Zealand is no longer a British colony, New Zealanders should have a flag that represents the country. New Zealand's official constitutional status in 1869 (when the current flag was designed and proclaimed) and in 1902 (when that flag was recognised, through legislation, as New Zealand's official flag) was as a British colony. The superior position of the Union Jack in the canton (top left corner of a flag) has led to people commenting that they would prefer a symbol unique to New Zealand. Suggestions over the years have predominantly focussed on the Southern Cross, the silver fern and the kiwi.

Second, the New Zealand flag is often confused with Australia's flag. There are numerous examples of this confusion. The most recent was when TV New Zealand reporter Jack Tame randomly asked over fifty people in New York's Times Square what country the flag belonged to. Only four people (two from New Zealand) responded with the correct answer. The majority thought it was Australia's; others thought it was Britain's.¹⁰

Third, many New Zealanders have noted that New Zealand's demography has changed significantly since 1902 and have stated that its multicultural population could be better represented in the flag.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 7

PEOPLE ARE NOT HAPPY TO VOTE FOR CHANGE UNLESS THEY KNOW WHAT THE CHANGE IS



Figure 8: The New Economics Party Published
June 27, 2014

Some people have criticised the referendum process because the first referendum did not ask voters if they wanted to change the current flag. But the reason why they were not asked this question, and also why there are two referendums, is that New Zealanders know what they are voting for if they want the flag to change. The question, ‘Do you want the flag to change?’ is one that is known as a blind vote

because it is highly likely that voters would not be prepared to say yes unless they knew what the change would be.

In 1989 the weekly New Zealand magazine the *Listener* ran a competition to find a new flag for New Zealand. Journalist Gordon Campbell had this to say at the end of the competition:

The true level of support for the flag cannot be gauged accurately by asking people what they think of the current design. A better picture emerges when the current flag is placed among other designs, with the invitation to choose between them. Most New Zealanders do want change; what the *Listener* competition failed to do was toss up the right design that could tap that underlying yearning for change.¹¹

The government considered a number of options for how the referendum on the flag should be conducted. It settled on the two-referendum process, including the preferential voting system used in the first referendum, so that New Zealanders would know what the alternative flag is before deciding whether to vote for the current flag or the alternative. The government chose this process because they consider it is more likely to lead to a legitimate and enduring result.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 8

ACCORDING TO NEW ZEALANDERS, THE TOP THREE VALUES NEW ZEALAND STANDS FOR ARE EQUALITY, FREEDOM AND HISTORY



Figure 9: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

The Flag Consideration Panel invited members of the public to consider the values and principles they think New Zealand stands for and then, with these thoughts in mind, to respond to this question: ‘What

do you stand for?’ Over 43,000 New Zealanders submitted answers via post or on the flag referendum website.¹² The top three responses were equality, freedom and history.

In asking New Zealanders this question, the panel intended that the answers would help brief alternative flag designs. One person’s answer was characteristic of what many other respondents said: ‘I stand for equality, freedom and responsibility. NZ is a friendly, welcoming, inclusive, and therefore multi-cultural society. Part of what makes this possible is that modern NZ is based on two distinct but overlapping cultures and histories—a background which should be treasured and celebrated.’¹³ Another person wrote: “I stand for keeping ties with our history & the Commonwealth but also embracing our unique nation & what we stand for.”¹⁴

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 9

THE TOP THREE SYMBOLS USED IN THE ALTERNATIVE FLAG SUBMISSIONS WERE THE SOUTHERN CROSS, THE SILVER FERN AND THE KORU

Flag designs by icon

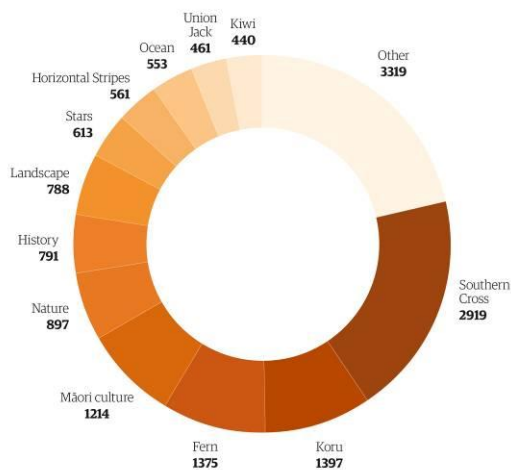


Figure 10: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

and the colours white, blue, red and black.

People from all walks of life submitted their ideas for a new flag for New Zealand, and there were no limitations in terms of age or where people came from or lived. The three symbols most often used in the 10,292 designs submitted were the Southern Cross, the silver fern and the koru. The top four colours were white, blue, red and black. The flag design selected in the first referendum (submitted by architectural technician Kyle Lockwood) has the Southern Cross, the silver fern,

The koru, spiral in shape, is based on the unfurling silver fern frond. It symbolises new life, growth, strength, and peace, and is an important symbol in Māori art, whakairo (carving) and Tā moko (tattooing). Because the silver fern begins life as a koru, some people feel that it is represented in the silver fern as well.

In his article on the competition the *Listener* magazine held in 1989 to find a new flag for New Zealand, Gordon Campbell summed up the symbols most evident in the submitted designs: ‘What sort of design will do the trick? Here, the voting once again confirms what was evident from the actual flag designs submitted by readers: the Southern Cross and the fern leaf are the motifs most likely to unite New Zealanders’.¹⁵

It is important that the symbol on a flag resonates with the people it represents because those people are more likely to accept it over time and to use it in a variety of mediums. The large white cross on the red background of the Swiss national flag is well-known throughout the world and can be found on a variety of Swiss products

from their army knives to chocolates. The British Union Jack can be found on all manner of souvenirs in the UK, including umbrellas and teddy bears. Similar trends can be found with other flags, such as Germany's, Israel's, America's and Japan's.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 10

LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH THE FLAG REFERENDUM PROCESS



Figure 11: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

The Flag Consideration Panel committed itself to extensive consultation during the referendum process. Consultation involved face-to-face meetings and hui with New Zealanders throughout the country. People therefore had opportunity not only to articulate what they believed New Zealand stands for but also to submit flag designs.

The panel also conducted a significant social media campaign about the process, with the aim of letting all New Zealanders know about the referendum and the role they would play within it.

New Zealand has a population of 4.5 million, and a good proportion of the people of an age to engage with the consultation process did so. They asked questions about the referendums, expressed their thoughts about New Zealand's past, present and future, talked about the symbols they felt best represented New Zealand's identity, and debated the merits of keeping or changing the current New Zealand flag. The Flag Consideration Panel found these discussions particularly helpful when they finalised the criteria for selecting the alternative designs that New Zealanders would vote on during the first referendum. The criteria the panel decided on required the design to have these features:

- Be unmistakably from New Zealand
- Celebrate us as a progressive, inclusive nation connected to its environment and with a strong sense of its past and a strong vision of its future
- Make for a 'great' flag, meaning that the design adhered to the principles of good flag design
- Have an enduring quality (i.e., not become outdated)
- Work well in all situations from celebration to commemoration
- Be inclusive (i.e., all New Zealanders should be able to see themselves within it)
- Not have any impediments to using it as the potential New Zealand flag.

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION TWO: MĀORI AND FLAGS

INTRODUCTION



Figure 12 Hikoī for seabed and foreshore, 2004. Photograph by Michael Hall. Te Papa (MA_E.003515)

Māori were introduced to flags through missionaries, and first began using them in the 1830s on hākari stages that were used to display feasts.¹⁶ As early as 1834, a number of northern Māori chiefs met with the British Resident, James Busby, at Waitangi to select the country's first national flag.

The flag selected was called the United Tribes of New Zealand Flag.

Although Māori had a role in selecting the flag, the designs submitted were not of their devising. The first design was developed by the colonial government in New South Wales, and the next three by Hokianga-based missionary the Reverend Henry Williams. The design selected was one of Williams'.

By the 1840s, northern Māori were well aware of the symbolism and power of flags. They flew ships' flags and pennants from their pā and tied pieces of cloth or fern around pou rāhui to denote tapu. Some consider these to be the first Māori flags.¹⁷ Rising tensions between Māori and British forces gave way to the New Zealand Wars of the 1840s through 1860s. Māori who fought alongside the British were represented by the Union Jack, whereas those who fought against the British created their own flags, many of which portrayed religious symbolism.

The Kīngitanga Movement (the Māori King Movement), which began in the 1850s, produced a number of flags. Each new Māori monarch has his or her own flag. Flags were also important rallying symbols for Māori during the Māori prophetic movements that began in the 1860s. After the New Zealand Wars of the 1860s, the New Zealand government presented special flags to those Māori who had fought with the colonial troops.

In more recent times, Māori have flown their own flags at Waitangi on Waitangi Day (February 6) as a means of representing their hopes and aspirations and, in some cases, as a form of protest against injustices against Māori.¹⁸ Waitangi Day commemorates the signing of te Tiriti of Waitangi in 1840.

One flag that has flown at Waitangi on Waitangi Day since 1990 is the Tino Rangatiratanga flag. In 2009, Maori selected this flag as the national Māori flag. On Waitangi Day 2010, the flag was officially flown, for the first time. It was raised over the Auckland Harbour Bridge and at other public locations. However, some Māori also feel a strong sense of affinity to the current New Zealand flag, especially former Māori servicemen who want to see the current flag retained.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 11

MĀORI SELECTED NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST OFFICIAL FLAG

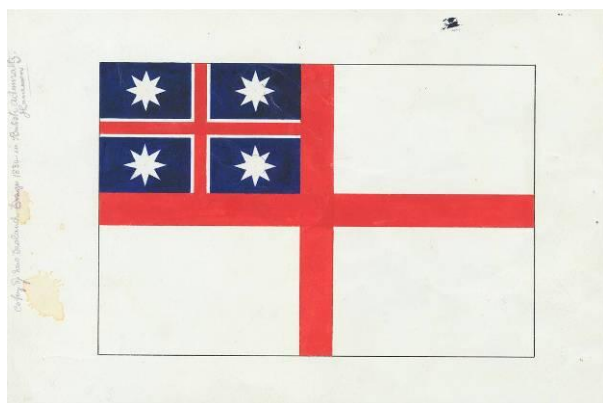


Figure 13: Image courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand

When the *New Zealander*, built in the Hokianga, sailed on its maiden voyage to Sydney in 1828 with no flag or register (a legal requirement for any trading or merchant ship), the New South Wales government granted her owner, Thomas Raine, a temporary licence to trade but refused to register her.¹⁹ Two years later, Sydney customs officials impounded another Hokianga-built ship, the *Sir George Murray*, for having no flag or register. She was owned by Ngā Puhi rangatira Patuone and Te Taonui. Despite efforts to be granted a temporary licence, no such courtesy was extended, and the ship was sold at auction to Thomas McDonnell, a timber merchant based in the Hokianga (McDonnell was later appointed as the Additional British Resident in NZ).²⁰ In March 1831, McDonnell set off for the Hokianga in the *Sir George Murray*, even though she still had no register. However, he did fly a flag from her, reported as the first New Zealand colours, and described as 'the English St George ensign, the ground of one quarter being blue, and having a half moon at its centre'.²¹

Meanwhile, the newly appointed British Resident James Busby and a collective of twenty-five northern Maori rangatira, aware of the problems associated with non-registered and non-flag-flying New Zealand-built ships, met at Busby's farm at Waitangi on 20 March 1834 to select the first official flag to represent the country. Busby had earlier rejected a design forwarded from the Australian authorities on the basis that it did not contain the colour red, a colour Māori regard as a sign of rank. Busby then called on Reverend Henry Williams, a Church Missionary Society clergyman living in the Hokianga, to come up with some more designs. He duly presented three options. The one the rangatira selected was the flag used to represent the Church Missionary Society.

Witnessing proceedings that day was the assistant surgeon of the HMS *Alligator*, William Marshall. He noted:

My friend Hau came to me to consult me as to which he should vote for, and having discovered how my taste lay, paid me the compliment of adopting it, and canvassed others for their votes also; it was the one finally chosen ... two of the head men declined voting, apparently apprehensive lest under this ceremony lay hid some sinister design on our parts, and, had anything like freedom of debate had been encouraged, instead of suppressed, before proceeding with the election, I have little doubt but that the real sentiments of those present would have been elicited.²²

Over time, various people have speculated that the stars on the United Tribes of New Zealand Flag, as it came to be called, represent the Southern Cross. However, according to New Zealand historian James Laurenson, this supposition is not valid, and the stars actually represent the stars of England.²³

The Flag Consideration Panel decided not to include the United Tribes flag in the longlist of alternative flag designs. Panel members made this decision after attending a hui at Waitangi, during which those present expressed the opinion that the flag should not be amongst those to be considered as New Zealand's potential new flag.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 12

HŌNE HEKE CHOPPED DOWN THE KORORĀREKA FLAGPOLE BECAUSE HE OPPOSED BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY OVER AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

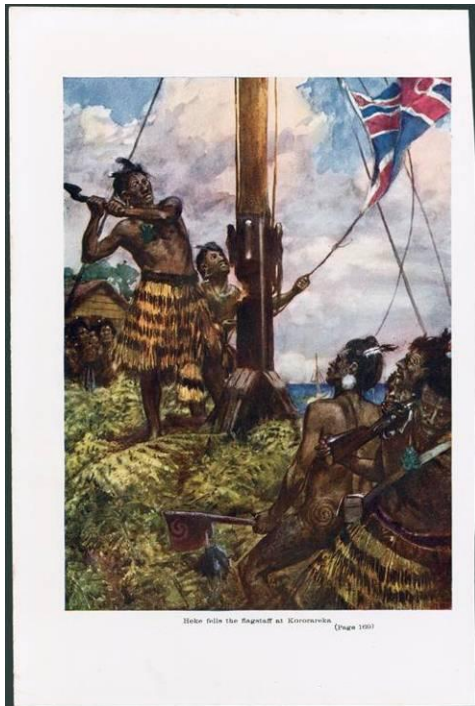


Figure 14: McCormick, Arthur David, 1860-1943. McCormick, Arthur David, 1860-1943 :Heke falls the flagstaff at Kororareka. Ref: A-004-037. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22729988>

Between 1844 and 1845 the flagpole flying the Union Jack at Maiki Hill, Kororāreka (Russell), was chopped down four times. Although Ngā Puhi chief Hōne Heke is often credited with cutting down the pole each time, his ally Te Haratua, rangatira of Pakaraka, was the person who brought the pole down the first time, albeit with Heke's knowledge and approval. Heke cut the pole down the next three times.

Heke later wrote to Governor Robert Fitzroy explaining that he wanted the pole down because the pole belonged to him, because the Pākehā who erected it had not paid him for the timber, and because the flagpole should be flying the native flag (i.e., the United Tribes flag). Further correspondence to Fitzroy, considered to be from Heke, presented an additional explanation: 'If

Pomare thinks proper to erect a flagstaff at Maiki, only as a signal for vessels, I have no objection: - but if it is for an ensign of Sovereignty of the Queen I will never submit to the flag!'²⁴

Historian Lindsay Buick's account of the origin of the flagstaff records that the kauri spar forming the pole had come from land owned by Heke and that he gave it to British Resident Busby, who erected it outside his residence at Waitangi and flew the United Tribes flag from it.²⁵ Heke was a signatory to the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. However, a number of incidents after it, which included the British authorities taking the flagstaff down, erecting it on Maiki Hill, and stringing up the Union Jack, led to Heke becoming suspicious of and then opposed to British motives. The Union Jack became a symbol of his disenchantment.

Not all Ngā Puhi shared Heke's sentiments towards the Union Jack. Rangatira Tamati Waka Nene wrote to Fitzroy in September 1844: 'If the flagstaff is cut down again we will fight for it ... We are of one tribe, and we will fight for the staff and for our Governor.'²⁶ Among those who agreed with Nene was another rangatira, Paikea from Kaipara, who requested a Union Jack 'as a badge or sign'. Despite Nene's expressed allegiance, he did question why the British authorities would not let Māori fly their own national flag.

The dispute over the flagpole sparked the outbreak of war in the north. British colonial forces saw Heke's action as a threat to British authority, and on the night after Heke cut the pole down for the fourth time (on 11 March 1845), patrolling colonial soldiers attacked Heke's men. The fight spilled over into Kororāreka, from where the British fled to their ships. They then shelled the town, which caught fire, so destroying it.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 13

THE FLAGSTAFF AT RUSSELL HAS BEEN RE-ERECTED AND DAMAGED SEVERAL TIMES SINCE 1845

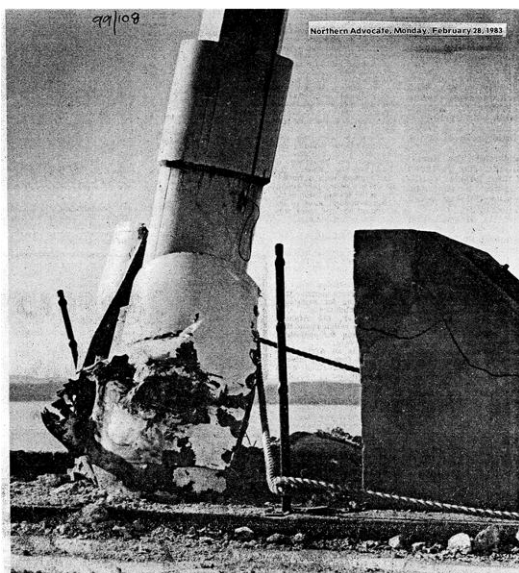


Figure 15: The base of the flagstaff after the 1983 explosion, Northern Advocate. Monday, February 28, 1983

After the Battle of Kororāreka (Russell) in 1845, Te Maiki, the hill above the township, remained bereft of its flagpole. In 1858 a group of Māori men voluntarily re-erected the flagstaff on the hill. They gave the flagpole the name Te Whakakotahitanga (at one with the Queen). The previous year, Maihi Paraone Kawiti had felled the kauri spar forming the pole. Several hundred men, said to represent 'every section of the Māori tribes',²⁷ carried the spar to Kororāreka and up Maiki Hill.

The man who apparently first suggested re-erecting the flagstaff was rangatira Te Ruki Kawiti, of Ngāti Hine. Kawiti fought alongside Hōne Heke in the battles that erupted after the fourth cutting down of the Maiki Hill flagstaff and continued on until 1846. In time, after talking with missionary Henry Williams, Kawiti decided that re-erecting the flagpole would be an act of reconciliation. However, he probably realised that the symbolism inherent in men who had fought the colonial troops raising a new flagstaff would not be lost on the British. He discussed the idea with Heke, who agreed to re-establish the pole.

Both Kawiti and Heke died before the idea could be made a reality, and it fell to Kawiti's son, Maihi Paraone Kawiti, to honour his father's wishes.²⁸ Maihi Paraone was a missionary teacher at Mangakahia and supported te ture (the law) and te whakapona (the gospel). As of January 1858, Te Maiki once again sported a flagstaff. Since that time, however there have been several more attempts to bring down the flagstaff. On the eve of Waitangi Day 1954, four naval ratings, all of whom

were drunk, almost managed to cut the flagstaff down.²⁹ In 1974, when Queen Elizabeth II visited Waitangi, a protestor attached an explosive device to the flagpole that failed to detonate.³⁰ Four years later, lightning shattered the top section of the pole. Then, in 1981, the flagstaff was chopped down twice. The first instance appears to have been the work of people protesting the then Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand. Two years later, sticks of gelignite were attached to the flagpole's base. Although the explosion was heard three kilometres away, it did not bring the pole fully down, and a note scribbled at the bottom of the pole was still decipherable. It read: 'The Treaty is a Fraud.'³¹ Since that time, the flagstaff has been extensively repaired and strengthened with a fibreglass cap.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 14

IN 1857 MĀORI DEBATED ALLIEGANCE TO THE UNION JACK



Figure 16: Angas, George French, 1822-1886 :Te Werowero, or Potatau the principal chief of all Waikato. Te Waru, principal chief of the Nga Ti Apakura tribe. Te Pakaru, principal chief of the Nga Ti Maniapoto tribe. *The New Zealanders Illustrated*. London, Thomas McLean, 1847.. Ref: PUBL-0014-44. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In May 1857, leaders of and delegates from various central North Island Māori iwi, including Tainui, held a rūnanga hui at Paetai, near Rangiriri. They had come together to discuss the merits of having a Māori king.³² Calls for such a role had begun earlier in the 1850s, and the endeavour to establish it came to be known as Kīngitanga or the Māori King Movement. The thinking behind the movement was that a Māori king would help unify all Māori at a time when they were losing their lands to

the rapidly growing European population.

During the hui, Kīngitanga supporters marched under and then raised a flag they had designed some time previously for whomever agreed to be king. The flag was white with a red border and two crosses. The marchers also carried a United Tribes of New Zealand flag. Then, over a hill, came Waata Kukutai, rangatira of Ngāti Tipa of Waikato, leading a contingent marching under the Union Jack. Although opposed to European acquisition of Maori land, Kukutai was not in favour of kingship, preferring instead a system of magistrates, laws and a form of rūnanga or council.

Kukutai and his followers placed the Union Jack opposite the flags of the Kīngitanga supporters, at which point Wiremu Naera of Ngāti Mahanga and a supporter of the British Crown, pointed to the newly designed red and white flag and said: 'Why do you bring that new flag here? There is trouble in it. I can't see my way clear. But I know that there is trouble in that flag. I am content with the old one. It is seen all over the world, and it belongs to me. I get some of its honour!'³³

Te Waharoa from Ngāti Hauā answered him by saying: 'I want order and laws. The King could give us these better than the Governor; for the Governor has never done anything except when a Pakeha is killed; he lets us kill each other and fight. A King would stop these evils. However, if you don't like the King, pull down the flag. Let Rewi pull it down if you wish.'³⁴ As soon as Te Waharoa said these words, Rewi Maniapoto, a Ngāti Maniapoto leader, took the king's flag and threw it in front of the Union Jack in order to demonstrate the colonial suppression he believed Māori were consenting to by honouring the Union Jack.

