

ORGANIZATION OF THE REFORM PARTY
IN NEW ZEALAND

by

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

A political party, like any other well-developed group must possess machinery of organization.¹ To gain power it must conduct campaigns and win votes. To run campaigns effectively, the party workers must be organized with tasks assigned to each and with lines of control and leadership defined. The major objective of a party organization is the winning of elections. The task of realizing this objective has to be broken down into parts and each part assigned to those involved in the performance of accomplishing the objective. There must be relationships of authority and responsibility within the organization to assure that each person carries out his assigned task in the right way at the right time.

It is the intended purpose of this thesis to reconstruct, analyze and study the formal organization of the Reform party in New Zealand. Basically, the author will be concerned with the years 1904-1915, as this period of time constitutes its formative years. However, it will be necessary to refer to certain events previous to 1904 and after 1915 in order to gain a full conception of the organization of the Reform party.

From 1899, with the dissolution of the Conservative party after the General Elections, until the emergence of the Reform party in 1909, there was no organized opposition to the Liberal party in New Zealand. It was in 1909 that the Parliamentary opponents of the Liberal party took the name of the Reform party.² The termination point of this thesis is 1915, as it was

¹ Valdimer O. Key, Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups, p. 337.

² The Dominion, February 12, 1909, p. 5.

in that year that, as a result of the outbreak of World War I, a coalition government, called the National Ministry, was formed. Also, after 1915, the organization of the Reform party experienced no basic changes in its structure.

The writer feels this subject is worthy of study, as the organization of the Reform party constitutes one of the major reasons for its success at the polls. It will be shown that the emergence of the Reform party and its rise to power was directly related to the simplicity of its structure and functional division of responsibilities by the party leaders. Therefore, it will be necessary to reconstruct the Reform party organization, to show the various lines of authority and responsibility, to enumerate the tasks involved and to describe their assignment, and to point out the fact that as the party's organization increased in magnitude, so did its success at the polls.

Material and Methods

Unfortunately, the Reform party is a dead political entity and more than three decades have passed since its final days of power. For reasons unknown to the writer, little concerning the Reform party has been consigned to writing. As a result, the writer has had to rely on the newspapers of that period as his primary source of information, supplemented by several Reform party publications, interviews, and the review of studies completed concerning the period of history examined in this thesis. The author has relied heavily on The Auckland Star and The Dominion, the two major newspapers in New Zealand during the period under discussion. Light and Liberty, the Reform party publication has also been used extensively. An unpublished document entitled, Hints on Organization, by E. Earle Vaile, has been heavily relied on, as it

enumerates the suggested basic structure for the Reform party organization. Mr. F. M. B. Fisher, Minister of Customs and Marine in the first Reform party Ministry, was interviewed on several occasions, and his remarks have been extensively used in this thesis.

It should be noted that several excellent studies have been compiled concerning the history of the Reform party and the political history of that period. Leicester Webb's unpublished M.A. thesis, The Rise of the Reform Party, and Margret Brand's unpublished M.A. thesis, A Study of Conservatism, are both excellent. Several books, such as The Politics of Equality by Leslie Lipson, The Long White Cloud by William P. Reeves, New Zealand in the Making by J. B. Condliffe, and Leicester Webb's Government in New Zealand offer excellent background information.

The appendices show the Reform party organization and its geographic units. The organization is traced from its formation, and the growth of its structure, size, and ability to carry the party to victory at the polls is shown.

CHAPTER I

RISE OF THE REFORM PARTY

Party politics in New Zealand during the last seventy years have followed a well-defined trend. For two decades the Liberals triumphed over their rivals and enjoyed an unbroken tenure of office. From 1912 to 1928 the Reform party was the strongest political party in Parliament, although its supremacy was never so firmly established as that of the Liberals. In the depression of the thirties, Reformers and Liberals coalesced to face the opposition of labor, whose power was steadily mounting. From 1936 to 1947, the Labor party predominated, followed by the National party. In 1958, the Labor party returned to power.

The slowness with which the pendulum has swung from "ins" to "outs" is a striking characteristic of New Zealand politics. According to Leslie Lipson, "it can best be explained in terms of economic factors."¹ The party in power retained office while economic conditions continued to be good. But any shift in the relations of economic groups, or any catastrophic fall in prices has brought an upset to the dominant party. Although social and moral issues have at times been important, they have never dominated political controversy. On matters of defense and foreign policy, the parties were seldom in conflict, since an overwhelming public sentiment favored the leadership of Great Britain.

Around 1906, industrial workers and small farmers, whose compatibility had underwritten the Liberal supremacy, forked and decided to pursue what

¹ Leslie Lipson, The Politics of Equality, p. 196.

they considered to be their own economic advantage. As their cooperation gave place to competition, the weakening of the Liberal party led to a re-alignment of political parties.

On the one side, organized labor showed a desire to go its separate way, and its breakaway from the Liberals gathered pace. Influenced by Marxian doctrines on class war, it assumed a militant temper, seeking not merely better conditions within the capitalist system, but an onslaught on capitalism itself. In 1908 the various Labor and Socialist candidates received over 40,000 votes, bringing them four seats out of seventy-six in Parliament, excluding the four Maori seats.²

While labor pursued its tactics of separation, the farmers flocked behind a new leader and common cause. Their chief interests lay in the policies of land settlement and state loans. The growth of the North Island dairy industry and the rise in the prices of primary products were making the new class of small farmers prosperous. Formerly radical when times were bad, they became more conservative with continued good times.

The spread of conservative sentiment manifested itself in the desire for freehold ownership of the land occupied on state lease. This campaign for freehold ownership of their land provided the nucleus of the new farmers' movement. This grew and flourished, especially in the North Island. The Liberal strength was concentrated in the South Island. When the population of the North Island became greater than that of the South Island at the turn of the century, voting preponderance shifted from the areas where the Liberal party had its stronghold.

² Ibid., p. 214.

Crushed by repeated Liberal victories, the old Conservative party representing the large landowners and well-to-do business men broke up after the election of 1899. In the 1902 elections there was no Conservative party, only opposition candidates. Opposition candidates polled less than 86,000 votes while miscellaneous candidates polled over 105,000 votes.³ Nineteen opposition members, as compared with ten independents were elected. The large number of independents emphasizes the lack of organized opposition to the Liberal party. In the 1905 election, the opposition ranks were more consolidated, this time under the leadership of William F. Massey, who had been appointed leader of the Opposition in 1903. The significance of this appointment was great. Leicester Webb attaches great importance to the appointment:

The meaning of the change of leadership is clear enough. The Liberals had come into power as the opponents of land monopolies and, with the leasehold tenure as their instrument, had assisted in the creation of a class of small landowners. As happens in so many revolutions, the beneficiaries, anxious to consolidate their gains, turned conservative. Those whom the leasehold had put on the land now demanded the freehold. Massey, himself a farmer, was the representative of this new class of conservative small proprietors, a class from which, towards the end of the century, the Opposition drew its main strength.⁴

Massey entered the New Zealand Parliament in 1894 when he was thirty-eight years of age. Like most representatives of country constituencies in New Zealand, he worked his way up to national politics through activity in local government and farmers' organizations. Upon his election to Parliament, he became one of the few small farmers' representatives who allied themselves with the Conservative party.

In education and the social graces, Massey was not the equal of his colleagues, but as a Parliamentarian he was far ahead of them. He was a master

³ Ibid., p. 216.

⁴ Leicester Webb, Government in New Zealand, pp. 18-19.

of the complexities and subtleties of parliamentary procedure, and possessed the capacity to use them to political advantage. He was considered to be a shrewd, honest, and simple man. As Leicester Webb pointed out, "Massey was a man who personified security and steadiness, who put reliability and honesty above all other virtues, who quoted the Bible and Kipling, who believed in the British Empire as a bulwark of peace and freedom, and who looked, and was, a good and kind man."⁵

The Parliamentary opposition, under its new leadership, received 117,000 votes in the 1905 General Elections, while miscellaneous candidates polled 61,000 votes.⁶ In 1908, the opposition vote increased slightly in farming areas and continued to be stronger in the North Island, but the total vote received by the opposition was less than that received in 1905. The opposition candidates received approximately 115,000 votes while miscellaneous candidates polled around 53,000 votes.⁷ As the party organization of the opposition was being rebuilt, the votes of miscellaneous candidates dropped considerably.

For the election of 1911, the battle lines were manned in earnest. The Parliamentary opposition had been reconstituted as the Reform party in 1909. The name "Reform" keynoted its criticisms of the Liberal administration. For years it had been charged that the Liberal ministry maintained its power by patronage and corruption. One of the Reform planks was to institute non-political control of the civil service. Another was to alter the constitution of the Legislative Council,⁸ effectively packed by that time with Liberal

⁵ Taken from a radio broadcast entitled "Great Prime Ministers," presented in November, 1955 in Wellington, New Zealand.

