

“We are not changing it”: A Reassessment of the History of the Flag

PAUL CHRISTOFFEL

Abstract

According to conventional historical accounts, the New Zealand Ensign Act 1901 changed the national flag from the Union Jack to the current flag. This article shows that the 1901 Act did not change the national flag; it merely reconfirmed that the New Zealand ensign was ‘the recognised flag of the colony’. During 1900 the public became confused when an apparent rival national flag emerged thanks to a bureaucratic bungle. The 1901 Act abolished the rival flag, which was highly unpopular due to its unsightly white disc.

The debates and discussions inspired by the flag referendums of 2015 and 2016 aroused in many New Zealanders a curiosity about the history and origins of the flag. To assist, the government provided a number of online resources, including updated articles on two web sites operated by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage. The Flag Consideration Panel produced a handy short video on the history of the flag and commissioned one of its members, historian Malcolm Mulholland, to write an informative booklet entitled *New Zealand Flag Facts*.¹

According to these sources, New Zealand has already twice changed its national flag. In 1840 the Union Jack replaced the United Tribes flag as the recognised flag.² The Union Jack remained the national flag until 1902, when the New Zealand Ensign Act 1901 came into effect, replacing the Union Jack with the current flag.³ Yet the New Zealand Ensign Act, which is the main focus of this article, says nothing about a change of flag. The few historians who have looked at the issue have misunderstood why it was passed, and in doing so have overlooked an intriguing story of bureaucratic bungling.

This article argues that there have been no abrupt changes of flag. It is debatable that the Union Jack was ever the national flag, and the current flag did not become the recognised ensign overnight. Rather, its status as national flag was gradually accepted in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The New Zealand Ensign Act 1901 contributed to this acceptance but it did not institute a decisive change. The first piece of legislation to declare the current flag to be the national one was passed in 1981.⁴ New Zealand is not greatly out of kilter with comparable countries in this respect. Australia had no legislation recognising a national flag until 1954 and Canada had none until 1965.⁵ No Act of Parliament or proclamation has ever recognised the Union Jack as the national flag of the United Kingdom, yet it has that status both inside and outside the British Isles.⁶ To a large extent it is convention and accepted usage that makes a flag or ensign a national symbol in absence of clear legislative recognition.⁷

The First National Flag

New Zealand’s first national flag – putting aside arguments about when the country became a nation – came into being in 1834. Today, it is known as the “United Tribes flag,” and is commonly considered symbolic of Māori independence. Its origins, however, were rather more prosaic. By the 1830s, ships were being built in New Zealand, but their owners had difficulty trading in Australia due to the lack of a flag to fly, as required under maritime law then as now. Both Māori and Pākehā were affected. In 1830, a Māori-owned ship, the *Sir George Murray*, was seized in Sydney for lack of registration papers or an officially recognised flag.⁸ New

Zealand resident James Busby worked with the Governor of New South Wales to address the shipping problem. In October 1834, Busby presented three flag designs to northern chiefs, who selected one by vote. The chosen flag was then hoisted to the accompaniment of a 21-gun salute from *HMS Alligator*. King William IV eventually approved the flag, a drawing of which was circulated by the Admiralty with instructions to “acknowledge and respect the national flag of New Zealand.”⁹

The recent government sources already mentioned offer three main arguments for how the Union Jack superseded the original flag in 1840. The first is that, although no legislation ever declared the British flag to be the national flag of New Zealand, it was once proclaimed as such.¹⁰ A major stumbling block for this argument is that no one has yet found any evidence of such a proclamation. A second line of argument offered claims that the “Union Jack (the British flag) replaced the United Tribes’ flag as the recognised flag of New Zealand when the Treaty of Waitangi was signed on 6 February 1840.”¹¹ There was thus supposedly something about the signing of the Treaty that made the Union Jack “the recognised flag of New Zealand.” A third argument maintains that the British flag replaced the 1834 flag through the action of British troops in tearing down flags raised by New Zealand Company settlers and raising the Union Jack in their place.¹² Thus the British flag, rather than merely symbolising British sovereignty over the colony, became the New Zealand flag through the act of flag-raising.¹³ Even if we ignore the questionable legality of the actions described (no British law prevents people flying non-British flags), this last argument seems no more convincing than the other two.¹⁴

Just as no proclamation or law declared the Union Jack to be the national flag, there was similarly no such law or proclamation rescinding the status of the 1834 flag. Some evidence indicates that this flag continued to be used on occasions, albeit in a much diminished capacity. A British Admiralty flag book dated 1845 includes an illustration of the United Tribes flag.¹⁵ A flag chart produced by a prominent American atlas maker during the 1860s shows the flag of New Zealand to be the 1834 flag.¹⁶ A civic reception in Wellington in 1843 featured both the Union Jack and “the flag of New Zealand.”¹⁷ In 1858, a *Lyttleton Times* report on the laying of the foundation stone for the new government buildings in Christchurch noted that “the central mast bore the Union Jack, with the flag of New Zealand below.”¹⁸ By then, the 1834 flag was primarily used by Māori, such as at the installation of Pōtatau Te Wherowhero as Māori King later that year.¹⁹ Because New Zealand became a British colony in 1840, ships originating there gained the right to fly British flags. The original New Zealand flag faded from use as a result, and a variant eventually became the house flag of the Shaw Savill shipping line.²⁰ By the late 1860s, however, a replacement was on the way.



Figure 1. The 1834 flag, now generally called the United Tribes Flag. Source: Wikimedia Commons, photograph by Tim Parkinson, 17 October 2006, permission to reproduce under the Creative Commons license, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NZ_United_Tribes_flag_photo.jpg, accessed 12 June 2017.

The New Zealand Ensign of 1869

The origins of the current New Zealand flag have been well covered elsewhere.²¹ It resulted from a confused situation in the early 1860s when British and colonial ships were flying a variety of ensigns with the Union Jack in the top left corner. To sort out the confusion the British Admiralty established a standard system. The red ensign would be used by all British and colonial merchant ships. The white ensign would be used by Royal Navy ships only. The blue ensign would be used by other British government ships. Colonial government ships could also use the blue ensign, but only if they inserted their “badge,” as it was called, into the fly.²² After temporarily inserting the initials “NZ” in the fly in 1867, officials eventually came up with a more convincing version of the blue ensign by inserting four red stars with white borders representing the Southern Cross in the fly. The “New Zealand ensign” was proclaimed in October 1869. When the press got wind of the new flag they immediately began referring to it as “the New Zealand flag.”²³ The nearby British colony of Victoria adopted a similar flag around the same time, prompting the *New Zealand Herald* to accuse the Australians of copying the Southern Cross design.²⁴

In 1871 the Governor sent a request to the War Office in London for advice on whether the New Zealand ensign could be used by colonial troops. In the opinion of the Secretary of State for War, Edward Cardwell, it could not.

The Colonial flag is a local ensign used for the sake of convenience, and would probably be carried by vessels having a Colonial registry; but the Imperial flag should be the distinctive mark or ensign of a British possession, thereby indicating the nationality of the inhabitants and their allegiance.... A colour is a distinctive mark of nationality, and Mr. Cardwell does not think that any colony or dependency can abandon such emblems, or adopt a local flag, whilst forming a portion of the Queen’s dominions.²⁵

As a result of this advice, the Union Jack rather than the New Zealand flag was flown from military forts during the pursuit of Te Kooti. Cardwell's views were otherwise never heard of again. It does not appear that the New Zealand government or its residents took much notice of such opinions, which would have precluded the country from adopting a national flag for as long as it remained a British colony or dominion. In 1911, for example, the King's private secretary put a similar view, stating that "the Union Jack is the national flag of Canada *as of all other parts of His Majesty's dominions*" (emphasis added).²⁶ Again, this pronouncement was quietly ignored, in New Zealand at least.