The next day, the powerful and elderly Waikato chief Te Wherowhero arrived at Paetai. He was one of the men proposed as a candidate for the kingship, and he had agreed to accept the title the previous month (April). In June 1858, his coronation took place at Ngāruawāhia. Sometime afterwards, he adopted the name Pōtatau. When Te Wherowhero joined the throng at Paetai, the Kīngitanga supporters re-erected the king's flag.

Towards the end of the hui, Kukutai again paraded the Union Jack: [He] rang a bell, and proclaimed that all who acknowledged allegiance to, and intended to support that flag, should follow him ... All lower Waikato and the sea coast to Kawhia mustered. They moved in procession over the hill, passed resolutions, and embodied them in a letter to the Governor.'³⁵ The following day, the Kīngitanga supporters despatched the king's flag 'to the tribes of the South of New Zealand, to convene a larger meeting, and induce Pōtatau to accept the office, or to appoint someone else.'³⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 15

KĪNGITANGA AND KOTAHITANGA MOVEMENTS CREATED THEIR OWN FLAGS

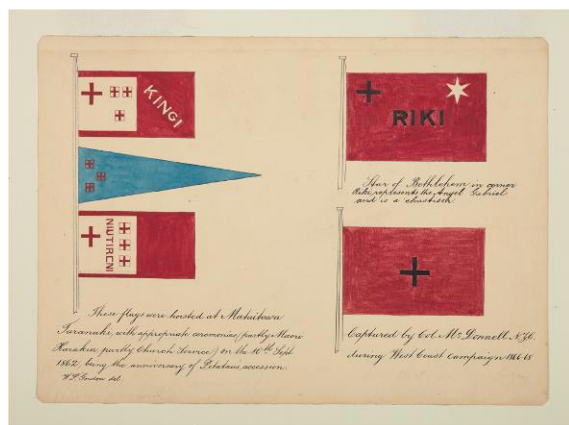


Figure 17: Photographer or creator: Gordon, W. F. Title: Three flags hoisted at Matakōwhiri, Taranaki, 1862
Courtesy of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa
Tongarewa Registration number: 1992-0035-1631/4A

When Māori appointed their first king, Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, in June 1858, they hoisted three flags that featured the words Kīngi (King) and Niu Tirenī (New Zealand).³⁷ The flag designed expressly for Pōtatau was the one with Niu Tirenī on it. It also contained three symbols, said to represent Aotearoa's three main islands. Support for the flag was not immediate. In May 1860, of the 350 Māori attending a hui held at Ōtaki, half opposed hoisting it and half were in favour of the action.

When Tāwhiao, of Ngāti Mahuta, succeeded Pōtatau, his subjects designed a blue and yellow flag for him. The flag had on it three star-like figures, again denoting New Zealand's three main islands. The flag designed for Tāwhiao's successor and son, King Mahuta, was 5.2 metres by 2.4 metres wide. It had a white background and was rich with symbols: the Tainui waka, the rainbow god Uenuku, Matariki (the Pleiades constellation), a cross, a crescent moon and the sun. Today, in the twenty-first century, the flag of the Māori King is raised at poukai (annual visits to marae affiliated to Kīngitanga) and at koroneihana (coronation) celebrations.

Another independent Māori movement, the Kotahitanga, or Māori Parliament, opened its first session at Waipatu Marae, Hastings, in 1893. Those assembled flew a flag containing depictions of the North and South Islands straddled by Māui, the demi-god who fished up the North Island. In 1897 at Papawai, as visitors made their way to the Kotahitanga Parliament, a number of flags greeted them. Hoisted on a pole was the 'Treaty of Waitangi flag' (probably the United Tribes of New Zealand Flag). Below it was the Rongopai flag, a flag bearing a cross and the words 'Rongo Pai' (good luck), first flown by missionaries at Te Waimate mission, founded in 1831.

Third down was the 'Māui flag', and fourth the flag of Pāora Pōtangaroa, a Wairarapa prophet. The Union Jack was also flown. In addition, the visitors were welcomed onto the marae by a haka pōwhiri from a group waving an 'English flag' in their hands.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 16

MĀORI PROPHETS WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE BRITISH IN THE NEW ZEALAND WARS HAD THEIR OWN FLAGS



Figure 18: Mair, Gilbert, 1843-1923: Te Kooti's flag, Te Wepu [1921?]. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

Te Ua Haumēne was the leader of the Pai Mārire faith, followers of which were sometimes known as Hauhau.³⁸ His flag, Kēnana (Canaan), demonstrated his belief that Māori and Jews are related. The five apostles of the movement, who

included Tītokowaru (Ngāti Ruanui) and Topia Tūroa (Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi), each had his own flag.

The standard flag of Pai Mārire, at almost 7.0 metres long by 3.7 metres high, is reputed to be the largest flag ever flown in New Zealand. It depicts a life-size image of Te Matairenga, the Māori god of war. Central to Hauhau ceremonies was the use of the niu (news) pole. Followers of the faith erected the nine-metre high staff in the middle of an open space and flew three flags from it. The first of these, Riki, was a long red pennant with a white cross, and was regarded as the war flag. The second flag was the flag of the prophet, apostle or priest conducting the ceremony, and the third was Ruru, another red pennant. Broader than Riki and featuring a St Andrew's cross and another symbol, it was deemed the flag of peace. The relative positions of Riki and Ruru at a meeting indicated whether the meeting was peaceful or not.

Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Tūruki (Ngāti Maru), founder of another Māori religious movement, Ringatū, believed in the power of flags and changed their design depending on his success in battle. His most famous flag was Te Wepu (the whip), which measured 15.8 metres by 1.2 metres. Nuns at Greenmeadows Mission School made it for Ngāti Kahungunu chiefs, but Te Kooti captured it from them in 1868 and held it until 1870, when Captain Gilbert Mair seized it at Rotorua. Te Kooti fought many battles, and had two other of his flags seized at Te Pōrere and Tāpapa, north of Putaruru, towards the end of the New Zealand Wars. Some 2,250 Māori lost their

lives fighting with and against the British and colonial forces during these wars; 560 British lost their lives.³⁹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 17

MĀORI WHO SIDED WITH THE BRITISH WERE GIFTED FLAGS

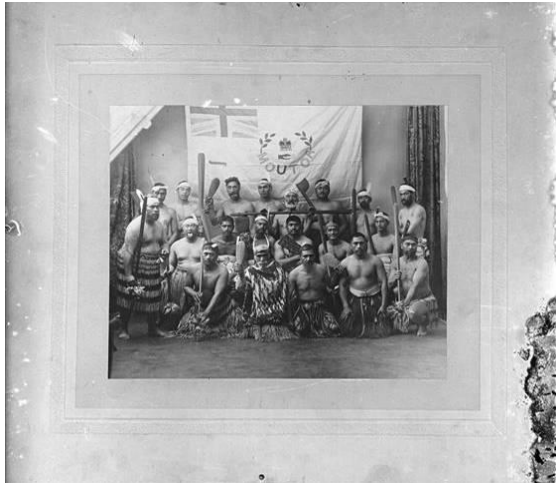


Figure 19: Maori men alongside a Moutoa flag. Tourist and Publicity. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

Some Māori chose to fight alongside the British during the New Zealand Wars and were gifted flags for their efforts.⁴⁰

In 1865 the colonial forces gave Mete Kīngi Te Rangi Paetahi, chief of Ngāti Poutama of Whanganui, a silk flag known as the Moutoa flag. He had led a contingent of Whanganui Māori, who drove a war party of Hauhau from Moutoa Island in May 1864, saving the Whanganui settlers from attack. The cost of the flag was £20, and Pākehā women from

Whanganui, Rangitīkei and Manawatū came together to create it. It has the Union Jack in the upper corner and a gilt crown in the centre, below which are two clasped hands, Pākehā and Māori, with the word Moutoa.

Another flag gifted to Māori for their role in fighting for the British was the flag Tangiharuru from the Urewera district. Named after a great Waikato chief who took a large portion of Te Urewera, the flag is a British ensign and is riddled with bullet holes. Some Māori believed that the flag possessed powers and so kept thirty of their men safe when they were attacked by over 1000 Hauhau soldiers before the Europeans arrived to assist with the fighting.

In the 1860s, Queen Victoria presented a flag called Te Rakau i Mataahu to Ngāti Porou military leader Rāpata Wahawaha. In 1901 Ngāti Tūwharetoa leader Te Heuheu sent a flag to King Edward VII on behalf of Māori tribes, which the king accepted and then returned to him. The following year the Prince of Wales forwarded a Union Jack to the New Zealand governor to present to the Te Arawa people in recognition of their loyalty. The Te Arawa people already possessed a Union Jack received from the Duke of Edinburgh in 1870.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 18

AT TIMES THE GOVERNMENT HAS GIFTED MĀORI A DEFACED NEW ZEALAND RED ENSIGN WHEN A NEW MARAE OPENS



Figure 20: Morris, Guy Clayton, 1868-1918. Maori reception during the tour of the Prince of Wales, Arawa Park, Rotorua. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In a practice that dates back to the time of Governor George Grey, the government has provided Māori with the New Zealand Red Ensign, a flag normally reserved for merchant shipping, upon the opening of a new marae.⁴¹ The practice fell into abeyance during the nineteenth century but was resurrected at the turn of the twentieth century. The Minister of Māori Affairs received a query from the Department of Māori Affairs relating to a request for a red ensign from Ngāti Pāhauwera at Mohaka.

The under-secretary of the department wrote:

At some time subsequently it became the practice for the Governor to present flags to Māori chiefs and since 1852 the cost has been paid for from the Civil List (Māori Purposes) fund which was formerly administered by the Governor independently of Parliament. I understand that Queen Victoria was responsible for originating the custom and that the Māori tribes are the only people entitled to fly a red ensign apart from merchant shipping companies.⁴²

Asked to give a response on the matter, the Department of Internal Affairs observed: 'It is an almost universal custom for the red ensign to be flown at all tribal gatherings—and draped over the coffin of a deceased ex-serviceman of the tribe. I do not think it is for us to interfere in this well-established custom.'⁴³ The legislation that governs the red ensign, the Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981, allows for Māori to receive a 'defaced' New Zealand red ensign with the words of the marae, hapū, iwi or waka upon the flag in white lettering. A defaced flag is an existing flag to which something is added, such as words or a symbol.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 19



Figure 21: Tino Rangatiratanga flag, image courtesy of Ministry for Culture and Heritage

IN 2009 MĀORI SELECTED THE TINO RANGATIRATANGA FLAG TO REPRESENT THEM

In January 2009, following suggestions from the Māori organisation Te Ata Tino Toa, the Minister of Māori Affairs, Dr Pita Sharples, called for a Māori flag to be flown from the Auckland Harbour Bridge.⁴⁴ Prime Minister John Key endorsed Dr Sharples' proposal,

stating that if Māori agreed, he would support a Māori flag being flown along with the current New Zealand flag.

In 2009 Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development) organised a nationwide roadshow of 21 public hui, during which Māori could decide what flag would represent them. The four options provided were the United Tribes of New Zealand Flag, the New Zealand Red Ensign, the current New Zealand flag, and the Tino Rangatiratanga flag. The ministry received over 1,200 submissions; the preferred option was Tino Rangatiratanga (80.1%); the least preferred was the current New Zealand flag. In line with the wishes of Māori, Tino Rangatiratanga was not legislated for but was recorded as the preferred national Māori flag in the government's cabinet minutes of 14 December 2009.

Two decades earlier (in 1989), Tino Rangatiratanga was judged the winner of a competition held by Northland-based group Te Kawariki, which then unveiled the flag at Waitangi during the sesquicentenary celebrations of the signing of te Tiriti o Waitangi. The black on the flag black represents Te Korekore, the realm of potential and the male element; the white represents Te Ao Mārama, the realm of being; and the red represents Te Whei Ao, the realm of coming into being and the female element Papatūānuku. The koru (the unfurling fern shape) represents the unfolding of new life and hope for the future. It was decided that the Tino Rangatiratanga design would not be included in the long list of flags selected by the Flag

Consideration Panel in accordance with the expressed wishes of the whānau of Te Kawariki following a hui held in Whangarei in 2015.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 20

NGĀTI WHAKAUE KAUMĀTUA SUPPORTS KEEPING THE CURRENT FLAG

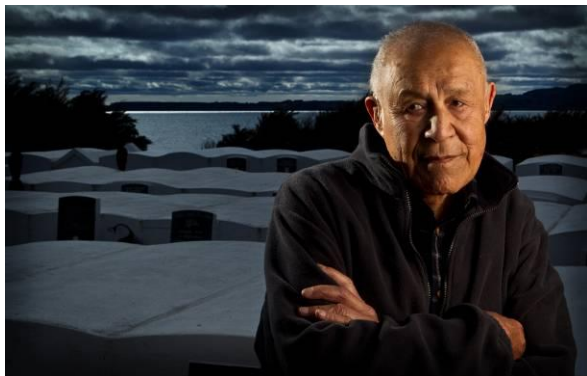


Figure 22: Pihopa Kingi, Image courtesy of Newspix NZ

When the Flag Consideration Panel held a hui at Ohinemutu Marae in Rotorua, Te Arawa kaumātua Pihopa Kingi spoke against changing the New Zealand flag. Kingi wrote to the prime minister to state that only the current New Zealand flag will fly at Ngāti Whakaue Marae and at Muriuika War Cemetery.⁴⁵

Kingi also sent his letter to a wide network of iwi members, none of whom objected to what he said. Kingi wrote: ‘It is important that you are made aware of the authority granted by Queen Victoria to Te Arawa to fly the Royal Ensign on their marae. This honour was bestowed soon after the Land Wars in the 1860s as a personal token of appreciation and gratitude to Te Arawa who formed a squad of men under the captaincy of Gilbert Mair to pursue Te Kooti.’⁴⁶

The flags of Te Arawa now hang at St Faith’s Church at Ohinemutu. Speaking to the *Rotorua Daily Post* in September 2015, Kingi noted: ‘Flags are ensigns that represent a country, especially in warfare. That’s why the Union Jack is so important to Ngati Whakaue in particular.’⁴⁷

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION THREE: THE UNION JACK

INTRODUCTION



Figure 23: 'Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, 4-7630'

The Union Jack became the second official New Zealand flag after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. In representing the United Kingdom, the flag also represented the largest formal kingdom the world had ever known—the British Empire, of which New Zealand was a part as a colony.

Although the current New Zealand flag was legislated for in 1902, the Union Jack continued to take pride of place in New Zealand communities, as evident in correspondence from the Mosgiel Jaycees to the Secretary of Internal Affairs in 1964. They wrote: 'We feel there is an appalling ignorance regarding our flag ... We have noticed that many New Zealand organisations persist in flying the Union Flag ... As we have our own flag, surely we should all use it; no disrespect is intended to the Mother Country as the Union flag is incorporated into our own ensign.'⁴⁸ The following year the Department of Internal Affairs released its publication *The New Zealand Ensign*. The department stated that it was now official government policy for the current New Zealand flag to be flown in the superior position to the Union Jack.

During this same period, Britain attempted to join the EEC and was eventually successful in 1973. With this development threatening ease of trade between Britain and members of the British Commonwealth, many former British colonies and dominions chose to sever ties with Britain in various ways, one of which was to erase the Union Jack from their flags and replace it with another icon that reflected the heritage of their respective country.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 21

THE UNION JACK BECAME THE SECOND OFFICIAL FLAG OF NEW ZEALAND IN 1840



Figure 24: King, Marcus, 1891-1983 :[The signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, February 6th, 1840]. 1938. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

The Union Jack became New Zealand's second official flag after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on 6 February 1840. The flag was present at the signing of the Treaty. Officials draped it over the table in the marquee and then placed the Treaty document on it so that representatives of the British Crown and Māori rangatira could sign it.

Missionary Reverend William Colenso was present at the event and later recorded what happened during it. Describing the interior of the marquee, he wrote: 'Around the sides of the tent were the whites, residents and settlers, by far the greater part being very respectfully dressed, and outside of them, against the walls of the tent were flags of different colours, which gave a charming air of liveliness to the whole, the table being covered by the vivid colours of the Union Jack.'⁴⁹ The Union Jack was also evident at the final signing of the Treaty in the South Island at Horikaka Pā, Horahorakakahu Island, Te Whanganui (Port Underwood). Major Thomas Bunbury, charged with carrying the Treaty south so that South Island chiefs could sign it, hoisted the flag above proceedings at the pā, after which the HMS *Herald* provided a twenty-one-gun salute.⁵⁰

In 1927 the New Zealand Naval Secretary wrote this observation:

[T]he Union Jack was ordained to be the National Emblem by proclamation, not by Act of Parliament, thus it seems to me to be correct to assume that the right to appoint a flag to be the National Emblem flows from the prerogative of the Crown. The Union Jack having been appointed to be the National Emblem before New Zealand became a self-governing colony it is reasonable to assume that until the Dominion Government itself legislated for some other Emblem the Union Flag was the Dominion National Flag and would have been flown on all occasions when National Flags are flown on shore.⁵¹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 22

THE UNION JACK REPRESENTS THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE



The national flag of the United Kingdom is referred to as either the Union Jack or the Union Flag.⁵² During the 1270s St George was anointed as the patron saint of England, and the heraldic cross chosen to represent him was a red cross on a white background.

Figure 25: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

After James VI of Scotland succeeded to the English throne in 1603 (and so became James 1 of that country), the saltire (the white diagonal cross on blue representing the patron saint of Scotland, St Andrew) was added to the heraldic representation of St George. In 1801, after the Act of Union with England (Wales), Scotland and Ireland, another cross was added to the flag. This cross was a diagonal red one on a white background, and it represented the patron saint of Ireland, St Patrick. The Welsh flag of St David does not appear on the flag because Wales united with England prior to 1606 and so was not seen as a separate principality. In 1801 government ordered that the flag was only to be used on the English monarch's castles and forts.

Today, the Union Jack is used to represent the United Kingdom. Some call the flag the Union Flag rather than the more popular Union Jack. There are several theories as to the inclusion of the word 'Jack'. The most popular theory is that the word was used before 1600 to describe a small flag flown from the small mast located at the bowsprit of a ship; by 1627 a small version of the flag was being flown in this position. Other theories include the notion that the word derives from the 'jacket' of the English and Scottish soldiers or that it came from the name of James I, who originated the first union in 1603.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 23

IF SCOTLAND VOTES FOR INDEPENDENCE, THE UNION JACK MIGHT CHANGE



Figure 26: Dailymail.co.uk, 13 January 2012, By Emily Allen

In September 2014 Scotland held a referendum that asked Scottish voters if Scotland should declare independence from the United Kingdom. The lead-up to the referendum created a debate in Britain, Australia and New Zealand about the potential implications for the Union Jack if Scotland did vote for

independence. The Union Jack consists of the flags of England, Scotland and Ireland, so if Scotland became independent, would the St Andrew's Cross (Scotland's emblem on the flag) have to be removed?

Vexillologists (flag experts) in Britain made a number of proposals as to what might be done if Scotland went ahead with independence. One thought was to represent Wales on the flag, given it is only indirectly represented on the Union Jack. Should this happen, the cross (yellow on a black field) representing Wales' patron saint, St David, could be added to the flag.⁵³ Much of the debate, however, centred on the legality of changing the flag, as the UK has no Act governing it. The Constitution Society, an organisation that promotes public understanding of the British constitution, pointed out that issues relating to flag change constantly arise and are far more common than implications arising out of events such as political independence.⁵⁴ In the end, the issue about taking Scotland out of the flag was resolved when the Scottish people voted against independence. It has been suggested by some however, that Scotland may revisit the question of independence in another decade.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 24

BRITISH AUTHORITIES HOISTED THE UNION JACK IN WELLINGTON IN 1840 TO SIGNAL BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY OVER NEW ZEALAND



Figure 27: Part of Lambton Harbour, in Port Nicholson, New Zealand, 1841, by Major Charles Heaphy VC. Gift of Horace Fildes, 1937. Te Papa (1992-0035-1780)

Governor William Hobson's proclamation of sovereignty over the North Island by right of cession and over the South and Stewart Islands by right of discovery on 21 May 1840 occurred in response to the actions of the New Zealand Company at Port Nicholson (Wellington).

In September 1839, Colonel William Wakefield, representing the company, had arrived at Port Nicholson and hoisted the United Tribes of New Zealand Flag to a 21-

gun salute from the barque *Tory*⁵⁵ The following year, the company, aware of the Treaty of Waitangi negotiations in the first months of 1840, introduced a form of government from 2 March and claimed their authority had come from local chiefs. Hobson was furious, stating that the power of government was only a matter for the British Crown. Colonial Secretary Willoughby Shortland, accompanied by troops and mounted police, took the flag down, read Hobson's proclamation of sovereignty, and demanded allegiance to the Crown. William Wakefield's brother, Edward Gibbon Wakefield later gave a vivid description of what happened at this time.

The first measure of the royalist forces was to send a man on shore ... to pull down all the New Zealand flags which he might find hoisted ... The man who performed this bold deed at *Pitone* [Petone] assumed, while he did it, the most ridiculous appearance of authority ... As he strode up to the flagstaff near Colonel Wakefield's house, on which a rather ragged New Zealand flag was hung, he threw disdainful and yet cautious glances around him ... at length he accomplished his gallant undertaking, and proceeded with a flourish to extend the sovereignty of England over the flags which adorned the snoring grog shops along the beach.⁵⁶

The next day, Shortland disembarked at Thorndon, hoisted the Union Jack and proclaimed Queen Victoria as New Zealand's sovereign.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 25

EVERY MEMBER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE CAN FLY THE UNION JACK ON LAND



Figure 28: Robert Offley
Ashburton Crewe-Milnes, 1st
Marquess of Crewe

In 1922 the official secretary of Government House in Auckland wrote to New Zealand's solicitor-general seeking advice on flying the Union Jack. 'According to Section 3 (3) of the Shipping and Seamen Act, 1908,' he wrote, 'the New Zealand Ensign is the recognised flag of New Zealand for general use on shore within New Zealand, but more often than not one sees the Union Jack on flag poles of such buildings as Town Halls. It would probably be unwise to discourage the flying of the Union Jack in cases where a desire to use it is expressed'.⁵⁷ In reply, the solicitor-general said that in an effort to provide clarification, he referred to a statement made in the British House of Lords. According to the Earl of Crewe, 'The Union Jack may be flown on land by every citizen in the British Empire, as well as [on] Government buildings.'⁵⁸ The solicitor-general concluded from this statement that the flag could be flown within New Zealand and on Government buildings in New Zealand and therefore Section 3 of the 1908 Act does not conflict with the rule laid down by the Earl of Crewe.