⁶ Leslie Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁸ The Legislative Council was the upper house of Parliament. Its members were appointed by the Governor for seven year terms. It possessed no power and was finally abolished in 1950.

nominees. However, it was the desire for the freehold tenure for occupants of state-leased farms that provided the greatest attraction for the electorate to the Reform banner.

In the election of 1911, the Liberal party received 191,000 votes, compared to 164,000 for the Reform party,⁹ but Reform captured more seats. More of the Reform votes were polled in the North Island than in the South Island, and more in the countryside than in the towns. Labor split the vote sufficiently in urban constituencies to detract from Liberal majorities.

The election results could not be called a decisive popular mandate for any party. The new Parliament contained thirty-six Reformers, thirty Liberals, four Laborites, six independents, and four Maoris.¹⁰ However, Massey, aided by a few Liberal turncoats, finally defeated the Liberal Ministry by forty-one votes to thirty-three. On July 10, 1912, William F. Massey was made Prime Minister. The Reform party solidified its position and remained a majority party in New Zealand until 1928.

⁹ Leslie Lipson, op. cit., p. 187.

¹⁰ Loc. cit.

CHAPTER II

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Formation of Party Organization: 1904-1912

The organization of the Reform party in New Zealand was the product of cooperative effort on the part of certain political groups. The leading role in this effort was played by the New Zealand Political Reform League under the leadership of William F. Massey. As the League provided the backbone of the Reform party organization, it is necessary to examine its origin.

There is no precise information available about the founding of the League; the only common agreement being that it started in Auckland. Light and Liberty, a monthly journal published by the League, fixes the foundation date of the first branch of the League in 1904, when Massey was entertained at a dinner in Auckland by the supporters of the Parliamentary opposition, "and a few days later the first branch of the Political Reform League came into existence."¹ This was the first of several local branches of the League which were formed before 1908. The Reformer, published in 1905 under the auspices of the League branch in Christchurch, shows that the name was adopted immediately there.² According to Bruce D. Graham, "the reorganization of the local organization of the Opposition party began in the years from 1904 onwards and especially in the years 1906 and 1907."³ Although there may have been local Leagues before 1908, there was no actual coordination between them. They were concerned primarily with local issues. In a speech before the

¹ Light and Liberty, May 27, 1913, p. 3.

² The Reformer, 1905, p. 12.

³ Bruce D. Graham, Waikato Politics, p. 203. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Victoria University College, 1954.

second Dominion Conference of the Political Reform League, C. P. Lindegreen, then the party organizer, gave the year 1908 as the time when the Political Reform League came into full and recognized existence.⁴ It was in 1908 that the Political Reform League became recognized on a Dominion-wide basis, although there was still no central organization in existence which bound the League branches together.

The Political Reform League absorbed the Parliamentary Opposition, which took the name of the Reform party in 1909, and the National Association, which arose from the depression of the 1880's and was "supported mainly by the established landowners;"⁵ the main aim of the Association being the maintenance of the freehold. It was in 1911 that the Political Reform League became the official organization of the Reform party.⁶ As the official publication of the League, Light and Liberty, pointed out, "the New Zealand Political Reform League is formed for the better organization of the Reform party and to promote legislation in the best interests of the people."⁷

The Auckland Political Reform League, established in 1904, became a most important basis for expansion of the organization. Reform Leagues were formed throughout the country between 1904 and 1912, but there was no centralized organization at the Dominion level until 1912, when a complete organizational scheme for the entire Dominion was accepted at the first annual national conference of Political Reform Leagues.

⁴ Leicester Webb, The Rise of the Reform Party, p. 21. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Victoria University College, 1928.

⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

⁶ Light and Liberty, May 27, 1913, p. 5.

⁷ Ibid., June 27, 1913, p. 43.

The progress of the Auckland Political Reform League, from 1905 to 1908, can be traced in letters written by E. Earle Vaile.⁸ Vaile was an active organizer for the Auckland National Association, and later became an organizer for the Political Reform League. It is clear from these letters, that the Parliamentary Opposition was hampered by inter-provincial and inter-island jealousies, yet struggled to present a Dominion point of view. The Political Reform League represented a more modern organizing technique in districts and provinces, but lacked Dominion-wide organization, a step which Vaile was continuously urging.

The absence of a central organization did not prevent the establishment of contacts between Leagues. Vaile, in a letter to Massey, revealed a continuity of Provincial strife from the 1890's to the new century. He maintained that the platform should be decided on by a Colonial Conference and criticized the Opposition for having too many planks, a lack of precision, and no solutions to the criticisms it made.⁹

Vaile's memoranda on the 1905 election in the form of a letter to Massey showed he felt the Opposition's organization was extremely lacking. He held that as much had been done in Auckland as in any other center, but that "one could count on the fingers of one hand all the really active workers."¹⁰ He also made the perennial complaint about lack of funds.

Nor was Vaile the only one who recognized the lack of organization. The Reformer, in an article published in 1905, stated the following:

⁸ Letters and Other Material Relating to the Political Reform League, 1905-1908, Auckland Public Library.

⁹ Margret C. Brand, A Study of Conservatism, p. 78, Unpublished M.A.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 79.

The great need of the Opposition party in past years has been proper organization. Individually, the supporters of its policy have been wholehearted in desiring its success at the polls; collectively, they have done little or nothing to insure that success. The present administration, on the other hand, largely owes its prolonged sojourn on the Government benches to the admirable organization of its forces.

The rank and file of the party must meet organization with organization. The committees of Opposition candidates should ascertain as far as possible, the political convictions of every elector in each district. If Mr. Massey's supporters avail themselves of the nucleus of organization provided by the Reform Leagues, the days of the present regime will be numbered.¹¹

The first actual plans for such an organization were drawn up by E. Earle Vaile. In a manuscript titled Hints on Organization,¹² dated January 23, 1907, Vaile outlined a scheme for the integration of the Opposition organization.¹³ Since this manuscript represents the basis for the Opposition party (eventually Reform party) organization, and since many of Vaile's recommendations in this manuscript were incorporated in the party's organization, it is necessary to delve into the manuscript in detail.

Vaile began by proposing his "organization in a nutshell." His scheme consisted of: (1) a committee for each polling place; (2) delegates from each polling place to meet and select a candidate; (3) committees to scrutinize rolls, and draw up lists of electors whose names should be struck off; (4) committees to arrange for canvassing and enrollment of supporters; (5) committees to arrange for the following for polling day: volunteer drivers of vehicles, "tickers off" at the polling booth, ladies to mind small children while housewives go to poll, clerks to assist the secretary, messengers; (7) scrutineers to be appointed by candidate; (8) after-polling day committee to

¹¹ The Reformer, 1905, p. 12.

¹² E. Earle Vaile, Hints on Organization, Auckland Public Library, January 23, 1907.

¹³ Appendix I. E. Earle Vaile's Proposed Organizational Structure for the Opposition (Reform) Party, 1907.

arrange with candidate for scrutinizing of rolls.

This, then, was Vaile's "nutshell" organization. It was simple, compact, and one might agree, extremely workable. Obviously its success was directly proportional to its simplicity. Undoubtedly, the scheme greatly impressed Massey, and those close to him, as practically all the recommendations were incorporated and used at one time or another in the Reform party organization.

Vaile felt that unanimity with regard to the selection of a candidate was essential, so that a solid and united front could be presented by the party when polling day arrived. He further felt that unanimity was the very cornerstone of organization — without it the whole fabric would totter to the ground. As Vaile put it, "so long as supporters of the party fail to grasp this fact of unanimity, so long will the party in power have a walk over at each election."¹⁴

Supporters of the party, according to Vaile, should take steps at least twelve months prior to an election to select a candidate to represent them officially during the contest. This would discourage many independents who otherwise might run in lieu of an official candidate.

A meeting of the party supporters would be held at the chief polling place in each country electorate, and a special committee of five would be elected for the purpose of subdividing the electorate into districts, each district comprising as nearly as possible one tenth of the party vote polled at the previous election.

¹⁴ E. Earle Vaile, op. cit., p. 3.

The committee, furthermore, was to decide upon a time, date, and place for a conference of delegates from those districts, and would in addition, appoint a convener for each district. Each convener would call a meeting of the party supporters in his district. This meeting would then proceed to elect the sub-committee for its particular district, and would also elect a delegate to attend the conference.

It would be the responsibility of the conference to select a candidate, elect a secretary and management committee, elect two delegates to attend the annual Dominion Conference, and discuss general policies for the electorate.

The management committee was to consist of four persons exclusive of the secretary. They were to be elected by the delegates at the conference at which the candidate was chosen. This committee was to have control of the various details connected with the election.

The district sub-committees were to consist of twelve to fifteen persons elected at meetings called by the conveners. Their job was to canvass their districts and carry out instructions received from the management committee.

At the apex of the organization was to be the Colonial (Dominion) Executive. This group was to be presided over by the leader of the party and to consist of the leader and his colleagues in the House and two delegates from each electorate. It was their function to discuss questions dealing with the organization of the party, party platform, party election cries, and funds for the party.

