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PALMERSTON POLITICS: A STUDY OF

A SINGLE ELECTORATE 1905-11.

A research exercise presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History at Massey  
University.

John Reginald McLeod  
1977



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JRM

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List of Abbreviations

AJHR Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives  
MDT Manawatu Daily Times  
MES Manawatu Evening Standard

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

The Liberal enigma - a massive victory in 1905 to defeat seven years later - has proved fascinating for historians particularly those at Auckland University in the 1950's and 1960's. The work produced varied from studies of the Dominion as a whole to those of a particular region. It seems logical to take this one step further and to analyse a single electorate. The advantage of a single electorate study appears to lie in observing national politics at its lowest denominator. The question is, did the politics of Palmerston<sup>1</sup> centre on localism, local figures and local concerns, or on party politics and its cohesion and discipline.

The key to understanding political events is to place them against the social and economic development of the town and the region of Manawatu. The beginnings of the development of the Manawatu<sup>2</sup> did not take place until the late 1860's with the public sale of Maori land purchased by the Wellington Provincial Government - the Awahou and Ahuaturanga blocks had been purchased in 1858 (the latter included the future site for Palmerston) and the Manawatu-Rangitikei block in 1866 (this included present day Oroua County and Feilding). Initially Palmerston was just one of a number of small settlements that appeared in the Manawatu in the 1870's - Sanson (1870), Feilding (1874), Halcombe (1876), Rongotea (1878), and Ashhurst (1879). Palmerston prospered because it became the centre of a communications network. By 1880 Palmerston had been linked, by either road or rail, with Foxton, Wellington, Wanganui, and Hawkes Bay. Other settlements tended to join

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1. The electorate was named Palmerston, not becoming Palmerston North until 1929. However as the town is referred to as Palmerston in contemporary sources, it has been decided to retain the name Palmerston for the town. The text will make it clear whether the electorate or the town is being referred to.
  2. Information on Palmerston and Manawatu is drawn from the following sources: B. Symondson, "Frederick Pirani M.H.R. Palmerston North 1893-1902", unpublished M.A. Thesis, Massey University, 1977, pp. 5-15; E.C.R. Warr, "The Rise of Pastoral Industries" Introducing Manawatu B.G.R. Saunders and A.G. Anderson (eds), Massey University, 1964, pp. 148-180; I.R. Matheson The Birth of Palmerston North, Palmerston North, 1971

this network as they grew; Palmerston benefited from the through traffic and emerged as a centre for the Manawatu. The rail links with Wellington, completed by the Wellington-Manawatu Company in 1886 to the detriment of Foxton, Palmerston's chief rival, and Hawkes Bay, through the Manawatu Gorge in 1891, consolidated the town's pre-eminent position to such an extent that the town's population increased from 800 in 1877 to 10,239 in 1906.<sup>3</sup>

Sawmilling was the only remunerative activity for the earliest settlers as it was twenty to thirty years before the land was in full production. These early years were ones of burning off the forest cover and a subsistence existence. Such was the clearing of the bush taking place that smoke from bush burning in Kairanga in the 1880's was reported as a continual nuisance in Palmerston. By 1900 this activity had converted the forest cover of the low hill country of the Manawatu into a stable cover of exotic pasture.

Refrigeration brought about a change in the very roots of the country's existence and introduced a new dimension to the settlement and prosperity of the Manawatu. It resulted in a greatly increased tempo of development in the latter part of the nineteenth century as the new forms of intensive livestock production provided the basis of widespread closer settlement by large numbers of small farmers. Between 1886 and 1906 rural holdings under 640 acres increased throughout New Zealand by 29,000 and the area doubled from 3.6 to 7.5 million acres. In the Manawatu, between 1891 and 1908, the total area of occupied land in holdings of 1 to 320 acres trebled.<sup>4</sup>

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3. Population of Palmerston North 1872-2000 Palmerston North City Corporation Town Planning Department, Research Section Report No. 5, Jan. 1969, p.2.
  4. J.D. Craig, "Fifty acres freehold - an historical geography of the changing character of land tenure and rural occupation in the six counties of the Manawatu 1891-1921" unpublished M.A. Thesis, Victoria University, 1968, pp. 5,28.

The first cream separator was demonstrated at Karere in 1883 and a dairy factory was opened there in 1884. The largest enterprise associated with the early development of the Manawatu dairy industry was the Dairy Union, established in 1893, with two factories, one of which was located at Palmerston and served by eight skimming stations. The meat industry was a further derivative of refrigeration and local requirements were met by the establishment of a freezing works at Longburn in 1885. The dominance of the small farmer in the Manawatu is demonstrated in the increase of entries in the Manawatu West Coast A. & P. Show between 1886 and 1902 - 290 to 6297.

Palmerston was, by 1905, essentially a focal point for the collection of produce and the distribution of supplies, a centre where townfolk engaged in commerce or in the maintenance of the dairy industry and the servicing of its equipment. The town relied for its prosperity on its hinterland. Pownall<sup>5</sup> in his study of Palmerston North, New Plymouth, and Wanganui, concluded that the last has had little relationship with its hinterland, New Plymouth was very dependent on it, and Palmerston North was somewhere between. His historical background suggests that Palmerston North was similarly dependent on its hinterland as New Plymouth and that as the former grew it lost some of its rural dependence.

Ian Matheson<sup>6</sup> in a Palmerston North centennial publication considers that

Palmerston North owed its existence and growth to the development of the surrounding countryside, firstly in the milling of the bush, and then the farming of cleared land.

Palmerston was not dissimilar to many other New Zealand towns in its relationship with the rural land surrounding it. D.V. Wilson<sup>7</sup> discussing Canterbury manufacturing between 1890 and 1900 commented that

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5. L.L. Pownall, "Town and Region" A comparison of Palmerston North, Wanganui, and New Plymouth New Zealand Geographer 1953, Vol. 9, No. 7, pp. 1-16.

6. Matheson, p.42.

7. D.V. Wilson, The Development of Industry in Canterbury, Christchurch, 1950, p.20. Wilson was President of the Canterbury Manufacturers Association in 1944 and 1945 and his comments were made in a Canterbury Centennial address.

the interdependence of the farmer and the manufacturer became more evident and it is interesting to observe just how many of our principal industries relied upon farming products.

Direct farm investment in the town came from large weekly stock sales, the A. & P. Show, the Dairy Union factory, and the United Farmers' Co-operative Association. The U.F.C.A. operated a large store which stocked a large variety of goods having over twenty departments. Farmers invested in the U.F.C.A. and received a rebate on purchases as well as interest on capital. It also loaned capital to farmers. Attempts were made to stock only New Zealand made goods, illustrating the rural community's dislike of tariffs and corresponding artificially high prices.<sup>8</sup>

Firms advertising in the Cyclopedia of New Zealand<sup>9</sup> give a further indication of the relationship between town and country. Barraud and Abraham, general merchants, stocked mainly farm and station requirements and similar to other firms operated a cart service for rural delivery; Holden and Kirk, dairy refrigeration and electrical engineers, stocked a "wide assortment of articles adapted to the use of dairy farmers"; Lane and Co. carting contractors, carried agricultural requisites throughout the Manawatu; and Beattie, Lang and Co., were successful farmers operating a dairy and general produce business. Throughout the 1890's the Manawatu Daily Times was edited by J.P. Leary, a semi-retired farmer. These are indicative of a strong relationship between the two sectors and the Cyclopedia itself, refers to Palmerston as "the centre of an essentially agricultural and pastoral district."

Industrially Palmerston was not a radical town. It exhibited little of the militancy which was a feature of many New Zealand cities at this time. It lacked the militant unions of these centres - the waterside workers in Wanganui, the flaxmillers in Otaki, the miners in the Waikato and the Auckland transport workers. Industry was mainly of a cottage type and filled the needs of the town and the Manawatu.

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8. Matheson, p.42.

9. Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Vol. 1, Wellington, 1897, pp. 1139-1203; Vol. 6, Christchurch, 1908, pp. 663-693.

The three biggest employers were the timber mills (up to 100 employees), the Post Office (80 employees in 1908), and the railways (57 employees in 1908).<sup>10</sup> Dahl's factory in Grey Street employed forty workers manufacturing products of the district producing ropes, tents, horsecarts, and oilskin clothing. Few other concerns employed more than twenty workers. These included bootmakers, cordial manufacturers, builders, and tailors. These characteristics suggest Palmerston's working class were less radical than other centres. No in-depth study has been made but other research on Palmerston tends to confirm this. Val Smith<sup>11</sup> suggests workers in the period resented radical interference and were essentially conservative and were more responsive to the views of the farming elements in the Manawatu than radical unionists.

The interdependence of town and country and the resulting conservativeness of the town had important political consequences in the three elections under review. It will help explain many of the issues, the candidates' and the electorate's stances on them, and the election results.

Palmerston was first represented in Parliament in 1870 in the newly created Manawatu seat. The first member was W.W. Johnson and he retained the seat until 1884, serving as Postmaster-General and Commissioner of Telegraphs in the Hall Ministry of 1881-82. D.H. MacArthur, a Manawatu County Councillor from 1877 to 1882 and Chairman for all but the first year, represented Manawatu from 1884 to 1890.<sup>12</sup> The Palmerston seat was created in 1890, and included the town, all of Fitzherbert West and stretched northwards into the Ruahines. The first member was J.G. Wilson, who had represented Foxton for the previous eight years. The contest in 1890 included Fred Pirani who was to be the member from 1893-1902, and John Stevens, a future member for Manawatu.<sup>13</sup> The Parliamentary

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10. Cyclopedia of New Zealand, 1908, p.668.

11. Val Smith, the author of a study on socialism, came to her conclusions after studying Department of Labour files and Palmerston life pre-World War I. The conclusions were given verbally.

12. Matheson p.77; M.H. Holcroft, The Line of the Road, Dunedin, 1977, p.205A

13. Symondson, p.24.

representative from 1902 to 1905 was William Wood who had won the seat on Pirani's retirement.

This work is as much a study of the rise of Reform as one of Liberal decline. Historians have tended to place more emphasis on the decline of the Liberals and neglected the rise of Reform. This may be because they see no difference between the two, or for more complex reasons. In Palmerston because of the absence of a Labour Party and the various characteristics of the electorate the Liberal decline does equate with Reform's rise.

Only one study exists on Manawatu politics<sup>14</sup>, and this has proven an unsatisfactory background as it concentrates on the political career of an individual. Manawatu history, though voluminous in extent, seems confined to personal reminiscences and brief surveys. The analysis of the three elections - 1905, 1908, and 1911 - which comprises the major portion of this exercise, is drawn almost exclusively from the two contemporary newspapers - The Manawatu Daily Times, a morning daily from 1882, and the Manawatu Evening Standard, an evening daily. Though founded five years later than the MDT, the MES was the first daily published in Palmerston. The latter from 1892, when it was purchased by the Pirani brothers, followed the political fortunes of Fred Pirani and by 1905 was pro-Opposition. The MDT played a neutral role in politics until 1905 from when, under the editorship of E.D. Hoben, it came increasingly to favour the Government. The factual reporting was surprisingly dispassionate in both papers though the editorial comment was predictably partisan. The newspapers provided a reasonable source of information for covering the three elections if, and only if, they are taken in conjunction with each other.

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14. Symondson

## Chapter Two - The Elections

### I The 1905 Election

#### Introduction

The 1905 election was the Liberal's greatest triumph<sup>15</sup> - tribute to the prosperity of the colony, Seddon's popularity, and a condemnation of an ineffective Opposition. William Massey had become leader of the Opposition in 1903 but was not yet head of a cohesive political party. Much of the election campaign was concentrated on the Voucher incident. The "New Liberals", a splinter Liberal quartet, had accused Seddon of arranging a fraudulent Government payment for his son. A Royal Commission had dismissed the charges, and Seddon exploited its findings inevitably implicating the Opposition, though they were not involved.