In 1937 Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs Joseph Heenan responded to an inquiry raised by the editor of the *Dominion Post*: Could the Union Jack, as per the Earl of Crewe's words, indeed be flown by every citizen of the British Empire on land?⁵⁹ The issue had re-occurred at this time because the 1937 coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth had generated considerable press about the correct way to fly the Union Jack. The matter came to light again when the national manager of the National Mutual Life Insurance Association of Australasia wrote to the Department of Internal Affairs in 1952 asking what flags association members could fly. 'We notice today, for instance, that some buildings are flying Union Jacks and some New Zealand Ensigns.'⁶⁰ The secretary replied that it could be either the Union Jack or the New Zealand ensign. He noted, however, that if a person or firm held a New Zealand ensign, the department would prefer that the ensign be flown.⁶¹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 26

NEW ZEALAND SOLDIERS SANG ABOUT THE UNION JACK

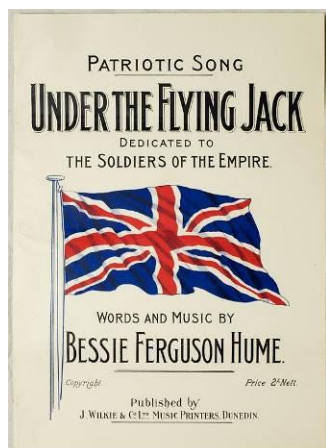


Figure 29: Archives New Zealand AEGA 18982, PC4/837, R23246132 (Copyright File - Under the Flying Jack)

As early as the South African (Boer) War of 1899 to 1902, New Zealand soldiers have been singing about the Union Jack. The following lyrics are from a popular song of the era titled *Boys of the Southern Cross*:

We've heard about your trouble, Tom,
In rousting out the Boer;
You shall not fight out there alone,
Amid the cannon's roar,
The blood that stirred our noble sires
To build up England's Fame,
Re-kindles in Colonial sons
Their prestige to maintain. For –
We are the boys of the Southern Cross
Our stars shine on our flags –
Emblazoned with the Union Jack,
To show we're Empire lads.⁶²

Although the reference to the flag is clearly the current New Zealand flag, the soldiers' mention of the Union Jack illustrates the men's allegiance to the British Empire. Other popular songs of the time were *One Flag, One Speech, One Empire*, dedicated to the then New Zealand governor, the Earl of Ranfurly,⁶³ and *For Their Queen and Union Jack*.

During World War I, songs popular with the New Zealand troops included *Under the Flying Jack*, *Sons of the Motherland*, *British, Every One!* and *Britannia's Southern Sons*. Army Council instructions at the conclusion of World War I required His Majesty the King to approve a silk Union Flag 'to each Battalion of overseas troops'.⁶⁴ World War II saw the composition of such songs as *Our Union Jack*, *Old England: Our Mother Country* and *The British Empire*.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 27

SIR EDMUND HILLARY FLEW THE UNION JACK AT THE TOP OF MT EVEREST



Figure 30: Edmund Hillary (R) and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay (L) at London's Heathrow airport on their arrival from the expedition. Image source unknown.

Sir Edmund Hillary flew the Union Jack when he, along with Tenzing Norgay, completed the first successful ascent of Mount Everest on 29 May 1953.⁶⁵ He and Norgay also raised two other flags—the United Nations and Nepalese flags.

Hillary was part of the British Mount Everest Expedition led by the British colonel, John Hunt. News of Hillary and Norgay's deed were conveyed to London in time for the world to be notified on the morning of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II (2 June 1953). Eleven of the fifteen-strong mountaineering party that aided Hillary were from the United Kingdom and two were from New Zealand (Hillary and George Lowe), with Norgay and Sherpa Annullu having come from Nepal.

British newspaper the *Daily Express* reported: 'Everest was conquered by a New Zealander. What could be more joyfully appropriate than such a reminder that the spirit of old Britain has spread through the whole of the young Commonwealth?'⁶⁶ Keith Holyoake, who became New Zealand's prime minister for three months in 1957 and between 1960 and 1972, remarked that Hillary 'has put the British race and New Zealand at the top of the world. And what a magnificent coronation present for the Queen.'⁶⁷

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 28

THE UNION JACK REPRESENTS NEW ZEALAND'S DEMOCRACY, WHICH ORIGINATED IN BRITAIN



Figure 31: Courtesy of Parliamentary Library

New Zealand's move to independence from Britain as a democracy in her own right has been an evolving one. Britain's legal jurisdiction over the country was first exercised from Australia. In 1823 the British government established a New South Wales parliament that had as its foundation a legislative council and a supreme court.⁶⁸ From

1788 until that time, the colony of New South Wales had been a penal colony made up of convicts, soldiers and their wives.⁶⁹ On 15 June 1839, British authorities extended New South Wales' jurisdiction to New Zealand.⁷⁰

Under this arrangement, the first governor of New Zealand was George Gipps. He, in turn, delegated authority to William Hobson, who was officially appointed Lieutenant Governor of New Zealand on 30 July 1839.⁷¹ New Zealand remained under the jurisdiction of New South Wales until Britain declared the country a separate colony on 16 November 1840, following the assertion of British sovereignty under the Treaty of Waitangi.⁷²

As a colony, New Zealand over time adopted the same system of governance as Britain's.⁷³ The country was ruled by governors who reported to the Colonial Office in England, but who also received advice from New Zealand's appointed executive and legislative councils. In 1852 the British Parliament passed the New Zealand Constitution Act, which meant New Zealand could now have an elected House of Representatives and an appointed Legislative Council. On 26 September 1907, the Colony of New Zealand became the Dominion of New Zealand. The name change had little practical effect, as New Zealand was neither less nor more independent from Britain than previously. However, the change did signal a significant shift in New Zealanders' perceptions of their country as a democratic nation in its own right, a shift that has continued to evolve to the present day.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 29

OFFICIALLY, THE UNION JACK WAS NEW ZEALAND'S SUPERIOR FLAG UNTIL 1965



Figure 32: Waitangi flagpole flying Union Jack. Whites Aviation Ltd :Photographs. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

During the early 1960s, an increase in queries to the Department of Internal Affairs about correct use of the Union Jack and the New Zealand flag led to W. A. Glue, Executive Officer of the Historical Publications Branch of Internal Affairs, researching and publishing a booklet titled *The New Zealand Ensign*.

Before the booklet was published in 1965, Glue contacted higher authorities in the department about the place of honour accorded to the Union Jack whenever it and the New Zealand ensign were flown together. Glue argued that giving the Union Jack precedence should continue based on the Department of Internal Affairs' rulings of 1926, 1947 and 1958, to cite but a few.

I submit that that courtesy should be continued; a change would provoke controversy. It might please a few rugged 'nationalists', but I think most New Zealanders (if they notice it at all) would like to see the courtesy continued. It is a mark of respect for the 'seniority' of the Union Jack and a mild reminder of our ties within the Commonwealth.⁷⁴

The Deputy-Secretary and the Secretary of Internal Affairs disagreed, however, with Glue's position. In his reply to Glue, Department of Internal Affairs Administrator E. T. O'Connor, stated:

By tradition in New Zealand the Union Jack has always been given precedence over the New Zealand Ensign ... The changing status of Commonwealth countries ... [means that] most now have their own national flag taking precedence over all other flags, and I feel the same should apply in New Zealand ... No publicity should be given, however, to the changeover.⁷⁵

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 30

NEARLY ALL FORMER BRITISH COLONIES REMOVED THE UNION JACK FROM THEIR FLAG WHEN BRITAIN WANTED TO JOIN THE EEC



Fifty-three independent nations belong to the British Commonwealth.⁷⁶ Four of these countries have never had the Union Jack on their flag, forty-four have removed the Union Jack from their flags, and Fiji is in the process of changing its flag, which will take the number to forty-five. No former British colony from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean or the Americas has the Union Jack on their flag any longer.

Figure 33: Image by Flag Consideration Panel The vast majority of British Commonwealth countries changed their flag during the 1960s when Britain attempted to join the EEC in order to secure trade benefits (France twice blocked Britain’s efforts in this regard). In 1973 the EEC finally accepted Britain as a member, after which New Zealand exports to the United Kingdom dropped dramatically. ‘There was no shadow of a doubt that the British application of 1961 [to join the EEC] presented a threat to New Zealand trade of the gravest dimensions. Prime Minister Holyoake summed it up when he said that the bid to join “raises questions probably the most serious New Zealand has had to face in times of peace”.’⁷⁷

However, despite calls from various New Zealanders to have the Union Jack erased from the New Zealand flag, this symbol has continued to feature on it. The only other independent Commonwealth Countries that still have the Union Jack on their national flags are Australia and Tuvalu, which, like New Zealand, are countries located in the Pacific Ocean.

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION FOUR: CREATING THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG

INTRODUCTION



Figure 34: Maori prisoners with soldiers, Rutland Stockade, Queen's Park, Wanganui. Harding, William James, 1826-1899 :Negatives of Wanganui district. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

The origins of the current New Zealand flag can be traced to the New Zealand Wars. British authorities, worried about the growing calls from Australia and New Zealand to have an increased British naval presence in local waters, passed the British Colonial Naval Defence Act in 1865. The British Admiralty then advised British colonies that if they possessed vessels governed by the Act, they must fly the Royal Navy Blue Ensign but that they must also include on the flag the seal or badge of the colony.

New Zealand-based government officials debated this matter, and in 1867 decided to have a flag with 'NZ' on the fly of the flag, that is, the half of the flag farthest from the flagpole. Two years later, New Zealand Governor Sir George Ferguson Bowen revisited the ensign after receiving a circular from Britain that asked for consistency between the governor's flag and the flag representing the various colonial marine fleets. Bowen approached British Lieutenant Albert Hastings Markham, who suggested inserting the Southern Cross on the fly of the flag, a proposal that was met with Bowen's approval.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 31

THE NEW ZEALAND WARS LED TO A JURISDICTIONAL DILEMMA OVER WHICH FLAGS TO FLY ON NEW ZEALAND VESSELS



Figure 35: By GPS 56 from New Zealand (Gun Turret at Mercer,NZ.) CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

During the War in the Waikato (1863–1864), British colonial forces realised they needed to have better access to a naval fleet if they were to combat Māori, and this matter had an eventual bearing on the flags flown on New Zealand boats and ships. The New Zealand governor at the time, George Grey, wanted British authorities to establish a naval station in New Zealand, rather than in Australia,

as was the case at the time.⁷⁸ The colonies of Victoria and New South Wales were also petitioning the Home Secretary of British Colonies for their own naval fleet to patrol their own harbours.⁷⁹

According to British historian Ian Stafford:

The government of New Zealand, first in 1846 and again in the 1860s war against Maori tribes, obtained armed river-vessels to pursue the war up the Waikato River; they were however commanded by Royal Navy officers. This fudged their status internationally but they were under local and not Admiralty control. At the same time, an armed ship, *Victoria*, which the Colony of Victoria put into service notwithstanding the United Kingdom's opinion of the Victorian legislation, transported reinforcements to New Zealand from Victoria and took part in bombardments of Maori positions whilst she was there. The United Kingdom government was sufficiently worried about the status of such a vessel to request further legal opinion.⁸⁰

The concern centred on the possibility of the colonies having their own naval fleets and therefore not necessarily being under the control of the British Admiralty.

Meanwhile, Grey ordered the purchase of a steamboat, the *Avon*, from Christchurch, and the building of another steamboat, the *Waikato*, in Sydney.⁸¹ He had both boats converted to gunboats and then handed over control of the *Waikato* to the British

Admiralty, but they were unhappy to serve under the jurisdiction of a British colony. British naval forces therefore took the boat and renamed it *Pioneer*.

This jurisdictional dilemma over colonial boats and ships led to British Parliament passing the Colonial Naval Defence Act in 1865.⁸² The legislation allowed British colonies to own ships, including for military purposes. By the end of 1865, the Lords of the Admiralty issued their own rules as to what flag could be flown on colonial vessels. The flag they stipulated was the Royal Navy Blue Ensign with the seal or badge of the colony.⁸³

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 32

IN 1867 THE OFFICIAL FLAG FOR NEW ZEALAND ON WATER WAS THE 'NZ' FLAG

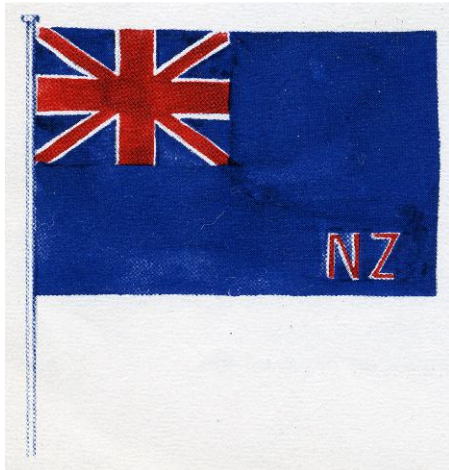


Figure 36: Image courtesy of Ministry for Culture and Heritage

In late 1866 the HMS *Challenger* reprimanded the New Zealand government steamers the *Sturt* and the *St Kilda* for not flying a Royal Navy Blue Ensign complete with a distinct badge or seal, and ordered them to take down the blue ensigns they were flying.⁸⁴

The matter was of course reported to Government, and warrants are to be issued immediately authorising captains of Government steamers to carry a blue ensign with the seal of the colony worked in it. The flag will be

a rather quaint one; but at all levels it will have the effect of saving Colonial Government officers from the rather snobbish punctiliousness of Imperial Officers, who in such a case ought to have had the courtesy to communicate direct with the Government before taking the course they did.⁸⁵

Despite the captains of the *Sturt* and *St Kilda* having on hand a memorandum (signed by the New Zealand Premier Edward Stafford) that allowed New Zealand ships to fly the ensign without the seal or badge, this did not satisfy the commander of the *Challenger*, and Governor Grey was forced to find a seal that could be placed on the ensign.⁸⁶ In January 1867 he wrote to New Zealand's postmaster general asking him to find a satisfactory design. The then seal of New Zealand was one possibility, but secretary of the New Zealand Postmaster General's Department, George Elliot Elliot, agreed that it was far too intricate to be placed on a flag and so discounted it. The next possibility was the Southern Cross, but officials argued that the constellation was not unique to New Zealand.⁸⁷ Finally, the proposal to simply insert the name 'New Zealand' on the flag was met with approval.

Although officials were happy with this solution, they soon decided 'New Zealand' was too long to place on the flag and so had it shortened to 'NZ' in red with a white

border.⁸⁸ Grey issued a proclamation on 15 January 1867 stating that the NZ flag would from now on be flown on ships owned by the New Zealand government.⁸⁹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 33

SIR GEORGE FERGUSON BOWEN ASKED LIEUTENANT ALBERT HASTINGS MARKHAM TO DESIGN THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG



Figure 37: Wikimedia Commons

‘Will you walk a little faster? Will you, won’t you, will you, won’t you, magnify the star?’ This adaptation of a quote from the Lobster’s Quartet in Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* drew mention during flag-related discussions in 1869 between the Governor of New Zealand, Sir George Ferguson Bowen, and Lieutenant Albert Hastings Markham of the British ship *Blanche*.⁹⁰

Bowen had set up this discussion because, in September of that year, he had received a circular from Downing Street relaying an Order in Council whereby the special flag for the governor of each British colony had to reflect the seal of the colony.⁹¹ In addition, the

New Zealand Marine needed a flag, and Bowen considered Markham the man to design it. Markham had arrived in New Zealand early in October 1869 aboard the *Blanche*, commissioned to tow the *Edith* to New Zealand from Sydney after the New Zealand Marine Department purchased her, the department’s first ship, from the New South Wales colonial government in the same month.⁹²

As discussions between Bowen and Markham proceeded, Markham said: ‘You already have the right to fly the Blue Ensign, why not add to it stars of the Southern Cross?’⁹³ Bowen agreed. After reviewing the first drafted design, Bowen sent a note back to Markham saying that the stars were too small and it was then that he included the quote from *Alice in Wonderland*. Markham enlarged the stars to Bowen’s approval, and on 23 October 1869 Bowen issued a proclamation stating that Markham’s design would represent New Zealand government ships, and that the design would be a ‘permanent device’,⁹⁴ a reference to something Colonial Secretary James Richmond had written in 1866: ‘I think you may settle on some temporary mark [on the blue ensign]’.⁹⁵ That ‘temporary mark’ was the 1867 NZ ensign.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 34

THE DESIGNER OF THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG, ALBERT HASTINGS MARKHAM HAD A VARIED CAREER



Figure 38: Albert Hastings Markham, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington,

Albert Hastings Markham, born in France but a British citizen, is known for much more than his role in creating the New Zealand flag. A man of many interests and restless spirit, he was also an explorer, author and officer in the Royal Navy. In 1868, Markham was promoted to first lieutenant of HMS *Blanche*, which he sailed to the Australian Marine Station in Sydney, where Her Majesty's vessels were based in order to police the interests of the British Empire in the Pacific Ocean.⁹⁶ It was during this time that Markham played his role in the design of the New Zealand flag.

Markham's time on the *Blanche* was just one of his many adventures. He fought pirates on the China Sea, helped suppress the illegal trade of 'blackbirding' (the slave trade in the Pacific Islands for the sugar industry of Queensland and Fiji), and for a period held the record for leading a party the closest to the North Pole. Several geographical locations are named after him, including a channel, island and cape in Russia, an ice shelf in Canada and a mountain in Antarctica. He is also credited with having discovered a species of albatross and a species of storm petrel previously unknown to Europeans.

While in the South Seas, Markham spent little time in New Zealand. In 1870 he berthed in Tauranga on the HMS *Rosario* for three weeks as part of the attempt to hunt and capture Māori leader and guerrilla fighter Te Kooti. Two years later, he was involved in what became known as the Nukapu Incident, sparked when the people on an island in the Solomons killed a British clergyman living there. During the incident, men aboard the *Rosario* ransacked a village on the island, resulting in the deaths of a number of residents.

In 1892 Markham was involved in another incident in which over 350 British naval sailors died. In 1893, on the instructions of his superior, Markham had the ship then under his command, the *Camperdown*, perform a manoeuvre off the Syrian coast that ended with her ramming the HMS *Victoria*. (The entire British Mediterranean fleet were on operations in the area at this time.) Markham was strongly criticised for not questioning the order, but he became a vice-admiral in 1897 and in 1903 was knighted for his services.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 35

THE MAN WHO APPROVED THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG DESIGN HAD AN UNFORTUNATE NICKNAME BUT WAS 'AT HIS BEST IN A CRISIS'



Figure 39: Governor George Bowen, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand

Governor George Ferguson Bowen, the man who approved the New Zealand flag design submitted by Lieutenant Markham, was a career British diplomat.⁹⁷ Before his appointment to New Zealand as its governor, he had served in the same position for the British colony of Queensland. While there, he gained the unfavourable nickname Polly Pickle because of his love of reciting nineteenth-century verse and his 'pompous' behaviour.