New Zealand's new flag was increasingly flown on land, especially on government buildings.²⁷ The flag also gained recognition abroad. In 1892 New Zealand's Agent-General in London wrote to the Premier requesting illustrations of the New Zealand flag and coat of arms, as he "occasionally received inquiries" as to their design. Officials responded that New Zealand had no coat of arms but enclosed illustrations of the New Zealand flag and information on its origins.²⁸ During the 1890s there was an increasing awareness of national ensigns thanks in part to the Americans introducing flags into school classrooms and instituting the pledge of allegiance.²⁹ In 1895, for example, the *Otago Daily Times* reported that the children of Anderson's Bay School had contributed to a fund "for the purchase of a New Zealand flag for the School – the national flag, to be cared for and venerated as it is in the State schools in America."³⁰ Other schools followed suit.³¹ In 1897, MHR Richard Monk called for a New Zealand flag to be distributed to every school. The Minister of Education agreed to look into it.³²

There was, however, some confusion about which was the correct national flag. One correspondent asked Monk, following his question in Parliament, to clarify the matter. Monk in reply referred to both the United Tribes and Southern Cross flags.³³ In 1896 a newspaper columnist noted that one flag chart showed the New Zealand flag with white stars, another showed it with red stars, and yet another showed the United Tribes flag (none, it should be noted, showed it to be the Union Jack).³⁴ There were also some who objected to the chosen flag. In the early 1890s an Auckland man campaigned for a flag change by distributing a flyer complaining that the New Zealand flag looked just like the Victorian one. He advocated a return to country's original flag established in 1834.³⁵

A Change of Flag?

Despite some confusion, dissent, and public ignorance, by the end of the nineteenth century the New Zealand blue ensign appeared reasonably well-established as the recognised flag. Yet official sources today claim that the Union Jack was the national flag at that time, a status it retained until replaced by the current flag in 1902.³⁶ The evidence for this alleged change of flag lies in the passing of the New Zealand Ensign Act 1901. That Act contains just three clauses and a lengthy preamble, none of which say anything about a change of flag. On the contrary, the preamble states that the flag described in the Act has been "the recognised ensign of the colony" since 1869. Legislation is, of course, rarely self-explanatory, and other evidence may cast more light on the matter.

In 1925, the Canadian government of William McKenzie King proposed setting up a committee, dominated by servicemen, to examine possible designs for a new flag to be used on land. The Prime Minister and the press were inundated with letters of protest and the Parliamentary opposition eventually succeeded in having the idea killed off. "The Union Jack was, still is, and always will be our flag," was one typical expression of opposition.³⁷ So when the New Zealand Parliament allegedly legislated to replace the Union Jack as the recognised

ensign in 1901, a similar level of protest might be expected. At the time, New Zealand was sending thousands of troops overseas in support of British imperial interests in South Africa. In June 1901, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall, heirs to the throne, undertook the second-ever royal tour of New Zealand, the first having been over 30 years earlier. The picture below shows one of a series of arches built across Wellington streets for the occasion.³⁸ Perhaps most importantly, Queen Victoria, who had been Queen of New Zealand for over 60 years, had died in January 1901. To ditch the Union Jack as national flag in the midst of such events would seem an action likely to arouse public passion.



Figure 2. Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York passing under Government Arch, Lambton Quay, Wellington. Photographer unknown, from the Kenneth Adrian Wilson collection, 1/2-136016-F, Alexander Turnbull Library. Reproduced with permission.

Two Ensign Bills went through Parliament, for there was not one but two New Zealand Ensign Acts. The New Zealand Ensign Act 1900 was rejected by British colonial officials due to a drafting error. The Act was redrafted and passed again as the New Zealand Ensign Act 1901. Yet, despite having two bites at the cherry, not one member of the House of Representatives or the Legislative Council objected to a Bill that supposedly discarded the Union Jack as the country's national flag. Indeed, only one Member even mentioned the Union Jack other than as a design feature of the New Zealand ensign.³⁹ Outside of Parliament, not one person is recorded as having raised any concerns, whether in the press or in letters to ministers and government departments.⁴⁰ Furthermore, no one either inside or outside of Parliament is recorded as having suggested that the 1901 Act changed the national ensign. The alleged change of flag appears to have gone completely unnoticed.

There is, of course, an obvious explanation. The New Zealand Ensign Act did not change the national flag. This is clear from reading the preamble to the Act, which provides a brief historical background. As noted earlier, the preamble states, once the typically circumlocutory legal language is translated, that the flag described in the Act has been “the recognised ensign of the colony” since 1869.⁴¹ This wording was inserted into the Act at the behest of Parliament. When the Bill first went to the House of Representatives it had no preamble. Arthur Atkinson, a Member for Wellington City, suggested the Act needed a preamble – otherwise to future generations it would contain “a very gross historical mistake” by giving the impression that New Zealand had no ensign in 1900.

We know there is already an ensign established, of which we are proud. We are not changing it, but simply giving it statutory sanction. I think, therefore, we should have a preamble to the Bill stating that the ensign has been established here for so many years, and that it is found desirable at the present time to give it statutory sanction.⁴²

Atkinson’s fellow Wellington City Member John Hutcheson similarly stated that the ensign described in the Bill was “the flag of New Zealand – the only one since very remote times we have known anything of.”⁴³ Minister of Marine William Hall-Jones put it more succinctly: “We intend to stick to the old flag.”⁴⁴ Premier Richard Seddon subsequently gave Atkinson and two other Members the task of drafting the preamble.⁴⁵

Bureaucratic Bungles and the “Flag Crisis” of 1900

So why then did Parliament consider it necessary in 1900 to give the flag “statutory sanction,” when MHRs considered it to have been the recognised ensign for over 30 years? The Parliamentary debates provide some clues, but they are of little help without some historical context. In June 1900, the country’s oldest daily newspaper, the *Otago Daily Times*, stated confidently: “The blue ensign with the stars representing the Southern Cross is the New Zealand national flag.”⁴⁶ This seems uncontroversial and in line with the views later expressed by MHRs. The *Auckland Star*, however, stated equally emphatically that an ensign that included four stars enclosed within a large white disc was “the official flag of our country.”⁴⁷ The *Star* was far from alone in this view, for many others also believed the national flag had changed to this unflattering design. This belief was understandable, as the new “white disc” flag could be seen during 1900 flying from public buildings and from ships that formerly flew the recognised New Zealand flag. The Ensign Act was an attempt to try and sort out this confusion. The story as to how the country got into the farcical situation of appearing to have competing national flags is an interesting one indeed.