The only regions from which the Opposition drew support were the older farming districts in Auckland and the South Island and a smaller number of high income city electorates. Their campaign was marked by the absence of a viable policy. One Opposition supporter wrote to Massey that the Opposition platform had been "shockingly weak and watery" and had concentrated on small issues such as fencing wire duty while virtually ignoring important questions like "native lands, Government wobble on the freehold, and general administration of Crown Lands."<sup>16</sup> Freehold-leasehold tenure was a crucial issue throughout 1905, receiving particular attention as the Royal Commission progressed through the country. The Opposition thus possessed only a limited electoral following. Professor Sinclair considers their appeal was limited to "estate owners and businessmen" who did not provide "a sufficiently large nucleus for a rich man's conservative party."<sup>17</sup>

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15. The Liberals won 55 seats (51.3 per cent of the vote), the Opposition 15, and Independents 6. M.D.N. Campbell, "Hawkes Bay Politics 1890-1914, A Study in the Development of Party Politics" Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Victoria University, 1967, p.139; R.K. Newman, "Liberal Policy and the Left Wing 1908-11, A Study of Middle Class Radicalism", M.A. Thesis, Auckland University, 1968, p.10.
  16. E.E. Vaile to Massey; J.D. Prince, "Northland Politics 1899-1929", Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Auckland University, 1966, p.117.
  17. K. Sinclair, A History of New Zealand, Harmondsworth, 1960, p.208.

### The Candidates

The incumbent, William Wood, was one of Palmerston's most esteemed citizens. An Australian by birth, Wood migrated to New Zealand in 1872. He settled briefly on the West Coast, becoming a close personal friend of Seddon, then moved to Palmerston to open a blacksmith's shop in Cuba Street. Wood was heavily involved in local affairs, serving two terms as Mayor, as well as two in the Council. He was also associated with the Wanganui Education Board, the Wellington Harbour Board, the Palmerston North High School Board, and the A. & P. Association. He had twice attempted to win the Palmerston seat, initially being defeated by Fred Pirani in 1899, but being successful in 1902. Wood's parliamentary career had not been characterised by verbosity. He was "not the yelping barking dog" in Parliament, though it appears he was a hard worker and a fine lobbyist.<sup>18</sup>

Fred Pirani has been considered one of the more controversial backbenchers in the House in the 1890's. An Italian Australian he migrated to New Zealand in 1864. Pirani served a journalistic apprenticeship on the Wanganui Herald under John Ballance in the late 1870's. The Pirani family procured an interest in the Manawatu Evening Standard in 1892. Pirani stood as the official Knights of Labour candidate in the new Palmerston seat in 1890 being endorsed by Ballance as a Liberal candidate, though unsuccessful. He won the seat as a Liberal in 1896, and as an Independent Oppositionist in 1899. He retired in 1902 because of ill-health and family reasons, though he was later persuaded to stand in Hutt where Wilford defeated him. The change of political colours by Pirani is explained by his biographer<sup>19</sup> as an acceptance that the Liberals had betrayed the Ballance ideals,<sup>20</sup> and that temperamentally he was suited to the non-group of the House.

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18. A.G.S. Bradfield, The Precious Years, Palmerston North, 1962, pp. 60-62.

19. Symondson, pp. 46-56.

20. The Ballance principles supposedly betrayed were his emphasis on Labour reforms, his opposition to monopoly and privilege, and his belief in vigorous and honest Government.



Figure I Fred Pirani  
(P.N. Public Library)

Figure II William Wood  
(P.N. Public Library)

### The Campaign

The campaign issues apart from the land question, were essentially local, perhaps signifying the lack of alternatives put forward by the Opposition. Wood attempted to rely on his record, and demonstrate "his genuiness, his stability, and his intrinsic worth of character."<sup>21</sup> Pirani based his campaign on the merits of the nine years he had represented the district in Parliament and of producing scandals of which Wood was the central figure.<sup>22</sup> These attempts to vilify Wood brought a great degree of illfeeling into the election. Near the end of the campaign Pirani was forced to use the new Electoral Act to stop letters appearing in the MDT that were highly critical of his conduct.<sup>23</sup>

Pirani initially accused Wood of being seen in "a beastly state of intoxication in the session" and of bringing his son to Palmerston to cause trouble for his father.<sup>24</sup> These accusations were easily shown as spurious by Wood, for as a letter to the editor of the MDT recognised, Wood was noted for his "high moral character, honesty ...."<sup>25</sup>

The second aspersion cast on Wood's character was as a result of his meeting at Kelvin Grove, where he said he was in favour of preference being given to British stock for immigration though he had no objection to Danes, Swedes, Norwegians and Germans as there were no men in the district who were as friendly or did as good work.<sup>26</sup> Pirani twisted these words so as if they appeared to insult any non-British

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21. MDT, December 6th, 1905, p.4.

22. Pirani's nickname was "Mosquito" and throughout the campaign he lived up to it.

23. If information was published between the issue of the writs and the close of the polls which contained untruthful information about a candidate the publisher and author were liable to various fines or imprisonment. New Zealand Statutes, 1905, p.163.

24. MDT, November 10, 1905, p.3; MES, November 10, 1905, pp. 5-6. Symondson, p.84, suggests Pirani's marriage was in a bad state.

25. MDT, November 30, 1905, p.2.

26. MDT, November 25, 1905, p.3.

inhabitants of New Zealand, a thing Wood had quite clearly not intended.

The incident that provoked the most discussion was Pirani's claim, that Wood had, in a meeting with the Premier, asked that the Gorge Bridge not be constructed at Fitzherbert, but at Hokowhitu. The inference made was that Wood wanted the bridge at the Hokowhitu site as he owned land nearby. Wood was able to produce a telegram from Seddon, and a letter signed by "six respectable settlers" (the others present at the meeting) saying it was a "direct lie", causing much embarrassment for Pirani and bringing forward the spate of letters deploring his behaviour.<sup>27</sup>

The emphasis of Pirani's attacks on the Seddon administration were directed at disparaging the Seddon version of democracy, accusing it of class distinction and of giving away benefits and votes of public money to special districts. Pirani virtually ignored the major issue of the day - land - except for indicating he favoured freehold and limited area. The pro-Opposition newspaper, the MES made a significant attempt to bring the land question to the voter's attention, and initiated a "battle of the journals" on this issue. If Pirani had concentrated more on land, he may have been more successful.

Wood favoured giving the freehold to Crown tenants taking up backblock sections and were subject to the hardships of pioneering, but all other Crown lands should be leasehold. This was inconsistent with his statement in 1903 that he was a leaseholder "through and through."<sup>28</sup> The modification appears to have resulted from the growth of public opinion for the freehold. It might appear surprising to suggest the tenure question could arouse much feeling in an electorate like Palmerston, where seven of every ten electors lived in the town. Palmerston was a service centre for the farmers of the Manawatu, and it is suggested by Chapman that the townsmen were very much aware of the views of the surrounding farmers and were inclined "to veer towards the views of their rural neighbours."<sup>29</sup>

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27. MDT, November 27, 1905; p.4.

28. MDT, November 10, 1905, p.3; MES, November 10, 1905, pp. 5-6; MES, November 11, 1905, p.5.

29. R. Chapman, "The Decline of the Liberals" Ends and Means in New Zealand Politics R. Chapman (ed), University of Auckland, 1960, p.18.

Wood's strategy was to attempt to remove the suspicion that he "cut an impotent figure in the halls of state."<sup>30</sup> Pirani issued a circular outlining what Wood had done in three years writing on it "Nothing". Wood said he had secured £100 for the Pahiatua track, a Supreme Court, a new railway station at Longburn, an electrical expert to look at possible sites for a power station, alterations to the Police and Railway stations worth £15,600, and a meteorological station in Palmerston - he had served his apprenticeship and was able to do the district the credit it deserved.<sup>31</sup>

Liquor and Bible-in-Schools, two contentious issues of the day, played no significant part in the result. Both candidates favoured temperance, but preferred to let the people decide by way of the ballot box. Initially Pirani and Wood agreed an opening prayer was enough religion in schools with Wood feeling Bible-in-Schools would destroy the best education system in the world. Pirani later changed his views when Rev. Jolly, Minister of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, in a sermon indicated he could not support any candidate who was not in favour of Bible-in-Schools. Pirani then said it would not harm state schools, and where introduced had proved a success.<sup>32</sup>

Though Pirani apparently had a good reason for not standing in Palmerston in 1902, and then for standing in Hutt, it proved somewhat of a disadvantage. Not only had it given Wood three years to consolidate his position, it led to him being branded a "traitor to the district" which Wood was able to use for his own benefit - he had not gone off to another electorate and having been rejected there come back to Palmerston.<sup>33</sup>

The election meetings attracted large crowds, indicating widespread interest in politics at that time. On election day the MES commented on the great excitement in town and noted that "at all the booths, vehicles after vehicles arrived, crowded with supporters of either candidates and there is no doubt polling will be a record."<sup>34</sup>

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30. MDT, October 19, 1905, p.2.

31. MDT, November 10, 1905, p.2; MES, November 10, 1905, pp. 5-6.

32. MDT, November 28, 1905, p.3.

33. MDT, December 6, 1905, p.2.

34. MES, December 6, 1905, p.5.

## The Results

When the final result was declared the crowd in the Square started singing "Rule Britannia". Wood had achieved a comfortable win with a majority of 514 - 3551 votes (53.9 per cent) to 3037 (46.10 per cent).<sup>35</sup> Wood's strength, as in 1902 was in the town itself where he won 55.65 per cent of the votes, though he had a slight advantage (50.80 per cent) in the country towns.<sup>36</sup> The voting trends were very similar to 1902. The Liberals held an advantage in all the urban polling booths except at College Street (49.30 per cent).

In the country towns Wood was strongest at Longburn, a traditional Liberal stronghold. The small country towns - Linton, Bunnythorpe, and Ashhurst were lost, the latter decisively. The reason for all the countrytown booths, with the exception of Longburn, moving towards the Opposition, appears to lie in the beginnings of the small townsmen following the voting trends of the surrounding farmers.

Wood polled well at several rural booths, but the majority were won by Pirani. This was to no avail as the Opposition had to win between 45 and 50 per cent of town votes to win the seat. Not too much emphasis can be placed on these results as this election was more a clash of local personalities, than an election decided on national lines.

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35. See Appendix A(2) for the complete election result.

36. For the purposes of this study country town is defined as a town in which at least half the voters will be drawn from the town, the remainder from the surrounding rural areas.

## II The 1908 Election

### Introduction

The 1908 election has been considered the Liberal's finest hour. Various statistics, based on those compiled by Lipson<sup>37</sup> give the Ward Government 59 per cent of the valid vote. However a recent study by Newman<sup>38</sup> contends that the Liberal vote actually fell from 51.3 per cent in 1905 to 45.8 per cent in 1908. He suggests that Lipson in compiling his statistics misunderstood the meaning of political labels, which he proposes were often meaningless at this time. Not every candidate standing as a Liberal would necessarily support the Government, while some would qualify their support, Newman shows that whereas in 1905 42.1 per cent of those entitled to vote supported the Government nominee, in 1908 only 35.4 per cent did so. The non-vote increased 4.6 per cent to 21.4 per cent. These indicate to a marked decline in Liberal support. X

The fragility of the Government in several sectors, though not overly distinct, was recognizable particularly in the appeal to the rural sphere, which had never been very strong. In the North Island bush regions, new settlers, traditionally Government backers, deserted to such an extent that eight seats were lost from Taranaki to Wairarapa. Urban working class support was only slightly eroded, though a Labour candidate was successful in Wellington East. Ward's premiership lacked the bluff, popular style of Seddon's, Ward appearing only as a "wobbly" figure of stability.