Bowen replaced George Grey as the governor of New Zealand. British authorities were keen to end the New Zealand Wars and viewed Bowen as an able administrator whose skills would suit the situation. Biographer Gavin McLean included the words of historian B. J. Dalton when summing up Bowen's character: '... fussy, too fulsome, inclined to self-importance, but "at his best in a crisis, and never found wanting in one".'⁹⁸

Bowen's view of Māori depended on where the loyalty of Māori lay; in one instance he was keen to avoid dissolving Parliament and calling an election when Julius Vogel defeated Edward Stafford's government by two votes in 1872 because he feared that the Māori Representation Act 1867 would expire as a temporary measure and could deprive Māori of an electoral voice. Bowen did, however, regard King Tāwhiao as an 'insolent barbarian' and refused to withdraw troops against Titokowaru for fear that it would encourage other Māori to rebel and potentially overthrow the entire country, except for Auckland and Wellington.⁹⁹ After departing his post in New Zealand, Bowen went on to act as a British governor in Victoria, Mauritius and Hong Kong.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 36

THE FIRST MAN TO FLY THE CURRENT NEW ZEALAND FLAG WAS AUSTRALIAN GEORGE AUSTIN WOODS



Figure 40: George Austin Woods, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand

The first time the Markham-designed New Zealand flag flew in New Zealand was 29 October 1869 on a ship moored at the Wellington waterfront. And the man who had hoisted it was George Austin Woods.¹⁰⁰ Woods, from Victoria, Australia, was in command of the *Edith*, the ship bought by the New Zealand Marine Department and then towed to New Zealand by flag designer Albert Hastings Markham aboard HMS *Blanche*. When the *Edith* arrived in Wellington, the local newspaper, the *Evening Post*, reported:

The altered New Zealand flag, as appointed by the Governor's recent proclamation, might have been seen for the first time this morning, flying on board the surveying schooner *Edith*. This handsome little vessel is now ready for sea, and will proceed to Auckland as soon as the weather moderates sufficiently to admit of her departure, in charge of Lieut. Woods, Marine Surveyor.¹⁰¹

After his arrival in New Zealand, Woods worked as the country's marine surveyor. He was also in charge of the New Zealand armed constabulary when on water. After leaving New Zealand in 1871, he went to Fiji, where he became its Premier.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 37

NO ONE KNOWS WHERE MARKHAM'S IDEA TO USE THE SOUTHERN CROSS CAME FROM



Figure 41: Southern Cross, Getty Images

No one is sure of who, if anyone, suggested to Albert Hastings Markham that the Southern Cross would work well as a badge on the New Zealand flag. However, the idea may have come from George Elliott Elliott, secretary of the New Zealand Postmaster General's Department. During discussions in 1867 for an appropriate badge for the New Zealand marine

flag, Elliott said: 'I would recommend that four stars to represent the "Southern Cross" should be adopted as the badge'.¹⁰² His thinking may have been influenced by the fact that a number of well-known Australian flags already depicted the Southern Cross.¹⁰³ They included:

- The National Colonial Flag for Australia (1823/24);
- The Australasian Anti-Transportation League flag (1849-1853; the league was against the establishment of British penal institutions in Australia and New Zealand);
- The Murray River flag (circa 1850);
- The Eureka Flag (1854; flown during the Eureka Rebellion when Australian goldminers protested against the imposition of taxes from England); and
- The Lambing Riots flag (1860; featured during a series of clashes between European and Chinese goldminers).¹⁰⁴

Another Australian flag featuring the Southern Cross that was in use in 1869, the year when Markham designed the New Zealand flag, was the New South Wales ensign. There are no records of a New Zealand-based flag portraying the constellation prior to 1869. As to why the Southern Cross on the New Zealand flag ended up with four stars rather than five, flag historian James Laurenson considered that this number was a 'conventional representation of the constellation'.¹⁰⁵

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 38

THE GOVERNOR'S FLAG WAS CONFUSED FOR THE NEW ZEALAND ENSIGN



Figure 42: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

Mere months after Governor Bowen proclaimed the Markham-designed flag as New Zealand's flag, public confusion over just what the flag looked like became apparent. The confusion was

not helped by some reports in the press. On 2 March 1870, for example, the *New Zealand Herald* reported:

New Zealand is to have a flag, and the Government has already settled upon the design, which, it will be acknowledged, is a very appropriate one. The colony will retain the old family shield, and to it a quartering peculiarity of its own. The flag will be the Union Jack, in the centre of which will be a green wreath composed of the rose, thistle, and shamrock, and the inner space will be an azure blue, on which will be seen the four stars of the Southern Cross. We understand that in a few days, the flag which has been designed by Lieut. Woods, commander of the Colonial Government schooner *Edith*, will be hoisted at the Government buildings, Auckland, under a salute from the battery.¹⁰⁶

The flag the *Herald* described was, in fact, the Governor's Flag. Two days later, the newspaper had this to say: "The new flag ordered by the Home Government to be used in New Zealand, and a description of which we gave in a former issue, is the official "Jack", i.e. the saluting flag, which will be used at Government buildings, forts, &c."¹⁰⁷ One month later, in an effort to further solve the confusion, Governor Bowen noted, amongst other things, 'I have also forwarded home a drawing of the proposed Governor's flag. It was made by Lieutenant Woods of the "*Edith*".'¹⁰⁸

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 39

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND FLAGS SHARE MANY HISTORICAL SIMILARITIES



Figure 43: Australian flag

Much has been made of the strong similarity between Australia's and New Zealand's official national flags. But the similarity is not surprising when we realise that both flags owe their origin to the Colonial Naval Defence Act 1865.

As of 1869, Australia had six flags featuring the Southern Cross. The flag that came to be Australia's national flag was chosen from a competition held in 1901, a year after New Zealand's parliament first introduced the Act that made the 1869-designed New Zealand flag New Zealand's official flag. One of the competition's entries came from a New Zealander, William Stevens, a ship's officer on the SS *Taieri*.¹⁰⁹

When the judges of the competition sent their final report to Prime Minister Edmund Barton, they wrote that because New Zealand was likely to become a state of Australia, the Southern Cross was especially suitable.¹¹⁰ As Australian vexillologist Ralph Kelly has stated: 'The Victorian flag evolved to become the current Australian flag.'¹¹¹ Adoption of the Victorian flag occurred just one year after Markham had designed the New Zealand flag,¹¹² but New Zealand officials did not send the New Zealand design to British authorities (in April 1870) until after the Victorian design had been sent to them and approved. A memorandum accompanying the New Zealand design noted the similarities between the two flags,¹¹³ but the New Zealand design was nonetheless approved.

Although the Australian and New Zealand flags look very similar, the Australian flag differs from the New Zealand flag in several ways. It has an additional star, the Epsilon Crucis, to depict the Southern Cross, and all of these stars are white. Four of the stars have seven points; the remaining star has five. In addition, the Commonwealth Star that sits below the Union Jack has seven points to represent each of Australia's states and territories. Originally, though, this star had only six points, but several newspapers wanted the seventh point added to make an

allowance if New Zealand chose to join the Federation of Australia. However, the seventh point was not added until 1908 after Australia formally acquired the territory of Papua.¹¹⁴

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 40

AUSTRALIA HAS ALSO BEEN DEBATING THE MERITS OF ITS NATIONAL FLAG



Figure 44: By Lachlan Fearnley (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons]

Many of the themes explored in this publication have been replicated in Australia. For example, the Australian and New Zealand flags have their origins in the same British legislation—the British Colonial Naval Defence Act 1865. In her book *Flag and Nation: Australians and their National Flags Since 1901*, Elizabeth Kwan writes of the generations of Australian schoolchildren required to salute the flag as part of government efforts to build patriotism, the long-term use of the Union Jack, and the ongoing debate over how well the flag represents contemporary Australia and what symbols might best suit a new flag.¹¹⁵ However, according to Kwan, ‘The real debate—a well-informed debate—has only just begun.’ She then writes:

To understand why Australians are divided over their national flag, especially its Union Jack, is to understand the transition Australians made in national flags from the Union Jack in 1901 to the Australian national flag in 1954. Further, that transition has continued to the present as Australians question the appropriateness of Britain’s national flag in the place of honour on their country’s national flag. Is the British Union Jack more important to Australians than their Commonwealth Star, the symbol of their nation?¹¹⁶

Australian media personality Peter FitzSimons, an advocate for changing the flag, claims that Australians need to engage in ‘Yet more discussion on why we need to change the Australian flag to something more emblematic of the nation we are—multicultural and cognisant of our Indigenous history—and not the nation we were—Great Britain in the South Seas.’¹¹⁷ One of the organisations opposing flag change is the Australian National Flag Association of Queensland: ‘[T]he existing design is an integral part of the Australian heritage and an appropriate expression of our national identity. The existing design of stars and crosses should therefore be retained and not altered in any manner whatsoever.’¹¹⁸

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION FIVE: LEGISLATION BEHIND THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG

INTRODUCTION

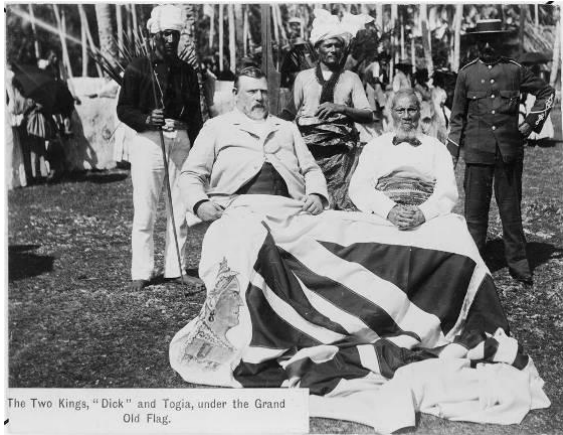


Figure 45: Sears, Frederick W, fl 1890s-1900s: Richard John Seddon and King Togia of Niue. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

At the turn of the twentieth century, New Zealand was in a state of ‘Empire fervour’ with no less than five significant events taking place over the space of the same number of years. These events reinforced New Zealand’s perception of itself as a British nation, with the colony doing its best to be the ‘Britain of the South Seas’.

While each of these events contributed to the legislative development of the New Zealand flag, the event that perhaps had the most direct influence was the South African War of 1899 to 1902, also known as the Boer War. It was the country’s first overseas conflict, and the New Zealand public wanted to demonstrate their patriotism by waving a flag, but which flag? At the same time, the British Board of Trade had introduced signalling flags (flags to be used at ports) to British colonies, and New Zealand was also using its 1869 flag used to represent the country on the water. However, the Union Jack was still the country’s official flag. In 1900, New Zealand Premier Richard John Seddon (popularly known as King Dick) introduced legislation to settle the confusion. He favoured the 1869 design featuring the Southern Cross. His suggestion was met with much enthusiasm, including patriotic speeches, in the New Zealand House of Representatives.

However, a brief note written by New Zealand flag historian James Laurenson and contained in the Turnbull Library manuscript archives indicates that the process thereafter was not straightforward: ‘In 1900, it was thought that we could simplify our flag. A Bill was introduced—a great deal of trouble began between two departments, many flags were made and destroyed—this is confidential and not to be used’.¹¹⁹ (The words ‘this is confidential and not to be used’ were heavily underlined.)

Unfortunately, Laurenson did not state which two departments were involved or why the flags were made and destroyed.

The actual passage of Seddon's 1900 New Zealand Ensign Bill was also problematic. Long-time adversaries Sir Robert Stout and Seddon were involved in a constitutional crisis, as the former believed that some of the wording in the Bill would adversely influence the prerogative of the New Zealand governor. The legislation, moreover, was not to the British Admiralty's liking, and so Seddon reintroduced the legislation in 1901, with royal assent being provided by King Edward VII the following year. The New Zealand governor's proclamation of this assent appeared in the *New Zealand Gazette* on 12 June 1902.

Section 3 of the 1908 Shipping and Seamen Act replaced the New Zealand Ensign Act until the Flags, Emblems and Names Protection Act 1981 was passed into law.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 41

IN 1900 NEW ZEALAND'S REPUTATION AS 'A BETTER BRITAIN' WAS EVIDENT IN THE COUNTRY'S ONGOING ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNION JACK



Figure 46: Steffano Francis Webb [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Noted New Zealand historian, the late Michael King, emphasised the considerable influence that Britain had on all spheres of New Zealand society at the turn of the twentieth century. According to King, the European settlers and their children and grandchildren 'were expected to carry forward the old vision of their country as a "Better Britain"'.¹²⁰

Ties to the British Empire in everyday life were well embedded by 1900. The population of New Zealand was dominated by people from the United Kingdom, and all New Zealanders were legally deemed British subjects. New Zealand was still very much a British colony. New Zealand's highest court was the Privy Council in London, and the Union Jack was the official flag on land. From 1897, New Zealand's legal tender was British coin under the Imperial Coinage Act 1870 (UK), a situation that remained unchanged until 1935, when New Zealand became the last British dominion to have its own currency. In addition, New Zealand was considered the 'dairy farm of the Empire', with over eighty percent of its exports between 1875 and 1914 destined for the British market.

In his history of the Imperial Commonwealth (published in 1945), Lord Godfrey Elton described New Zealand as 'in character ... the most British of the colonies'. He then observed:

But racially too the people were homogeneous and the direct influence of Britain lasted long. By 1898 no native of the country had yet become its Prime Minister [this would not occur until 1925], and all its leading Members of Parliament, professors, clergy and professional men without exception were British born. More obviously than in Canada, Africa or even Australia the British way of life had taken root overseas.¹²¹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 42

FIVE IMPORTANT EMPIRE EVENTS PRECEDED THE 1902 FLAG LEGISLATION

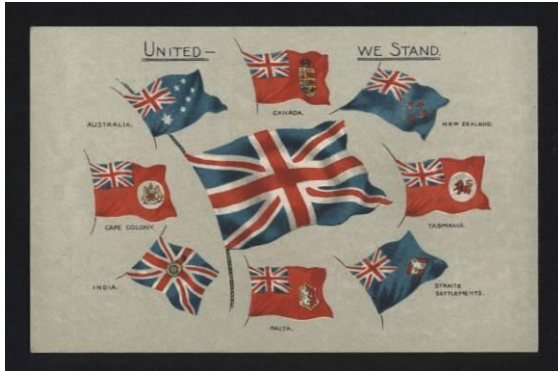


Figure47: Museum Victoria Collections

At the turn of the twentieth century, five historical events involving the British Empire over the course of just five years reinforced New Zealanders' allegiance to the British Empire. That allegiance, in turn, underpinned the passage of Premier Richard Seddon's New Zealand Ensign Bills of 1900 and 1901, with the legislation finally given royal assent in 1902.

The first event was Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, which sent New Zealand into a state of euphoria. In 1899, at the suggestion of Premier Seddon, New Zealand became the first colonial legislature to offer troops for the Boer War in South Africa. Those troops were accepted, and the war became New Zealand's first overseas conflict. Two years later, New Zealand gave way to deep mourning when Queen Victoria died on 22 January 1901. The *Press* reported the following scene in Christchurch: 'Never before in the history of the city has such a profound gloom settled upon the people ...There were not a few persons who, on hearing the sad news, were unable to restrain their grief, and tears were seen trickling down the cheeks of several of the sterner sex. A thick veil of gloom settled down on all. People could hardly realise the loss they had suffered.'¹²²

Mourning Victoria's loss gave way to celebration later in 1901, when the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (the future King George V and Queen Mary) came to New Zealand during June as part of their Empire Tour to thank colonial subjects for contributing towards the Boer War. The following year there was reason for more celebration with the coronation of King Edward VII and his queen, Alexandra, at Westminster Abbey.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 43

NEW ZEALANDERS BECAME CONFUSED OVER WHICH FLAG OFFICIALLY REPRESENTED THE COUNTRY



Figure 48: Auckland City Libraries - Tāmaki Pātaka Kōrero, Sir George Grey Special Collections Reference: 1099-3 Photograph by Paul F. Baker

In 1887 the British Board of Trade, established to oversee the economic interests of the British Empire, established a committee to revise the International Code of Signals. In 1898 it released its report as to which flags ships from British colonies could fly when arriving at and departing from ports. The board also recommended that countries' commercial (merchant) operation could fly the designated flag.¹²³

The board had decided that a white disc should be inserted behind the seal or badge of each British colony. This led, in New Zealand's case, to colouring the Southern Cross stars on the New Zealand flag in red, dispensing with the white borders around the stars, and then placing the white disc behind the constellation. Although the board's focus was on flags' use at sea only, the New Zealand signalling flag was also being flown from public buildings and used for commercial operations on land. Confusion ensued: were officials in New Zealand to fly the Union Jack, the current New Zealand flag that represented government ships on water, or the newly authorised signalling flag from the British Board of Trade?

After the signalling flag appeared on government buildings in Auckland in 1900, John Hutcheson, MP for Wellington City, asked Premier Seddon a number of questions in the House about the various flags, including which was to be used for commercial purposes.¹²⁴ Seddon responded that the government had agreed to the British Board of Trade recommendations, but that he would pass legislation making it illegal for the New Zealand flag to be used for advertising. This announcement coincided with New Zealand troops serving in the Boer War. The New Zealand public wanted to show their patriotism, but which of the three flags should they wave? It was at this point, on 14 July 1900, that Seddon introduced his legislation to make the Blue Ensign the official flag of New Zealand.¹²⁵

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 44

THE MAN WHO INTRODUCED THE LEGISLATION GIVING OFFICIAL STATUS TO THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG WAS RICHARD SEDDON



Figure 49: Richard John Seddon. Morice, Charles George Frederick, 1868-1966: Photographs.. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

Premier Richard Seddon, New Zealand's longest serving prime minister,¹²⁶ was keen to bring in legislation that would firmly establish which flag would serve as New Zealand's official flag. He wanted to do this for two reasons: to stop confusion amongst the public as to what flag to fly and to instil a sense of patriotism among New Zealand school children towards the British Empire.

Lancashire-born, Seddon arrived, via Australia, on the West Coast of New Zealand in 1866 and established himself as a shopkeeper to service goldminers operating in Kumara. After becoming the local mayor, Seddon became involved in national politics as the MP for Hokitika, Kumara and Westland. When Premier John Ballance died in 1893, Seddon became leader of the Liberal Party and, by appointment, New Zealand Premier. An imperialist, Seddon regarded himself as the strongest voice in politics in the South Pacific. He accordingly opposed New Zealand becoming a state of the newly formed Federation of Australia at the turn of the twentieth century.

The legislation Seddon is most commonly associated with is the Old Age Pensions Act 1898 and the Workers Dwelling Act 1905, both enacted to assist struggling miners whom he represented. Seddon's term in office is remembered for world-leading, enlightened social legislation, remarkable for its time. But he was a man of contradictions. He vigorously opposed Asian immigration. Biographer Tom Brooking labels Seddon's attitude towards the Chinese and Japanese as 'appalling'. He also contextualises Seddon's views as sharing 'the prejudices of almost the entire left in New Zealand and Australia.'¹²⁷ Seddon initially strongly opposed the women's suffrage movement, arguing that Parliament was no place for women. However, when touring England in 1902, he advocated for women throughout the British

Empire to have the vote. As Brooking notes: 'The former opponent of the women's suffrage thereby became the darling of the British feminist movement.'¹²⁸

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 45

A MAIN PURPOSE OF THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG WAS TO INSTIL PATRIOTISM



Figure 50: Horowhenua Historical Society Inc 'Flags in schools', Ministry for Culture and Heritage

Although confusion existed regarding which flag represented New Zealand at the turn of the twentieth century, there is no doubt as to one of the main intentions behind the New Zealand Ensign Act. Premier Richard John Seddon, speaking in the House of Representative on 19 September 1900, said:

[T]he flag with the Southern Cross upon it has been generally recognised as the New Zealand flag ... We shall have our flags in the public schools saluted, and there is no doubt it has a stimulating effect. It creates a feeling of patriotism, which has been somewhat defective, and as

years roll on, unless we do something of this kind, we shall find our young New Zealanders growing up and their education very deficient. See how the flag of the Americans—the stars and stripes—is almost worshipped.¹²⁹

The MP for Waitematā, Richard Monk, then rose to deliver a speech that the entire House supported. He focused on the relationship between England and New Zealand, emphasising that the flag would serve to give children a greater appreciation of that connection. The MP for Ashley, Richard Meredith, requested that 10,000 copies of Monk's speech be printed and distributed to schools throughout the country 'with a view of educating the boys and girls that they are living under the British flag and enjoying the liberties and traditional glory connected with that flag, and that they belong to a nation that we all have a reason to be proud of.'¹³⁰

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 46

TEN THOUSAND COPIES OF RICHARD MONK'S SPEECH WERE DISTRIBUTED TO NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLS



MR. R. MONK.

Figure 51: Richard Monk, the
Cyclopedia of New Zealand

During the debate in the House of Representatives early in the twentieth century on which flag to officially recognise as the one representing New Zealand, the most applauded speech was the one delivered by Richard Monk, MP for Waitematā. He took exception to what he saw as the disfigurement of the Southern Cross when the 1869 Markham-designed flag was altered in this way so that it would serve as a signalling flag. He argued that features unique to New Zealand such as the kiwi or the 'Rotorua fern' should be used instead, and that the 1869 flag (the blue ensign) should remain as it was and become New Zealand's

official national flag. (At this time, the Union Jack was still the legal flag of New Zealand). Monk saw the blue ensign as

... especially appropriate to this colony, for the reason that we are the most southern colony in the British Empire ... The most noble races have made their national flag the shrine of their martial lore and the traditions that are instinct with the genius of national life and emotion, and I think it is well for us to have similar and kindred feelings. My ideal for a flag is not for signalling purposes, but the emblem that is closely identified with the best aspirations of the people, appealing to their vicissitudes, the inseparable comrade of their national being ... It should be exhibited in every school, and the children be taught to make it the shrine of their honour, investing with it every manly attribute and the most exalted aspirations.¹³¹

In the middle of his speech, Monk quoted a poem written by former New Zealand politician Vincent Pyke: 'Three crosses in the Union, Three crosses in the Jack, And we'll add to it now the Cross of the South, And stand by it, back to back. Though other skies above us shine, When danger's tempest lowers, We'll show the world that Britain's cause, And Britain's foes are ours.'¹³² Monk's speech was warmly received by the House, so much so that the MP for Ashley, Richard Meredith,

requested that 10,000 copies of his speech be printed and distributed to schools throughout the country.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 47

THE PASSING OF THE NEW ZEALAND ENSIGN BILL LED TO A CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS



Figure 52: Sir Robert Stout. Morice, Charles George Frederick, 1868-1966: Photographs. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

Although the New Zealand Parliament passed Premier Richard Seddon's 1900 New Zealand Ensign Bill, it never came into effect for two reasons. The first involved Sir Robert Stout, the Acting Governor of New Zealand. He objected to the wording of Clause 4 of the newly passed Act, and this objection caused a constitutional crisis.¹³³ To understand why, we need to go back a few years.

In 1893 New Zealand Premier and leader of the Liberal Party, John Ballance, died after an illness. Richard Seddon became the acting leader of the Liberal Party and therefore premier. He convinced his colleagues that a full vote would be taken for the leadership once Parliament resumed. Stout wanted to contest the leadership, but after Seddon argued that doing so would divide the party in two, no vote was taken. Seddon remained in power and the dispute over this outcome led to Seddon and Stout becoming archenemies. The two men were very different. Stout 'objected to "Seddonism": autocratic control by the party leaders, rigid discipline enforced by caucus and use of patronage for party purposes. Stout was able to exert little influence over politics and became frustrated'.¹³⁴ This power struggle spilled over into passage of Seddon's 1900 Bill.