In 1887, the British Board of Trade set up a committee to update its international code of signals, a code system first devised in 1857 to help mariners communicate messages at a distance using specially-designed flags. In February 1898, the Board sent the committee’s final report to various governments for comment, including New Zealand’s.⁴⁸ Minister of Marine William Hall-Jones sought the advice of the Marine Department’s Nautical Advisor, Captain George Allman. In addition to code signals, the Board of Trade report included an inventory of flags then used at sea. Allman looked at the draft and found in it a picture of the British red ensign flown by colonial merchant ships. Rather than show separately the merchant flag of every colony, the report used a generic picture showing, with a white disc, where a colony’s badge might be affixed, should it have one. Allman looked at this picture and came to a startling conclusion that he outlined in a report to the Minister of Marine in April 1898.

Above this flag there is a memorandum stating “with a badge in some cases”. This I take it means that any individual colony can adopt a badge in the disc. *The white disc*

*in the fly of the ensign appears to me to be the Colonial distinguishing mark with or without a badge in it (emphasis added).*⁴⁹

Allman thus concluded from the illustration in the Code Signals report that the Board of Trade required every colonial flag to have a white disc on it. This, to his mind, included the New Zealand blue ensign. The government was at that time considering putting the Southern Cross on the red ensign, so Allman commissioned illustrations showing how the new red and blue ensigns, complete with white disc, might look. He considered several options, including placing a moa or the letters “NZ” inside the white disc.⁵⁰ Perhaps unsurprisingly, Allman was sacked from his job over a separate matter in February 1899.⁵¹

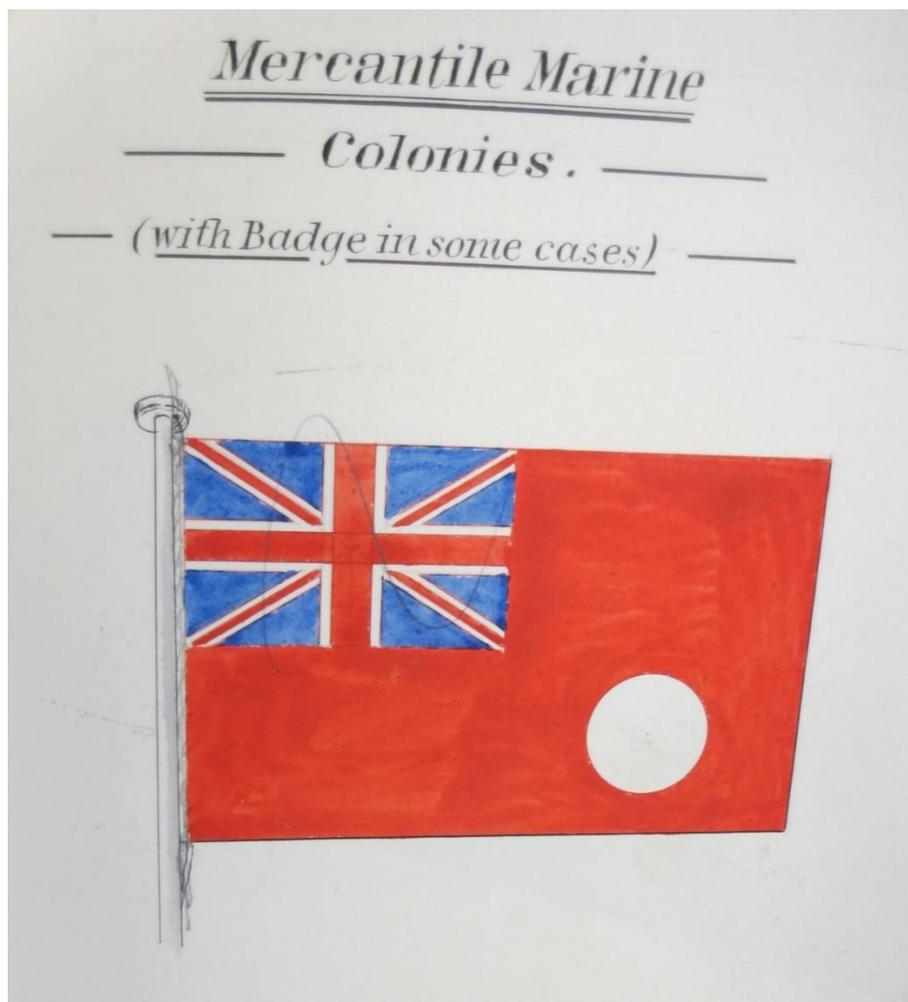


Figure 3: George Allman’s sketch of the illustration from the Board of Trade report. (New Zealand Ensign and Governor General Badge 1866-1939 [Archives Reference: ADOE 16612 M1 1229 / 25/2483 1] Archives New Zealand The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua).. Photographed by the author. Reproduced with permission.

Allman’s report never claimed that the Board of Trade instructed the change of flag, as no such instruction appears in any of the correspondence from the Board. However, through a process of “Chinese whispers” it was soon commonly believed that the Board had ordered the New Zealand government to change its flag when used at sea. In July 1900, in response to a question

about the changed flag design, Premier Seddon told Parliament that the Board of Trade required “for ship signalling and commercial purposes ... that the colonies should have a white disc on the flag.”⁵² This claim has in turn found its way into historical accounts of the disc flag debacle.⁵³ In June 1898 Hall-Jones provided a report to Seddon in which he outlined his intentions to alter the flag and to seek permission from the colonial authorities in London to put the colonial badge on the red ensign.⁵⁴ The following month, the Governor sent a dispatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in which he requested these changes.

My Ministers request me to ask that the stars should in future be placed in white circle on the fly of the ensign, similar to the circle which is to appear on the red ensign. As regards the red ensign for the use of colonial merchant vessels, my Ministers recommend that sanction should be given in the case of New Zealand vessels to the placing of four red stars in the white circle which is to appear on the fly of the ensign.⁵⁵

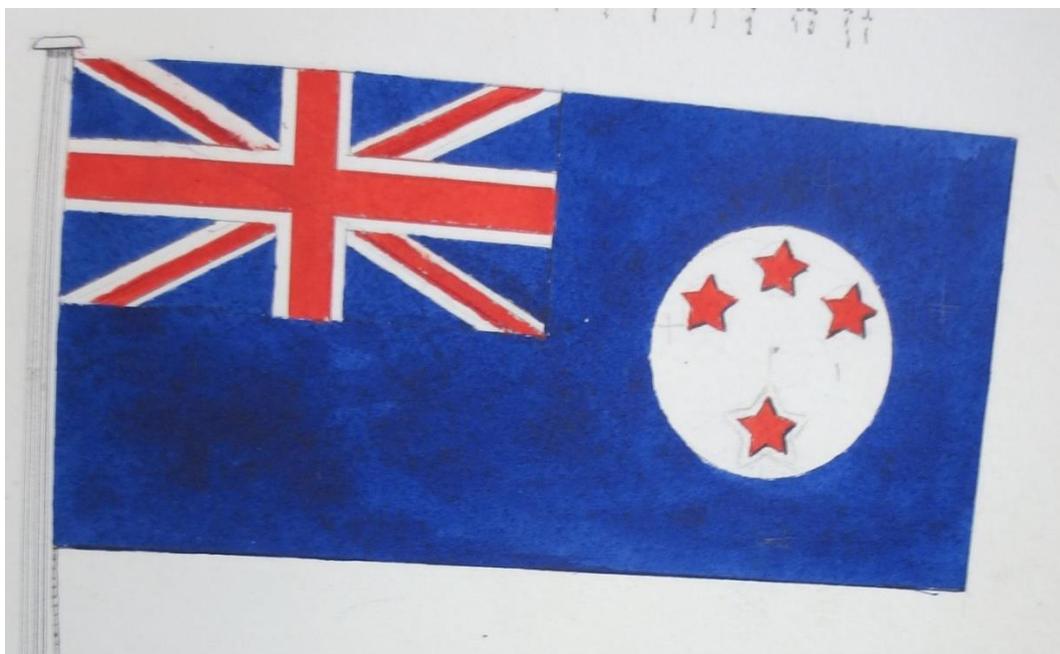


Figure 4: George Allman’s proposed new flag, which was eventually adopted by the government for use at sea but which was also commonly flown on land. (New Zealand Ensign and Governor General Badge 1866-1939 [Archives Reference: ADOE 16612 MI 1229 / 25/2483 1] Archives New Zealand The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua). Photographed by the author. Reproduced with permission.