The Ward administration's legislation intended to solidify its power base proved disastrous. Opposition throughout the colony to McNab's leasehold Land Bill forced the Government to replace it with the Land Amendment Act, 1907, which was nothing more than an unsatisfactory compromise. The Tariff Act, 1907, which raised duty on essential farm commodities, including agricultural machinery, brought a furore of protests from the rural community. The third piece of legislation which furthered the farmers' impression that the Government was not working in their interests was the Dairy Regulations. Introduced in election year by McNab, they laid down standards of hygiene for all

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37. Leslie Lipson, The Politics of Equality, Chicago, 1947, p.187.

38. Newman, pp. 8-10

dairy farms. They quickly became an election issue and raised widespread opposition throughout the rural regions, being represented as sinister interference by "mischievous urban radicals"<sup>39</sup> The Arbitration Act, 1907, had in no way decreased working class disenchantment with the conciliation and arbitration system, as the Court though giving wage increases refused to compensate workers for relative income lost between increases.

The Opposition under Massey was becoming a cohesive body, though it did not as yet have a vast appeal as an alternative government. In Massey and Allen it had two personalities who were capable of matching any in the Government. With the mantle of Ballance and Seddon slipping from Ward's shoulders as the Liberal coalition showed its first signs of weakening Massey appealed as a "safe man" who would stand firm.

#### The Candidates

There were three nominations for the Palmerston seat in 1908 - Wood, a Kairanga farmer, David Buick, and a contractor, William Milverton. Buick, originally from Karori, had failed in two previous attempts at Parliament, in 1896 and 1899, twice being defeated by Piani. He owned 550 acres of first class grazing land at Kairanga, and was wellknown as a breeder of Romney sheep, and as a successful racehorse owner. His interest in local affairs included the A. & P. Association, sporting clubs, and the Manawatu Road and Drainage Board.

Milverton was an English immigrant who had lived in the Manawatu region for most of his life. His contracting business was a major one, being given the contract for the Featherston Street sewerage scheme, one of the largest contracts let by the Council. Milverton appears to have had a somewhat eccentric personality.

#### The Campaign

The feature of the election was the large interest maintained throughout. The candidate's meetings were well attended, often being

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39. Newman, p.2; B.L. Evans, A History of Agricultural Production and Marketing in New Zealand, Palmerston North, 1969, p.156.

40. MES, November 4, 1908, p.4.

filled to capacity, and the MES commented that "there must be a strong drawing power in politics in Palmerston".<sup>40</sup> The Palmerston electorate received unprecedented attention from the hierarchy of the two parties.<sup>41</sup> Massey visited Palmerston five times in the six months prior to election day and Martin, the Opposition organiser, lived in Palmerston for three months. It is hardly surprising that Wood considered that they had brought "every power on earth" to defeat him.<sup>42</sup>

In what is considered a major diversion in Liberal policy, Ward announced at the Opera House that a "rest in legislation" was desirable. He pointed out the Liberal Government had dealt with "some of the most difficult subjects that had affected this or any other country", and had established "a record of which any Government might well be proud". The Government's efforts should now be directed to more "vigorous administration, particularly in the field of land settlement".<sup>43</sup> However, this was only confirming the existing state of affairs for no major innovative legislation had been introduced since Old Age Pensions in 1898 - the "party of change" had nothing more to offer.

The first of Massey's two public meetings concentrated on land legislation, industrial unrest, and increased taxation, though it did cover most of the Opposition platform. Massey, not without an element of pathos, claimed the Opposition Party was not supposed to have a policy, but as the Government was "unable to provide a policy for themselves they had to provide one for them".<sup>44</sup>

Massey's second meeting centred on land and the public debt. Massey, never noted for his defence of the Maori race, disclosed there were 40,000 "natives" idle, and their land wasted as the system did not encourage them to work. He pressed for the rapid individualisation of titles, and sale of the land to settlers who would use it. Land

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41. The only major political figure holding an election meeting in Palmerston within the previous ten years had been Seddon in 1899.

42. MES, November 25, 1908, p.4.

43. MES, October 20, 1908, pp. 5-6; MDT, October 20, 1908, pp. 5-6; R.T. Shannon, "The Decline and Fall of the Liberals: A Study in an aspect of New Zealand Political Development 1908-1914", M.A. Thesis, Auckland University, 1953, p.11.

44. MES, September 22, 1908, p.5; MDT, September 22, 1908, p.5.

endowments had only been set aside to please the "socialistic land nationalisers" who supported the Government. The Public Debt, Massey said, had increased £10 per head in twenty years. He agreed the Dominion could not exist without borrowed money, but had no need for the exorbitant loans secured by the Ward administration.<sup>45</sup>

The introduction of the Dairy Regulations in election year proved disadvantageous for the Government, as they provided the Opposition with an opportunity to take the offensive and make advances in non-urban electorates. Buick mentioned some aspect of the Regulations at all his meetings. Initially he concentrated, as did other Opposition candidates, on the inspecting fee of 20 shillings, intimating it was simply a tax for owning cows.<sup>46</sup> While later in the campaign he indicated the folly of too much bureaucracy, claiming two Dairy Inspectors had visited his farm on the same day and said differing things on the state of his dairies.<sup>47</sup>

Throughout the electorate, feeling against the Regulations was widespread and an anonymous correspondent to the MES must have echoed the thoughts of many when he praised the pioneers who made the country the place it was. But after all this

a paternal Government is training men to come and have the right to invade our homes, when they like and at what time they like, and we shall have to come and go, do this and that at their bidding, in fact, carry on our work under the eye of the dairy police<sup>48</sup>

Wood defended the Regulations, saying some farmers did not keep their dairies clean, resulting in poorer quality butter and lower prices. Massey's only initial objection, Wood claimed, was the fee, and the Stock Committee of the House, which recommended the Dairy Regulations, was comprised of Members who had been farming all their lives.<sup>49</sup> Wood's attempts at vindication were not helped by his lack of platform ability. They appeared to lack conviction, and be a reiteration of everything supporters of the Regulations had said before.

45. MES, November 3, 1908, p.6.

46. See MDT, September 29, 1905, p.5, as an example

47. MES, November 16, 1908, p.5.

48. MES, November 12, 1908, p.5.

49. MDT, October 28, 1907, p.5.

Land, once again, was to be a controversial issue. The land legislation of 1906 and 1907 had only served to further polarise opinion. The Opposition favoured all Crown tenants being given the choice of tenure, with present tenants being given the opportunity to acquire the freehold. The Farmer's Union branch in Palmerston sent out a questionnaire to each of the candidates, deciding to endorse Buick's candidature on the basis of his support for optional tenure, and his promise to oppose nationalisation of land, and the means of production and distribution.<sup>50</sup> Wood's attitude to land tenure was similar to that of 1905 - he favoured the freehold for backblock settlers, but not for those taking up endowed lands.

The land controversy, and the objections to the Dairy Regulations, illustrated the attempts of the Opposition to label the Government as "Socialistic". In this manner they hoped to "lure" the Liberal right wing away from the Government. The Palmerston branch of the Farmer's Union endorsed a national executive resolution for the Union to take a more active part in politics and a "firm stand against Socialistic legislation".<sup>51</sup> Buick repeatedly claimed that the Socialists were running away with the Government, even though he supported State Fire Insurance, and school textbooks being printed by the Government Printing Office.<sup>52</sup>

Throughout the campaign the MES made numerous attacks on the Liberal 'Socialists'. The editorial on election eve accused the Government of having lost touch with the "most essential element in the community - the primary producer." This was because the Cabinet was "full of Socialists, with men who believe that land should bear all taxation."<sup>53</sup>

The Opposition made no attempt to define "socialism", the mere mention of the word supposedly sending the rural community into panic. In fact, neither candidate was approved of by the Palmerston Socialist

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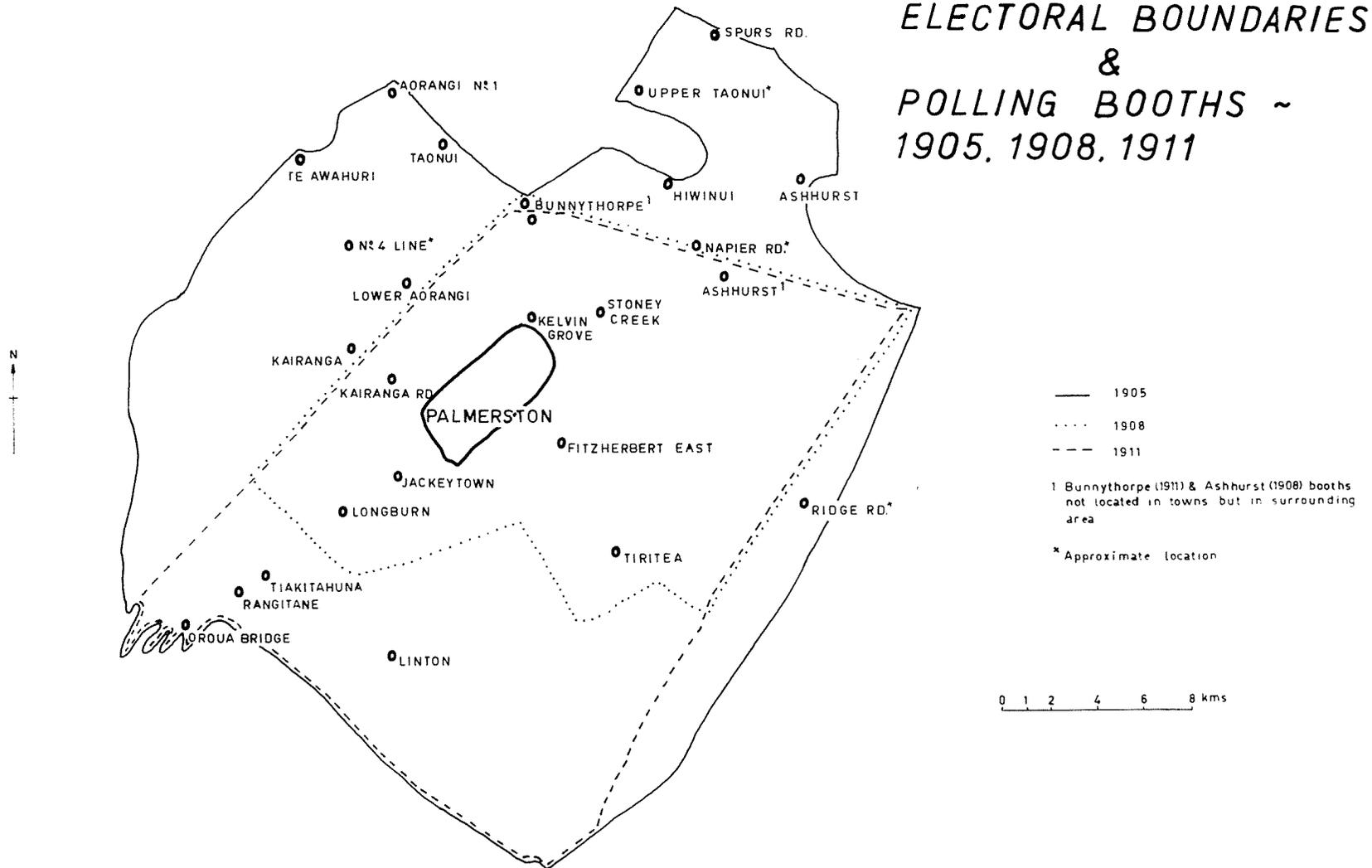
50. MES, October 27, 1908, p.7; MDT, November 16, 1908, p.7.