Clause 4 of the New Zealand Ensign Act centred upon the Act being reserved for 'the approval' of Her Majesty. In New Zealand, a Bill usually became a legal Act of Parliament after it received formal approval from the governor. However, Britain still required New Zealand to gain royal approval for legislation dealing with certain matters, flags being one of them. Stout argued that having to secure royal approval cut across the governor's prerogative to decide courses of action. Seddon refused to have the clause amended because to do so, he said, would negate the important constitutional principle regarding royal assent. Correspondence on the matter was

eventually forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London, who said that although he would prefer the wording to be different, he was satisfied with the wording of the 1900 Act.¹³⁵

However, the wrangling over the matter was then overtaken by a ruling from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty in London. They were concerned that the legislation allowed the blue ensign (the 1869 Markham-designed flag) to be used 'for all purposes', as stated in the 1900 Act's preamble. They claimed that the provision would allow New Zealand merchant vessels, instead of just government ships, to fly the blue ensign, a precedent that could lead to other merchant vessels in Britain and in other of her colonies wanting a similar privilege.¹³⁶ The New Zealand government agreed with the objections and put aside the 1900 Act.

The following year (1901) Seddon introduced an altered Bill, in which use of the blue ensign was restricted to use at sea and only on 'vessels owned and used by the New Zealand Government' or if the Admiralty had given permission for it to be flown other than stipulated. The Bill passed in that same year. On 24 March 1902, King Edward VII gave his assent to the new Act at the Court of St James, London.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 48

MANY NEW ZEALANDERS REFERRED TO THE CURRENT FLAG AS THE BRITISH FLAG FOR MANY YEARS

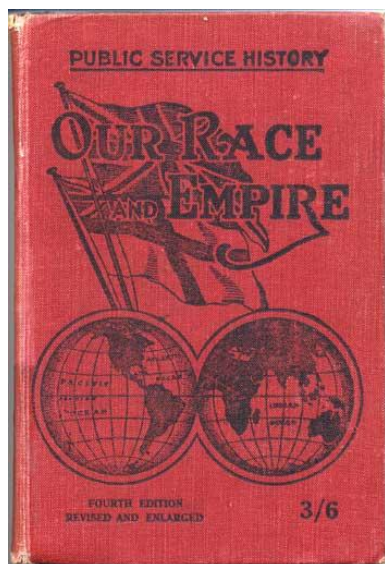


Figure 53: *Our race & Empire*: A concise history based on the Public Service Entrance, Intermediate, and Senior National Scholarship syllabus. Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1930

In 1900 a collective of Old Boys from Christchurch's Marist Brothers School donated a New Zealand flag to their alma mater to demonstrate their loyalty and patriotism. In his speech of thanks, his Worship the Mayor, William Reece, did not distinguish between the Union Jack and the New Zealand flag. He said, when referring to the New Zealand flag, that he 'expected that as the students grew older that they would know and appreciate far better what the meaning of the hoisting of the British flag was and that, as had been said by an eminent American divine, wherever the British flag was hoisted in any part of the world its people would fight to the death before it was hauled down.'¹³⁷

Several speakers at 'hoisting the flag' ceremonies throughout the country around this time also made no such distinction, while parliamentarians debating the New Zealand Ensign Bill of 1900 viewed the New Zealand flag and the British flag (Union Jack) as one and the same. For example, Richard Monk, MP for Waitematā, stated: 'And we had our great flag—the flag of our race—and the traditions surrounding it.'¹³⁸

Nearly three decades later, in 1928, teacher James Henderson wrote to the Director of Education expressing concern over the 'disrespect' shown towards the national flag and drafted a code for schools on how to fly it. 'I feel certain that no other people would find the indifference towards the national emblem that we find among the British ... Is it worth consideration as a means of better inculcating patriotism in our children? Would we as a nation be the better for a greater display of patriotic fervour towards the emblem of our Empire and our Dominion?'¹³⁹ *Our Race and Empire*, a compulsory text for all New Zealand government officials during the 1930s, had this to say: 'Does the New Zealander

exist who can read this story of his people without being proud that he was born, or that he lives under the British flag?'¹⁴⁰

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 49

THE NEW ZEALAND NATIVES ASSOCIATION OPPOSED THE CURRENT FLAG



Figure 54: Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, AWNS-19020123-4-3

The New Zealand Natives Association was an organisation preoccupied with issues of identity for New Zealand, and it consisted of second-born or third-born generation 'New Zealanders' (meaning their parents or grandparents were born in the United Kingdom or they had directly settled from Britain). When Seddon legislated to make the New Zealand flag New Zealand's official flag, members of the association protested against the move.

The Gisborne branch of the association stated as its aim 'to stimulate patriotism and national sentiment; to provide for social intercourse; and to unite all worthy sons of New Zealand in one harmonious body throughout the Colony.'¹⁴¹ For the Auckland branch, the association's purpose was 'to create a feeling of patriotism and nationality; in fact, to form a young New Zealand party in the widest and best sense'.¹⁴² The activities of the association included promoting volunteer units, guest lectures and entertainment events. The association took a keen interest in national symbols; its own symbol was the silver fern leaf badge with the acronym 'NZNA' inscribed on it.¹⁴³

The presidents of the New Zealand Association and the Auckland branch took particular exception to Seddon's 1900 Bill and sent the following telegram to him while Parliament was debating the legislation: 'The new flag just introduced most unpopular. Suggest instead either that hoisted at Kororāreka, 1834, with addition of Jack, or white ensign, with addition of three stars, one in each corner, representing three islands of New Zealand. Either would be distinctive, historical and popular.'¹⁴⁴

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 50

THE BRITISH MONARCH HAD TO GIVE ROYAL ASSENT BEFORE THE CURRENT FLAG COULD BECOME NEW ZEALAND'S OFFICIAL FLAG



Figure 55: Edward, Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, by Alexander Bassano (1829-1913).
Wikimedia Commons

Before legislation designating a flag of a British colony or dominion as the national flag could come into effect, it had to receive royal assent. After the New Zealand government passed Seddon's second New Zealand Ensign Bill in 1901, it received the official seal of approval from King Edward VII at the Court of St James in 1902, with the Lord Chancellor, Lord President, and Lord Suffield in attendance.

Section 56 of the Act to Grant a Representative Constitution to the Colony of New Zealand 1852 required the New Zealand House of Representatives and Legislative Council to present any piece of legislation they passed to the New Zealand governor for assent. At that juncture, the governor could pursue one of three options: he could provide the assent himself, he could refuse to provide assent, or he could 'reserve such bill for the signification of His/Her Majesty's pleasure thereon'.

After Parliament passed the 1900 New Zealand Ensign Bill, the New Zealand government decided to send it to His Majesty King Edward VII for assent because provisions in the Colonial Naval Defence Act 1865 and the interest the British Admiralty had in the legislation required this course of action. The Admiralty did have some reservations about the 1900 Act, and Seddon accordingly had the legislation amended. He then reintroduced it to Parliament as a second Ensign Bill in 1901. It passed, and Seddon sent the law to His Majesty for his assent. In 1981, the Flags, Emblems, Names and Protection Act of that year also received assent directly from Queen Elizabeth II was touring New Zealand at the time and so provided the assent in person.¹⁴⁵

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION SIX: THE SILVER FERN

INTRODUCTION



Figure 56: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

Use of the silver fern to represent New Zealand is extensive. It is used on currency, it has been used on stamps, and it is on New Zealand passports. In 1963 two fern leaves were added to

the base of Queen Elizabeth II and the Māori chief on the New Zealand Coat of Arms.¹⁴⁶ In 1996, Dr Claudia Bell of Auckland University offered one reason as to why the silver fern is such an evident symbol of New Zealand: 'The more ancient the history of the claimed symbol, the more firmly its claim to be fixed as a permanent feature of national identity.'¹⁴⁷

Māori traditionally used the silver fern as a means of finding their way through the bush at night, and one of their whakataukī (proverbs) promotes the silver fern as a symbol of regeneration. After New Zealand-based riflemen adopted the silver fern as a good luck charm during a competition in Taranaki in 1853, rugby players picked up on the idea, with both the national rugby team of 1884 and the Natives team that toured the United Kingdom in 1888 using it. The fern was truly popularised when it was stitched on to what would become the All Black uniform, in 1893. Today, it embellishes the majority of national New Zealand sporting uniforms.

The silver fern remains a popular icon in the military. There are numerous examples of New Zealand troops using the fern. It appears on the onward badge that decorates every New Zealand soldier and on the graves of our war dead. As early as 1925, it was suggested that the silver fern should represent New Zealand made produce being exported to overseas markets; it now represents the New Zealand FernMark used to promote New Zealand businesses. The most preferred alternative flag from the first of the two current referendums, designed by New Zealander Kyle Lockwood, represents the silver fern.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 51

MĀORI USED THE SILVER FERN AS A 'HOMING BEACON'



Figure 57: Silver Fern, Getty Images

The silver fern (*Cyathea dealbata*), called ponga by Māori, is endemic to New Zealand.¹⁴⁸ Māori used native flora to navigate their way home through the forests at night. They would break-off several fronds of the silver fern and leave them silver side up so that the moonlight would reflect off them. This night-time trail served as a

homing beacon. Over the years, deer cullers and possum hunters have also used the fern for this purpose.¹⁴⁹ Māori also have a whakatuakī (proverb) that is closely associated with the silver fern:

Mate atu he tetekura, Ara mai he tetekura.

As one chief dies, another rises to take their place.¹⁵⁰

When said in the context of the silver fern, the translation becomes:

As one frond withers and dies, another rises to take its place.¹⁵¹

He tete, or frond, stands for a chief. Sir Tipene O'Regan of Ngāi Tahu once reminded author and academic Dr Danny Keenan (Ngāti Te Whiti Ahi Kā, Te Ātiawa) that 'to Māori, the silver fern denotes strength, stubborn resistance, and enduring power, encapsulated in a natural form of native elegance. Māori have always honoured the fern, giving it a pride of place.'¹⁵²

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 52

NEW ZEALANDERS ADOPTED THE SILVER FERN AS A GOOD LUCK CHARM



Figure 58: Boer War version of the Fern-leaf hat badge. It is 70 cm (3 inches) long.

http://www.diggerhistory.info/pages-badges/new_zealand.htm

In 1853, while the HMS *Sparrow* was berthed in New Plymouth, sailors with the Royal Navy challenged the local army garrison to a match involving rifle shooting. The event took place at Rewa Rewa Rifle Range, and just before it began, the New Zealand shooters spotted some silver fern, picked it, and pinned the leaves to their pockets as a good luck charm.

The charm brought success, as the army garrison won the competition.¹⁵³ Its members apparently said: ‘The silver fern has brought us luck and we will carry on using it.’¹⁵⁴

During the nineteenth century, the silver fern was also used in verse and paintings by famed watercolourist, Alfred Sharpe. Sharpe, regarded as one of the pioneer artists of New Zealand, prolific and successful, producing around 150 watercolours depicting the New Zealand landscape from the 1860s to the 1880s, also wrote poetry.¹⁵⁵ One of his poems, titled *A Night in the Forest*, contained these lines:

A silver fern outspreading,
In mass of lace like threading,
Throughout its frondings wide,
Faint phosphorescence showers,
On the kie kie flowers, from its silv’ry underside.¹⁵⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 53

THE FIRST NATIONAL RUGBY TEAM ADOPTED THE FERN AS ITS SYMBOL



Figure 59: New Zealand rugby team. Making New Zealand :Negatives and prints from the Making New Zealand Centennial collection. Ref: MNZ-1018-1/4-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22871927>

In New Zealand, the link between rugby and national identity cannot be denied. As historian Ron Palenski once remarked: 'It was rugby union ... which New Zealand took to more enthusiastically and thoroughly than any other colony, that did most to establish a sense of identity through sport.'¹⁵⁷

New Zealand's early rugby teams demonstrated this connection through their popularisation of the silver fern. In 1884 New Zealand's first national rugby team

wore dark-blue jerseys with a fern (albeit a gold one) on the breast,¹⁵⁸ so marking the first time the fern was used as a national symbol overseas. Apparently, the person who came up with the idea of having the team wear the fern was Samuel Sleigh, an English-born insurance broker.¹⁵⁹

During their 1888/89 overseas tour, the rugby team called the Natives used a silver fern on a black jersey. Their tour encompassed New Zealand, Australia, Britain and Ireland. During it, they played 107 matches, winning 78. The tour is still reputed to be the longest-ever tour undertaken in the history of sport.¹⁶⁰ Captain of the team, Joe Warbrick,¹⁶¹ from Ngāti Rangitihi, played for both the 1884 and 1888 sides.

At the first annual general meeting of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union (now called New Zealand Rugby), former 1888 Native Tom Ellison¹⁶² from Ngāi Tahu and Te Āti Awa proposed that members of the national rugby team should follow the example set by the Natives and wear a black jersey featuring a silver fern. Ellison captained the first such team when it played New South Wales in 1893.¹⁶³

Since the pioneering days of New Zealand rugby, the silver fern has been closely associated with the All Blacks, the national team that represents New Zealand at the highest level of this, the country's national sport.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 54

NEW ZEALAND SOLDIERS WORE THE SILVER FERN DURING THE BOER WAR



Figure 60: Archives New Zealand AEGA 18982, PC4/861, R23246134 (Copyright File - Lads of the Silver Fern)
NZ War Medal: New Zealand Defence Force
Grave stone: <http://www.nzwargraves.org.nz/>

During the Boer (South African) War at the turn of the twentieth century, the silver fern appeared on the Glengarry (cap) and slouch hat badges of soldiers from New Zealand. The New Zealand Natives Association wanted to differentiate New Zealand troops from the soldiers of other British colonies and so produced 200 silver

fern badges for the hats of the men shipped to South Africa in 1899.¹⁶⁴ The association was essentially interested in forging a unique New Zealand identity rather than having men from New Zealand seen as Britons living afar. Some New Zealand soldiers in World War I referred to themselves as 'Fernleaves' (New Zealand having been labelled as 'Fernland' and New Zealanders as 'Fernlanders' at the start of the 1900s).

In World War II, Lowndes Square in Knightsbridge, London, hosted a 'Fernleaf Club',¹⁶⁵ a residential centre for the rehabilitation of troops, staffed by the New Zealand Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. All World War II New Zealand soldiers wore the badge called 'Onward'. This 'universal badge of the 2 NZEF was introduced in October 1939: the letters 'NZ' surrounded by fern fronds and surmounted by the King's Crown, all above a scroll bearing the word 'Onward'. Hat and collar versions were worn on SD uniforms by all ranks ... This was supposed to be the only badge worn, although this ... [was] not strictly adhered to'.¹⁶⁶ The official address for the New Zealand Division Headquarters in Egypt in World War II was 'Fernleaf Cairo',¹⁶⁷ and the New Zealand War Service Medal has the silver fern on the back.¹⁶⁸ The silver fern also adorns the headstones of New Zealanders in the cemeteries of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission throughout the world, thereby perpetuating the association between the military and the silver fern.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 55

NEW ZEALAND USED THE SILVER FERN ON ITS EARLY PRODUCE



Figure 61: Fernleaf New Zealand butter; a pure natural food. [Display card. 1950s?].

Ref: Eph-F-DAIRY-1950s-01. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

<http://natlib.govt.nz/records/32231638>

The silver fern has long been closely associated with New Zealand produce because of its use as a trademark for the country's meat and dairy exports.¹⁶⁹ After the success of the 1924/25 All Blacks Invincibles Tour, Tour Manager Stan Dean suggested 'that the fern leaf be adopted as a national trade mark for New Zealand goods in the same way Canada has adopted the maple leaf.'¹⁷⁰

The National Dairy Association immediately took up Dean's idea. Dean clearly considered that the fern should stamp all New Zealand-made products leaving the country's shores. As he pointed out, the fern had been recognised in Britain since its use as an emblem during the rugby tours of that country by the Natives in 1888, the Originals in 1905, and the Invincibles in 1924.¹⁷¹ The silver fern was also used on New Zealand-produced tobacco products, and it gave its name to the train that travelled on the North Island main trunk line between Wellington and Auckland from 1972 to 1991 (the Silver Fern railcar).¹⁷²

More recently, in the 1990s, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise and Tourism New Zealand developed the silver fern into the distinctive New Zealand FernMark. These organisations created the mark in order 'to establish a singular visual identity for New Zealand'.¹⁷³ Those businesses that carry the FernMark are the ambassadors of New Zealand's efforts to promote New Zealand products and trade overseas.¹⁷⁴

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 56

TODAY'S NATIONAL SPORTING TEAMS CONTINUE TO USE THE SILVER FERN



Figure 62: All Blacks Haka, by Sonya & Jason Hills from London, UK [CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons]

In 1966 a Wellington *Evening Post* columnist noted a complaint voiced by the manager of the New Zealand Commonwealth Games team, recently returned from Jamaica. The manager wanted the fern emblem discarded or some very strict rules regarding its use to be put in place.¹⁷⁵ So ‘many other people and groups are adorned with the motif,’ he explained, ‘that it ceases to be distinctive and the honouring of wearing it is somewhat lessened.’¹⁷⁶ The columnist then observed there was no shortage of New Zealanders keen to drop the fern, for various reasons: the fern itself was very rare, it lacked the distinctiveness of other national symbols, and some people saw it as a ‘white feather’ (a reference to when this was the ‘cowardice’ symbol for those refusing to fight in the wars). Replacements for the fern could be the kiwi and the New Zealand Coat of Arms. But, warned the columnist, New Zealanders would still want the silver fern on All Black jerseys.

Another consideration worth bearing in mind is that one national symbol for all fields makes a greater impact. It is not a matter of sport, but trade and tourism as well, if New Zealand is as concerned as she should be with getting her image across as widely as possible. One dignified, striking and representative symbol cropping up all over the place on things and people New Zealand might work wonders ... Mr. Shakespeare has rightly called for action on the few square inches that shout ‘New Zealand’ and the time is right for either affirming positively that we like what we have or coming up with something we really do like.¹⁷⁷

Despite these concerns, the silver fern today features on the uniforms of many of our national sporting teams, including the Black Ferns (women’s rugby team), Silver Ferns (women’s netball team), White Ferns (women’s cricket team), Blackcaps (men’s cricket team), All Blacks (men’s rugby team), Football Ferns (women’s football team), All Whites (men’s football team), Black Sox (men’s softball team),

White Sox (women's softball team), Black Sticks (men's and women's hockey teams) and the Kiwi Rugby League (men's rugby league team).

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 67

MANY PEOPLE OVERSEAS READILY RECOGNISE THE SILVER FERN



Figure 63: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Before the silver fern represented national sports teams, the military and New Zealand produce on the world stage, people of Victorian England were extremely keen on collecting plants from different parts of the planet. As such, many fern varieties, including the silver fern, ended up in England. New Zealanders Eric Craig and Thomas Cranwell took advantage of this fad and produced pressed fern albums for

sale in both New Zealand and overseas, while H. B. Doobie produced cyanotype images of 148 New Zealand ferns that were published in book form.¹⁷⁸

When, at Gallipoli in 1915, New Zealand soldier Raymond Baker was wounded, an Australian stretcher bearer recognised where he was from because of his silver fern. “Hello mate?” he said. ‘Pig Islander? Which is the soldiers’ colloquial for New Zealander’¹⁷⁹ In 2010 columnist Jim Eagles wrote in the *New Zealand Herald*: ‘But if you want to signal your nationality, whether visiting Britain or Botswana, China or Chile, a silver fern is the best way to do it.’¹⁸⁰ Meanwhile, in their book *New Zealand! New Zealand! In Praise of Kiwiana*, Stephen Barnett and Richard Wolfe claimed that the silver fern was just as well known as the kiwi to people from overseas.¹⁸¹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 58

MANY PEOPLE CONSIDER NEW ZEALAND'S NATIONAL COLOURS TO BE BLACK AND WHITE

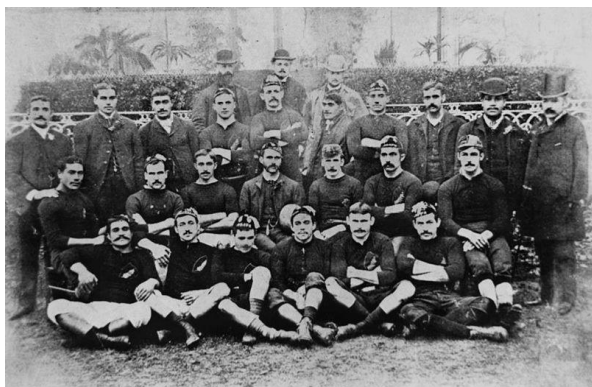


Figure 64: By unknown, Ryan, Greg (1993). Forerunners of the All Blacks. Christchurch, New Zealand: Canterbury University Press. Via Wikimedia Commons

During the summer of 1887 and 1888, the New Zealand Athletic Association awarded its members with black velvet caps complete with silver piping and the letters NZAAA (also in silver) on the front of each cap.¹⁸² According to journalist and historian Ron Palenski, this event marked the first time we New Zealanders used black and white as national colours.¹⁸³ The man that Palenski credited with inventing the NZAAA uniform was Leonard Cuff, born in Christchurch and the founding secretary of the association. Palenski thinks that the 'Cuff' who boarded the *Te Anau*, the ship that transported the 1888 Natives rugby side to Britain and whose uniform was white emblazoned with a silver fern, was Leonard Cuff. He suggests that if this was the case, Leonard and Joe Warbrick, the Natives captain, may have earlier struck up a conversation about what the uniform for the touring Natives might look like, and that it is this conversation that influenced the colours of the NZAAA uniform.¹⁸⁴

Among the other theories as to why the 1888 Natives wore black is that the New Zealanders wanted a colour that would set them well apart from the colours of the other nations competing in the tour. England had white, Wales scarlet, and Ireland green. Also, with the manager of the 1884 New Zealand rugby team tour, Samuel Sleigh, now based in Britain as a member of the English Rugby Football Union, it is possible he may have written to Warbrick suggesting that the team not have a jersey colour that would clash with those of the home nations.¹⁸⁵ In 1925, the *Wellington Evening Post*, having spoken to surviving members of the Natives, George 'Bully' Williams and Jack Webster, that Warbrick may have selected the colour black to withstand the wet and muddy conditions of England.¹⁸⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 59

NEW ZEALANDERS VOTED FOR THE SILVER FERN FLAG IN THE FIRST REFERENDUM



Figure 65: Kyle Lockwood's Silver Fern flag

On 15 December 2015, the New Zealand Electoral Commission released the official results of the first referendum to select a flag to compete with the current New Zealand flag in the second referendum in March 2016.¹⁸⁷

The winning design, drawing 662,160 votes, was the silver fern, the second most popular alternative was the silver fern (red, white and blue) followed by red peak, and then silver fern (black and white), and koru. Just under 1,400,000 people voted, with the number of informal votes being 149,747.¹⁸⁸

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 60

KYLE LOCKWOOD DESIGNED THE SILVER FERN FLAG



Figure 66: Kyle Lockwood, image by Flag Consideration Panel

Kyle Lockwood, the designer of the silver fern flag, was born in Wellington. He designed the silver fern concept as a student in architecture technology at Massey University in 2000. Apparently, while one of Lockwood's lecturers was discussing how flagpoles are attached to buildings, Lockwood sketched a flag to go on top. Since that time, his flag design has

undergone six or seven iterations, taking into account feedback he received from vexillologists.