Nowhere does the dispatch outline the reason for the requested change, which must have perplexed colonial officials. They gave permission for the new flags, and “white disc” flags began appearing on New Zealand ships in late 1899.⁵⁶ The Government intended the white disc flag to be flown only at sea, but failed to communicate this intent to government officials. By early 1900, the blue ensign with the white disc was seen flying from government buildings that had formerly flown the traditional New Zealand flag. The new flag also flew from other public buildings, in some cases with the stars removed and product promotions inserted in the resulting blank white space.⁵⁷ The Government made no announcement about the new flag and its sudden appearance understandably took the public by surprise. One newspaper correspondent outlined his confusion:

I should like to know what is the true flag of New Zealand. A flag, similar to Messrs Shaw and Savill [the United Tribes flag], I understand, was the first, and then a Blue Ensign, with red stars, or red star with white border, or white stars; but to-day I notice the Blue Ensign with a portion of a pawnbroker's sign – a full-moon; on close inspection I notice that the moon is swallowing up 4 little stars.⁵⁸

In March 1900, a bemused flag-maker wrote to the government asking if the new flag recently seen flying from government buildings and ships in Auckland had official approval. He suggested that if the government wished to change the national flag, it should at least choose an attractive design.⁵⁹ Others too were unhappy with the apparent new design – “four oysters on a plate” was one description – and suggested alternatives.⁶⁰ A correspondent to the *Bay of Plenty Times* wrote: “It is much to be regretted that Ministers when changing the New Zealand flag should have kept on the present heraldic fraud in an uglier form.” He suggested a return to the 1834 flag, which was “saluted by the British warships as the flag of an independent State.... Is not that, Sir, a flag to be proud of?”⁶¹ Richard Hobbs – described in the press as “an old New Zealand-born colonist” – started a campaign to revive the 1834 flag.⁶² The New Zealand Natives Association (a club for New Zealand-born Pākehā) supported this idea in a telegram to the Premier.⁶³ The *Auckland Star* wrote: “The new flag is by no means an improvement on the old one.... It would seem that the time has now come when an appropriate flag should be selected for this colony, an ensign which will not be confused with Australian flags.” The *Star* said the proposed revival of the 1834 flag, “deserves the consideration of the Government.”⁶⁴

Marine Minister Hall-Jones was embarrassed by the confusion caused by the flag change initiated by his department, and appears to have ordered government ships to revert to the recognised New Zealand flag. In mid-1900 the government steamer *Tutanekai* switched back to the old flag after previously flying the white disc flag.⁶⁵ Another government steamer, *Hinemoa*, was also spotted flying the traditional New Zealand flag.⁶⁶ The Government had decided – on what basis it is unclear – that the new flags needed to be flown only in overseas ports.⁶⁷ Hall-Jones was horrified to see the white disc flag flying from the government building in Wellington and, in his capacity as Minister of Works, instructed his department that “the New Zealand flag is that which has been flown for so many years without the disc.... Please act accordingly.”⁶⁸ Hall-Jones also wrote to fellow Minister Joseph Ward suggesting Ministers instruct those in charge of public buildings to display the proper New Zealand flag without the disc.⁶⁹

The New Zealand Ensign Act 1900

The white disc flag debacle was even more embarrassing for Seddon, who faced questions in Parliament about the unsightly new flag, its disfigurement with advertisements, and the confusion its sudden appearance had caused.⁷⁰ He and Hall-Jones appear to have expected the new flag to have been confined to the sea and been little noticed by the public. Instead, there was public confusion as to which was the true national flag, and many thought the flag had been changed for the worse. The situation was possibly exacerbated by the community's heightened awareness of flags during the Boer War then underway. Seddon therefore set about trying to remove the confusion and to restore the mana of the New Zealand flag. He came up with two strategies. One was to legislate, as reported in the press: “Recently when replying to sundry hecklings in the House on the subject of the new style of New Zealand Ensign, the Premier declared that he would bring down a Bill to put the matter in form.”⁷¹ Seddon's other strategy was to order the Education Department to issue every school in the country with a New Zealand flag, as Richard Monk had suggested three years earlier. Seddon announced the

school flag proposal during the debate on the New Zealand Ensign Bill, although he had hinted at it earlier.⁷² It was something of an about-turn, for in early 1900 Seddon promised funding for “unfurling the flag” rituals in public schools. This imperialistic movement began with the onset of the Boer War and generally involved the display of British flags rather than the New Zealand ensign.⁷³

Seddon oversaw the drafting of the Ensign Bill, which was introduced into the Legislative Council in September 1900.⁷⁴ It provided for not one but two official New Zealand flags – the 1869 flag for use on land and the white disc flag for use at sea. The Bill also included a third flag – the red ensign with a white disc – for use by merchant ships.⁷⁵ Seddon aimed to reduce confusion by ensuring the hated white-disc flag could only be flown at sea. However, his provision for three separate flags was mocked by the *Otago Daily Times*, which accused Seddon of wanting to change the national flag.

It seems absurd to have three different flags, when one has been for so long generally recognised as the New Zealand flag ashore and afloat.... If Mr Seddon is dissatisfied with the recognised flag, why not revert to the original New Zealand flag, accepted by the Native chiefs in 1834? The flag first recognised as the New Zealand flag is more striking and more distinctive than either of the flags Mr Seddon proposes; and the consent of her Majesty would be more readily obtained for the flag first hoisted and saluted by British warships than for the nondescript ensigns referred to in Mr Seddon’s Bill.... When Parliament is dealing with the matter we hope to see the claims of the original New Zealand flag duly recognised.⁷⁶

Wellington’s *Evening Post* reprinted the *Otago Daily Times* editorial with approval.⁷⁷ The Legislative Council further confused the situation by amending the Bill so that the white disc flags were described as “code signal” flags.⁷⁸ This amendment was presumably inspired by the belief that the British Board of Trade had ordered the design change and that the change had something to do with the international code of signals. The Bill was consequently renamed the “New Zealand Ensign and Code Signals Bill.”⁷⁹ When the Bill went to the House of Representatives, these changes provided John Hutcheson, a trained and experienced seaman, with an opportunity to demonstrate his in-depth knowledge of the subject. “To call it a code signal flag is an absurdity: no nautical man accustomed to flags or their meaning would use the term ‘code signal’ as applied to an ensign or national flag.”⁸⁰

Hutcheson, as with other Members, objected to the inclusion of the white disc flag in the Bill. Indeed, members competed to declare how much they hated this ensign. Seddon himself stated: “The disc that has now been put on the blue ensign...is in itself, to my mind, an abortion, and should not be tolerated on a national flag.”⁸¹ Auckland City Member William Napier called the white disc “conspicuously ugly.” “It defaces the flag; and it is quite incorrect to say – as I understand has been stated in the House – that the Admiralty or the Board of Trade desires that it should be used.”⁸² Arthur Atkinson pointed out there was no need to mention the disc flags in the Act, as these could be dealt with by regulation if need be. Seddon agreed, and all mention of white disc flags was removed from the Bill in committee stage.⁸³ It duly received its third reading and was passed in its amended form by the Legislative Council.⁸⁴ In October 1900 the New Zealand Ensign Act was reserved for “the Queen’s pleasure.”⁸⁵

The various amendments left the New Zealand Ensign Act 1900 with just two substantive clauses. One described the flag and the other provided a penalty for defacing it. The Act therefore did little more than clarify that the colony’s flag had not changed despite the recent appearance of the white disc flag, and prevented the flag being defaced with advertisements.