51. MES, October 27, 1908, p.7.

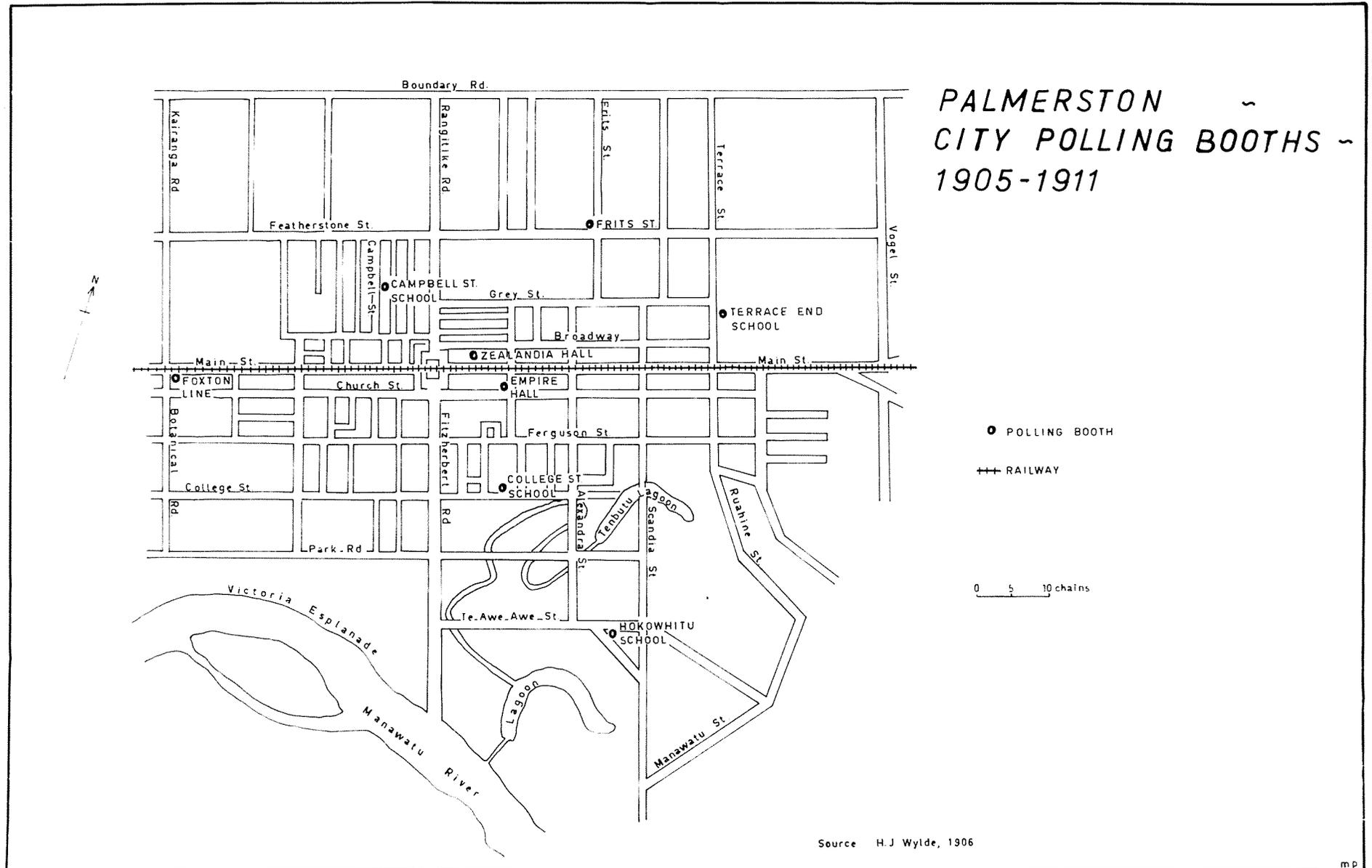
52. MES, October 1, 1908, p.3.

53. MES, November 16, 1908, p.4.

# PALMERSTON ~ ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES & POLLING BOOTHS ~ 1905, 1908, 1911



# PALMERSTON CITY POLLING BOOTHS ~ 1905-1911



Source H. J. Wylde, 1906

Party. They asked both candidates whether they were in favour of a state bank with the sole right of note-issue, of taxing the unearned increment of land, of adult suffrage in all elections, of nationalisation of the coastal steamship services, state control of all monopolies, and state ownership and control of the liquor traffic.<sup>54</sup> Neither's replies were acceptable and the Party withdrew from the election.

Wood received a mixed reception from the working class. He said it was the Government's intention "to bring about a friendly feeling between employers and employees". A majority of workers seemed to still support the Government. As one correspondent noted a working man's party was soon to rise, but until then they should vote Liberal, as the Tories were the opponents of labour. Some, however, considered the worker was "fast approaching serfdom", as the Government closed up the channels of labour with their "insane legislation" - the enemy you know is better than the friend you cannot trust.<sup>55</sup>

Chinese immigration seems to have been a more significant factor in this election than in 1905.<sup>56</sup> Attention in that year had been focused on the "yellow peril" by Lionel Terry, who murdered a Chinese specifically for that purpose, though in Palmerston only brief comments were made on the subject. The 'problem' was reactivated in 1908 with Ward resisting strong pressure to raise the polltax to £500.<sup>57</sup> Buick made his opinions very clear - all Asians should be excluded and if this was not possible then the polltax should be raised to £5000. If this proved unsuccessful he would keep them out with a rifle.<sup>58</sup> Wood, though still opposed to Chinese living in New Zealand, took a less drastic approach. He preferred a boycott of their businesses.<sup>59</sup> This issue played no material part in the outcome though it resulted in the feeling

54. MDT, November 11, 1908, p.5; MES, October 30, 1908, p.5.

55. MES, November 17, 1908, p.6; MES, November 16, 1908, p.6.

56. There were two Chinese settlements in the electorate - one at Stoney Creek, and the other on the Wellington High School Reserve land in the block bordered by Botanical and Park Road, and College and Linton Streets.

57. P. O'Connor "Keeping New Zealand White" The New Zealand Journal of History, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1968, pp. 44-45.

58. MES, October 27, 1908, p.5.

59. MDT, November 4, 1908, p.4.

against the Chinese being intensified.

Milverton, too, spoke to capacity audiences, something attributable more to his personality, than his policy. Commenting on his meeting at the Opera House, the MDT, said he was "subjected to a considerable amount of banter and running comments, and his idiosyncracies in manner caused through nervousness, gave rise to much laughter throughout his address." His policy was rather a mixed one - he favoured free primary and technical education, but considered that secondary and university education should be left to private and benevolent people. Girls' education should consist of home training and nursing to allow them to become "womenly women". He opposed old age pensions as they broke the respect of children for their parents. Milverton considered the vote of £100,000 for the British Navy insufficient and that New Zealanders should be "endeavouring to build up a nation that would uphold the prestige of the British flag."<sup>60</sup>

#### The Results

Neither Buick nor Wood secured a majority, and were thus forced into a Second Ballot seven days later. The Second Ballot Act, 1908,<sup>61</sup> was designed to secure majority representation. If no candidate received more than fifty per cent of votes cast, the top two candidates entered a runoff. Buick topped the poll with 2675 votes (49.31 per cent), Wood polled 2626 votes (48.41 per cent), while Milverton's 123 votes (2.28 per cent)<sup>62</sup> prevented a victory on the first ballot. Wood, once again, held the advantage in the town (49.35 per cent), but Buick's slight majority in the country towns (51.54 per cent), and domination in the rural sector (61.41 per cent) allowed him his narrow lead.

Wood lost four of the seven town booths, but secured the largest, Zealandia Hall (50.82 per cent). Two booths - Campbell Street and Terrace End - customary Liberal supporters - were won by Buick because of a small working class defection. Small nurserymen appear to be the factor in Wood winning Hokowhitu, though it appears high white collar voters in the north of Hokowhitu voted at the College Street booth.

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60. MDT, November 11, 1908, p.5.

61. See Appendix B.

62. See Appendix A(3).

Voting in the two country towns are in absolute contrast. Longburn supported Wood with a slightly reduced majority, while Buick won an overwhelming victory in Bunnythorpe. No single reason can be found to explain the discrepancy, though it appears personalities and the peculiar makeup of Longburn with the freezing works will partially explain it.

If the electorate boundaries had remained similar to those in 1905,<sup>63</sup> Buick would have won comfortably on the first ballot. Of the eleven rural polling booths lost to other electorates, nine supported their respective Opposition candidates - 618 votes (63.91 per cent) to 349 for the Government.<sup>64</sup> Buick's advantage in Palmerston rural booths was similar (61.41 per cent), indicating that rural trends were similar throughout the Manawatu.

#### The Second Ballot

They are lined up at the barrier  
And the going's pretty good  
For the Second Ballot Gallop  
Davey B. and Plain Bill Wood.

And the wise men in their wisdom  
All the blokes and coves and chaps  
Say whatever proves the winner  
Has no easiest of snaps

Then we're told again by someone  
(Sure the man must be a fool)  
That if we put in Buick  
We shall lose the Dairy School.

And the Buickites inform us  
That the time is pretty ripe  
To help the Massey Party  
Give the Government a swipe

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63. The roll decreased from 8349 to 7236 in 1908. This was due to a reduction in the size of the electorate losing Jackeytown, a large portion of Bunnythorpe, and a large are of Fitzherbert West including Linton, and also to purging for the first time since 1902. MES, November 2, 1908, p.5; AJHR, 1909, Vol v, H30, p.2.

64. AJHR, 1909, Vol. v, H30C, p.12.

Why even John from China  
Selling cabbage and callot  
Is of the fixed opinion  
Plooick win him Second Ballot

So we're hazy and we're crazy  
We've election on the brain  
And the silly Second Ballot  
Makes us do it once again

But when the strife is over  
Buick 'Laird of Cloverlea'  
Will surely be elected  
By a good 'majoritee' 65

The seven days between the two ballots allowed for campaigning, and both Buick and Wood took advantage of this to the fullest. Press coverage, though initially it was to be restricted by a "gag clause", later dropped by the Government, was to cause a controversy, which became the focal point of the second ballot. The MDT suggested that as McNab had been defeated, the new Minister of Agriculture would probably reconsider the decision to site a Dairy School in Palmerston. This would require a good lobbyist, familiar with every Parliament move, to protect Palmerton's interests. In case of any elector missed the message, a letter appearing opposite the leader spelling it out - "it's good to have a friend in Government."<sup>66</sup>

The MES responding to this slight on their candidate said it was an insult to the electors and to Buick to suggest the Dairy School would go elsewhere if the latter was returned.<sup>67</sup> However, the "spoils to the victor" theme was eagerly grasped by Wood's supporters. Haydon, Wood's electorate chairman, said, when introducing the candidate for his final meeting, "if Palmerston wants to be on the swim, they had better return a Government member."<sup>68</sup>

This attitude appears to have been resented in many quarters, and helped turn Buick's final meeting into a personal triumph. He dwelt briefly on the Dairy School gaining an enthusiastic response from his audience, then accused Ward of bolstering up the Public Service with

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65. MES, November 23, 1908, p.6.