Lockwood's interest in promoting the silver fern comes from his own experience and that of his father, who was a national underwater hockey representative, captain and coach. Lockwood spent time in the New Zealand Army and remembers 'actually [being] more proud of that [the fern] than I was of the flag flying over the parade grounds.'¹⁸⁹ On hearing the news that his design had won the first referendum, he said: 'I just stopped and my jaw dropped.'¹⁹⁰ Lockwood's interpretation of his silver fern design is 'a design that would include all New Zealanders. And I feel like the fern with its multiple points represents multiple cultures coming together and growing upward into the future.'¹⁹¹

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION SEVEN: SCHOOLS AND THE FLAG

INTRODUCTION



Figure 67: 'Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, AWNS-19000824-1-1'

'Hoisting the flag' was a movement that swept through schools in Canada and Australia before reaching New Zealand shores in the late 1890s. At first, the practice involved raising the Union Jack, but later it saw the New Zealand flag raised on occasion.

The purpose of the practice was to instil patriotism within New Zealand schoolchildren so that they would feel a deep sense of attachment towards and pride over the Union Jack—the flag that represented the Empire to which New Zealand belonged. The ceremony also involved patriotic speeches from local dignitaries, Members of Parliament and, on occasion, either the prime minister or governor. Children performed flag drills and recited verses and song that paid homage to 'Mother Britain'.

When the current New Zealand flag became New Zealand's official flag in 1902, the Union Jack was still the flag of choice during the hoisting flag ceremonies because it constantly reminded New Zealand pupils that they had to play their part to support God, the King or Queen, Empire and Country. Although the flag continued to be the Union Jack over ensuing decades, schools increasingly asked for the New Zealand ensign but an apparent shortage of this flag within the Wellington bureaucracy meant that schools rarely had the opportunity to use it.

By the 1960s, the flag ceremonies were beginning to wane and some educational authorities became alarmed at this apparent demise. In 1984 the then Minister of Education, Merv Wellington, attempted to reintroduce the ritual on a compulsory basis, but his proposal met with stringent and passionate criticism from various

quarters, including the Labour Party. In July 1984, the country voted in a snap election, which Labour won. The new government declared that it had no intention of seeing through Wellington's scheme.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 61

FLAGS WERE USED TO INSTIL PATRIOTISM IN NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLCHILDREN



Figure 68: Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh drive past a crowd of children waving Union Jack flags at Athletic Park, Wellington, Royal Tour 1953-1954. Crown Studios Ltd: Negatives and prints. Ref: 1/4-106728-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington,

In his book on New Zealand's state school system, historian Roy Shuker wrote: 'During the early 1900's, the sentiments associated with the Flag, the Monarchy, the Empire, King and Country, were intensely popular, and an average of some 30 percent of the *Journal* [*New Zealand School Journal*] was devoted to imperial, military, and other "patriotic" topics.'¹⁹²

This patriotic zeal continued after World War I with 'attempts to enforce loyalty through legislation; the introduction of compulsory flag-saluting'.¹⁹³ Shuker also explained that 'The Alien Enemy Teachers Act (1915) forbade the employment of any teacher who was not a British citizen'.¹⁹⁴ In 1921 the government introduced compulsory loyalty oaths for teachers. The same year, the Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, T.B. Strong, wrote a commentary titled *The Inculcation of Patriotism* in which he stressed the influence schools and teachers have on determining children's political ideas: 'The recently gazetted regulation requiring that the Flag shall be saluted regularly and the National Anthem sung is a counterblast to the openly expressed disloyalty that would, if it could, tear the Empire asunder and wreck social peace.'¹⁹⁵ Strong suggested that the format for a school assembly should be:

BOY'S VOICE [pupil facing the picture of King George and saluting]: Our King inspires loyalty and devotion to our country and its laws because he rules by the consent of the people. God save the King! NATIONAL ANTHEM: (Sung by all) BOY'S VOICE: The Great War proved that thousands of New Zealanders thought our beautiful country worth dying for. Like them, we pledge ourselves to live and, if necessary, die for our country and for our comrades throughout the Empire. CHILDREN'S PLEDGE: Land of our birth, our faith, our pride, for whose dear sake our fathers died, O Motherland! We pledge to thee land, heart, and hand in the years to be.¹⁹⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 62

HOISTING THE FLAG CEREMONIES TOOK PLACE IN ALL NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLS



Figure 69: Unidentified dignitaries watch school children walk past during a parade, includes British flags in the background, probably Hastings district. Whitehead, Henry Norford, 1870-1965: Negatives of Napier, Hastings and district. Ref: 1/4-029615-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

As the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, the hoisting the flag movement (also known as unfurling or saluting the flag) spread to schools throughout New Zealand. Adherents of the movement maintained that patriotism could be instilled in children by having them pay reverence to a flag or flags (either the Union Jack or the New Zealand Flag, or both), perform military drills and learn about the history of the British Empire.

The Napier School Committee was instrumental in getting the movement underway in New Zealand when, in 1897, it passed the following motion put forward by a Mr Edwards: 'That in order to inculcate a spirit of patriotism throughout our schools arrangements be made by which at stated intervals, during school hours, the British or New Zealand flag be introduced and properly saluted by the pupils.'¹⁹⁷ The committee then sent the motion to the Minister of Education, with a view to having the initiative implemented throughout the country. The following year, Waimate School was just one school able to report that it had the ceremony underway:

The flagstaff had been erected and the flag procured with a definite object, that of kindling in the hearts of the girls and boys a spirit of patriotism and enthusiasm, to inspire in them feelings of loyalty and devotion to Great Britain, and to help them to recall what they owed, under God, to the British Empire ... When they read ... of those hundreds of others who had fought and bled for their mother country, did it not send the blood coursing through their veins? Where the British rule was established, peace, progress and prosperity would follow in its train. They were Britain's sons and daughters and were ready to play their part in the making of the Empire.¹⁹⁸

By April 1900, New Zealand newspapers were reporting an increasing number of hoisting the flag ceremonies. At one ceremony, Governor Lord Ranfurly stated: 'The

Empire has gained an enormous advantage in federation—in binding together the colonies to her, who needed no Act of Parliament to bind them. The same blood ran in our veins, and when the Mother Country suffers, we suffer.’¹⁹⁹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 63

NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLCHILDREN RECITED VERSES ABOUT THE FLAG



Figure 70: Children forming a living flag, Newtown Park, Wellington, during the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York. Hinge, Leslie, 1868-1942 : Photographs, negatives and photo albums. Ref: 1/4-016908-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

The flag-hoisting ceremonies that schoolchildren from around the country performed were accompanied by verses that the children could recite or sing. Two such verses were published in the *New Zealand School Journal*. The first, 'Red, White and Blue' from 1914 read:

Some flags are red or white or green
And some are yellow too.
But the dear, dear flag that we love best,
Is the red and white and blue.

Then hail the flag, the bonny flag,
Of red and white and blue.

We love our native country's flag,
To it our hearts are true.

Above we wave in splendid folds,
The red and white and blue.

Then hail the flag, the bonny flag,
Of red and white and blue.²⁰⁰

'Message of the Flag' appeared in the *School Journal* in 1923.

Our Union Jack, on Empire Day,
Floats proudly in the breeze;
Not here alone, but far away,
In lands across the seas.

Wherever British children dwell,
Or British folk may be,
On Empire Day our flag shall tell,
That we are Britons free ...

'Tis thus it speaks, our Union Jack,
Its message from the mast.

To follow in the noble track,
Of heroes in the past.²⁰¹

From 1903, Empire Day celebrations were held on 24 May, the day of Queen Victoria's birthday, even though by that time a new monarch was on the throne, Edward VII.²⁰² In time, the day of observation became 3 June, which was King George V's birthday.

The purpose of the day, which featured parades, saluting the flag and patriotic speeches, was inculcating patriotic fervour, with that fervour focussed on Britain, the mother country. As the *School Journal* containing the 'Message of the Flag' verses observed:

Britain is like a mother with many children who have gone from her into other countries to earn their living. She still loves them; she sends them many kind messages, and helps them in every way she can. And the children, the people far away from her, love her in return ... This little mother and all her big children we call the Empire, and we keep up Empire Day just as we might keep up our mother's birthday in the family, to show that we are still her loving children.²⁰³

Empire Day celebrations morphed into Commonwealth Day in 1958.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 64

SEDDON PROMISED EACH SCHOOL A FLAG, AND THE OTAGO DAILY TIMES OFFERED EVERY SCHOOL IN DUNEDIN A UNION JACK



Figure 71: Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, AWNS-19060201-1-2

The hoisting the flag movement within New Zealand schools gained rapid momentum during 1900, fuelled, as the *Otago Daily Times* (*ODT*) pointed out in November 1900, by the federation movement in Australasia and by the South African War, both of which

had produced an 'outburst of enthusiasm for the flag of the empire, the Union Jack'.²⁰⁴ The

newspaper advised that, in Melbourne, Australian politician Sir Fredrick Sargood had promised the distribution of 200 flags, one to each school in the state of Victoria, by the end of the year. A member of the public supported his offer by providing the requisite number of flagpoles and fittings.

The *ODT* asked why every New Zealand school should not have its own British flag to commence the new century with and to commemorate the birth of a new empire. Noting that Seddon had promised every school with a New Zealand ensign, the *ODT* extolled the virtues of the Union Jack, which can be found 'in all quarters of the globe'.²⁰⁵ To initiate proceedings, the proprietors of the newspaper offered to present a Union Jack to each of Dunedin's schools.

The following year, during a flag raising ceremony in Palmerston North, with over 1000 people in attendance, Seddon confirmed his commitment to such ceremonies. School children, he said, were the men and women of the future. If trained correctly, they would be a credit to their parents, their teachers, their colony, and the British Empire. He also emphasised that 'An insult to the British flag meant an insult to the nation. Every Britisher would resent it and fight to the last to wipe out the stain.'²⁰⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 65

SCHOOLS VOICED CONFUSION OVER WHICH FLAG TO FLY: THE UNION JACK OR THE NEW ZEALAND ENSIGN?



Figure 72: Children during VE day celebrations, Lambton Quay, Wellington. Pascoe, John Dobree, 1908-1972 :Photographic albums, prints and negatives. Ref: 1/4-001510-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

As early as 1900, schools were expressing confusion over what flag they should be flying on their grounds. Should it be the New Zealand ensign (the flag designed in 1869) or the Union Jack? On 16 June 1900, for example, 'J. P.' from the Bay of Islands, highlighted the nature of the confusion in a *New Zealand Herald* article he titled 'Saluting the Flag'.

Now that the much-to-be-desired custom is becoming general, it is timely if we ask ourselves if it will be better for us to have the diversity of liberty, or the uniformity of order? ... In Parnell they hoisted the Red Ensign with the New Zealand Ensign; in Mount Eden

they hoisted the Union Jack; at Clevedon they also hoisted a very fine Union Jack; in some other places we are not told so clearly what flag was hoisted ... I am not complaining about the diversity of British flags; we may rather rejoice in that, varied though they may be, the Union is ever present!²⁰⁷

In 1926, the Secretary of the Southland Education Board wrote to the Director of Education after an inspector found that the convent school in Winton did not possess a flag and that the children there sang the New Zealand anthem (*God Defend New Zealand*).²⁰⁸ When responding to this letter, Inspector of Schools T. B. Strong drew attention to Section 133 of the Education Amendment Act 1921, in which 'suitable provision is made for the inculcation in the minds of the pupils in sentiments of patriotism and loyalty'.²⁰⁹ Although the convent school was a private school, Strong said that he would not be happy unless the children at the school saluted the flag and sang the national anthem (*God Save the King*). In 1930 the Whakatāne School Committee Chairman Dr J. C. Wadmore wrote to the Minister of Education asking for advice on what flags to fly at the school and when. Wadmore suggested that the

school should fly the New Zealand ensign on all national days of importance and fly the Union Jack on days of imperial importance. 'The whole affair is such a muddle when in the hands of schoolmasters of varying tastes and knowledge,' he said, 'that it is liable to become ridiculous.'²¹⁰

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 66

COURT CASE LEADS TO GOVERNMENT INTRODUCING REGULATIONS IN 1941 ON FLAG FLYING IN NEW ZEALAND'S SCHOOLS

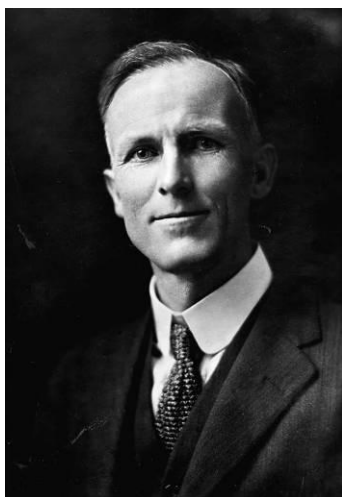


Figure 73: S P Andrew Ltd. S P Andrew Ltd (Photographer) : Head and shoulders portrait of Henry Greathead Rex Mason. Holland, Roy, fl 1943-1971 :Portraits of Labour politicians, and lantern slides compiled by Harry Holland; also WW2 veterans on parade, including Sir Stephen Weir. Ref: PAColl-4415-05. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In 1940, Louisa Kennedy, a teaching assistant at Waikino School in the Waikato, refused to participate in the flag ceremony. 'I am truly loyal to the British Empire,' she explained, 'and I have every respect for the flag, and the principles for which it stands. I feel however that to salute the flag is a form of worship which to me is forbidden by the commandment of my Creator.'²¹¹ Her stance prompted a meeting between the Minister of Education and the Secretary of the New Zealand Educational Institute, during which the former said to the latter: 'If you could go quietly and gently get the thing forgotten by the Board [Auckland Education] it would be a win.'²¹² The case ended up, however, at the Teacher's Court of Appeal, where the magistrate presiding over it stated that the by-law requiring pupils and teachers to salute was *ultra vires* (beyond one's law): 'In coming to this conclusion I am not unmindful of the possible effect of the Appellant's conduct on the minds of the young children ... I agree that everything should be done ... to inculcate loyalty and love of Empire in children.'²¹³ His ruling led to the Minister of Education instigating the Ceremony of Honouring the Flag Regulations 1941, intended 'to awaken the spirit of patriotism in children'.²¹⁴ The regulations stated that during the ceremony, a staff member or pupil should recite from memory these passages:

We give thanks for the privileges we enjoy as New Zealanders and members of the British Commonwealth of our Nations; we honour the memories of all those who have served our country; we declare that we will honour our king, obey the laws of this government, and serve our country to the utmost of our ability ... We honour the flag because it stands for New Zealand, and for our love of truth, justice, freedom, and

democracy, in which we are united through the person of our king, with all other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.²¹⁵

The Director of Education (i.e., the head of the Department of Education) stipulated, with respect to the regulations, that schools were to use the New Zealand ensign, but if one was not available, they could use the Union Jack.²¹⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 67

CHILDREN WHO REFUSED TO SALUTE THE FLAG WERE 'TACTFULLY EXCLUDED'

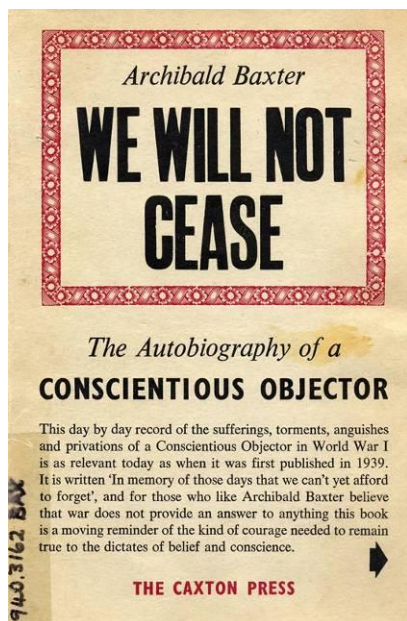


Figure 74: 'Archibald Baxter's 'We will not cease' cover', URL: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/we-will-not-cease>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage)

If children did not salute the flag, local school education boards had no power to enforce compulsion. The issue appeared to be especially contentious in times of war. In 1940, for example, a teacher at Nihotupu School in Glen Eden wrote to the Department of Education for advice concerning a seven-year-old pupil who refused, on the instruction of his father, to participate in the school's flag hoisting ceremony.²¹⁷ The father had written to the school, stating that he opposed the ceremony on biblical grounds. The teacher wrote back, saying: 'Actually I consider you are doing your son a grave disservice in forcing upon an immature mind ideas of which he has no comprehension; the consequences of which, in his later life among his fellows, needs no elaboration.'²¹⁸

When the Department of Education became involved in the matter, the father wrote to the Minister of Education claiming that 'The sole teacher has threatened to strap John. That would be religious persecution and a brutal assault of a most cowardly nature that should never be permitted.'²¹⁹

In Timaru that same year, a Jehovah Witness protested to the Canterbury Education Board that he did not wish his two children to participate in the flag ceremony or sing the national anthem. Commenting on the matter in the *Christchurch Press*, the Secretary of the Canterbury Education Board said that 'Mr McAuley's children should be tactfully excluded from the ceremony of the saluting of the flag, if the headmaster is convinced that Mr McAuley's religious scruples are genuine and that no disloyalty is intended. If there is any uneasiness on this score the police should be informed.'²²⁰ Towards the end of the year, the issue cropped up again, in Taranaki, prompting a member of the Taranaki Education Board to comment:

It is an extraordinary position. No one sitting round this table would be prepared to dictate one iota as to the religious convictions of the Jehovah's Witnesses, but I wonder what they would do if bombs were dropped on them in their district, as they were in London, the heart of the Empire, and if that should happen, to whom would they fly for aid. It is amazing that these children should refuse to pay a tribute to the flag of the country in which they live.²²¹

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 68

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH NEW ZEALAND FLAGS FOR ALL SCHOOLS



Figure 75: Pupils and teachers alongside the flag pole at Roseneath School, Wellington. Watt, T (Miss), fl 1978 :Photographs of Wellington and Napier scenes. Ref: 1/2-080447-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In August 1941 the Education Department, having realised that the demand from schools for the New Zealand ensign was outstripping departmental supplies, wrote to the Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs, Joseph Heenan. 'While the Education Department wishes to encourage the use of the New Zealand Ensign, it is faced with the position that many schools have only a Union Jack. It would be impossible at the present time to procure a sufficient number

of New Zealand Ensigns to provide one for every school, and it would also be very costly.'²²²

At the conclusion of World War II, the head teacher of the native school at Mitimiti, Hokianga, wrote to the Department of Education saying they wanted to erect a school memorial flagpole in honour of the old boys who had served during the war. Could they please have either a Union Jack or the New Zealand ensign? The department replied that it could not supply either flag, as they had stopped sending out flags many years ago.²²³ Fifteen years later, in 1961, Te Waha-o-Rerekohu Māori District High School in Te Araroa asked the Department of Internal Affairs for a New Zealand ensign, as they did not know where else to obtain one. Internal Affairs told the school the Education Department supplied flags for schools.²²⁴

In 1963, Internal Affairs fielded another query about where to purchase a heavy duty New Zealand ensign for outside purposes. The query this time came from the Patriotism Committee of the Church College of New Zealand, 'We realise,' the college said, 'that most public schools do not display the flag daily'.²²⁵ In this instance, the Internal Affairs Secretary recommended that the college purchase the

flag from Hutcheson, William & Co., Wellington. It also advised that 'It has become accepted practice to fly flags from Government buildings only on the days set out on the schedule as the too frequent use and display of them tends to obscure in the minds of the general public their purpose and significance.'²²⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 69

A COMMITTEE IS ESTABLISHED DUE TO THE DECLINE OF SCHOOL FLAG CEREMONIES IN THE 1960S



Figure 76: Headmaster of Wellington College, Harold Heron. Burt, Gordon Onslow Hilbury, 1893-1968 :Negatives. Burt, Gordon Onslow Hilbury, 1893-1968 :Negatives. Ref: 1/2-036368-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

As New Zealand entered the 1960s, it was clear that fewer and fewer schools were holding flag ceremonies. A query from a member of the public led the Taranaki Education Board asking the Wellington Education Board if the ceremonies were still meaningful and appropriate for the 1960s. The board replied that it was up to each headmaster and mistress to determine what their school should do in this regard.²²⁷

In 1966, an editorial in the *Bay of Plenty Times* lamented the decline in flag ceremonies at schools:

Such demonstrations of patriotism can and should be meaningful without having to resort to mass flag waving as indulged in by some other countries or to boring parades with the usual invitation to some dignitary or another who,

with tedious long-windedness, trots out outworn clichés of patriotic fervour ... Such observance in this country carries no undertones of sabre-rattling or drum beating, but is simply an occasion for a New Zealander to pay rightful homage to his country's flag while at the same time reminded of what it means to live under it. Any request by a New Zealander to be excused from honouring the flag must have a sinister ring to it.²²⁸

In 1968, in order to provide clarity on the matter, the Executive of the Education Boards Association established a sub-committee charged with looking at the flag ceremony in schools. The committee eventually recommended in its report that the number of days on which schools would be required to observe the ceremony during the year should be reduced and that a more informal approach taken with respect to the ceremony itself.²²⁹ However, the Director-General of Education suggested to the committee that because of the present 'tense world situation', raising matters of this nature at this time would not be opportune.²³⁰ The committee agreed, and the matter was 'dropped'.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 70

MINISTER OF EDUCATION'S PLANS TO MAKE THE FLAG CEREMONY COMPULSORY ATTRACT WIDESPREAD CRITICISIM

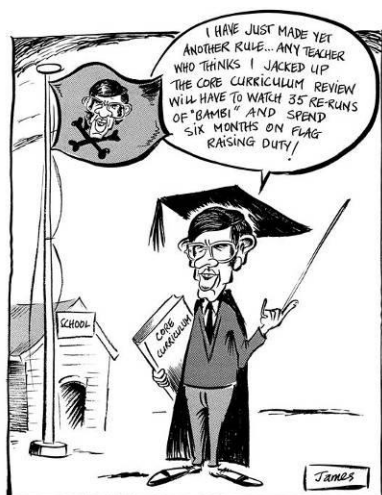


Figure 77: Taranaki Daily News (Newspaper). Lynch, James Robert, Ref: DCCL-0024862. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In 1979 the MP for Wellington Central, Ken Comber, concerned that most New Zealanders no longer flew the New Zealand flag, argued that schools should consider bringing back the hoisting the flag ceremony.²³¹ In 1984 Minister of Education Merv Wellington announced that he would make it compulsory for all state primary and secondary schools to fly the New Zealand ensign on a daily basis from the start of the next school year.²³² In effect, he wanted to update the Ceremony of Honouring the Flag Regulations of 1941.