The hastily-drafted preamble stated that it was desirable that the flag “be established by law as the ensign of the colony for all purposes.” This last sentence raised issues for the Admiralty in London, who pointed out that “all purposes” would incorrectly include New Zealand’s merchant ships, which flew the red ensign. They therefore declined to forward the Act for Royal assent and it never came into force.⁸⁶ The consequences of this rejection were relatively minor given the minimal practical provisions in the Act. Its main purpose, to restore the mana of the flag after the white disc flag debacle, was achieved by the mere passing of the Act.

School flags

In December 1900, the government issued a new postage stamp which featured the New Zealand flag.⁸⁷ The government also began implementing its plan to distribute a New Zealand flag to every school in the country, a measure independent of the Ensign Act but similarly aimed at restoring the mana of the flag. Parliament voted £1500 for 1800 school flags, and in October 1900 the government sought tenders to supply them.⁸⁸ The New Zealand Educational Institute concurrently held a competition in which school pupils suggested the best dates on which to fly the New Zealand flag. The 15 most popular dates were chosen from the lists submitted and schools were instructed to fly their flags on these dates.⁸⁹ Various delays meant that only 78 flags were ready to distribute by May 1901. The flags were sent to schools accompanied by a booklet entitled “The Union Jack and Its Story.”⁹⁰ This is a far cry from Seddon’s tentative agreement in Parliament to send a copy of Richard Monk’s floridly nationalistic Ensign Bill speech to every school.⁹¹ Clearly the Premier’s more imperialistic impulses held sway.

Inglewood School was one of the few to receive a flag in time for the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall in June 1901. The *Taranaki Herald* reported this as the first unfurling of the national flag in Inglewood.⁹² Over the next year the press regularly reported local schools receiving and unfurling their New Zealand ensigns, with the opening of new schools extending the process.⁹³ The national press was particularly interested in the ceremonial flag-raising at one school in February 1902:

A feature of the ceremony connected with the hoisting of the New Zealand ensign at the native school at Waimana, Bay of Plenty, last week, was unique. Most of the elder Maori men present had fought against the flag they were honouring. Te Whiu, who performed the ceremony, was one of Te Kooti’s ablest generals, and bears the marks of three severe wounds received at the hands of Her Majesty’s troops.⁹⁴

The issuing of a New Zealand flag to every school was a symbolic act at least as important as the two Ensign Acts in enhancing the status of the flag. This was in sharp contrast to Australia, where private interests funded the widespread distribution of Union Jacks to schools in 1901. This helped ensure, along with the institution of Empire Day in 1905, that “the Union Jack became firmly established as the flag for Australian public schools.”⁹⁵ This status was only significantly challenged when the government distributed the Australian blue ensign to every school shortly before the 50th jubilee celebrations for the Commonwealth of Australia.⁹⁶ This came nearly 50 years after the New Zealand government took similar action.

The New Zealand Ensign Act 1901

After the New Zealand Ensign Act 1900 was rejected by officials in London it was subsequently redrafted as a new Bill. The Government sought and received permission from the Admiralty to alter the wording to clarify that the New Zealand ensign “may be used for all purposes ashore” but only by government ships at sea.⁹⁷ As a result, the words “for all purposes” in the preamble were replaced by “for the purposes hereinafter mentioned.” A new

clause was added to specify what these purposes were. This clause stated that the New Zealand ensign “shall be the recognised flag of the colony for general use on shore within the colony and on all vessels belonging to the Government of New Zealand” (emphasis added).⁹⁸ In other words, the New Zealand Ensign Act 1901 officially reinstated the traditional New Zealand flag in place of the white disc flag on government vessels. The immediate outcome of the Act, once it received the Royal assent in 1902, was therefore to abolish the much-loathed blue ensign with the white disc instituted nearly three years earlier due to a bureaucratic blunder. Thanks to the provision against “defacing” the flag, the white disc version of the New Zealand flag could no longer be legally flown at all.

The New Zealand Ensign Act 1901 said nothing about the New Zealand ensign being “the national flag.” The words “the recognised flag of the colony” did not appear in the 1900 Act, and in 1901 were part of a clause inserted to clarify that merchant ships could not fly this flag. If the intention behind the two Ensign Acts was indeed to change the status of the New Zealand flag, then words like “recognised flag” would surely have been integral to both Acts from the outset. In 1908, the New Zealand Ensign Act was consolidated on the Shipping and Seamen Act, where it remained until the passing of the Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981. That Act was the first to refer to the New Zealand blue ensign as the “national flag.”⁹⁹

When the New Zealand Ensign Act went through Parliament in 1901 it received only cursory mention in the press. The Parliamentary debate, such as it was, was largely confined to bickering over whose fault it was that the 1900 Act was rejected. When the 1901 Act received Royal assent in June 1902 the press reports were restricted to a brief paragraph. There was no fanfare to greet what some allege was a new national flag. A search of British and Australian newspaper archives failed to uncover any press stories during 1902 on what was supposedly New Zealand’s new flag, although an Australian newspaper in 1901 saw the 1900 Act as a further signal of the Liberal Government’s lack of interest in joining the Commonwealth of Australia.¹⁰⁰ The lack of local press interest is understandable. By 1902 the white disc flags had largely disappeared, on land at least, and New Zealand flags were regularly seen flying on public buildings and at numerous schools throughout the country. An Act that merely confirmed that the New Zealand flag was indeed the New Zealand flag was hardly one to attract significant press comment. The Act did, however, force the Auckland Harbour Board to remove the letters ‘AHB’ from the New Zealand ensign it had flown for many years, as this violated the provision in the statute against defacing the flag.¹⁰¹

There remained some unfinished business, for New Zealand merchant ships continued to fly the red ensign with the stars enclosed within a white disc. By 1903, the new international code of signals had been in force for two years, and Marine Department officials belatedly realised that the code placed no requirement on colonial ships to sport a white disc on their flags. They presumably noticed that no other colony had followed New Zealand’s lead. The Shipping and Seamen Act 1903 thus removed the white disc from the New Zealand red ensign and this “abortion” of a flag was finally consigned to the dustbin of history.¹⁰²

A surprising amount of support for a return to the 1834 Flag emerged during the disc flag debacle of 1900. New Zealanders were attracted to the story behind the flag: the selection by Northern Chiefs of a flag from the three put forward by James Busby, the subsequent 21-gun salute, and its acceptance as the national flag of an independent country by British colonial officials, gave the flag a history that many found appealing. Māori only belatedly joined the discussion. In December 1900, Māori participants in the procession for the Canterbury Jubilee celebrations held aloft the United Tribes flag. They explained its significance to a reporter from

the *Oamaru Mail*, who wrote that this was “the real flag of our country.”¹⁰³ In August 1901, a group of South Island Māori petitioned Parliament requesting legal recognition of the United Tribes flag.¹⁰⁴ In 2015, the Flag Consideration Panel rejected this flag as an option for New Zealand’s flag referendums after consulting Māori at Waitangi.¹⁰⁵ It is perhaps unfortunate that Pākehā were not consulted as well.