66. MDT, November 20, 1908, pp. 4-5.

67. MES, November 24, 1908, p.6.

68. *ibid*

Catholics, and attacked the Government's land legislation - McNab had said he would stand or fall by his Land Bill, and he had fallen.<sup>69</sup>

### The Result

Wood failed by 93 votes to retain his seat, Buick increasing his first ballot lead by 44. The margin between the candidates in the town and the country towns remained similar, but Buick furthered his majority by 8 per cent in rural booths.<sup>70</sup> The booth results in Palmerston, itself, were dissimilar to that of the first ballot, with Wood winning three booths - Campbell Street, Terrace End, and Foxton Line - that he lost on the first ballot, but lost Hokowhitu, and only narrowly retained Zealandia Hall. The turnout was fractionally smaller - 77.39 per cent to 77.10 per cent, although 318 electors voted in the second ballot but not the first.<sup>71</sup> With these 318 votes and a further 66 resulting from the drop in informal votes, as well as Milverton's 122, means there was potential 502 votes to be redistributed. These votes were mainly redistributed in Palmerston, and follow the same patterns as the first ballot, excepting they altered booth results without changing the final result.

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69. *ibid*

70. See Appendix A(4)

71. AJHR, 1909, Vol. v, H30A, p.7.

### III The 1911 Election

#### Introduction

The 1911 election showed that the interests of the industrial workers and small farmers whose compatibility had underwritten the Liberal supremacy had forked as each group took a separate path to its own economic advantage. The rural voters of the North Island continued the trends of 1908, and urban labour shifted to a new party. The growth of organised labour between the two elections was startling. In 1909 the Federation of Labour had been formed, and in 1910 the Trades and Labour Councils created the Parliamentary Labour Party. Workers were beginning to find that better results could be obtained by direct action as arbitration had become a guarantee of the status quo.

The Liberal administration had been racked by a series of scandals in the previous two years. In Auckland, Knyvett, a territorial officer, had become the New Zealand "Dreyfus". He was apparently wronged by his superiors and was unable to obtain redress because of a 'callously unsympathetic Government.'

In 1910, the member for Stratford, Hine alleged that his predecessor, Symes, another former Liberal, Major, and a Maori member, Henare Kaihau, had been involved in serious improper practices in dealing with Maori land, and threatening newspapers with the loss of Government advertising. A Royal Commission exonerated the Government and Major, though the others were censured.

Early in 1911 Massey accused the Government of alienating 53,000 acres of native land by an Order-in-Council, and after a highly profitable repurchase sold to a syndicate of which McNab was chairman and principal shareholder. Findlay provided the legal services and Carroll signed the Order-in-Council. Another Royal Commission cleared the Government of any improper action but the stigma still remained.<sup>72</sup>

Sir Joseph Ward's leadership also came in for criticism. In 1910 The Unauthorised Biography of Sir Joseph Ward exhumed unsavory details of

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72. Shannon, pp. 109-113; Newman, p.371.

Ward's bankruptcy in 1896, and claimed

if there is one man in New Zealand today whose life history and business transactions have rendered him unfit for the responsibilities of a Premier, it is the same Sir Joseph Ward. 73

The acceptance of a hereditary Baronetcy by Ward in June, 1911, provoked widespread criticism. Shannon considers Ward "made a mistake in accepting a hereditary title in the first place and greater mistake in accepting one without distinction and prestige."<sup>74</sup>

However some of the damage was offset by Ward's offer of a Dreadnought to the British Government which was greeted by general approval in a nation where a "jingoist patriotism was one of the abiding traditions of politics."<sup>75</sup>

The Opposition's position had improved further since 1908. The alignment with the Farmer's Union allowed a shift in ideological front by dropping the term "Conservative" permitting a respectable "Liberal Opposition" to attract traditionally Liberal middle-class voters. Their "clean hands" appealed as a counter to the Liberal rule by "patronage and corruption."<sup>76</sup>

After the first ballot, both parties had won twenty-three seats each with thirty to be decided on the second ballot. This poll after a number of amazing occurrences, including Labour voters supporting a Reform candidate and Opposition voters supporting Labour and Socialist candidates, resulted in Reform winning 36 seats, the Liberals 30 seats, independents 6 seats and Labour and Socialist 4 seats. The Government survived one vote of confidence but fell on the second.

#### The Candidates

The candidates for the Palmerston seat were David Buick, William Milverton, the former Liberal Minister Robert McNab and a Fitzherbert farmer William Thomson. McNab, wellknown as an historian, as well as a politician, had won Mataura in 1893, but had been defeated in 1896. He

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73. The Unauthorised Biography of Sir Joseph Ward, Auckland, 1910, p.1.

74. Shannon, p.113.

75. *ibid*, p.107.

76. Campbell, p.171.

regained the seat in a bye-election in 1898, and retained it until 1908. He declined a Cabinet appointment in Seddon's Cabinet, but became Minister of Lands in 1906 when Ward took over the premiership. His infamous Land Bill of 1906, which replaced the lease-in-perpetuity on Crown Lands for a sixty-six year lease, aroused such Opposition throughout the Country and within the House, that it was dropped. The Dairy Regulations, introduced by McNab in 1908, also brought forward protests from the rural community and became a major election issue. McNab lost his seat at the 1908 election, though his political influence did not cease. He lobbied successfully for compulsory military training which was embodied in the 1910 Defence Act. McNab moved to Palmerston, where he finished Old Whaling Days, and became involved in the Mokau transaction.

William Thomson, A Scot, became Minister of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Palmerston in 1892. He resigned in 1899, after his opposition to prohibition had split the congregation. He went overseas, returning in 1906, taking land at Fitzherbert. He still retained a strong interest in the liquor question, becoming associated with the Licenced Victuallers Association.

### The Campaign

It seemed certain that Palmerston would require a Second Ballot, as there were 4 candidates contesting the election. McNab was at the centre of the electioneering - the Southern reject against the incumbent, an old resident. Buick was not a well man, but this in all probability aided him. In the previous three years he had profited from the increasing effectiveness of the Opposition and had proved himself a capable member, being a fine speaker. He was aided by Massey's public meeting, and the Reform platform of Thomson. McNab was faced by three hostile candidates and was in an unenviable position. He still had the stigma of the Land Bill and Dairy Regulations and was now forced to defend himself against another aspersion - the Mokau transaction.

McNab at his first meeting in the town explained that although he had been called a "southern reject", he was a "southern success" on five occasions. He now had business interests in the North and intended to settle in Palmerston. He had only stood as no local was prepared to

contest the seat in the Government's interest.<sup>77</sup>

Throughout the electorate there was considerable feeling against McNab, which was illustrated by a spate of letters to the two local papers. One correspondent noted McNab had served Mataura for thirteen years, had been a Cabinet Minister and his electorate had still rejected him, while another said "Buick is an old resident of Palmerston. He is the father of a family and has acquired his present position by honesty and hard work..." W. West called simply for the electors "to reject, the Mataura reject."<sup>78</sup> Buick told the electors "the wise man from the South was thrown out by his electorate, and we don't want a Southern man in this electorate."<sup>79</sup>

McNab was put on the defensive in most of his meetings by his association with the Mokau transaction. He said he had not brought the land off the natives - the 56,000 acres had been leased, then fallen into the mortgagee's hands, and Lewis had applied for an Order-in-Council to purchase it, and he (McNab) had bought at the same price any other buyer including the Government could have bought. It was claimed he had made £50,000 from the transaction but this was completely untrue. McNab defended the Order-in-Council, saying the Government first checked that the price was fair, and that satisfactory arrangements had been made for the Natives. He also disclosed that the decision to give the Order-in-Council had been made in December and he had not joined the company until January.<sup>80</sup>

Massey accused the Government of allowing 53,000 acres to fall into the hands of speculators, while Buick claimed the speculators had made £50,000 profit at the expense of small settlers.<sup>81</sup> A correspondent said the Mokau land was out of the price range of settlers and being sold for

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77. MDT, November 9, 1911, p.5; MES, November 9, 1911, p.5.

78. MES, December 1, 1911, p.2.

79. MES, December 7, 1911, p.5.

80. MDT, November 9, 1911, p.5; MES, November 9, 1911, p.5; MES, November 14, 1911, p.5; MES, December 7, 1911, p.5.

81. MES, November 23, 1911, pp. 5-6; MES, December 7, 1911, p.5.

£3 or £4 an acre. If the Government had brought the land and upgraded the facilities, they would have been able to sell it for thirty to thirty-five shillings.<sup>82</sup>

No matter how McNab defended the accusation of the Mokau transactions, the whole episode proved disastrous for him. McNab spent so much time defending the transaction, and he was often forced on to the defensive, that the limelight was taken from other areas of his platform. This did not differ much of the Government's platform. He wanted free education from primary to University, research encouraged into departments of industry peculiar to New Zealand, have a lawyer head of the Arbitration Court, land endowments to continue to finance education, old age pensions, hospitals and other charities, the land for settlement tenure to remain as present, optional tenure on other Crown Lands, customs duties on the necessities of life reduced, and he would attempt to have a Dairy School, lost after the 1908 election, because of "lack of revenue" sited in Palmerston.<sup>83</sup>

Buick's policy was based on closely on that of the Reform party. He wished to stop wasteful expenditure, keep borrowing to a low level, secure optional tenure, limitation of area, quick settlement of native lands after a rapid individualisation of titles, remove political influence and patronage from the civil service by creating a Civil Service Board responsible to Parliament, and introduce compulsory military training up to the age of twenty one.<sup>84</sup>

Massey, at his meeting in Palmerston on November 22, endorsed Buick as the Reform candidate, and paid tribute to his work for the Opposition over the three previous years, though Thomson, the next day intimated Massey had not come to support Buick, but to put Reform's views.<sup>85</sup> Massey talked at length of Mokau, and elaborated on the Reform platform - sickness and unemployment insurance, a stop to extravagant expenditure, less borrowing, optional tenure, a speedy settlement of Native

82. MES, December 4, 1911, p.5.

83. MES, November 28, 1911, pp. 5-6.

84. MES, November 11, 1911, p.5; MES, November 14, 1911, p.5; MES, December 2, 1911, p.8.

85. MES, November 24, 1911, p.5.

land, and an elective Legislative Council.<sup>86</sup> McNab, referring to the Massey meeting, said he did not need outside help and did not want it. McNab received no assistance from the Government and when Ward visited Palmerston he made no reference to McNab's candidature.<sup>87</sup>

Working class agitation was largely ignored by the Opposition speakers, but the MES played up the actions of the "socialist agitators", being strongly aware of the fears of the rural community. The paper made several attacks on the "militant" Federation of Labour and its "controller", Semple, during a period of industrial unrest in Auckland. It accused Semple of threatening to take out the Tramway and Waterside workers to assist a few Drainage men over a small dispute. The Government was unable to control these "militants" because too many of its members sympathised with them.<sup>88</sup>

The announcement of Thomson's candidature brought forth harsh criticism of his motives in standing. A letter to the MDT suggested he was standing in liquor's interests, and was prepared to sacrifice the interests of the Opposition to advance the Trade's views. The letter intimated he would withdraw before the issue of the writs and support Buick.<sup>89</sup> A number of letters in a similar vein appeared in the two papers, but their accusations were denied by both Thomson and the Licensed Victuallers Association. Thomson's credibility was stretched further when he held two public meetings during the campaign specifically on the liquor question. The campaign, however, was enlived by Thomson. Each Sunday evening, throughout the campaign, he spoke from a cart in the Square. Thomson stood as an unofficial Reform candidate and pledged, that if elected, he would do all in his power to keep Massey in office. His policy was similar to Buick's, but their main variation was on defence and on a civil service Board. Thomson preferred a volunteer territorial group, and an examination for Civil Service entrance, as a Board was too susceptible to political interference. He wanted Orders-in-Council abolished, and criticised Ward for giving a Dreadnought to the Royal Navy

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86. MES, November 23, 1911, p.5.