His announcement met with widespread discontent and protest. For example, Hugo Manson, a board member of Hutt Valley High School, said he would argue for his board to reject the regulation and urged other boards to follow suit. He claimed that Merv Wellington's 'brand of compulsory patriotism is a characteristic of totalitarian states.'²³³ Some protestors felt so strongly about the matter that they resorted to chopping down flagpoles.

Wellington's plans were quashed after the National Party lost the 1984 election. The new Minister of Education, Russell Marshall, revoked the 1941 regulations and said that it would now be up to each school to decide whether or not to hold flag raising ceremonies.²³⁴ The New Zealand Returned Services Association promptly wrote to Marshall, expressing their dismay:

That the 1941 regulations should be revoked is in our view a retrograde step. N.Z.R.S.A. believes that the retention of our free and democratic society depends largely on the teaching of responsibility, discipline and loyalty to others; to honour the flag must surely be a part of that teaching. The New Zealand flag is symbolic of many things; to honour it on certain occasions serves as a reminder of our nation's allegiance to the Crown as a member of the Commonwealth and our history. Also, most children enjoy traditional pomp and ceremony.²³⁵

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION EIGHT: THE NEW ZEALAND MILITARY AND FLAGS

INTRODUCTION



Figure 78: World War I New Zealand military headquarters in London. Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association :New Zealand official negatives, World War 1914-1918. Ref: 1/2-014091-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

The story of New Zealand's military and flag use is similar to that of New Zealand schools. During World War I, the flag primarily used by the armed forces was the Union Jack. Examples exist of the New Zealand flag being used, but most of these instances involved the personal actions of individual soldiers rather than an official action by their regiment or battalion. The military made greater use of the New Zealand flag in World War II than it did in World War I.

During World War II, the New Zealand flag and, in particular, New Zealand symbols, came to be strongly associated with its troops. For example, the 2nd Division, which served in Greece, North Africa and Italy, had a silver fern sign (soldiers also wore the silver fern during the Boer War – see fact 54), while the 3rd Division, which served in the Pacific, sported a kiwi. Of the Air Force servicemen and women who fought in Europe, most served in the seven official 'New Zealand' Royal Air Force (RAF) squadrons (i.e., RAF squadrons with large proportions of New Zealanders in them but not exclusively so). These squadrons therefore operated under the Union Jack and in aircraft with the RAF roundel painted on them. New Zealand symbols, such as those evident in aircraft nose art, were common but unofficial. In the Pacific from 1942 onwards, the Royal New Zealand Air Force operated in its own right, and so used both the Union Jack and New Zealand flags, while the force's aircraft flew with RNZAF roundels.

The navy had a similar dual identity, operating as the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy until 1941 when it became the Royal New Zealand Navy. The ships of the New Zealand Division were fully crewed by New Zealanders and flew the New Zealand ensign as the national flag. As was the case with other Empire forces, the

New Zealand forces made dual use of the Union Jack and the national flag—the New Zealand flag. The British Navy White Ensign remained the Navy's ensign, however, until the New Zealand White Ensign replaced it in 1968.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 71

NEW ZEALAND SOLDIERS' EXPERIENCE AT GALLIPOLI MARKED AN IMPORTANT POINT IN NEW ZEALANDERS' SENSE OF NATIONHOOD

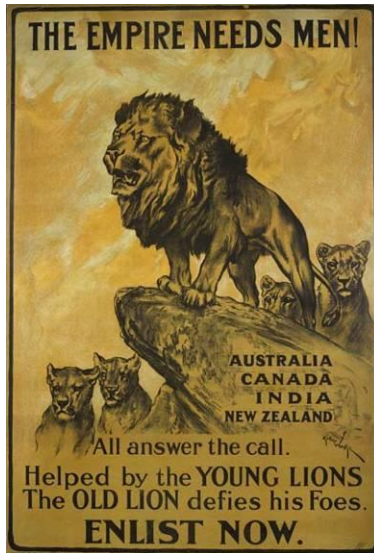


Figure 79: Arthur Wardle [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

When writing *Voices of Gallipoli* (published in 1988), New Zealand author Maurice Shadbolt interviewed elderly men who had fought at Gallipoli. Although the soldiers he interviewed varied in the extent to which allegiance to the British Empire influenced their desire to fight overseas, Shadbolt concluded from what they said that Gallipoli signalled a point at which New Zealanders began to draw away from Britain and towards New Zealand as a nation apart.

As for New Zealanders, the tragedy [Gallipoli] nourished a new and tender nationalism. In the 1980s that nationalism has at last become assertive, with the country reconsidering traditional connections, and defying bullying allies ... In 1915 the idea of New Zealand as a nation—distinct from Britain—was still relatively new and largely a wistful literary conception ... The men who sailed off to Gallipoli may have gone as citizens of the Empire; those who voyaged home were unmistakably New Zealanders. For them, the mystique of Empire, of Britain as motherland, had perished at Chunuk Bair.²³⁶

One of the men Shadbolt interviewed, Tony Fagan, commented: 'I suppose you could say I was looking for adventure. Today people would say we were brainwashed with patriotism. Britannia Rules the Waves on our side, and Deutschland Uber Alles on the other.'²³⁷

Another interviewee, Henry Lewis, said: "I thought the war was a good chance to make a break and get out in the world. Loyalty to the British Empire never had much to do with it. It was just a matter of wanting to get away with the boys."²³⁸ Lewis also spoke of the growing disillusionment the forces at Gallipoli felt about Winston Churchill, Britain's First Lord of the Admiralty and the man responsible for instigating the Dardanelles campaign, of which Gallipoli was a vital part. 'Those sailors called

Churchill pretty horrible names, and told us he was responsible for the whole deal ... We were soon blaming Churchill for all the thousands of lives lost.²³⁹

For Hartley Palmer, Gallipoli 'was a mix of patriotism and adventure. I used to read a lot, especially books about deeds that won the British Empire. There was not the doubt and questioning there is now. We were more simple minded. Britain was a great power, and we were proud of all the areas coloured red on the map of the world, and loyal to the Crown.'²⁴⁰

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 72

THE NEW ZEALAND RED ENSIGN FLEW ON WORLD WAR I NEW ZEALAND TROOP SHIPS



Figure 80: New Zealand Red Ensign, Ministry for Culture and Heritage

During World War I, the British Admiralty instructed the Headquarters of the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces to have all New Zealand transport and troop ships fly the New Zealand Red Ensign. New Zealand's Minister of Defence, James Allen, authorised this directive.²⁴¹ Because New Zealand did not have a navy at this

time, the command was passed to the chartered ships tasked with transporting New Zealand soldiers. These ships were owned by various firms, including the Union S.S. Company, N.Z. Shipping, N.Z. & African S.S. Company, the Commonwealth and Dominion Line and the Shaw, Savill and Albion Company Line.

New Zealand had adopted the red ensign in 1903 and based its design on the British Red Ensign, also known as the Red Duster, flown for centuries by merchant trading ships based in Britain. In 1968, the newly created New Zealand White Ensign replaced the British White Ensign used until this time by the New Zealand Royal Navy.

The origins behind the three different coloured flags (red, white and blue) of the British Royal Navy date back to 1625 when the fleet was divided into three squadrons: red (the van), white (the rear) and blue (the centre).²⁴² In 1864 an Imperial Order in Council instructed the three squadrons to disband and stated that from now on the white ensign would be used for all British vessels commissioned as ships of war.²⁴³ The red ensign was transferred over to merchant ships, and the blue ensign was reserved for British colonies.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 73

TWO NEW ZEALAND FLAGS WERE DEFINITELY AT GALLIPOLI



Colonel Malone at Quinn's Post.

Figure 81: Lieutenant Colonel William Malone's bunker,
[Wikimedia commons](#)

During World War I, two New Zealand flags were known to have been at Gallipoli. One was owned by Stratford (Taranaki) war hero Lieutenant Colonel William Malone; the other by Private John Taylor of the Canterbury Battalion. In his diary of 31 December 1914, Malone wrote: 'I have the only New Zealand flag in Egypt.'²⁴⁴ Malone was commander of the Wellington Infantry Battalion at

Gallipoli, and he was killed at Chunuk Bair. His life was later commemorated with a memorial gate at Stratford. Private Taylor had the flag at Quinn's Post, Gallipoli. The post, just over ten metres from the opposing Turk trenches, was regarded as one of the most dangerous positions on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

In 1946 reporter Elizabeth Parson wrote of a flag that a mother gave to her soldier son just before he left New Zealand to take part in the Great War (later known as World War I). He placed the flag in his pocket. The soldier regarded the flag as a good luck talisman and remarked: "I never treated the flag as a platoon flag. I always carried it in my pocket and I remember in hospital in England, Queen Alexandra was absolutely astonished to find a digger carrying a British flag' (in reality the New Zealand flag).²⁴⁵

New Zealand flags also adorned postcards sent from the battlefields of World War I. One such producer of postcards was Frank Duncan & Co. of Auckland. The author of the publication *Just To Let You Know I'm Still Alive: Postcards from New Zealanders during the First World War*, Glenn Reddiex, wrote: 'Prominent among these patriotic postcards were ... flags, fern, kiwi, and verse.'²⁴⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 74

NEW ZEALAND SOLDIERS RAISED THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG AT LE QUESNOY TOWARDS THE END OF WORLD WAR I

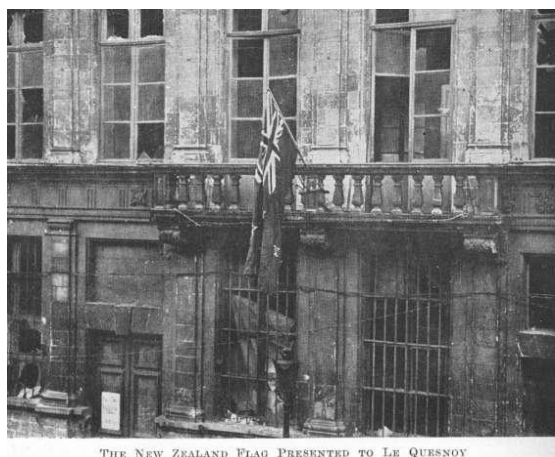


Figure 82: Author: Col. H. Stewart, Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1921, Auckland

On 4 November 1918, New Zealand troops liberated the French fortified town of Le Quesnoy (pronounced le ken-noir) in Northern France, and immediately on doing so raised the New Zealand flag from one of the town's buildings. The fifty New Zealanders who lost their lives during this battle are buried in a cemetery at the town's northern end of the town. Le Quesnoy was surrounded by high walls, and in order to gain entry to the town, the New Zealanders

had to scale them. The first soldier to manage this was Lieutenant Leslie Averill. Le Quesnoy immortalised his actions by naming one of their street's (Rue d'Averill) and the town's primary school (l'École du Lieutenant Averill) after him.²⁴⁷

The date on which the New Zealand Division freed Le Quesnoy is significant for two reasons. First, it was the last day New Zealand troops saw action in World War I, and second, it is regarded as the most successful day of fighting on the Western Front by New Zealand soldiers, who during it advanced ten kilometres and captured 2000 Germans.²⁴⁸ Just eleven days after the war ended in an armistice (on 11 November 1918), the *Wanganui Chronicle* reported that 'The civic authorities of Le Quesnoy have presented the New Zealand Rifle Brigade with the first flag hung in the Grande Place after their entry. It has been decided to include the fern leaf in the town's coat of arms.'²⁴⁹ Unfortunately, the town did not end up modifying their coat of arms in this way.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 75

THE FIRST TIME THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG WAS FLOWN IN BATTLE WAS 1939



Figure 83: S P Andrew Ltd. S P Andrew Ltd
(Photographer) : Ref: PAColl-4415-05. Alexander
Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

On 13 December 1939, the HMS *Achilles*, which was accompanied by the British ships *Ajax* and *Exeter*, opened fire on the German 'pocket battleship' *Admiral Graf Spee* in the South Atlantic Ocean. The encounter, which came to be known as the Battle of the River Plate, was the first time a New Zealand unit engaged in combat in World War II. It was also the first time that the New Zealand flag was raised in battle.

Just before the three Allied ships engaged the German ship, a signalman on the *Achilles* ran forward, carrying with him the New Zealand ensign and then shouting, *Make way for the Digger flag!* as it was hoisted up the mainmast.²⁵⁰

After the men of the *Achilles* returned to New Zealand in February 1940, huge numbers of Aucklanders and Wellingtonians turned out to see them parade through the streets of the two cities early in April. Just a few days earlier, on 30 March, the flag raised aboard the *Achilles* had been draped over the coffin of Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage, who had died in office on 27 March.²⁵¹ Thousands and thousands of people lined the streets of Auckland as Savage's funeral cortège travelled from central Auckland to Bastion Point, where Savage was buried.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 76

DURING THE WORLD WARS, THE MILITARY USED THE UNION JACK AS ITS PALL

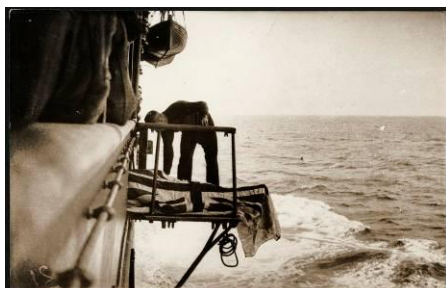


Figure 84: A body being readied for burial at sea during World War I. Williams, Charles Athol, 1899-1990 : Ref: PAColl-0184-1-035. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

A pall is a cloth draped over a coffin during a funeral. Throughout both World Wars, the military's official practice was to place a Union Jack over the coffins of its members who died in service.

In 1942 funeral director E. Morris Junior wrote to the Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs, J. W. Heenan, to ask him just which flag should be used during military funerals. According to Morris, funeral directors 'maintain that there is only one flag that represents the King and Empire and that is the Union Jack and therefore that is the only flag permissible to be used at military funerals ... Every soldier swears allegiance of this King and Empire, and the Union Jack is the only flag that truly represents King and Empire.'²⁵² Heenan responded: 'The Army Secretary's reply to the question was that so far as military funerals are concerned, the custom is to use the Union Jack to cover the casket. The Naval Secretary has stated that it is customary for the coffin of any deceased member of the Naval Forces to be draped with a six breadth Union Jack.'²⁵³ The Air Force also agreed with this practice.

In his book *Johnny Enzed: The New Zealand Soldier in the First World War*, Glynn Harper quoted one veteran of that war who remembered: 'Every morning a dreadful significant line of figures lies in the stern covered with the Union Jack ... It is all a horrible nightmare'.²⁵⁴ Among the many funerals of military personnel during World War II was that of Gunner Leslie Gauld in 1941. A member of the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force, Gauld had been invalided home to New Zealand from England, but he collapsed and died on his return. The *Auckland Star* reported: 'Representatives of the Otahuhu Returned Association were present and provided the Union Jack which covered the casket.'²⁵⁵ In 1950, the authors of the official history of New Zealand chaplains who served the military during World War II

recorded that the New Zealand Royal Navy always used the Union Jack during burials at sea.²⁵⁶

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 77

INTERNAL AFFAIRS RECOMMENDS USE OF THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG AT WAIKUMETE CEMETERY



Figure 85: Joseph William Allan Heenan. Pascoe, John Dobree, 1908-1972 Ref: 1/4-020963-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

'because ex-servicemen of Empire forces other than those of New Zealand were frequently buried in the cemetery'.²⁵⁸

In May 1943, the Auckland City Council approved a proposal by the Auckland Returned Servicemen's Association to erect a permanent flagpole at the soldiers plot at Waikumete Cemetery in Glen Eden, Auckland. The association said they would only erect the flagpole, however, if the Union Jack and not the New Zealand flag was hoisted and lowered to half-mast every time a serviceman was buried at the cemetery.²⁵⁷ The association explained that the person who had donated the £100 cost of the flagpole wanted this condition in place

Captain Reginald Judson V.C. of the association expressed doubts about whether anybody had a right to hoist the Union Jack without express authority,²⁵⁹ a concern taken up by the Under-Secretary of the Department of Internal Affairs, J. W. Heenan. He sent a memo to Town Clerk James Melling at the Auckland Town Hall: 'I notice,' Heenan wrote, 'that it is proposed to use the Union Jack for all burials. This does not seem to me to be right, since, as far as New Zealand soldiers are concerned, the only proper flag to use is the New Zealand Ensign. With regard to Imperial men, the Union Jack would be the proper flag.'²⁶⁰

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 78

THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG FEATURES IN JIM HENDERSON'S GUNNER INGLORIOUS

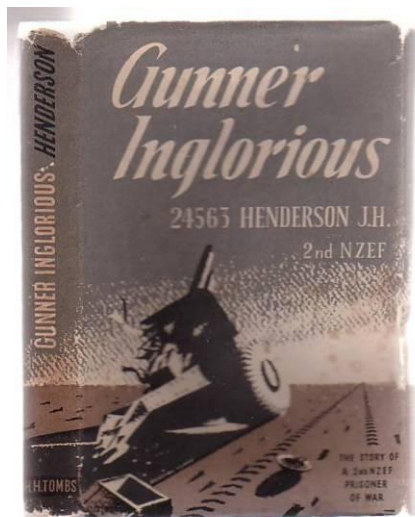


Figure 86: Gunner Inglorious cover,
Wikimedia Commons

Gunner Inglorious is author, historian, and broadcaster Jim Henderson's account, published in 1945, of his wartime experiences. In the book, Henderson wrote of his feelings on seeing the New Zealand flag on his voyage home:

After supper we go up on deck, two bottles of *Stella* beer between us. High on the foremast floats the New Zealand flag, flown whenever New Zealanders are in this British ship. Could we ask for anything more? Mac looks up, the muscles work on his elderly face, he stiffens to attention, he salutes, I hear him murmur:

'The old flag ... the best of the lot.'

I wave up to the beloved four red stars on the blue with the Union Jack and say: 'Hya, toots' to stop myself bursting into tears.²⁶¹

Henderson's war story was remarkable. He served as a gunner in the Middle East with the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force before the Germans killed his crew at Sidi Rezegh in 1941. His leg shattered (and later amputated) and suffering from a chest wound, he was taken prisoner by German forces and held in Italy for 19 months. *Gunner Inglorious* sold an estimated 100,000 copies and was made into a stage show.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 79

THE UNION JACK HAS BEEN FLOWN AT HALFMAST WHEN AN RSA MEMBER DIES



Figure 87: Union Jack photo: Cpl Steve Bain via Wikimedia

In 1962 the General Secretary of the Returned Servicemen's Association (RSA) contacted the Department of Internal Affairs on behalf of the Patea RSA to ask about flag etiquette on the death of a member. J. L. O'Sullivan, responding on behalf of the Secretary of Internal Affairs, advised that a flag can be flown on the day of such a death or funeral, or both. He then offered further advice.