According to Vaile, the first matter to be considered by all committees throughout the electorate was the compilation of as complete and correct a

roll of party supporters as possible. This roll was not to include those who were not eligible to vote. A separate roll was to contain their names and reasons for their disqualification. Copies of these rolls were to be forwarded to the Secretary of the country electorate.

It was to be the duty of every committee to appoint some of its more influential and popular members to interview all those whose votes could possibly be secured.

Throughout his manuscript, Vaile stressed the importance of everyone doing his job and working smoothly together. In Vaile's words, "organization is like a huge machine, dependent on the smallest bolt or crank. If one of these fails, then the whole of the machinery is rendered useless."¹⁵

Vaile stressed that it was of the utmost importance that there should be a scrutineer at each polling place; "the smaller and more insignificant the place, the greater the necessity for a scrutineer."¹⁶

Vaile further recognized the need for providing transportation to the polls for party supporters. He outlined a rather elaborate system concerning the utilization of vehicles on election day. A month before polling day, it was to be ascertained how many vehicles and drivers would be available. As soon as this was done, a complete list would be drawn up, and all vehicles numbered. The supporters in the district would then be assigned to a vehicle and the drivers would be responsible for seeing to it that those apportioned to their vehicle arrived at the poll.

Throughout the day of polling, all pertinent information and happenings were to be funneled into the management committee.

¹⁵ Loc. cit.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

Immediately after polling day, the Secretary was to compile a return of the votes and compare his compilation with that of the Returning Officer. Finally, the Secretary would prepare a complete list of all supporters who actively assisted the party during the contest.

Here then, we have the basic plan for an effective party organization. What Vaile proposed in his Hints on Organization, for the most part, was incorporated in the eventual Dominion-wide political organization of the Reform party, the Political Reform League.

Until the first National Conference of Political Reform Leagues in 1912, the Auckland Provincial Executive was the dominating and driving force of the organization. However, by June, 1912, Leagues had blossomed forth in many electoral districts. By 1912, the electoral districts of Bay of Islands, Raglan, Waikato, Thames, Ohinemuri, Tauranga, Taumarunui, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Auckland West, Waitemata and Manukau all had active Leagues with several branches formed and working in each.¹⁷ In 1909, the electoral district of Rangitikei formed a League, with its headquarters at Hunterville.¹⁸ Palmerston acquired a League in 1910, while Franklin district boasted of a League with branches in Pukekohe, Onewkero, and Tauku as early as 1907.¹⁹ Wellington and Auckland East set up Leagues in 1909.²⁰ By 1912, then, the North Island had Leagues in being in at least seventeen electoral districts out of that Island's forty-two electoral districts. There were also numerous branches throughout these districts.

¹⁷ The Auckland Star, June 14, 1912, p. 2.

¹⁸ The Dominion, September 25, 1909, p. 7.

¹⁹ Ibid., December 18, 1907, p. 7.

²⁰ New Zealand Herald, May 24, 1910, p. 6.

In the South Island, several Leagues were also set up and active by 1912. The electoral districts of Otago, Christchurch, West Coast, Dunedin and Invercargill had Leagues by 1911.²¹ In 1912, Avon, Christchurch North, Kaiapoi²² and Westland²³ districts formed Leagues. However, the Canterbury League was the largest and foremost League in the South Island. In May, 1912, after a conference with Massey, a political organization maintained by the farmers of Canterbury, known as the Farmer's Political Protection Federation, joined forces with the Reform party and established a League.²⁴ Thus, at least ten Leagues were in being in the South Island, with numerous branches, by 1912.

Between 1909 and 1912, several Women's Political Reform Leagues were also instituted. Wellington formed the first in 1909,²⁵ with Canterbury,²⁶ Mamukau,²⁷ and Parnell²⁸ following.

Thus, the process of increasing the number of Leagues and their support continued to move forward during this period. Massey, in an address before the Wellington Women's branch of the League, stated:

I am glad to be able to tell you that the movement of setting up branches is spreading, and in a very short time there will not be a single electorate through the length and breadth of the colony without its branch of the Political Reform League.²⁹ Organization is absolutely necessary to any political party.³⁰

21 The Christchurch Press, July 30, 1912, p. 8.

22 Loc. cit.

23 The Dominion, August 24, 1912, p. 4.

24 Ibid., August 5, 1912, p. 6.

25 Ibid., July 30, 1909, p. 8.

26 The Christchurch Press, August 9, 1912, p. 8.

27 The Auckland Star, November 15, 1912, p. 8.

28 Ibid., December 20, 1912, p. 8.

29 The Dominion, July 30, 1909, p. 8.

30 Loc. cit.

Between 1908 and 1912, the Political Reform League had two different organizers. Besides having the job of setting up new League branches and keeping those already in operation growing and active, the organizers acted as a liaison between the Prime Minister and his cabinet and the Political Reform League. It was the duty of the organizer to lay the actual ground work for the setting up of Leagues. It was his job to make certain they prospered and continued to grow. The job of the organizer was one held by men who made organizing their life's work. R. R. Martin was the first party organizer.³¹ He had been the organizer for the Auckland Electoral League, began organizing for the League in 1906,³² and continued in this post until 1911, when he voluntarily retired to become an organizer for the licensing trade.³³ At this time, C. P. Lindegreen, of Hastings, who was chairman of J. P. Campbell's election committee, was made organizer in his stead. In the latter part of 1913, C. P. Lindegreen resigned, and C. P. Paape took up the duties of organizer.³⁴ By 1912, the job of organizer had been split, so that one organizer was in charge of the South Island and another the North Island. At first, he was organizer for the Farmer's Political Protection League and the Canterbury branch of the Reform party, but eventually became organizer for all the South Island.³⁵

The year 1912 was remarkable in New Zealand, for it was the year of the fall of the James Seddon rule in politics. In the General Election of December, 1911, out of a total of seventy-six Parliamentary seats, the Reform party

31 The Auckland Star, August 3, 1912, p. 5.

32 The Dominion, August 5, 1912, p. 6.

33 The Auckland Star, April 12, 1912, p. 2.

34 The Dominion, October 6, 1913, p. 8.

35 Loc. cit.

grabbed thirty-seven seats while the Liberal party managed to hold only thirty-one.³⁶ However, four independents were elected, as well as four Labor party members. The rebuilding of the Reform organization was already beginning to show positive results. The Reform party increased its total electoral vote from 114,000 in 1908, out of a total of 410,000 votes cast, to 164,000 in 1911,³⁷ out of a total electoral vote of 465,000. Whereas the Reform party had received twenty-seven per cent of the total vote in 1908, they received thirty-five per cent in 1911.³⁸

On February 20, 1912, Sir Joseph Ward was challenged by Massey, and, after a week's debate, escaped defeat by the vote of the Speaker. Under the circumstances, Sir Joseph Ward resigned, and was succeeded by Thomas Mackenzie, who formed a new cabinet and met the Parliament on June 27, 1912. But Massey believed the country to be tired of the party which had prevailed so long, and moved a second vote of confidence. The Government was beaten by the handsome majority of forty-one votes to thirty-three.³⁹ On July 10, 1912, William F. Massey became Prime Minister.

By 1912, the number of Leagues had been greatly increased and continued to grow. The Auckland Executive of the League retained its foremost position as the "grandfather" of the Leagues. Undoubtedly, the fact that Massey headed this group explains to a large extent why this Executive continued to be the best organized and most active League in the country. It was this group that, in March of 1912, decided upon the official colors of the Reform party, "red, white and blue, in a distinctive design."⁴⁰ During the five year period, 1907 to 1912, only in 1909 did the formation of Leagues appear to decline. The only

36 Appendix II. December, 1911 Election Results.

37 Leslie Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 206.

39 *Annual Register*, 1912, pp. 112-113.

40 *The Christchurch Press*, March 15, 1912, p. 7.

apparent reason for this is that it followed a general election year. As The Dominion commented, "last year (1909) was a timid one for the Reform organization."⁴¹

At the first annual meeting of the Provincial Council of the Auckland Political Reform League in June of 1912, it was announced that a Dominion Conference of the party would be held in Wellington in August.⁴² Delegates were appointed to represent the Council at the Conference. David Jones, commenting in The Christchurch Press, said, "when it was decided to hold the Conference, branches of the Reform League had not been definitely established in several important centers in the South Island. However, we immediately took steps to rectify this. Delegates have been appointed from nearly all the branches."⁴³ He further stated that "it is confidently expected that the conference will result in a complete system of party organization for the whole Dominion."⁴⁴

The various branches of the League had been asked to submit schemes for organization at the first Dominion Conference as well as to send delegates.⁴⁵

First National Conference of New Zealand Political Reform League

The first National Conference of the New Zealand Political Reform League opened at the Sydney Street School Room in Wellington on August 3, 1912. As The Dominion stated, "it will be attended by delegates from all parts of the Dominion. No political gathering upon a more comprehensive scale has ever

⁴¹ The Dominion, March 10, 1910, p. 4.