87. MDT, November 27, 1911, pp. 5-6.

88. MES, November 1, 1911, p.4.

89. MDT, October 17, 1911, p.2.

without consulting Parliament. Other parts of his platform included School Boards elected on Parliamentary franchise, an elective Upper House, the Old Age Pension to women over sixty, a Wages Board to replace the Arbitration Court, and insurance against sickness and unemployment.<sup>90</sup>

Milverton, once again, provided an alternative form of entertainment for the electors and spoke to capacity crowds. His philosophy was a varied one. He felt too many people made living with their coats on-carpentry was a finer trade as any - girls should go to technical school to learn domestic economy instead of being "dressed up dolls". It was time the Natives were brought up to their responsibilities - they contributed nothing towards roads and bridges and the cost of humanitarian legislation. They should be allowed a Reservation and the rest of their land taken. On Chinese immigration Milverton differed from most of his contemporaries

What do we say in this tinpot country? We dictate to a nation of five hundred million people that they have no right to come here unless they pay £100 poll tax.

It is not surprising that after the results had been declared Milverton told the crowd gathered in the Square that they had not understood the deep questions he had gone into.<sup>91</sup>

### The Result

Buick narrowly avoided a second ballot when he received 3374 votes (50.12 per cent) of the 6732 valid votes.<sup>92</sup> McNab polled 2542 votes (37.76 per cent), Thomson 748 (11.11 per cent) and Milverton 68 (1.01 per cent). It was an overwhelming triumph for the Opposition<sup>93</sup> in all winning

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90. MDT, October 28, 1911, p.5; MES, October 28, 1911, p.3; MES, November 18, 1911, p.5.

91. MES, December 2, 1911, p.5; MDT, December 8, 1911, p.5.

92. See Appendix A(5).

93. Thomson stood in the interests in the Opposition and it has been assumed that his supporters were Opposition voters.

61.23 per cent of the vote. Its percentages in the town, country towns, and rural areas were 58.96, 69.02, and 73.60 respectively. Buick won all booths except Longburn and Rangitane, though the Opposition's total votes at the former gave it a majority. McNab fared best in the town (39.91 per cent) though he never seriously challenged Buick. Thomson did well in the country towns, particularly in Linton, which was in his home district of Fitzherbert West. Thomson's previous association with the Presbyterian Church did not seem to affect his support in Palmerston itself. Milverton's percentage gives an accurate indication of how seriously he was taken by the voters.

### Chapter Three

#### Palmerston, Manawatu and New Zealand

The years from 1905 to 1911 saw the decline of the Liberal Party not only in Palmerston but throughout New Zealand. Palmerston like other electorates or regions in the Dominion had its own localised motives for rejecting the Government. A pattern, however, is discernible throughout New Zealand as to why the Liberal Party decayed from 1908 onwards. The two divergent sectional groups - the "backblocks" small farmer, and the urban working class - on which Liberal support was based found other parties that were able to champion their interests more effectively. The farming synthesis was of backblock pioneers, often on land recently opened up particularly under the Lands for Settlement Act. The older established farming districts continued to return Opposition members throughout the Liberal Government's tenure of office. For these backcountry farmers capital, roads, and railways were desperately needed to make the land profitable. The state encouragement of primary industry by the use of its power to create cheap money aided the providers of "ancillary services to the economy - the workers in shop, mine, factory, and dairy factory."<sup>94</sup> Though the Liberal Government's first consideration was to the primary producer, it did not neglect the other groups in society. The workers benefited from the prosperity of successful farming, and state legislation which fixed standards of health, hours, accommodation, and compensation while the Arbitration Court completed the "Christian minimum" by bringing down favourable judgements for the workers.

This coalition began to break up when the sectional interests of the two groups began to conflict. As backcountry farming areas were brought into the category of well established districts, they veered towards the conservativeness of the farmers in these districts. Countrytown shopkeepers and businessmen who had previously voted in Liberal for development and closer subdivision of land (every new farmer was a fresh customer) deserted to the party of the farmers. Since their prosperity relied on the farmers they were very sympathetic to the political views of that group. Liberal attempts to satisfy the businessmen and small farmers alienated the urban working class as they felt their interests

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94. Chapman, p.19.

and small farmers alienated the urban working class as they felt their interests were not being well attended to. This discontent began to intensify from 1905 when Arbitration Court judgements came increasingly to favour the employer.<sup>95</sup>

The movement away from the Government follows a similar pattern in Palmerston.

Table I Liberal Support (%) in Palmerston 1905-11<sup>96</sup>

	Urban	Countrytown	Rural
1905	55.65	50.80	48.66
1908(1st Ballot)	49.35	47.69	36.14
1908(2nd Ballot)	50.64	48.40	31.00
1911	39.91	30.70	25.86

The initial drop in Liberal support was in 1908. The Government suffered small losses on the first ballot which were slightly recouped on the Second Ballot in urban and country town booths. Rural support took a startling drop - 11 per cent - on the first ballot and slipped a further 5 per cent on the Second Ballot. In 1911 the rural trends continued - a further 5 per cent loss - but in the countrytowns (18 per cent) and the urban booths (11 per cent) Liberal support plummeted.

The collapse of the rural vote followed a similar line throughout the electorate as illustrated in Table II.

Table II Liberal Support (%) at Three Rural Polling Booths. 1905-11

	Fitzherbert East	Stoney Creek	Kelvin Grove
1905	46.67	56.10	46.34
1908 1st Ballot	36.67	33.33	43.21
1908 2nd Ballot	33.33	31.64	35.30
1911	12.09	26.52	20.91

95. Much of the previous information has been condensed from Chapman, pp.18-19, Bellringer, pp. 125-6, Graham, pp.176-88.

96. All tables in this chapter are drawn from the election results in Appendix .

The sole significance of the three booths selected in the table is that they were the only three rural booths used in all three elections. The fall in Liberal support in 1908 of 13 per cent, 24 per cent and 11 per cent respectively, though wide ranging, does indicate a large loss of confidence by the rural sector. The voting variation between ballots was probably caused by fluctuations in the turnout of voters ie some electors voted on the first ballot, and not on the second, and some failed to cast a vote on the first ballot but did so in the Second. The Liberal support in rural areas in 1911 drops to less than 25 per cent. At Fitzherbert East in 1905 the Liberals had won 9 votes in every twenty, but in 1911 their return was only one in eight. McNab's lowest return in 1911 was at Tiritea where he could only win 10.82 per cent of valid votes.

Table III

Liberal Support(%) at a Country Town Booth (Longburn) 1905-11.

1905	61.97
1908(1st Ballot)	57.39
1908(2nd Ballot)	59.60
1911	38.59

Longburn was the only country town booth in all three elections. Its returns were not indicative of all country town booths as its swing away from the Government - 21 per cent - was three years later than other country town booths. Longburn was a different type of town. It had become a junction for the Wellington - Palmerston railway in 1886, had had a freezing works since 1885, and a dairy factory from the late 1890s. The Longburn vote for the Government in 1908 suggests that these electors bore a closer resemblance to the working class voters of Palmerston than to their rural neighbours. The move away from the Government in 1911 seems to confirm this, as a similar phenomenon occurred in Palmerston in 1911. The vote of 1908 might also be as a result of the Government buying the Wellington-Manawatu Company's line just before the election to the immense benefit of shareholders. This also ensured Longburn would continue to be on a main railway line.

It has been suggested that land tenure and its associated strife explains the alienation of the farmer and backblock settlers from the

Government. Under the Liberal land settlement schemes land was leased for 999 years (lease-in-perpetuity). The rent from these leasees was to be a permanent return on loans and taxes invested in land settlement, and any rise in land values would therefore be returned to the taxpayers. Initially this was successful but as tenants saw land values rising because of the increasing prosperity of the country they attributed it to the "labour of their hands, their wives' hands, and often their children's hands."<sup>97</sup> They wanted the freehold at the original price of land when leased plus one per cent. The Government was divided on a solution. The left wing of the party considered these settlers wanted to take for themselves what all had contributed to, while others, particularly those members with non-urban seats felt that the leaseholders were prepared to ignore the family sweat, to please city radicals and unionists.<sup>98</sup>

Throughout the three elections under consideration, land was a major issue. In 1905 much feeling was generated by the report of the Royal Commission into Land Tenure. Buick, a farmer and a freeholder, was able to exploit the Government's predicament to the full in the 1908 election. Pirani was unable to attack the Government's land legislation as he had voted for much of it as a Government supporter in the mid-1890's, and in fact, voted for the principle of leasehold in the 1894 Act.<sup>99</sup> It was only after he became disenchanted with the Seddon administration he veered towards the freehold. The land agitation took on a different aspect in 1911 with the Mokau transaction and the associated land administration corruption of the Government.

The feeling over the freehold versus leasehold question leaves us with one inconsistency. By 1910 the three counties of Oroua, Manawatu and Kairanga, included only nine per cent Crown leasehold land - 583 holdings of 6369 - this was mainly in upper Oroua and Pohangina.<sup>100</sup> It would appear surprising that land tenure could be a major issue when only one in eleven holdings in the Manawatu was leasehold and all of it was outside the electorate.

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97. Bellringer, p.135.

98. Chapman, pp. 20-21; Graham pp. 128-141.

99. Symondson, p.104.

100. Craig, pp. 49,78.

Bailey<sup>101</sup> suggests that the land tenure question took on a symbolic nature, one in which freeholders supported leaseholders.

The question of leasehold versus freehold ... takes on a symbolic nature, symbolic of the desire to preserve the independent, thrifty, morally and physically superior way of life of which the freehold was the nexus.

If leaseholders were given the freehold they could join with freeholders to combat socialists and urban radicals within the Government. They would have security against their greatest fear - land nationalisation. The various Socialist groups made no secret of their desires for land nationalisation. The Press, in April 1905, reported the Christchurch branch of the New Zealand Political Labour League recommending the "necessity for nationalising the land of the colony". The controversy split the Government in two, while the Opposition who unanimously accepted the demands for the freehold were able to embarrass the Government. Bellringer<sup>102</sup> considers that initially the battle was between the freeholders of both parties against Liberal single taxes and radicals. After the two reports - one favouring leasehold, the other freehold - of the Commission, and the split in the Government as evidenced by the indecision with McNab's 1906 Land Bill, the rural sector realised that the Government was not able to legislate in their favour, and they defected to the Opposition.

The fear of socialism was very apparent in Palmerston particularly in 1908. The Palmerston Socialist Party made their opinions obvious when they asked the candidates whether they were in favour of taxing the unearned increment of land, and nationalising coastal steamship services and coalmines.<sup>103</sup> The reaction to this type of comment resulted in the widespread feeling against the Dairy Regulations.

The farmer's Union seems to have played little part in the three elections even though its founder J.G. Wilson was once the member for Palmerston. It supported the Opposition candidate in 1905 and 1908, though its impact was hardly felt, and in 1911 it was aligned with the Opposition. The MDT's report of the 1905 Farmers Union meeting to choose a candidate indicates it was a farce. Thirty farmers were at the meeting which was in

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101. R.L. Bailey, "Agarian Aspirations and Demands as illustrated by the 1905 Royal Commission on Land Tenure," unpublished M.A. Thesis, Massey University, 1972, pp. 4-27.