The Flag and National Identity

The history of the flag was very much bound up with how New Zealanders saw themselves in the world. Just as national identity did not change overnight, neither did people’s perception of the flag. New Zealanders for a long period enjoyed a strange dual identity, as British subjects and as citizens of a British colony. The British Empire was commonly referred to as a “nation,” and many New Zealanders thus saw themselves as citizens of this “great British nation.” Richard Seddon in many ways embodied this dualistic view. When a Parliamentarian in 1901 suggested that New Zealand should officially call itself a “state” rather than a colony, Seddon responded that “he would rather, as a Britisher, be a colony.”¹⁰⁶ For Seddon, the New Zealand ensign was the local version of the British flag. “We should adhere to the grand old British flag, but on every flag there should be in this colony the southern cross.”¹⁰⁷ In some ways Seddon was right. The New Zealand ensign was little more than a British flag with a small local touch to distinguish it from other colonial flags. Keith Sinclair in his 1987 book on the search for national identity barely mentions the flag but devotes nearly three pages to the New Zealand coat of arms, with its distinctively local elements.¹⁰⁸

A recent book on New Zealand national identity includes several pages on the flag, primarily focussing on the 1901 Act.¹⁰⁹ However, the author fails to explain how he thinks these events contributed to national identity. A September 1900 editorial in the *New Zealand Herald*, on the other hand, drew an interesting and perceptive picture of the relationship between flags and national identity. The paper began, as others did at the time, by expressing its dislike for the white disc flag that had recently appeared. “The flag that has been assigned to New Zealand by that mysterious body, the Imperial Board of Trade, has not even the qualifying virtue of being locally conceived and begotten.” The *Herald* had “a strong suspicion that it is a cautiously-devised test to see how much strain to the square inch our colonial loyalty will bear.” However, while some during the flag crisis of 1900 called for a distinctive flag with a compelling history, the *Herald* wanted the white disc flag to stay.

[D]oubtless, as the years go on, our pride in great deeds done under it and our love for the country we have begun to symbolise with it, will en-halo its ugliness and even cause us to glory in its unrivalled meaninglessness. We will give it a meaning and thus, perchance, heap coals of fire upon its designer’s head. The Americans have nothing much to boast of in the beauty of their Stars and Stripes, and yet have made it famed in song and story. With that example, we may take kindly to the flag ... as our own. In a hundred years we shall not be willing to change it for something only ordinarily plain; though just at present it is somewhat trying.¹¹⁰

Clumsy prose aside, the last sentence is strikingly prescient. A flag criticised in 1900 for its similarity to Australian flags, and described by the *Otago Daily Times* as “non-descript,” was in 2016 embraced by a clear majority of New Zealand voters, to some extent for its historical associations. As the *Herald* predicted, the flag has become imbued with the mythology of nationhood and identified with love of country. The flag did not inspire national identity. Rather, the growth of national identity and the passage of time inspired an affection for the flag, which gained its meaning from the historical events with which it was associated in the public mind. Victoria University Professor Simon Keller made a similar point in 2015 when he

wrote that the significance of flags as national symbols “can come after they are adopted, not before,” a process that may take a considerable time.¹¹¹

In 1902, however, New Zealand’s national identity was still at an infant stage. Before then, some claimed that the Union Jack was the national flag – unsurprisingly, given that many considered the British Empire to be their nation.¹¹² This did not change suddenly in 1902. The flags that were distributed to every New Zealand school in the early 1900s were accompanied by a booklet entitled “The Union Jack and Its Story.” The “unfurling the flag” ceremonies that began with the Boer War became less common after that war ended, but schools that continued this practice generally flew the Union Jack as well as, or instead of, the New Zealand ensign.¹¹³ On 24 May 1904 (the birthday of the recently-deceased Queen Victoria), Empire Day was instituted in Britain and the colonies, providing “the opportunity for annual displays of Brittanic flag-waving.”¹¹⁴ In a typical Empire Day ceremony in 1913, the headmaster told the pupils of a Palmerston North school they were assembled “to salute their national flag” which was, of course “their grand old flag, the Union Jack.”¹¹⁵

In the 1922 general election, some candidates mocked the regular saluting of the flag by young children. The editorial writers of the *New Zealand Herald* took umbrage. “The Union Jack, as our national flag, has been chosen by process of law, and attempts to make it an object of scoffing are, therefore, on the part of a British subject, outrages of law as well as challenges to sentiment.”¹¹⁶ The *Herald’s* view was very much a minority one, however. As previously noted, many accepted well before 1900 that the New Zealand ensign was the national flag, and this view became more commonplace over time.

The British flag remained remarkably popular, however, and “continued to take pride of place in New Zealand communities” until the 1960s.¹¹⁷ That said, New Zealanders were lukewarm about the Union Jack compared with Australians and Canadians. The latter saw the flag as distinguishing them from their powerful neighbour to the south. In 1906, the provincial government of Manitoba required all state-funded schools to fly the Union Jack on pain of losing their funding.¹¹⁸ In February 1911, the Canadian government ordered the Union Jack be flown in all border towns and ports.¹¹⁹ It is hard to imagine similar events in New Zealand, then or at any other time.

In Australia, the current flag was not widely accepted as the national flag until the 1950s. For various reasons, including its similarity to the Victorian state flag, many objected to the Australian ensign gazetted in 1903. Others considered the red rather than the blue ensign to be the national flag, a disagreement that never arose in New Zealand because the blue ensign was instituted 30 years before the red. Still others considered the Union Jack to be the national flag. It was only in the early 1950s, when the government distributed an Australian blue ensign to every school and legislated to make it the “Australian national flag,” that the current flag became paramount.¹²⁰

Concluding remarks

Recent accounts of the history of the New Zealand flag have attempted to shoehorn that history into a defined periodisation not justified by the evidence. For much of the nineteenth century it is unclear if the country even had a national flag. Only the flag instituted in 1834, now known as the United Tribes flag, was unambiguously a New Zealand ensign. That is perhaps why many nostalgically called for its return during the flag crisis of 1900. By that date another flag, the New Zealand blue ensign, was widely accepted as the national flag, although there was a degree of uncertainty and confusion that was exacerbated by the emergence of an apparent

rival. The New Zealand Ensign Act of 1901 helped strengthen the position of the New Zealand ensign by ensuring that no imposter flag could again challenge it, as happened in 1900, without express Parliamentary approval. But the 1901 Act did not institute the radical change that many have ascribed to it. In particular, it did not cast aside the Union Jack as the recognised flag and replace it with the New Zealand ensign. Indeed, it is questionable that the Union Jack was ever the New Zealand national flag. Certainly some believed it was, and continued to do so well into the twentieth century. But the strength of feeling witnessed in Canada and Australia were never apparent. No one protested when the New Zealand ensign was flown from government buildings in the late-nineteenth century, or when it was used in flag-raising ceremonies in schools. The distribution of a New Zealand flag to every school in the country was greeted with approval in the early 1900s rather than with opposition. Indeed, the only significant flag-related protest took place in 1900, after the government appeared to have unilaterally changed the design of the New Zealand ensign. Public recognition of that flag increased during the twentieth century, and in 1981 it was rescued from the obscurity of the Shipping and Seamen Act and formally given the status of “national flag of New Zealand.” This change did not, of course, give the New Zealand ensign a new status, but rather reflected a status it had long since attained.