⁴² The Christchurch Press, June 15, 1912, p. 11.

⁴³ Ibid., July 30, 1912, p. 8.

⁴⁴ Loc. cit.

⁴⁵ The Auckland Star, August 5, 1912, p. 8.

been organized in New Zealand."⁴⁶

The Prime Minister, William F. Massey, opened the meeting, and said, regarding the work of the Conference, that "the most important business would be to arrange a scheme of organization to prepare for a general election whenever it might come."⁴⁷

A committee, comprising ten delegates from each island, was appointed to report upon the various organizational schemes submitted by branches. A second committee of seven members was appointed to report upon the advisability of establishing or appointing an official organ of the League. The Conference resolved that provision should be made in the constitution of the League for the enrollment as honorary members of branches of young people under twenty-one years of age. The desirability of establishing branches of the Women's Political Reform League in every electorate was unanimously affirmed.⁴⁸

A scheme of organization for the Dominion was submitted on August 5th by the committee constituted two days previously, and the details of its recommendations were discussed at considerable length. The subscription for members of the League was fixed at 2s. 6p. per annum.⁴⁹

A proposal by the Canterbury branch that a party yearbook should be published was, on the recommendation of a committee, referred for favorable consideration. The committee reported that it had no recommendation to make regarding the proposed appointment of an official organizer of the party.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ The Dominion, August 3, 1912, p. 6.

⁴⁷ The Auckland Star, August 5, 1912, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Loc. cit.

⁴⁹ The Dominion, August 6, 1912, p. 8.

⁵⁰ Loc. cit.

It was resolved that the Dominion Executive should consist of the leader of the party and eleven other members, and an executive of this number, including two ladies, was constituted to act during the next twelve months.⁵¹

A clause was added to the constitution providing for the representation at the Dominion Conference of Women's Branches by one delegate from each electorate.⁵²

A constitution was adopted and a statement of objectives of the League was drawn up.⁵³ These were:

To secure prudent and honest administration of the public affairs of the Dominion according to sound economic principles.

To secure and maintain freedom of political conscience and opinion.

To support measures giving equality of opportunity to all.

To guard strictly the constitutional prerogatives of Parliament, particularly with regard to measures giving undue powers of patronage to Ministers.

To promote and encourage the candidature for Parliament of honourable, capable and representative men.

To take such measures as may commend themselves to the League for the furtherance of the foregoing objects, and such others as may from time to time be adopted in addition hereto.

To co-operate with and assist in establishing branches of the League throughout the Dominion.

⁵¹ Loc. cit.

⁵² Loc. cit.

⁵³ E. C. Huie, ed., The Reform Year Book, 1913, p. 4.

Thus, with this statement of objectives, the first annual National Conference of the Political Reform League came to a close.

Unfortunately, apparently no report was made public showing the actual changes and additions made concerning the party's organization. The organization of the Party can only be surmised by reviewing what occurred in the organizational structure in the next few months.

Reform Party Organization as of June, 1913

Obviously, many changes and additions were made and incorporated in the organization, since that was one of the primary purposes of having the Conference.

By June, 1913, a pattern of the party's revised organization began to show itself.⁵⁴ The May 27, 1913 issue of Light and Liberty, listed the officers of the Political Reform League.⁵⁵ From this listing we can begin to gather an idea of what the Party's revised organizational structure consisted of.

The officers of the Political Reform League as of May, 1913, were:

President: The Hon. W. F. Massey, M. P.

Dominion Executive: The Hon. W. F. Massey, M. P. (president); Messrs. E. W. Alison (Waitemata), H. H. Smith (Waikato), E. H. Williams, (Hawke's Bay), E. F. Hemingway (Patea), W. H. D. Bell (Wellington), Mrs. Haslam (Canterbury Women's League), E. C. Huie (Canterbury League), J. McGregor (Dunedin), R. Scott (Otago Central).

⁵⁴ Appendix III. Reform Party Organization as of June, 1913.

⁵⁵ Light and Liberty, May 27, 1913, pp. 3-4.

Auckland Provincial Executive: The Hon. E. F. Massey, M. P. (president); G. L. Garland, secretary.

Wellington Provincial Executive: C. V. Morison, president; R. W. Gilbert, secretary.

Canterbury Provincial Executive: David Jones, organizer.

Auckland Women's Executive: Mrs. J. P. Campbell, president; Mrs. Ross, secretary; Mrs. VonSturmer, honorary organizer.

Wellington Women's Executive: Mrs. J. Darling, president.

Canterbury Women's Executive: Mrs. Haslam, president; Mrs. E. Trent, secretary.

Reform Club, Wyndham Street, Auckland: J. P. Campbell, president; R. Maxwell, secretary.

Organizers: North Island — C. P. Lindegreen; South Island — David Jones.

As we can see, the Dominion Executive was a representative group, composed of members of Parliament, Reform party members (both men and women), and one of the party organizers.

By June of 1913, there were three Provincial Executives: Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury.⁵⁶ Each had a specific geographic area of control. There were thirty-five District branches throughout the Dominion with each controlling a network of sub-branches.⁵⁷ These District branches were: Bay of Islands, Kaipara, Waitemata, Manakau, Auckland West, Parnell, Eden, Franklin, Ohinemuri, Raglan, Tauranga, Waikato, Wanganui, Taumaranui, Hawke's Bay,

⁵⁶ Appendix IV. New Zealand Political Reform League Provincial Organization as of June, 1913.

⁵⁷ Appendix VIII. New Zealand Political Reform League District and Sub-District Branches as of June, 1913.

Waipawa, Taranaki, Stratford, Egmont, Gisborne, Patea, Rangitikei, Bay of Plenty, Wairarapa, Masterton, Palmerston North, Wairau, Christchurch North, Riccarton, Kaiapoi, Avon, Timaru, Temuka, Grey, and Westland. There were twenty-six District branches and seventy-seven sub-branches in the North Island, and nine District branches and fourteen sub-branches in the South Island. It should be noted that the North Island was more highly organized than the South Island and that the Reform party constantly received the majority of its support from the North Island.

As has been mentioned earlier, Massey was not only the leader of the party in Parliament, but also controlled, and, to a very large extent, formulated the policy of the party's organization. He called the party conventions when he felt like it, as there was no set time for a convention to be held. Undoubtedly, Massey also had a large voice in the selection of candidates who would run on the Reform ticket. It has been stated that it was largely because of Massey's qualities as a leader that the Reform party held office for so long.⁵⁸

F. M. B. Fisher, who was Minister of Customs and Marine in the first Massey cabinet, voiced the opinion that, "Massey ruled the party. He called the party conventions, decided and set policies in motion, and managed to keep a very close tab on all functions and happenings concerning the party."⁵⁹

Between June, 1913 and October, 1913, new Leagues were formed in Ross, Ruatapu, Kokatahi, Kanieri, Reefton, Westland, Gremouth and Waiiau.⁶⁰ The Women's Leagues also continued to grow and increase. The Canterbury Women's

⁵⁸ Taken from a radio broadcast entitled "Great Prime Ministers," presented in November, 1955 in Wellington, New Zealand.

⁵⁹ Interview with Mr. F. M.B. Fisher, May, 1956.

⁶⁰ The Christchurch Press, September 5, 1913, p. 5.

branch claimed its membership had increased ten fold and that it had established sub-branches at Sumner, Fendalton, Cashmere, and Avon.⁶¹ In a speech to the Christchurch Women's branch of the League, the Hon. W. H. Herries said that the last election (1911) showed that the "Ladies Political Leagues" throughout the Dominion exerted a great influence in electing the Reform candidate, and that this was especially so in Wellington, where the power of organization had been shown. The dominant note in his address was the necessity for thorough organization and immediate organization in view of the coming election. The roll was the main thing, he continued, for without the roll, nothing could be done. He said that the electorate should be divided up into wards, streets, and even sets of houses, and thoroughly canvassed. "Get them on the roll first," Herries stated, "then your victory is three-parts won."⁶²

In a report concerning the party's organizing efforts during the first five months of 1913, Light and Liberty made the following comments:

In 1913, a number of branches were set up around New Zealand. They were set up with the organization in the hands of a central committee, who had its own organizing officer. Branch meetings were held every month and a report of the meetings was sent to the organizing secretary in Wellington and also to the editor of Light and Liberty for publication. A list of members was compiled by branch secretaries and supplied to the general secretary. Women's Leagues were formed in Wellington, Auckland, Canterbury and Wanganui by 1913, and each had a membership of over three hundred. They had a president, vice-president, and secretary, and held meetings monthly. Also, in 1913, branches were set up in Manukau, Franklin, Waitemata, Grey Lynn, Parnell, Auckland East and Auckland West. The organizers had been busy in both North and South Islands. Branches had been formed in many towns in the majority of the electorates, and the foundations of a great organization was being built.⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid., September 12, 1913, p. 8.