If it is desired to half-mast the flag, this should be done for the funeral only, and the flag to be used should be the Union Jack, as the New Zealand Ensign is only half-masted on the death of a National or Empire statesman and on the occasion of the death of the Head of a Foreign State or demise of the Crown. I think you will appreciate that should the practice of half-masting the New Zealand Ensign at the funerals of Returned Association members, especially in the smaller centres, be encouraged, this would lead to confusion and would become a purely automatic gesture which in time would become meaningless. However, all would be in order if the Union Jack was used, and this would be an adequate mark of respect on such occasions.²⁶²

The department's position at time was the same as the position evident in its ruling on this matter in 1951 and 1954.²⁶³

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 80

THE MONIKER 'KIWIS' BEGAN WITH THE NEW ZEALAND MILITARY AND BOOT POLISH

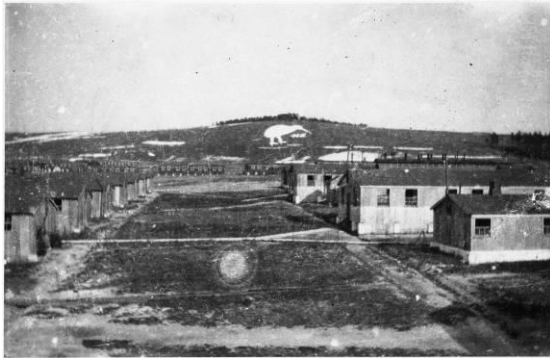


Figure 88: Sling Camp, Salisbury Plain, England, after World War 1. Johnson, Margaret :Collection of photographs and postcards of assorted subjects. Ref: PAColl-6129-02. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In 1906 Australian William Ramsay called his newly invented shoe polish 'Kiwi' in honour of his wife's country of birth.²⁶⁴ The brand earned high demand when war broke out in Europe in 1914 because men in the military needed it to shine their boots, belts and horses' tack. The popularity of the polish and a large chalk kiwi on the hill above Sling Camp (made in 1919 as troops awaited to go home and set on England's Salisbury Plains),²⁶⁵ contributed to the New

Zealand military acquiring the moniker 'Kiwis', a nickname much in evidence by World War II. That the kiwi had featured on military badges since 1886 and that several World War I regiments used it probably also contributed to the nickname.²⁶⁶

Today, the kiwi emblem still appears on the uniforms of New Zealand soldiers and continues to be used in many spheres of New Zealand life and commerce. It has appeared on stamps, currency and lottery tickets, been used by the state television broadcaster as a means of bidding viewers good night, given as a nickname to one of New Zealand's prime ministers (Keith Holyoake), and provided the name of one of our home-grown banks. And, of course, New Zealanders are now known worldwide as Kiwis. Many New Zealanders will also recall the large Kiwi signs decorating the skylines of Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington, and Palmerston North during the 1960s.²⁶⁷

The kiwi was a popular option among the designs suggested during the Flag Consideration Project, however was not selected by the Flag Consideration Panel for inclusion in the first referendum as they felt other designs better met their criteria (outlined in fact 10).

NEW ZEALAND FLAG FACTS

FLAG FACTS SECTION NINE: THE 'CHANGE THE FLAG' DEBATE

INTRODUCTION



Figure 89: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

The debate over whether to change the New Zealand flag has been going on ever since the current New Zealand flag was made New Zealand's official national flag in 1902. The journey that Canadians experienced when changing their flag has also had a long-standing impact upon the debate in New Zealand. In 1946,

Invercargill-born Geoffrey Cox, who gave vivid eyewitness accounts of events in Europe during the 1930s and 40s and was later acknowledged as a 'TV trailblazer' in the UK, suggested that it was time New Zealand changed its national flag. His suggestion was sparked by New Zealanders living in London who were following the Canadian debate over changing the emblem on their flag to the maple leaf.

I have personally long been of the opinion that we should make a similar change in the New Zealand flag by replacing the four stars by the silver fern leaf. At present the New Zealand flag and the Australian flag are so similar as to be constantly confused so that the ordinary man has yet another reason for thinking that New Zealand is probably just a part of Australia (this is still a common fallacy in Britain).²⁶⁸

Initially small in volume, the call to change the current flag reached a crescendo during the 1960s when Britain attempted, and was eventually successful in 1973, to join the EEC. During that time and since, MPs from both Labour and National have suggested changing the flag, but evidence from opinion polls continued to indicate that the public's appetite was not sufficiently hearty to warrant any attempt to change the flag. As the 1980s began, the Department of Internal Affairs, already focussed on the forthcoming (in 1990) sesquicentenary celebrations of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, suggested that now might be the time for New Zealand to develop a new flag.²⁶⁹

After a series of competitions held by several newspapers during the 1980s, the New Zealand weekly periodical the *Listener* launched a serious 'change the flag' campaign in 1989, but like previous efforts it failed to sufficiently spark.²⁷⁰ The next concerted effort to change the flag came in 2004 when Wellington businessman, the late Lloyd Morrison, attempted to gain enough signatures for a citizens-initiated referendum on the subject. That effort was also unsuccessful.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 81

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY REQUESTS TO CHANGE THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG



Figure 90: Maori Battalion at a transit camp in Egypt. New Zealand. Department of Internal Affairs. War History Branch :Photographs relating to World War 1914-1918, World War 1939-1945, occupation of Japan, Korean War, and Malayan Emergency. Ref: DA-06839-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

The first time someone seriously suggested changing the New Zealand flag appears to have been in 1897. M. J. Stewart of Thames wrote to the Minister of Education stating that 'before taking any steps to more generally recognise the present so-called N.Z. flag ... [government should] carefully weigh and consider the strong claim of the flag suggested by Mr Busby [the United Tribes flag]'.²⁷¹

Since then, flag-change requests have been many and varied.

For example, in 1906 the Otago Yacht Club wrote to the Minister of Marine to ask if they could use the blue ensign with a distinguishing symbol, such as a crown crescent or a fern.²⁷² In April 1943, 31 pupils of Tikitiki Native High School wrote to Prime Minister Peter Fraser. In their letter, they set out why they felt a flag change was timely: 'The stirring deeds of our Māori soldiers have prompted us to ask you to consider including in the flag of New Zealand a Māori emblem to commemorate their valour'.²⁷³ Twenty-four years later, Cecil Andrews of Wellington wrote to the Marine Department advising that 'in view of our changing status over the years, the question arises as to whether, as a nation, our national flag has kept pace with our graduation as a nation'.²⁷⁴ In 1968 Prime Minister Keith Holyoake received several letters about changing the flag. L. B. Doggett wrote that a new flag should contain the Union Jack, a kiwi and a silver fern.²⁷⁵ F. X. Quin believed the flag should change because it was always confused with Australia's, and the current flag showed us as a dependency of Britain.²⁷⁶ S. L. Davis's suggested new flag had an outline of New Zealand in the canton but retained the Southern Cross stars in the fly.²⁷⁷ Twelve-year-old Aucklander S. J. Shirley asked why the kiwi or silver fern did not appear in the middle of the New Zealand ensign.²⁷⁸ In reply, Holyoake said: 'If it was decided to identify New Zealand more directly on the flag, this could be done by

incorporating suitable emblems, such as the kiwi or fern-leaf.²⁷⁹ However, changing the flag could only occur if there was 'widespread demand' to do so.²⁸⁰

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 82

DURING THE 1920S CANADA ASKED NEW ZEALAND WHAT WE THOUGHT OF OUR FLAG



Figure 91: Canadian flag

In April 1920, the New Zealand Parliament received a letter from Canadian MP Robert Manion, curious as to other British dominions' use of their flags: 'Will you be so good as to inform me at your earliest convenience as to whether or not you have a distinct flag of your own, separate from the Union Jack of Great Britain?'²⁸¹

Debate in Canada over flags led to further queries from Canadians to the New Zealand Government in 1922, 1925, 1927 and again in 1944, when the Office of the High Commissioner in Canada asked for further information about the New Zealand flag. The following year, Evelyn Carson wrote from Canada to the New Zealand Prime Minister: 'We understand that New Zealand had her own flag, and we would like to know whether the people of your country voted for their favourite version of a New Zealand flag, or whether your Government chose it.'²⁸²

In 1967 in New Zealand, Clark Titman produced an alternative New Zealand flag design based on the Canadian flag. It received much press.²⁸³ His flag had the hoist (the part of the flag nearest the pole) and fly (the part farthest from pole) coloured in red. One part of the section coloured in red represented Māori; the other represented the British. He left the Southern Cross in blue as depicted on the current New Zealand ensign. Journalist Gordon Campbell observed after the New Zealand *Listener* ran a competition to find a new flag for New Zealand that 'someone in power will have to champion a new design in much the same way Lester Pearson pushed through the maple leaf design in Canada. The *Listener* evidence confirms that most people want a change ... the [Canadian] public first resisted the new design, argued about it, lived with it and finally liked it.'²⁸⁴

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 83

NEW ZEALAND DEBATED CHANGING THE FLAG IN THE 1960S WHEN BRITAIN WANTED TO JOIN THE EEC



Figure 92: Dansey, Harry Delamere Barter, 1920-1979. Ref: E-549-q-10-060. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In July 1967 after Britain had tried for the second time to join the EEC and failed, the *Manawatu Standard* had this to say:

All the colonies and other territories of the Empire that have become republics since the Second World War have chosen new banners, without the Union Jack. That must leave only the Australians and ourselves living under ensigns which incorporate the Great Union flag ... Even with Britain a full member of the European Economic

Community and New Zealand's trade and defence centred upon the Pacific, it's hard to imagine any strong public pressure for the removal of the Union Jack from our ensign. Its place is earned on the basis of history alone, quite apart from any special considerations. Indeed, New Zealanders often fly the Union Jack when they could be displaying their national pride better by hoisting the New Zealand ensign; just as we will sing 'God Save the Queen' on appropriate occasions, having no national anthem other than that.²⁸⁵

According to Michael Robson, author of *Decision at Dawn: New Zealand and the E.E.C.*, Britain's efforts to join the EEC 'signalled a "new" New Zealand—one which after a 130 year association with the Mother Country, would at last stand alone.'²⁸⁶

He continued:

New Zealand's debt to Britain is a considerable one and it is foolish to deny it. Our law, our Parliament, our conceptions of the civil service, our press—all of these are modelled to great advantage on their British counterparts. Then there are the very strong family ties. This accepted, New Zealanders are New Zealanders and not British ... New Zealand's drift away [from Britain] has been peaceful and evolutionary, the changes often so subtle and gradual they have been scarcely discernible.²⁸⁷

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 84

LABOUR LEADER NORMAN KIRK WAS THE FIRST POLITICIAN TO PUBLICLY SPEAK ABOUT CHANGING THE FLAG



Figure 93: Norman Kirk. Hill, Morris James, 1929-2002 :Negatives of Wellington, and national events and personalities. Ref: 35mm-18291-21-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In August 1962 MP for Lyttelton and future New Zealand Prime Minister Norman Kirk suggested erasing the Southern Cross from the national flag and replacing it with the kiwi because the flag looked so similar to Australia's. The then Prime Minister Keith Holyoake retorted: 'We could adopt a slogan—call us kiwis.'²⁸⁸ New Zealand economist and author Brian Easton later write of Kirk: 'At the heart of his nation building was national identity.'²⁸⁹

Kirk was not to be the only Labour politician and party member to suggest flag change. When Labour became the government in 1972, members of the party continued to advocate for changing the flag. They introduced a remit proposing that the flag be altered, only to have it defeated when it came to the vote at the party's 1973 conference.²⁹⁰

The party made the same attempt at its 1989 annual conference. This time the remit was defeated by 144 votes to 136.²⁹¹ The previous year, Labour Minister for Foreign Affairs Russell Marshall had called for the flag to be changed. Four years on, the former Labour MP who became the leader of Mana Motuhake, Matiu Rata, claimed that the flag needed to change in order to 're-establish our national identity'.²⁹² Helen Clark, Labour Prime Minister from 1999 to 2008, also supported changing the flag. She suggested removing the Union Jack.²⁹³

In 2010 Labour MP Charles Chauvel promoted a Private Members Bill that called for a review of the New Zealand flag (see fact 90). Labour also promoted change as part of their 2014 manifesto, with MP Trevor Mallard releasing the Internal Affairs policy on the matter:

The time has come for a change and it is right for the issue to be put to the public. We would however support the ability of the RSA and similar organisations to continue to

fly the current flag if they so wish. New Zealand changed its national anthem from 'God Save the Queen' on a gradual, optional basis and that process worked.²⁹⁴

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 85

GEORGE WALSH WAS THE FIRST NATIONAL MP TO SPEAK PUBLICLY ABOUT CHANGING THE FLAG



Figure 94: George Walsh. Tauranga City Libraries Research Collections

In 1966 the *Bay of Plenty Times* reported that National MP George Walsh had said the Union Jack means nothing to some countries where it once flew. Commenting on New Zealand MPs who had travelled abroad and subsequently warned New Zealand of changes occurring internationally, Walsh observed: 'During both world wars, Britain stood for the right of countries to

go their own way and now the Empire was at an end and a Commonwealth had been formed ... The days of the Union Jack are gone.'²⁹⁵ Walsh's comments attracted some impassioned responses. R. W. Littlebury, for example, after stating he had been born in England, said: 'A flag, no matter of what country, is not just flown to look pretty, but as a reminder of their Sovereign state, and the Union Jack ... [is] respected and known throughout the world by right-thinking people.'²⁹⁶

In 1979 the Minister of Internal Affairs, David Allan Highet (Allan), made a suggestion to change the national flag so that it had a silver fern (see fact 87). In 1998 National Minister of Cultural Affairs Marie Hasler advocated for changing the flag to a silver fern, a suggestion backed by then Prime Minister Jenny Shipley. Shipley's predecessor, Jim Bolger, had also favoured changing the flag. He recalled at one of the commemorations of the landing in Europe of World War II when the Australian High Commissioner walked off stage with the New Zealand Flag. With the New Zealand flag already taken, Bolger took the Australian ensign as it was the only one left²⁹⁷. In March 2014, eight months before the general election, National Prime Minister John Key announced his intention to establish a process directed toward determining the future of the New Zealand flag.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 86

IN 1969 INTERNAL AFFAIRS NOTED INCREASING CRITICISM OF THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG



Figure 95: Cabinet Ministers at Government House. Further negatives of the Evening Post newspaper. Ref: EP/1966/5405-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In June 1969, the Department of Internal Affairs, having noted the increasing frequency of criticism concerning both the New Zealand flag and the national anthem called for a report indicating 'the possible changes which should be considered and the methods by which each could be achieved.'²⁹⁸ In August that same year, Minister of Internal Affairs David Seath wrote:

The present New Zealand flag has been used since 1902, and at different times Government has received a number of suggestions about changing the design of the flag. If it was to identify New Zealand more directly on the flag, this could be

done by incorporating suitable emblems, such as a kiwi or fern-leaf ... not justified unless there was 'widespread demand for this to be done'. The suggestions made are infrequent and do not represent the views of many people.²⁹⁹

Earlier in 1969, the weekly New Zealand magazine the *Listener* had asked several New Zealanders for their views on the flag. Trade Union Secretary Ken Douglas suggested a silver fern and Southern Cross. 'New Zealand's flag,' he said, 'depicts our colonial association with Great Britain. A flag should depict the country's aims and aspirations ... We should have as our flag a design which depicts New Zealand as an entity portraying racial unity, progress and independence.'³⁰⁰ Art critic Hamish Keith said the current flag had no characteristics identifiable with New Zealand and suggested a koru as a replacement.³⁰¹

Not everyone interviewed agreed with changing the flag. Hamilton Mitchell, Dominion President of the Returned Servicemen's Association, did not want change, a sentiment supported by the President of the Royal Commonwealth Society of

Christchurch, K. H. Bartlett: 'I still believe New Zealanders owe a great deal of allegiance to the country from which so many of its population have its origins.'³⁰²

Freelance journalist Owen Gager was one of the people who disagreed with the sentiments expressed by Mitchell and Bartlett:

The present design suggests two things; we are British and we are in the Southern Hemisphere. As a third generation New Zealander, I don't feel British, and I think most of my generation don't; it seems clear that in the next few years our trade with Britain will slowly diminish. Our formerly dependent status to Britain is supposed to have ended with our ratification of the Statute of Westminster.³⁰³

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 87

MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS RECEIVES DESIGNS FOR A NEW FLAG IN 1979

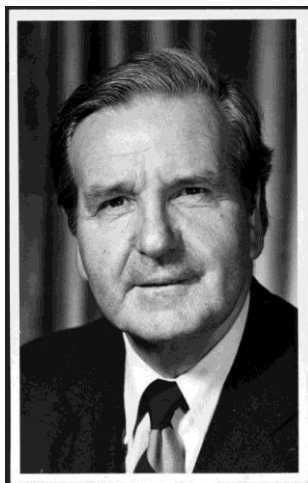


Figure 96: David Allan Highet
The Dominion Post
Collection, Alexander
Turnbull Library

In 1979 Minister of Internal Affairs David Allan Highet (Allan) suggested changing the flag so that it had a silver fern on the fly³⁰⁴. Highet had overseen legislation seeking to strengthen national identity. In 1976 he introduced the Waitangi Day Act, which changed the name given to the February 6 public holiday back to Waitangi Day from New Zealand Day. The following year, after submission of a petition to government, he legalised God Defend New Zealand as one of New Zealand's two national anthems (the other being God Save the Queen) and in 1977 he introduced the Citizenship Act that established New Zealand citizenship as a citizenship separate from that accorded by Commonwealth membership.

As a result of his suggestion, Highet received written support and designs for a new New Zealand flag. Frances Millar, the Mayor of Invercargill, supported the idea but stressed that he hoped any design would incorporate the Union Jack³⁰⁵. The New Zealand Ambassador to Germany, B.F. Bolt, also submitted a design that represented 'Ao-tea-roa'³⁰⁶.

Highet responded to the people who had submitted their design stating 'No change is contemplated at the present time, but the designs you have submitted will be held for future reference. Should a competition for the design of a new flag be held at some future date you will be advised of the details'³⁰⁷. The following month, Highet responded to another flag designer that '...I receive many representations about the New Zealand Ensign. There is however no indication of a widely based desire for a change in the design of the flag and some sections of the public are quite strongly opposed to any change'³⁰⁸.

The debate about changing the flag resulted in the secretary of the national Commonwealth Games Association, George Craig, deciding unilaterally to dispense with the national flag and to use a design based on the 1974 Commonwealth Games

in Christchurch to represent the New Zealand contingent attending the Brisbane Commonwealth Games of 1982³⁰⁹. The move by Craig clearly surprised his fellow association executive members with the board meeting to overturn the decision before the team departed.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 88

THE LISTENER RAN A COMPETITION TO FIND A NEW DESIGN FOR THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG



Figure 97: NZ Listener

In late 1989, with the 1990 sesquicentenary celebrations of te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi looming, the *Listener* magazine convened a panel of artists and designers and asked them to suggest designs for new New Zealand flag designs. The magazine also invited entries from the public. The *Listener* advised that the winning entry would be submitted to the government and it proposed that a national referendum should follow so that New Zealanders could decide what the flag should be. *Listener* writer Gordon Campbell reflected on comments that Australian columnist Ron Saw made

after Ausflag ran a similar competition in the mid-1980s:

But a national flag ... has a lot more to do with identity than it has inheritance. The same argument, by extension, applies to New Zealand. There is a British heritage, expressed in many ways in this country, yet that heritage need not be expressed in the New Zealand flag; our own identity can be ... It is not easy to focus on what is essential about New Zealand, and then think up a design that will harmoniously express it.³¹⁰

Some politicians opposed the campaign. Coromandel MP Graeme Lee wanted to introduce a Private Members Bill that would require the consent of three-quarters of politicians to agree to changing the flag before the ensign could be altered.

The competition attracted 600 entries, after which the *Listener* invited its readers to vote in their top three designs. The line-up of designs voted on included the current New Zealand flag. The winner was announced in July 1990. Receiving just under 4000 votes, it was the current New Zealand flag. This number equated with 43.6 percent of the total vote, so it did not represent the views of the majority of voters. They spread their choices across the other finalists.

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 89

NZFLAG.COM FAILED TO GAIN ENOUGH SIGNATURES ON A PETITION CALLING FOR A CITIZENS-INITIATED REFERENDUM ON CHANGING THE FLAG



Figure 98: Lloyd Morrison and Mayor Bob Harvey at the flag raising at Waitakere City - March 2004

In 2004 a trust titled NZFlag.com, headed by the late Wellington businessman Lloyd Morrison, launched a campaign to gain enough signatures to force a citizens-initiated referendum on whether or not to change the design of the New Zealand flag.³¹¹ The trust supported the adoption of a silver fern design, but the petition failed to gain enough signatures.

Morrison attributed the lack of signatures to inability to assemble a sufficient number of volunteers to collect signatures. This situation had occurred, he said, because the process had 'proved to be a bigger challenge than expected. Telecom's withdrawal of its "InTouch" newsletter, which had looked to have solved the distribution issue, finally made the campaign untenable. We simply failed to get petition forms in front of New Zealanders—apathy was the winner again.'³¹²

Several high-profile New Zealanders did, however, endorse the campaign. Although the Returned Services Association (RSA) remained opposed to any change to the flag, its national body did state that it would amend its position if a national referendum showed that change was what the public wanted. But some district RSA associations, such as Canterbury, disagreed with that stance and voted to oppose any move to change the flag.³¹³

NZ FLAG FACT NUMBER 90

LABOUR'S CHARLES CHAUVEL PROMOTED A PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL CALLING FOR AN INVESTIGATION INTO ADOPTING A NEW FLAG FOR NEW ZEALAND



Figure 99: Charles Chauvel,
Parliamentary Library

As noted in fact 84, in 2010 Labour MP Charles Chauvel submitted a Private Members Bill to the House of Representatives. Titled the New Zealand Flag Bill, its provisions called for a close look at the issue of bringing in a new national flag for New Zealand.³¹⁴

More specifically, if passed, the Bill would result in the creation of a commission that would spend eighteen months consulting the public about whether a new flag should be adopted. The commission, appointed by the Prime Minister after consultation with all party leaders in Parliament, would also hold a nationwide competition for new flag designs, after which it would select the three it thought best reflected New Zealand's national identity, aspirations, culture and heritage. The legislation also allowed for a referendum to be held so that voters could state whether they wanted the current flag to remain or whether they wanted to adopt one of the three designs.

On introducing the Bill, Chauvel stated: 'I think it is timely to have a debate about New Zealand's flag. That debate should be properly resourced, involve widespread consultation, and be respectful ... Only a publicly-funded and run process can hope to ensure these three outcomes.'³¹⁵

CONCLUSION



Figure 100: Image by Flag Consideration Panel

A flag may well be a country's most prominent symbol. It therefore should reflect how the country sees itself as well as how the country wants the world to see it.

Between 3 March and 24 March 2016, New Zealanders will be asked to make an important decision, one that will determine which flag New Zealand flies in the future.

For those eligible to vote, the decision merits careful thought, especially in regard to issues of identity. Whatever the decision, the matter is one that the country is unlikely to revisit in the near future, which means that upcoming generations of New Zealanders will inherit the historic outcome of what will be announced in March this year.

We trust that the material contained in this publication has helped New Zealanders make their decision.

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