¹ Malcolm Mulholland, *New Zealand Flag Facts* (Wellington: New Zealand Flag Consideration Panel, 2016). The Panel’s video is available at www.mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/flags/answers-common-questions, accessed December 2016.

² The more correct name for the British flag is the Union Flag, but the popular name ‘Union Jack’ will be used here.

³ Kerryn Pollock, “Flags,” Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/flags; “Flags of New Zealand,” in New Zealand History, nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/flags-of-new-zealand; Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 39.

⁴ Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981, s 5(3)(a).

⁵ Elizabeth Kwan, *Flag and Nation: Australians and their National Flags Since 1901* (Sydney: University of NSW Press), 149; John Ross Matheson, *Canada’s Flag: A Search for a Country* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1980).

⁶ Alfred Znamierowski, *The World Encyclopedia of Flags: The Definitive Guide to International Flags, Banners, Standards, and Ensigns* (London: Anness Publishing Ltd, 2004), 39-40.

⁷ The word “flag” has a general meaning that can extend to flags advertising commercial enterprises. The word “ensign” refers to a flag used in an official capacity, such as on a ship. In the nineteenth century, the words seemed to be used interchangeably, such as in the New Zealand Ensign Act 1901.

⁸ “United Tribes Flag,” nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/flags-of-new-zealand/united-tribes-flag, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, updated 21 January 2016; Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 22-23.

⁹ James Busby quoted in the *New Zealander*, 30 November 1853, 2.

¹⁰ New Zealand Naval Secretary in 1927, quoted by Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 40.

¹¹ Pollock, “Flags,” page 1.

¹² “Union Jack,” nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/flags-of-new-zealand/union-jack, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, updated 11 May 2015; Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 44.

¹³ The term “British flag” is used in this article (as by others) as synonymous with the Union Jack. This usage was commonplace in the nineteenth century.

¹⁴ There do, however, appear to have been plenty of rules about how, where, and when to fly British flags – see Nick Groom, *The Union Jack: The Story of the British Flag*, (London: Atlantic Books, 2006), 124-25.

¹⁵ A photograph of the 1834 flag from an 1845 Admiralty Flag book is held at the Alexander Turnbull Library; see tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.344665

¹⁶ “Johnson’s New Chart of National Emblems,” www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2009633675/

¹⁷ *New Zealand Colonist and Port Nicholson Advertiser*, 19 May 1843, 2.

¹⁸ *Lyttelton Times*, 9 January 1858, 5.

-
- ¹⁹ *Colonist*, 10 September 1858, 2.
- ²⁰ Pollock, “Flags,” page 1. The Shaw Savill house flag was very similar but not identical to the United Tribes flag.
- ²¹ See especially Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 50-63.
- ²² *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates* (hereafter NZPD), vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 61; Groom, *The Union Jack*, 237; Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 50-52.
- ²³ See, for example, the *Evening Post*, 29 October 1869, quoted in Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 59.
- ²⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, 4 March 1870, 3; Ausflag, “Victoria 1870-1877,” www.ausflag.com.au/victoria_1870-1877.asp, accessed 7 December 2016. There is no evidence that the Victorians knew of the New Zealand design at the time.
- ²⁵ *Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives* (hereafter AJHR), 1872, A1-a, 16.
- ²⁶ Quoted by Canadian Prime Minister William MacKenzie King in the Canadian Parliament, 16 February 1938, www.lipad.ca/full/1938/02/16/1/, accessed 12 December 2016. A similar dispatch from the Colonial Office was widely reported in New Zealand newspapers in 1912 – see, for example, *Auckland Star*, 8 June 1912, 5.
- ²⁷ See, for example, *Auckland Star*, 30 January 1893, 3.
- ²⁸ W. B. Perceval, Agent-General London to Premier, 2 September 1892, and draft responses, Archives New Zealand, “Flag – New Zealand Ensign 1883-1940,” item R12322886, ACGO 8333 IA1 1839 / 1759 81/1 1.
- ²⁹ Jeffrey Owen-Jones, “The Man Who Wrote the Pledge of Allegiance,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, November 2003, www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-man-who-wrote-the-pledge-of-allegiance-93907224/.
- ³⁰ *Otago Daily Times*, 22 April 1895, 4.
- ³¹ See, for example, *Woodville Examiner*, 16 July 1897, 2; *Woodville Examiner* 8 September 1897, 2; Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 97.
- ³² NZPD vol. 94, 3 November 1897, 439-40. “MHR” stands for Member of the House of Representatives.
- ³³ *Temuka Leader*, 13 November 1897, 3.
- ³⁴ *Otago Witness*, 18 June 1896, 46.
- ³⁵ *Auckland Star*, 25 June 1900, 4.
- ³⁶ Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 5, 73; Pollock, “Flags,” page 1; “Union Jack” (Ministry for Culture and Heritage).
- ³⁷ Matheson, *Canada’s Flag*, 24-37.
- ³⁸ “Royal Visits” in *An Encyclopedia of New Zealand 1966*, www.teara.govt.nz/en/1966/royal-visits/page-3. The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall later became King George V and Queen Mary. The first royal tour was by the Duke of Edinburgh (a son of the Queen and Prince Albert) in 1869-70.
- ³⁹ That member was Richard Monk, who gave a long and increasingly incoherent speech in support of the New Zealand Ensign Act 1900. His speech included a brief history of the Union Jack: see NZPD vol. 114, 18 September 1900, 59-61.
- ⁴⁰ The two main files on the flag held at Archives New Zealand contain some public correspondence, but none relating to the two New Zealand Ensign Acts.
- ⁴¹ These words are in the preamble to the New Zealand Ensign Act 1900 and the New Zealand Ensign Act 1901. The preamble was omitted when the latter Act was consolidated in the Shipping and Seamen Act in 1908.
- ⁴² NZPD vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 63-64.
- ⁴³ NZPD vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 57. Hutcheson, in referring to “very remote times,” was harking back to the United Tribes Flag. Wellington City had two members in 1900, being one of four multi-member urban electorates later abolished in 1903: see Neill Atkinson, *Adventures in Democracy: A History of the Vote in New Zealand*, (Dunedin: OUP, 2003), 106.
- ⁴⁴ NZPD vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 59.
- ⁴⁵ NZPD vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 64.
- ⁴⁶ *Otago Daily Times*, 23 June 1900, 6.
- ⁴⁷ *Auckland Star*, 16 July 1900, 4.