⁶² Ibid., May 9, 1913, pp. 7-8.

⁶³ Light and Liberty, May 27, 1913, p. 25.

It is interesting to note that organizations in sparsely populated portions of an electorate were called "associate" members of the League. The District Executive could appoint sub-committees in these "associate" organizations.

At a meeting of the Auckland provincial branches at their annual convention, June 4, 1913, it was passed that the membership subscription throughout the province would be 2/6 and that members were allowed to transfer from one branch to another without payment of further dues.⁶⁴ By October, 1913, the Auckland Reform Club had over nine hundred members.⁶⁵

In a talk at Auckland on June 5, 1913, Massey stated that the work of organization was being carried on vigorously in all parts of the country, and at a recent meeting of the Dominion Executive it had been decided to appoint a general secretary to the party who, "in addition to carrying on organizing work, would reply to attacks made upon the party in the Opposition Press."⁶⁶ By June 27, 1913, Ernest A. James, editor of the party publication, Light and Liberty, and a member of the Auckland Executive, had been appointed General Secretary of the New Zealand Political Reform League.⁶⁷

Thus, we see that during the intervening months between the first and second Dominion Conferences, the organization of the party continued its constant, and rather rapid growth.

Second National Conference of New Zealand Political Reform League

October 4, 1913 was chosen as the date of the second Dominion Conference of the New Zealand Political Reform League. On that date, over one hundred

⁶⁴ The Auckland Star, June 5, 1913, p. 2.

⁶⁵ Ibid., October 10, 1913, p. 7.

⁶⁶ The Christchurch Press, June 5, 1913, p. 8.

⁶⁷ Light and Liberty, June 27, 1913, pp. 3-4.

fifty delegates from all over the Dominion gathered to view and consolidate their gains and propose and make plans for the forthcoming year.

On the day preceding the convention, the Dominion Executive met, with E. W. Alison, of Auckland, presiding.⁶⁸

The secretary, E. A. James, reported that a branch of the League had been formed at Greymouth, and that Women's branches had been formed in Wellington Suburbs, Wellington East and Wellington North.

There were about eighty delegates present, and, as The Dominion stated, "a good deal of business was dealt with."⁶⁹

Two of the several remits which were passed for presentation to the general conference were:

That it be recommended to arrange for an interchange of speakers between Northern and Southern branches of the Reform League and that clause 5, section (c) of the constitution be amended so that Women's branches of the League shall be entitled to send two delegates to the Dominion Conference, thus placing them on an equality with the men.⁷⁰

There was also a conference of delegates representing the Women's Leagues held the day preceding the general conference. Several remits were passed for presentation to the general conference.

Massey, who was president of the League, presented the opening address to the Conference. In his address, he expressed the hope that "the Conference might prove very successful, and that it would result in the perfecting of the party organization."⁷¹ Following Massey's opening remarks, E. H. Williams, of Hastings, was voted to the chair. Next came the report of the Dominion Executive.

68 The Dominion, October 4, 1913, p. 6.

69 Loc. cit.

70 Loc. cit.

71 Ibid., p. 8.

In this report, several interesting points are noted pertaining to the party organization.⁷² It began by claiming that good work had been done in consolidating the Reform forces and in perfecting the party organization. The Executive had held five meetings during the previous year and reported the existence of some one hundred twenty branches and sub-branches of the League. The report further pointed out that excellent work had been done in setting up Women's branches and also among the Maori's. It continued by stating that the appointment of a general secretary was decided upon at a meeting of the Executive held on May 10, and E. A. James was subsequently appointed to the post. C. P. Paape had assumed the duties of North Island organizer upon the resignation of C. P. Lindegreen, while David Jones remained the South Island organizer. Mrs. Von Sturmer had been appointed as organizer for the Women's Leagues.

The report continued by discussing the two party publications. A Reform Annual had been published, while the journal, Light and Liberty, was being published monthly. It is interesting to note that the amount of annual subscription was to be fixed by the Executive of each branch, provided it was not less than one shilling.

Next, the report dealt with three remits which were to be brought before the General Conference. The most important of these was a request stating that the membership of the Executive be increased from eleven to fifteen, exclusive of the president, and that the Executive include at least three gentlemen resident in Wellington and two members of Parliament.

After the acceptance of the report, committees were set up to deal with the remits and to report to the Conference on October 7.

⁷² Ibid., October 6, 1913, p. 8.

Unfortunately, the proceedings of the Conference were not open to the press. However, a brief summary appeared in The Christchurch Press:

At the second annual Dominion Conference, a committee, set up to consider amendments to the constitution, reported in favor of creating five divisions for the purpose of organization and grouping of electorates as follows: Auckland, including all north of the Waikato; East Coast, including six electorates on the east side of the North Island; Wellington, including Taranaki and Wellington; Marlborough, including Canterbury and Westland; Otago and Southland, including all electorates south of Oamaru. The executive was authorized to make any rearrangement of electorates under the grouping system determined upon that might be agreeable to the provincial executives concerned.⁷³

Reform Party Organization as of October, 1913

Fortunately, a report of the Conference's activities concerning work done on the party organization, was included in the October, 1913 edition of Light and Liberty.⁷⁴ Although this report is in no way a complete coverage of the decisions reached concerning organization at the Conference, it does present a general picture of the organizational scheme decided upon to supplement and complement the organizational structure already in being. Using this report as a basis, it can be surmised that the following organizational structure was decided upon and accepted.

The Dominion Executive membership was increased from eleven to fifteen, and included three men permanently residing in Wellington and two members of Parliament. This change, it will be noted, had been submitted to the conference by the Dominion Executive.

The proposed creation of five provincial organizational divisions, as recommended by the committee on organization and constitutional amendments

⁷³ The Christchurch Press, October 7, 1913, p. 7.

⁷⁴ Light and Liberty, October 11, 1913, pp. 15-16.

at the conference, was approved by the conference delegates. The five provincial divisions were: Auckland, East Coast, Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago and Southland.⁷⁵

The Auckland area included all electorates north of and including Waikato. That is, Bay of Islands, Kaipara, Marsden, Waitemata, Eden, Grey Lynn, Auckland Central, Auckland East, Auckland West, Parnell, Manukau, Franklin, Raglan, Thames, Ohinemuri and Tauranga.

The East Coast area included the electorates of Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Napier, Hawke's Bay, Waipawa and Pahiatua.

The electorates included in the Wellington area were Wellington Central, East, North, South, Suburbs, Hutt, Otaki, Palmerston, Rangitikei, Oroua, Waimarino, Wairaropa, Masterton, Wanganui, Patea, Egmont, Stratford, Taranaki, Taumarunui, Wairau, Nelson and Motueka.

The Canterbury area included all electorates north of Oamaui, including Hurunui, Avon, Lyttelton, Christchurch East, North, South, Riccarton, Ellesmere, Kaiapoi, Selwyn, Ashburton, Temuka, Timaru, Waitaki, Grey, Butler, and Westland.

All electorates south of Oamaru and including Wakatipu, Oamaru, Otago Central, Chalmers, Dunedin North, West, South, Central, Bruce, Clutha, Mataura, Awarua, Invercargill, and Wallace, comprised the Otago and Southland area.

These Provincial Executives were to consist of (a) the Parliamentary members of the Reform party for the districts comprised within their respective divisions; (b) one representative from each properly constituted Electoral District branch of the Reform League within the division; and (c) such representatives of Women's branches, not exceeding one for each electoral district,

⁷⁵ Appendix V: New Zealand Political Reform League Provincial Organization as of October, 1913.

as the Provincial Executive deemed expedient to admit to membership. The Provincial Executive could, if it wished, appoint its own organizer, and could, by arrangement with the National Executive, undertake the entire responsibility for Reform party organization within its own boundaries. However, in reference to this apparent concession of power to the Provincial Executives, it is interesting to note that Light and Liberty stated that "organizers had been appointed by the National Executive for the Provincial branches of East Coast and Otago and Southland. They were Mr. P. C. Witherby (Napier) and Mr. D. T. Fleming (Balclutha)."⁷⁶ This statement would appear to contradict the supposed power of the Provincial Executives to appoint their organizers. It should be pointed out, that the Provincial organization of the League did not change after October of 1913.

Thus, we can see that by October, 1913, the organization of the Reform party had blossomed and grown at a tremendous rate. Many Leagues had been added; sub-branches by the dozens had been inaugurated; membership had increased greatly; and most important, the organization had become more centralized and solidified. Its structure contained more unity and, for the first time, a chain of command was definitely apparent.⁷⁷

The political organization of the Reform party had a little less than one year to grow before it was to become dormant for several years. Throughout the remainder of 1913, the League continued along the path of adding to its numbers and forming more sub-branches.

⁷⁶ Light and Liberty, October 11, 1913, pp. 15-16.

⁷⁷ Appendix VI. Organization of the Reform Party as of October, 1913.