102. Bellringer, pp. 128-35.

103. MES, October 30, 1908, p.3.

"no sense representative of the farming community. Mr. Hodder, who used to be a farmer, and who now is, by a coincidence, chairman of Mr. Pirani's committee, came along and added his weight and influence to the choice." Before Pirani was chosen, Hewitt, the Chairman, spoke of the changes to the country if the leaseholders were returned to power, instancing Russia as an extreme example of the resultant evils of leasehold principles.<sup>104</sup>

No matter how strong the Opposition was in the rural and countrytown areas it could not win the seat without taking over 45 per cent of the town vote at a very minimum. They succeeded in this in 1908, and in 1911 took it a step further by dominating the town booths. The defection of urban booths and seats from the Government took place mainly in electorates where the Labour or Socialist Party offered an alternative. Palmerston, like Taranaki, is an exception, as there was no Labour candidate, but yet the Reform candidate was still successful in rural areas. This suggests a number of the working class voted Reform. In fact some had supported the Reform/Opposition candidates all along. Research indicates that 4 per cent of the male adult population were of high white collar status, 29 per cent low white collar and 66 per cent working class.<sup>105</sup> These figures have been derived from occupational ranking and social class as devised by Claire Hatfield. Figure I shows the distribution of occupational ranking throughout Palmerston in 1906. The map is adequate for the purposes of this study but in depth research could provide a more detailed distribution.<sup>106</sup> The map has been used to ascertain what social groups supported the Government and when their support was withdrawn, Campbell Street, Central,<sup>107</sup> Terrace End and Foxton Line booth, all drew upon predominantly working class areas, though the last to a slightly lesser extent, while Frits Street, Hokowhitu, and College Street, drew upon mixed areas with a working class minority.

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104. MDT, November 27, 1905, p.2.

105. Research by Neal Swindells, for Palmerston, using a small sample had similar results - High white collar 6.1 per cent, low white collar 36.1 per cent working class 57.8 per cent. B.A.(Hons) Research Exercise in progress.

106. See Appendix C for Hatfields occupational rankings and methodology of social map.

107. Central includes Zealandia Hall, 1905-8, and the Empire Hall 1911 as they are only 100 yards apart.

# PALMERSTON SOCIAL CLASSES 1906

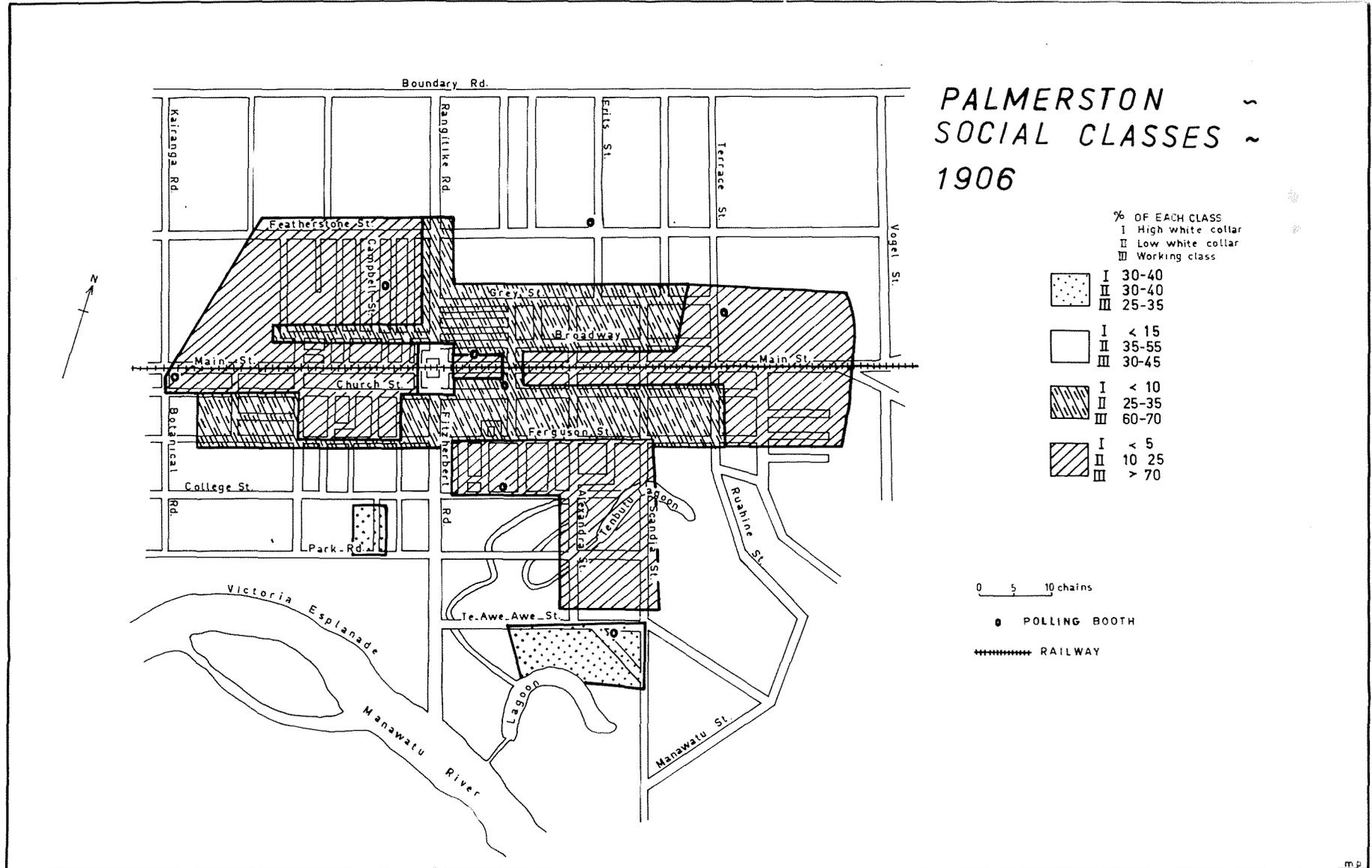


Table IV

<u>Government Support (%) in Four Urban Booths 1905-11.</u>				
	Campbell Street	College Street	Terrace End	Centr
1905	52.35	49.29	55.56	57.6
1908 (1st Ballot)	47.38	40.06	48.08	50.8
1908 (2nd Ballot)	51.96	44.52	51.94	50.2
1911	38.72	40.00	42.71	40.5

These four urban booths were the only ones used in all three elections. In 1905 it appears a little over half the working class and low white collar workers supported the Government. This assumes that few high white collar workers would have voted for the Liberals and can be discounted. To differentiate between the other two groups is harder, though we can assume safely that a number of small businessmen and proprietors may have opposed the Government. The drop of Government support in 1908 of approximately five per cent suggests that the low white collar group - grocers, drapers, butchers and settlers on the outskirts of town may have been beginning to follow the merchants and shopkeepers in countrytowns and the farmers. The drop of ten per cent in urban support in 1911 completes this low white collar movement and also reflects a significant fall in working class votes. It seems probable that by 1911 up to three quarters of low white collar and between fifty-five and sixty per cent of the working class favoured the Reform Party.

The total movement of 15 per cent reflects the town's close association with the country. The influence of the rural sector was such that as they changed the town followed. The author feels the closeness and dependence of town, and its resulting conservativeness allowed voters, who in other centres would not have entertained the idea of voting Reform, to vote for that party. This explains the absence of a "Labour Party". The two newspapers only mentioned the Palmerston Socialist Party twice in the re-elections.

Bellringer's<sup>108</sup> research into Taranaki seems to confirm this view. As soon as the Liberal's lost their majorities in the Taranaki towns, they lost their seats. In New Plymouth the Liberal vote dropped from 74 per cent in 1905, to 53 per cent in 1908 and to 45 per cent in 1911. By 1911 Reform

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108. Bellringer, pp. 141-148.

held the three major towns in Taranaki - New Plymouth, Hawera and Patea. Businessmen's support was obtained by dropping the free trade platform and supporting protective tariffs. It offered an improvement in the old age pension scheme and compulsory insurance against sickness and unemployment for the workers. Bellringer considers Taranaki townspeople realised their prosperity depended on their farmers and followed their lead in voting Reform.

Palmerston was following the trends of the Manawatu and this can be seen in Table V which compares Palmerston with the two other electorates in the Manawatu.

Table V

	<u>Liberal Support (%) in the Manawatu 1905-11</u>		
	Palmerston	Oroua	Manawatu
1905	53.90	50.67	51.35
1908	49.16	49.84	43.76
1911	37.76	39.62	37.74

The Government won a majority of votes throughout the Manawatu in 1905 though in Oroua the seat was lost as a superfluous Liberal split the Government's vote. By 1908 all three seats were held by the Opposition though somewhat narrowly. In 1911 the Manawatu completely rejected the Liberal Party and Reform candidates had comfortable majority in all three seats.

Initially it may appear as if the drop in Liberal votes in 1911 in Palmerston is a localised result. McNab was a weak candidate for Palmerston. Though a former Cabinet Minister and a noted historian and scholar, he had been rejected by his electorate in 1908, had introduced the Dairy Regulations and the notorious 1906 Land Bill, and had the shadow of Mokau hanging over him. However the similar trends throughout the Manawatu suggest that McNab's shortcomings did not cause his defeat but in fact a swing throughout the Manawatu against the Government did.

The improvement in Opposition organisation from 1908 cannot be ignored when assessing the reasons for the Liberal decline in the Manawatu. Shannon<sup>109</sup> suggests Hints on Organisation, a Manual published under the auspices of the Political Reform League in 1906 by a prominent Oppositionist,

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109. Shannon, p.34.

E.E. Vaile, was the first real attempt by the Opposition to combat the organisational ability of the Liberal Party. Graham<sup>110</sup> considers Vaile's criticism was the first step toward opposition success in 1911. Vaile thought candidates should be selected by all Party supporters, not just by a small committee appointed by the Party's Central Executive. He suggested a network of subcommittees of party supporters within each electorate be formed, which would appoint a delegate to a meeting to select the candidate. In Waikato sixteen branches sent twenty one delegates to the selection meeting for the 1908 candidate. The Government held Waikato in 1908, though narrowly. The Opposition concentrated on Taranaki and Manawatu. Martin made Palmerston his headquarters for electioneering for three months in this region. Massey made five visits to Palmerston outlined in Chapter II and it is significant that on Second Ballot day in the Dominion Massey chose to visit Palmerston.

1911 ranks as one of the national elections in New Zealand history, comparable with 1890, 1935, and 1960. Reform, from 1912, was to dominate New Zealand politics in one form or another. New Zealand society may not have been revolutionised as the 1890 and 1935 elections did, but it brought a new emphasis to New Zealand life. 1905 was the last great election triumph of the Liberals. 1908 was the forerunner for 1911, and its movements in political opinion resulting in eight lost seats, came to their conclusion in 1911. Palmerston mirrored these changes in New Zealand politics, blending national and local issues into its own political identity. But also Palmerston politics reflected the politics of the Manawatu. Electorates within a region tend to follow a similar pattern. In three electorates within the Manawatu deserted the Government in 1908 as did the three electorates in Taranaki. A similar result occurred in the Waikato in 1911.

This study has illustrated how closely related a major town is to its hinterland and how responsive its electors were to the views of the surrounding countryside. It appears as if this shaped the electorate's politics. The issues, themselves, continued appearing from the rural sector and the town concurred with the rural viewpoint.

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110.Graham, p.89.