- ⁴⁸ International Code of Signals Committee, “Third and Final Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade,” Archives New Zealand, “New Zealand Ensign and Governor General Badge 1866-1939”, item R19985835, ADOE 16612 M1 1229 / 25/2483 1.
- ⁴⁹ George Allman, Nautical Advisor, Marine Department, “Explanation of Flags and other remarks,” 18 April 1898, 1, Archives New Zealand, “New Zealand Ensign and Governor General Badge 1866-1939,” item R19985835, ADOE 16612 M1 1229 / 25/2483 1.
- ⁵⁰ George Allman, “Explanation of Flags and other remarks,” and accompanying illustrations, 18 April 1898, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge.”
- ⁵¹ Captain Allman was dismissed in February 1899 because he had allowed a candidate for the seaman’s examination to be supplied with the answers in advance. See *Evening Post*, 27 February 1899, 6; *Press*, 25 January 1899, 3; Marine Commission Report, AJHR 1899, H26.
- ⁵² NZPD vol. 111, 6 July 1900, 322.
- ⁵³ Ron Polenski, *The Making of New Zealanders* (Auckland University Press, 2012), 150; Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 69.
- ⁵⁴ Hall-Jones to Premier, “International Code Signals,” 6 July 1898, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge.”
- ⁵⁵ AJHR 1899, A1, 7.
- ⁵⁶ Chamberlain to Governor Ranfurly and Minister of Marine to Premier, 22 September 1899, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge”; *Auckland Star*, 26 June 1899, 4.
- ⁵⁷ *Auckland Star*, 8 June 1900, 2; *Bay of Plenty Times*, 11 June 1900, 4; *Otago Daily Times*, 26 June 1900, 6; *New Zealand Herald*, 26 June 1900, 5, *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 30 June 1900, 3; NZPD vol. 111, 6 July 1900, 321-22.
- ⁵⁸ *Auckland Star*, 8 June 1900, 2.
- ⁵⁹ Cornelius Le Roy to “Office in Charge of New Zealand Heraldry,” 7 March 1900, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge.”
- ⁶⁰ *Press*, 5 October 1900, 4.
- ⁶¹ *Bay of Plenty Times*, 20 June 1900, 2.
- ⁶² *Auckland Star*, 16 July 1900, 4.
- ⁶³ *Auckland Star*, 2 August 1900, 6.
- ⁶⁴ *Auckland Star*, 16 July 1900, 4.
- ⁶⁵ NZPD vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 58.
- ⁶⁶ *Auckland Star*, 16 July 1900, 4.
- ⁶⁷ *New Zealand Herald*, 13 September 1900, 4.
- ⁶⁸ NZPD vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 59; Hall-Jones to Glasgow, 27 July 1900, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge.”
- ⁶⁹ Hall-Jones to Ward, 27 July 1900, Archives New Zealand, “Flag.” It does not appear that Ward issued this directive.
- ⁷⁰ NZPD vol. 111, 6 July 1900, 321-22, 10 July 1900, 374.
- ⁷¹ *Star*, 15 August 1900, 4.
- ⁷² NZPD vol. 114, 19 September 1900, 64; NZPD vol. 111, 6 July 1900, 322.
- ⁷³ *Press*, 28 April 1900, 7. The “unfurling the flag” movement was also known as “hoisting the flag” or “saluting the flag.”
- ⁷⁴ *Auckland Star*, 15 September 1900, 3.
- ⁷⁵ R. J. Seddon, New Zealand Ensign Bill no. 108-1, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge.”
- ⁷⁶ *Otago Daily Times*, 31 August 1900, 4. The ODT obtained a copy of the Bill in advance.
- ⁷⁷ *Evening Post*, 3 September 1900, 6.
- ⁷⁸ W. C. Walker, New Zealand Ensign and Code Signals Bill no 135-2, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge.”
- ⁷⁹ NZPD vol. 114, 1 September 1900, 57.
- ⁸⁰ NZPD vol. 114, 1 September 1900, 58.
- ⁸¹ NZPD vol. 114, 1 September 1900, 57.
- ⁸² NZPD vol. 114, 1 September 1900, 62. Napier was of course quite correct in saying the Board of Trade had not called for this change, although it is unknown how he came to this conclusion.
- ⁸³ NZPD vol. 114, 1 September 1900, 63-65.

-
- ⁸⁴ NZPD vol. 114, 20 September 1900, 99.
- ⁸⁵ *Auckland Star*, 22 October 1900, 2.
- ⁸⁶ Chamberlain to Governor of New Zealand (copy), 21 March 1901, Archives New Zealand, “Ensign and Governor General Badge”; AJHR 1901, A2-a, 1.
- ⁸⁷ *Taranaki Daily News*, 24 November 1900, 2.
- ⁸⁸ *Feilding Star*, 2 November 1900, 2.
- ⁸⁹ *New Zealand Herald* and *Auckland Star*, 17 December 1900, 4.
- ⁹⁰ *Evening Post*, 23 May 1901, 6.
- ⁹¹ NZDP vol 114, 20 September 1900, 62-64.
- ⁹² *Taranaki Herald*, 12 June 1901, 2.
- ⁹³ Wetherstones School in Otago, for example, received its New Zealand Ensign in August 1902. See *Otago Witness*, 13 August 1902, 31.
- ⁹⁴ *Evening Post*, 11 February 1902, 6.
- ⁹⁵ Kwan, *Flag and Nation*, 24-31, 152.
- ⁹⁶ Kwan, *Flag and Nation*, 99-100.
- ⁹⁷ AJHR 1901, A2-a, 2.
- ⁹⁸ New Zealand Ensign Act 1901, preamble and section 3.
- ⁹⁹ Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981, s 5(3)(a).
- ¹⁰⁰ *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 27 April 1901, 7. Available in the National Library of Australia's online archive “Trove.” The British Newspaper Archive online database uncovered no relevant results.
- ¹⁰¹ *New Zealand Herald*, 6 August 1902, 6.
- ¹⁰² Shipping and Seamen Act 1903, section 341.
- ¹⁰³ *Oamaru Mail*, 18 December 1900, 4.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Wanganui Herald*, 22 August 1901, 2.
- ¹⁰⁵ Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, 23.
- ¹⁰⁶ NZPD vol. 119, 10 October 1901, 315.
- ¹⁰⁷ NZPD vol. 111, 6 July 1900, 322.
- ¹⁰⁸ Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity* (Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1986), 190-92.
- ¹⁰⁹ Polenski, *The Making of New Zealanders*, 148-54.
- ¹¹⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, 13 September 1900, 4.
- ¹¹¹ Simon Keller, “A Flag Does Not Need to Tell a Story to be Successful,” *Dominion Post*, 20 August 2015, available at www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/comment/71281195/a-flag-does-not-need-to-tell-a-story-to-be-successful.
- ¹¹² See, for example, the correspondent “Briton” in the *Auckland Star*, 22 May 1900, 3.
- ¹¹³ See, for example, *Waikato Argus*, 21 April 1903, 2; *North Otago Times*, 26 May 1902, 1; *Otago Witness*, 22 March 1911, 38; *Evening Star*, 16 June 1911, 4; *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4 June 1913, 4; *Taranaki Daily News*, 23 December 1916, 7.
- ¹¹⁴ Groom, *The Union Jack*, 254; Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, 177-78.
- ¹¹⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 24 May 1913, 2.
- ¹¹⁶ *New Zealand Herald*, 25 November 1922, 8.
- ¹¹⁷ Mulholland, *Flag Facts*, pp 39, 48.
- ¹¹⁸ *New Zealand Herald*, 22 September 1906, 5.
- ¹¹⁹ *Evening Post*, 18 February 1911, 5.
- ¹²⁰ Kwan, *Flag and Nation*, 150-51.