Reform Party Organization in 1914

By February, 1914, five more sub-branches had been established in the country. By April, an additional thirteen sub-branches had been formed.

However, it is interesting to note that at various times, a group would form and attempt to use the name of the League to further its interests. In February, 1914, at a meeting of the Dominion Executive, it was decided that no branch or sub-branch of the League that did not accept and work under the Reform Party platform, constitution and rules of the New Zealand Political Reform League, "would be recognized or allowed to take part in the business of the League."⁷⁸ This was brought about by certain objections that were raised at the 1913 conference concerning the presence of delegates whose branches had not so accepted and become affiliated with the League. It was also decided at this meeting, that each men's branch would be entitled to send two delegates, and each women's branch one lady delegate for each electorate the branch represented, to the annual conference of the League.

The party branches and sub-branches continued to hold numerous meetings and "garden parties." Rallies were constantly held in different sections of the country. Several members of Parliament were always present, and Massey himself attended as many as he possibly could. Most of these meetings were day long affairs, with a garden party in the afternoon and a political rally at night.

On May 7, the Dominion Executive of the League met with the following members of the executive in attendance: the president, W. F. Massey, was in the chair; Sir Walter Buchanan, M. P.; D. H. Guthrie, M. P., W. H. D. Bell, M. P., M. A. Clark (Auckland), Gilbert Carson (Wnaganui), C. Ferguson (Wairau),

⁷⁸ The Dominion, February 5, 1914, p. 6.

John Macgregor (Dunedin), Mrs. Haslem (Christchurch Women's League), Mrs. C. Earle (Wellington Women's League).

It was decided to arrange for the annual conference of branches to be held in Wellington on July 16 and 17.⁷⁹

Reports presented by the organizers all indicated healthy progress, branches and sub-branches of the League having been opened at Raetiki, (Waimarino), Waipapakauri (Bay of Islands), Kumara (Westland), Motueka, Collingwood, and Takaka (in the Motueka electorate), and Paroa (Grey electorate).⁸⁰

It was stated that there were 22 districts which had not selected candidates for the forthcoming election.⁸¹

It can be clearly seen that practically all of the business conducted at this meeting dealt with the party's organization. This was only natural, with 1914 being the election year. However, it is interesting to note the monitoring chore done by the Executive as well as its policy making powers. This was the group that controlled the League during the year. It is well to note the representation of this group. Massey was president. There were three M. P.'s, two representatives of the South Island, two representatives of the North Island, and a representative from a North Island Women's League and one from a South Island Women's League. In short, both main geographic areas were represented, as were the women and members of Parliament. Certainly a notable and solidifying accomplishment.

With the impending conference of delegates in Wellington in July, and the General Elections in December, there were two main areas in which the

⁷⁹ The Auckland Star, May 8, 1914, p. 6.

⁸⁰ Loc. cit.

⁸¹ Loc. cit.

League was working during the second half of 1914. First of all, there was the election of candidates to represent the Reform party at the polls, and, secondly, there was a rash of meetings at all levels of the Reform party organization accompanied by the selection of delegates to attend the third annual Reform party conference.

The district branches and sub-branches continued to hold meetings, at which local problems were resolved and remits were prepared for the annual conference. The question of campaign funds was constantly brought up. Apparently the job of financing a candidate fell to the district organization in which he was running. Delegates were selected to attend the National Conference. These delegates were usually elected, but, as in the case of the Christchurch North branch,⁸² were sometimes appointed by the chairman of the branch. The Women's branches continued to grow and prosper, with the Auckland Women's League alone comprising branches in at least nine electorates (city central, city west, city east, Eden, Parnell, Grey Lynn, Manukau, Franklin, and Rotoua).⁸³

At this point, it appears opportune to mention yet another segment of the New Zealand populace that came under the organizing yoke of the Reform party. The Junior Reform League was formed in mid-1914 to encompass the young men in the 19-20 year age bracket.⁸⁴ It was determined that this organization of the League would be for those who were not of such an age as to have a vote, although, older men who wished to join were welcomed. In the Christchurch Junior League, meetings were held each fortnight. Its membership was over 100, who agreed to the objectives of the Reform League which

⁸² The Christchurch Press, July 11, 1914, p. 12.

⁸³ The Auckland Star, July 1, 1914, p. 6.

⁸⁴ The Christchurch Press, July 1, 1914, p. 10.

stated that they were to work "to secure the return of Reform candidates."⁸⁵ The reports concerning the Junior Leagues are very sketchy, and it is felt that this program just got well started when the war put an end to it. It nevertheless constituted a new and vitalizing method of enlisting people to work for and support the Reform party.

However, it was not only the grass roots organizations that were meeting, planning and expanding. For example, on June 19, the sixth annual conference of delegates representing the various branches of the League in the Auckland province met in Auckland.⁸⁶ There were over 200 people in attendance. In the Provincial League report, which was read at the conference, it was stated that "during the past year, the organization had been placed on a much better footing."⁸⁷ The control of the Auckland Executive was considerably curtailed when the Bay of Plenty and Gisborne districts were taken in hand by the Hawke's Bay organization and the other electorates south of the Waikato were included in the Wellington district. In the early history of the Reform movement, the Auckland Executive controlled the organization throughout the Dominion, but by 1914, other districts were doing their share of the work and the Auckland Executive was limited to the control of 17 electorates.

The Auckland Women's branches of the League reported to the conference that eight branches had been formed in the city and suburbs and operations had been extended to Kotoura. They had a membership of over 900 with membership increasing daily.

⁸⁵ Loc. cit.

⁸⁶ The Auckland Star, June 19, 1914, p. 2.

⁸⁷ Loc. cit.

Thus, we see, that on all levels of the party structure, organization was continuing. Meetings were being convened, areas of control revamped, members enrolled, and all hands looking toward the impending Dominion convention and the General Elections.

With the General Elections only five months away, feverish activity was to be noted throughout the Reform party organization. Numerous reports of meetings, "socials", and fund-raising affairs, were mentioned in local newspapers.⁸⁸ The Reform members of Parliament scurried throughout both islands in speaking capacities. Massey himself was to be found visiting a great many of the local branches on speaking engagements and visits. Perhaps the hardest working group at this time were the organizers. Not only were they continuing in their effort to form new Leagues, but were forever doing their best to keep up those in existence.

To mention the multitude of meetings and political get-togethers would be fruitless. A typical example, however, was a meeting of the Reform party in the Otaki electorate held at Levin on July 20.⁸⁹ This meeting was called to meet with their organizer. There were twenty-one delegates present from the various sub-branches in the electorate.

At this meeting a resolution was passed urging on the Dominion Executive of the party to give them the services of the organizer for the purpose of thoroughly organizing the branches throughout the electorate.⁹⁰ A sub-committee comprised of three gentlemen was appointed to co-operate with the organizer.

⁸⁸ A person was selected in each town to spearhead the arrangements for political meetings, etc. This individual was often referred to as an "agent."

⁸⁹ The Dominion, July 21, 1914, p. 5.

⁹⁰ This further substantiates the fact that the organizers were under the control of the Dominion Executive.

At the conclusion of the meeting it was decided to have a conference of delegates representing all the branches on August 15 for the purpose of deciding on a method of selecting the Reform candidate.

Branches of the League continued to be formed throughout the country, mainly through the effort of the organizers. For example, in the city of Waikanae, approximately one hundred electors gathered at a meeting on July 30, 1914.⁹¹ The object of the meeting was to consider the matter of forming a branch of the League and to hear an address by the party organizer. It was resolved that a branch of the League be formed in the city. Officers for the branch were elected and duties assigned to various individuals.

Third National Conference of New Zealand Political Reform League

On July 16th, the third national conference of the New Zealand Political Reform League opened in Wellington with a full representation of delegates from all parts of the Dominion. The Conference was attended by some 250 delegates and members of the League. It is interesting to note that there were a number of Maori representatives at the Conference which shows that the Reform party was interested in including all groups in the Dominion in its organization. Several native branches of the League had been set up and they too sent their delegates to the convention. These native branches had been established in the Tauranga, Bay of Plenty and Hawke's Bay districts. H. F. Von Haast was elected chairman. Of course, the president of the League, Prime Minister Massey, attended and was accompanied by most of the Reform members of Parliament.

⁹¹ The Dominion, July 31, 1914, p. 4.

The Dominion Executive, in presenting its annual report, began by congratulating the members upon the improved outlook and prospects of the party in general. The report continued by stating that:

Since the last conference, Messrs. E. C. Huie, of Christchurch, and E. H. Williams, of Napier, have resigned the positions as members of the executive, to which they were elected. Mr. Huie's position on the executive was filled by the appointment of Mr. Gilbert Carson of Wanganui, who was highest on the list of non-elected candidates for seats on the executive last year. Mr. Williams' resignation was of more recent occurrence, and the conference being fixed for a much earlier date than usual, it is not deemed necessary to appoint his successor....