APPENDIX A(1) The 1902 Election Results

<u>Booth</u>	<u>Wood(L)</u>	<u>Hodder(O)</u>	<u>Manson(IL)</u>
Courthouse	726	464	119
Campbell St.	102	123	22
Terrace End	215	147	38
College St.	62	119	16
Fire Brigade	507	382	150
Longburn	100	61	10
Oroua Bridge	38	16	4
Linton	52	59	8
Tiritea	14	32	3
Fitzherbert East	23	45	3
Taonui R.L.	49	46	39
Awahuri	41	21	11
Bunnythorpe	83	90	29
Upper Taonui	18	20	4
Bogun's	7	10	4
Stoney Creek	36	43	9
Hiwinui	17	25	1
Jackeytown	25	37	5
Kelvin Grove	24	22	18
Conway's	4	6	1
Lower Aorangi	6	11	8
Ashhurst	56	58	2
Kairanga	<u>21</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>7</u>
	2226	1893	511

Source      MES, November 26, 1902, p.2.

Note          The 1902 election results do not appear in the AJHR.

(2) The 1905 Election Results

<u>Booth</u>	<u>Wood(L)</u>	<u>Pirani(O)</u>
Zealandia Hall	1616	1187
Campbell St.	379	345
Terrace End	370	296
College St.	245	252
Longburn	163	100
Oroua Bridge	46	14
Linton	69	71
Tiritea	15	38
Fitzherbert East	41	49
Kairanga	44	64
Aorangi No.1.	17	22
Taonui	61	81
Bogun's, Napier Rd.	9	20
Stoney Creek	69	54
Hiwinui	16	23
Jackeytown	40	45
Kelvin Grove	38	48
Conway's, Spurs Rd.	7	8
Lower Aorangi	21	28
Ashhurst	57	91
Hill Top, Linton	14	7
Ridge Rd.	10	7
No. 4 Line	<u>19</u>	<u>10</u>
	3551	3037

Source: AJHR, Session 1, 1906, H25A, p.11.

(3) The 1908 Election Result - First Ballot

<u>Booth</u>	<u>Buick(O)</u>	<u>Milverton(I)</u>	<u>Wood(L)</u>
Zealandia Hall	1234	51	1328
Campbell St.	327	14	298
Terrace End	283	15	276
College St.	190	15	137
Frits St.	73	6	113
Foxton Line	155	7	154
Hokowhitu	53	4	63
Longburn	74	1	101
Kairanga Rd.	41	-	11
Kelvin Grove	42	4	35
Bunnythorpe	60	1	23
Stoney Creek	63	5	34
Ashhurst	23	-	20
Fitzherbert East	<u>57</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33</u>
	2675	123	2626

Source

AJHR, 1909, Vol V, H30C, P.30.

(4) The 1908 Election Result - Second Ballot

<u>Booth</u>	<u>Buick</u>	<u>Wood</u>
Zealandia Hall	1356	1368
Campbell St.	283	306
Terrace End	285	308
College St.	182	146
Frits St.	89	90
Hokowhitu	55	52
Foxton Line	148	191
Longburn	86	109
Kairanga Rd.	43	9
Kelvin Grove	55	30
Bunnythorpe	60	28
Stoney Creek	76	35
Ashhurst	33	16
Fitzherbert East	<u>60</u>	<u>30</u>
	2811	2718

Source

AJHR, 1909 Vol V, H30C, P.12.

(5) The 1911 Election Result

<u>Booth</u>	<u>Buick(R)</u>	<u>McNab(L)</u>	<u>Milverton(I)</u>	<u>Thomson(IO)</u>
Empire Hall	1301	1078	33	250
Campbell St.	481	374	10	101
College St.	210	172	2	46
Terrace End	334	290	7	48
Longburn	70	71	-	43
Kairanga Rd.	33	11	-	3
Kelvin Grove	69	23	2	16
Fitzherbert East	64	11	-	16
Linton	75	38	1	57
Tiritea	41	6	-	18
Tiakitahuna	48	28	-	19
Hokowhitu	60	51	-	9
Foxton Line	184	154	6	64
Frits St.	153	87	4	18
Bunnythorpe	64	21	2	5
Ashhurst	37	22	-	7
Rangitane	11	38	-	7
Stoney Creek	80	35	-	17
Special	<u>59</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>
	3374	2542	68	748

Source

AJHR, 1912, Vol.4., H12A, p.13.

Appendix BThe Second Ballot Act, 1908

The Second Ballot was an electoral device introduced by Sir Joseph Ward in October, 1908. It was used in two general elections - 1908 and 1911 - and four byelections before being repealed in 1913. The Act provided for majority representation in Parliament. If no candidate received fifty per cent of the valid votes, a second ballot would be held between the top two polling candidates. This ballot would be held seven days after the first ballot, except in ten larger electorates where it would be held fourteen days after the first. Initially press coverage was to be restricted but widespread opposition resulted in this "gag clause" being dropped. All expenditure incurred by candidates in the Second Ballot would be paid for by the State up to fifty pounds.<sup>1</sup>

Ward in introducing the Bill claimed its sole purpose was to achieve majority representation. He claimed there had been fifteen minority members in 1905 and it was possible that one day a majority of electorates would be represented by minority members. The Government had more to lose from the Second Ballot as they had twelve of the minority members in 1905.<sup>2</sup>

There appears to be two political reasons for the introduction of the Second Ballot. Firstly it would save the Government from redundant candidates. In 1905 thirteen seats had been contested by Liberals other than the Government nominee. In Hawkes Bay, in 1908, few Liberals were prepared to challenge Dillon, the incumbent, who himself was being strongly challenged by Sir William Russell, the former leader of the Opposition. Ward hoped redundant Liberals who complicated the first ballot would support the Government on the second ballot.

Secondly, it was a precautionary insurance against the indicated and inevitable formation of an independent Labour movement. The Second Ballot gave Labour voters a second chance to vote Liberal, and if a Labour candidate was in a Second Ballot with an Oppositionist, Liberal voters could be expected to support that candidate. Labour could therefore be

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1. New Zealand Statutes, 1908, pp. 85-89.

2. New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, Vol.144, pp. 575-581.

integrated into the political system with little disruption to the Liberal's position. It was inconceivable that a Labour member would support the Opposition.<sup>3</sup>

The Second Ballot worked orthodoxly in 1908. There were twenty-three second ballots, resulting in a net loss of two seats for the Government, while the Opposition and Labour Party each gained one seat. In Hawkes Bay Dillon was able to overcome a first ballot deficit to defeat Russell, after the redundant Liberals supported him.

At the end of the first ballot in 1911, the two parties were deadlocked - each had won twenty-five seats outright, the Government were leading in fifteen, Reform in thirteen, and Labour and an Independent were each leading in one. It was left to the Second Ballot to find the Government. Massey, taking advantage of Ward's poor relationship with the Liberal left wing urged Reform voters, where there was no Reform in the Second Ballot, to support the Labour candidate. In Grey Lynn, Payne, the Socialist candidate, overcame a thousand vote deficit on the first ballot to defeat the Liberal Fowlds. This can be attributed to Reform voters supporting Payne. In Otaki there was a similar result when the Socialist Robertson defeated the Liberal, Field.

In Parnell, the Second Ballot produced an incredible result as it appears as if Labour voters supported Reform. The Auckland Branch of the Labour Party denounced the Liberal, Findlay, as the "bitteresy anti-Labourite in the Ward administration" and claimed Labour had "nothing to gain from supporting the Liberal Party."<sup>4</sup> Dickson won comfortably, and probably would have succeeded even without Labour votes.

Throughout 1912 and 1913 the Liberal and "Labour" parties rectified some of their differences and this was illustrated in the Grey and Lyttleton byelection in 1913. On the second ballot Liberal votes enabled Social Democrats to succeed in winning the seats. The Government was aware of the damages of the Second Ballot and attempted to repeal it. Initially it was unsuccessful as the Second Ballot Appeal Act was stonewalled by the Opposition and the Government dropped it. Massey then attempted to

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3. Shannon, pp. 4-8.

4. E.P. Aimer, "The Politics of a City: A Study in the Auckland Urban Area, 1899-1935", unpublished M.A. Thesis, Auckland University, 1958, p.87.

use devious means to repeal the Second Ballot inserting several clauses in a Legislative Amendment Act which effectively repealed it and this was passed after a stern battle by a majority of fourteen.

What then was the legacy of the Second Ballot? There were fifty-seven in all, the first ballot being confirmed in thirty-eight instances and overturned on nineteen occasions.<sup>5</sup> The Second Ballot proved a failure. The growth of Reform was not checked, and Labour blossomed winning six seats in second ballots. However when ideal conditions existed as in 1908 and 1913 it worked well, and was a danger to Reform. Add this to its cumbersome mechanism it is not surprising that New Zealand's one attempt at prevential voting did not survive the Reform Government's first term.

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5. Shannon, p.256.

## Appendix C.

### (1) The Methodology of the Social Map.

The Social Map in Figure V had been devised from four sources: the 1905 Electoral Roll, H.J. Wylde's 1906 Map of Palmerston, Claire Hatfield's occupational rankings for New Zealand at the turn of the century, and discussions with Ian Matheson, the Palmerston North City Council Archivist. The occupations of electors as designated by the Electoral Roll were placed into street lists. This gave an indication of the social status of streets throughout the town. The weakness of this approach is that for the larger streets eg Main Street, Church Street, had only the designation East or West as addresses. This however was not a problem for shorter streets as they had no wide variation of social status.

Wylde's map was used to fill this gap, by gauging section sizes and relating them to the occupational ranking within the streets. It has been assumed that streets with a number of small sections were likely to be inhabited by lower classes than on larger sections. Mr. Matheson, a noted local historian, was able to note inconsistencies and errors, and help rectify them.

However this obviously leaves a number of problems. Firstly how accurate are the occupational designations in the Electoral Roll? Most historians agree that occupations included in the Censuses at this time were notoriously inaccurate. The other problem is how accurate are Hatfield's rankings. For the purpose of this study they have been used exactly as outlined by her. However, as her research had not been completed and come under the scrutiny of professional historians, the accuracy has yet to be tested.

One source of information unable to be used was the Palmerston Rate Books. It was hoped to use section valuations to complete this Social Map, but this has been unable to be done because of the absence of a Valuation Roll. The exact location of sections cannot be ascertained and therefore this source could not be used.

The Social Map should only be seen as a highly generalised indication of social class in Palmerston. The time has not been available for a large amount of research, but the map does give an indication of social segregation in Palmerston. This is limited but still in evidence.

## OCCUPATION RANKING FOR N.Z.

## I. High White Collar

(a) Professionals

eg. architect	editor
solicitor	professional engineer
clergyman	
civileng, chemist, vet	

(b) Major Proprietors, Managers and Officials

eg. merchant	banker
sheriff	broker
manufacturer, brewer	corporation official
hotelkeeper, publican	
buildercarp, contractor, builder	

## II. Low White Collar

(a) Clerks and Salesmen

eg. auctioneer	advertising man
agent, landagent	auditor
accountant	baggage man
clerk	bank teller
collector	
messenger	

(b) Semiprofessionals

eg. photographer	actor
surveyor	airplane pilot
journalist	artist
teacher, primary, pupil	musician

(c) Petty Proprietors, Managers & Officials

eg. cabprop	foreman
dealer	huckster, pedlar
storekeeper	minor government official
stationmanager	
shipbuilder	

## III Working Class

(a) Skilled

eg. shoemaker, stonemason	boilermaker
bricklayer, bookbinder	electrician
printer	coppersmith
carpenter, joiner	engraver
baker butcher	goldsmith
saddler, currier, tanner	paperhanger
engindriver, engineer	roofer

(b) Semiskilled and Service Workers

eg. platelayer, cook, storeman	apprentice
fireman	cook
hairdresser	janitor
brickmaker	lineman

(c) Unskilled labourers and Menial Service Workers

eg. groom, porter, ganger	coachman
labourer	lumberman
miner, mariner, seaman	porter

Source Claire Hatfield (Work not completed)

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