The work of organization has been vigorously proceeded with during the nine months that have intervened since the last conference was held. The staff of organizers has been reinforced in the interval, and there are now four organizers actively engaged in the interests of the League — Mr. A. A. Paape (who was the general oversight of the North Island, excluding the East Coast electorates) and of certain West Coast electorates in the South Island; Mr. P. L. Witherby, who is working the Hawke's Bay and East Coast electorates (with the assistance of a sub-organizer); Mr. David Jones, of Christchurch and Mr. D. T. Fleming, of Balclutha, the latter two dividing the South Island electorates between them, and good work is reported by all four gentlemen, with healthy prospects for the coming elections. In addition to the organizers already referred to, a special representative of Light and Liberty, who has been engaged obtaining subscribers for the journal, has assisted branches already in existence, and helped to form other branches in the districts he has visited in the Masterton, Wairarapa, Palmerston, Oroua and Taranaki electorates, enrolling approximately 2,000 members of the League.⁹²

We see that in the intervening nine months between Dominion Conferences, two organizers were added to the party making a total of four (not counting the one organizer for the Women's Leagues). This in itself must testify to the growth of the party's organization. With the continued expansion of the League, the necessity for closer scrutiny and observance of the local Leagues became apparent. Thus, the task of organizing and controlling the actions of the League and its members was subdivided, so that as of 1914, both the

⁹² Ibid., July 17, 1914, p. 8.

South and North Islands possessed two organizers. In addition to their regular work, they were instrumental at times in the selection of candidates and molding local League policies.

The next section of the report dealt with the election of the Executive:

With a view to obviating delay in the election of the new Executive, it is proposed to take nominations at the close of the first day's proceedings of the present Conference, so as to permit of the ballot papers being printed and the election taking place at 10 o'clock on the second morning. The members of the present Executive, all of whom are eligible for re-election, are: Messrs. H. D. Acland (Christchurch), E. W. Alison (Auckland), W. H. D. Bell, M. P. (Wellington), Sir Walter Buchanan, M. P. (Wairarapa), M. A. Clark (Auckland), Gilbert Carson (Wanganui), Charles Ferguson (Marlborough), D. H. Guthrie, M. P. (Oroua), John MacGregor (Dunedin), C. B. Morrison (Wellington), R. Scott, M. P. (Otago), H. F. Von Haast (Wellington), Mrs. E. Earle (Wellington), and Mrs. R. St. Barbe Haslam (Christchurch).⁹³

The Dominion Executive was an elected body, chosen annually by the Reform delegates at the Dominion Conference. However, when a vacancy appeared, it was filled by appointment, as in the case of E. C. Huie. According to F. M. B. Fisher, these appointments were conducted by the Dominion Executive itself, with the accompanying approval of Massey. Usually an attempt was made to fill the vacancy with a person from the same general locale.

In the afternoon, the business of the conference dealt with questions of organization, and suggested amendments in the constitution of the League. Among other motions carried was one recommending that provision should be made for the equal representation of men and women delegates at the general conference. Before rising, nominations were received for the new executive.

⁹³ The Dominion, July 17, 1914, p. 8.

Representation at the General Conference (as well as other party meetings), was always a problem in the League. There was a constant bickering between the North and South Islands, the North Island feeling that due to its larger population, it should have more delegates. The South Islanders argued that since they comprised a larger land area, they should have equal, if not larger representation. Likewise, the Women's Leagues advocated equal representation consistent with their membership and number of Leagues. The Maoris wanted larger representation. One can see that the longer the League was in existence, the closer it came to having equal representation at its meetings (regardless of at which level). The importance of both Islands was shown by having each equally represented on the Dominion Executive. Likewise, as time went on, the Women's Leagues gained a larger representation on all levels of the organization. The Maoris, by 1914, were represented at the general conference as well as having many branch Leagues and representation on the Provincial executives where warranted.

The first business proceeded with on the second day of the General Conference was the election of the Executive for the ensuing year. This, of course, was the elected group that functioned in the absence of the General Conference. In short, it was the governing body, and as such, carried out the wishes of the General Conference and formulated policies concerning the party's organization and day to day existence. At this election, the following people were selected to compose this group: Sir Walter Buchanan (Wairarapa), Messrs. H. F. Von Haast (Wellington), A. H. Russell (Hawke's Bay), W. H. D. Bell, M. P. (Wellington), D. H. Guthrie, M. P. (Oroua), C. B. Morison (Wellington), H. D. Acland (Christchurch), E. W. Alison (Auckland), R. Scott, M. P. (Otago), E. H. Woods (secretary of the new Waterside Workers' Union, Auckland), C. Ferguson (Marlborough), M. A. Clark (Auckland), and

James Wall (Taumarunui).

Mrs. J. P. Campbell (Auckland) and Mrs. Rolleston (Christchurch) were elected as the women delegates on the Dominion Executive. Mesdames R. St. B. Haslam (Christchurch) and C. Earle (Wellington), members of the old Executive, declined to stand for reelection. Mrs. E. Hadfield (Wellington) also declined to stand.

Thus, only two of the old Executive were turned out, not counting those who refused to stand for reelection. Messrs. Russell and Woods replaced Messrs. MacGregor and Clark. In this exchange the South Island lost one representative on the Executive. The Wellington Provincial organization received six of the fifteen seats on the Executive, which appears to have been just, as it contained 22 electoral districts within its provincial boundaries.

The third annual conference of delegates ended with a lengthy open discussion concerning suggestions from the delegates for improving the position of the party and the better working of the branches and assistance of candidates. The Conference closed on the evening of July 18. This was to be the last Conference of Reform party delegates for several years.

Reform Party Organization as of August, 1914

At this point, it is necessary to take a final look at the organizational structure of the Reform party.⁹⁴ Actually, between October, 1913 and August, 1914, there was very little change to the basic structure. During this period of time, the main accomplishment in the organizational field was

⁹⁴ Appendix VII. Organization of the Reform Party as of August, 1914.

the continued emergence of new Leagues and increased membership. By October of 1913, there were seventy-six District branches throughout the Dominion and this number of District branches remained unchanged.⁹⁵ By August of 1914, there were ninety-four sub-branches in the North Island and forty sub-branches located in the South Island.⁹⁶ This represents an increase of seventeen sub-branches in the North Island and twenty-six in the South Island since June of 1913. Besides the increase in the number of Leagues throughout the Dominion, there were several other changes in the party organization between October, 1913 and August, 1914, that should be summarized at this point.

First of all, two organizers were added to the existing three party organizers. This made a total of four men and one woman who performed the duties of party organizers. Two men were assigned to each Island, with the woman organizer being responsible for the Women's Leagues.

The second main change was the institution of the Junior Reform League and its accompanying sub-branches and local working committees. Although this program was doomed with the stoppage of party organizing with the advent of World War I, it nevertheless did make its appearance.

The number of Women's branches increased as did the number of sub-branches and local working committees of the League throughout the country. The Reform party continued to hold meetings, select candidates, and inform the public of what they were offering. A few branches were formed without the help of a party organizer.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Appendix IX. New Zealand Political Reform League District and Sub-District Branches as of August, 1914.

⁹⁶ Loc. cit.

⁹⁷ The Dominion, December 7, 1914, p. 6.

Candidates for election moved from town to town enlisting support while party workers prepared copies of electoral rolls, passed out literature, and prepared for the many jobs to be done on election day itself.

Suspension of Organizing Activities

The organizing activities of the Reform party were dramatically brought to a halt with the outbreak of World War I.

In a speech before Parliament on August 8, 1914, Massey made the following statement:

I feel so strongly that party warfare as generally understood, should be suspended at a crisis like this (i.e. outbreak of war) that I have given instructions to the organizers of our party to cease organizing until I give them further instructions. The party organizers can have a holiday; we have two or three of them, and they can have a holiday until a change takes place for the better in the affairs of the Empire.⁹⁸

On August 27, 1914, in a speech before Parliament, Massey further stated: "So far as our organizers are concerned, I gave instructions that organization must be suspended three weeks ago."⁹⁹

The genuineness of the desire on the part of the political parties to sink their differences and show a united front in the face of the national danger, was further strengthened by the decision of both the Opposition as well as the Reform members of Parliament to cancel their engagements in different parts of the country.¹⁰⁰ The Opposition party even stopped the publication of its party journal.¹⁰¹ This feeling of the necessity for union at such a time was not confined to political parties; it permeated the whole

⁹⁸ Parliamentary Debates, August 8, 1914, p. 481.

⁹⁹ Ibid., August 27, 1914, p. 633.

¹⁰⁰ The Round Table, September, 1914, p. 244.

¹⁰¹ Loc. cit.

community.¹⁰²

In regard to the stoppage of the use of party organizers, an interesting event occurred in September which leads one to wonder how effective this stoppage "manifesto" was.¹⁰³

In the electoral district of Temuka, a meeting was called to select a candidate to stand for election on the Reform ticket. This meeting was deemed necessary due to the death of the gentleman who had previously been selected. A Reform party organizer was present at the meeting, and the Opposition claimed that the meeting had been called by the organizer in defiance of the agreement on no further organization.

Massey, in answering this charge before Parliament, stated that, although there was an organizer present at the meeting, he had not called the meeting, but had merely been invited to attend. This constituted only one of many charges and counter-charges that were to be made in the ensuing months prior to the General Elections.

Although the distribution of party literature was supposedly stopped, it is known that it nevertheless was done. The Reform party even went so far as to distribute a party publication, entitled, Under Which Flag to Army troops at Awapuni immediately before the votes were taken prior to their leaving for Europe.¹⁰⁴ This, of course, was emphatically denied by Massey. In a speech before Parliament on September 15, Massey stated:

¹⁰² Loc. cit.

¹⁰³ The Dominion, September 16, 1914, p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., September 15, 1914, p. 4.

I want to say that since I made the statement that organization had been suspended, the party journal has not been published and no meetings have been held, although at that time a number of meetings were advertised. Everyone was postponed. I have not listed a finger in the way of organization since I made the statement in the House, and our party organization has been practically suspended. Seven meetings were convened by the Reform organizer in my district, but when it was agreed in this House by both parties to drop organization until matters had assumed a settled aspect, instructions were immediately given to cancel all the meetings in order that no breach of the understanding arrived at should take place.¹⁰⁵

Regardless of what Massey said, meetings were held. For example, on the very day he made the above address, an advertisement appeared in an Auckland newspaper stating:

Friends and supporters of Mr. Parr, the Reform candidate, are invited to meet at St. Alban's Hall, Dominion Rd., on Wednesday next, the 16th inst., at 8 p.m., for the purpose of inaugurating a central committee. C. W. Harris, organizing secretary.¹⁰⁶

Even though campaigning continued, the general public was apathetic to party politics, being completely engrossed in news and events concerning the war. The Round Table summarized this fact very well when it stated:

Never before in the history of New Zealand has so little public interest been taken in a General Election as in the one taking place. Naturally, the mind of the public is so occupied with the world shaking events on the Continent of Europe that it is difficult to focus attention on the issues of local party politics. The candidates have been addressing meetings as usual and these have been fairly well attended. The newspapers devote a certain amount of their space to politics, but the war continues to monopolize the bulk of their space. The general mass of the public read the war news and skip political.¹⁰⁷

105 Parliamentary Debates, September 15, 1914, p. 866.

106 Ibid., p. 867.

107 The Round Table, December, 1914, p. 496.

Formation of Coalition Government

The General Election took place on December 10, 1914, with little buildup or fan-fare. Massey and the Reform party came out of the contest with the narrow majority of two which was reduced to one on the election of a Speaker from among the Ministerialists. The total number of Reform members in the House was forty-one, while there were thirty-two Liberals and seven Socialists; the two Opposition parties cooperated during the election.¹⁰⁸

Regardless of the indecisive results, the 1914 General Election showed the effects of the Reform party organization. The total votes for the Reform party increased from 164,000 in 1911 to 243,000,¹⁰⁹ out of a total electoral vote of 516,000. This represented an increase of twelve per cent of the total votes cast. In 1911, the party received thirty-five per cent of the total votes compared to forty-seven per cent in 1914.¹¹⁰ It is interesting to note, that there were no independents elected in the 1914 General Election. In previous elections, the Reform party had lost a number of votes due to independents siphoning off Reform support. As the Reform party's organization increased in strength and efficiency, so the independent vote decreased. In 1905, there were close to 61,000 votes cast for independents.¹¹¹ In the 1914 General Elections, this figure dropped to 1,000 votes.¹¹² Leslie Lipson, in referring to the Reform party, states that "as its party organization was being rebuilt, the votes of miscellaneous candidates dropped considerably."¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Annual Register, 1915, pp. 358-360.

¹⁰⁹ Leslie Lipson, op. cit., p. 187.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 206.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 187.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 188.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 216.

Owing to the equilibrium between the parties, and also to the example set by England, the question of forming a Coalition Ministry soon came to the front. A Coalition Cabinet, or as it was called in New Zealand a "National Ministry," was not an unnatural development under war conditions, because the Reform and Liberal parties held by no means incompatible principles.¹¹⁴ But owing to the rivalry of the politicians, some time elapsed before such a Ministry was actually formed. On August 4, 1915, a National Ministry was constituted, with members drawn from the two large political parties, but not from the Socialists.

The two major political parties united in a concentrated effort to funnel their energies in the conduct of the war. The coalition government continued until August 21, 1919, when Sir Joseph Ward resigned from the Cabinet.¹¹⁵

Throughout the period of the National Ministry, party meetings were few and far between. There is practically no mention of party organization in the various newspapers and publications during this period. It can only be assumed that neither of the major political parties entered into any active organizing activities. It is only with the collapse of the National Ministry in 1919 that party organization once again reappeared.

The Reform party revived its organization and organizing techniques in 1919. Although there were a few changes in the organizational pattern in the Reform party in the next decade, its basic structure and methods remained as they were when active organizing was halted in 1914.

¹¹⁴ Annual Register, 1915, p. 360.

¹¹⁵ The Dominion, August 22, 1919, p. 8.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY

This study endeavored to reconstruct the organization of the Reform party in New Zealand. It traced the organization of the party from its formative stages up to the point at which political organization ceased, as a result of the outbreak of World War I. The organization developed, spread, and eventually engulfed the entire country as a result of determined effort on the part of several individuals and the amalgamation of certain conservative groups.

In particular, the organization of the Reform party gained its impetus through the foresight and initiative of E. Earle Vaile and William F. Massey. They realized the need for an effective political organization and the task of formulating an organization fell upon their shoulders. Thanks to their leadership, plans were drawn up, meetings held, and the groundwork laid for the organization.

A great deal of credit for the party organization must go to the Auckland Political Reform League. This was the first League formed, and it became a basis for expansion of the organization. Until the first National Conference of Political Reform Leagues in 1912, the Auckland Provincial Executive was the dominating and driving force of the organization.

With the first National Conference of Leagues in 1912, the party organization was well on its way to becoming a solidified, complete and effective entity. From 1912 on, the organization prospered, expanded, developed and became more streamlined. It is important to point out that the basic organization, even from its beginning, remained simple and functional. The lines of authority, command and decision were always well defined. The various

groups which comprised the organization knew where they belonged in the organizational hierarchy and what duties and functions they were to perform. Organizational boundaries were laid out, and these areas of responsibility were relatively closely adhered to. Plans were formulated, and, as has been shown, in many cases minute details were incorporated into the overall organizational plan.

The structure of the Reform party organization was composed of the Dominion Executive, Provincial Executives, District branches and sub-branches. Each of these organizational bodies had specific zones of interest and control.

The Dominion Executive was an elective body whose members were selected at the National Conference of the New Zealand Political Reform League. It represented the apex of the organization, with the Prime Minister, W. F. Massey, sitting as president of the body. Its specific task was that of running and controlling the League in the interval between Dominion meetings of the League. When originally proposed, the Dominion Executive was to be composed of the party leader, members of Parliament, and two delegates from each electoral district. By June of 1913, its composition had been solidified to eleven members. However, by October of 1913, its membership had increased to fifteen, a level at which it remained until party organization ceased. The party organizers fell under the guidance of the Dominion Executive and their activities were controlled by this body. Its position was comparable to the present Dominion Council of the National party of New Zealand.

The Provincial Executive was not a part of E. Earle Vaile's original organizational scheme. It apparently was envisioned as a means of monitoring

and controlling the District branches which would ease greatly the work of the Dominion Executive. It acted as a filter center between the apex of the organization (Dominion Executive) and the District branches. A number of District branches were grouped under each Provincial Executive and were responsible to it. Likewise, the Provincial Executive was responsible for seeing that the Districts carried out the wishes of the Dominion Executive and the Reform party. With the emergence of the Provincial Executives, the chain of command was complete. In June of 1913, there were three Provincial Executives: Auckland, Wellington, and Canterbury. By October of 1913, there were five Provincial Executives. They were: Auckland, Wellington, Canterbury, East Coast, and Otago and Southland. The number of Provincial Executives remained at five until party organization ceased in 1914.

According to the plan drawn up by Vaile in 1907, there was to be a District branch in each electoral district composed of five persons. He referred to this group as the country electorate committee. By June of 1913, there were thirty-five District branches throughout the Dominion with each controlling a network of sub-branches.

Between June and October of 1913, the number of District branches more than doubled, until by October of 1913, there were seventy-six District branches. By October of 1913, each electoral district had its own District branch which controlled and monitored the various sub-branches within the electoral district. This arrangement remained constant until the party's organizing ventures were halted in August of 1914.

The North Island, from the outset of the party's organization, showed a much higher degree of organization than the South Island. There were several reasons for this. To begin with, the North Island had always been the area of conservative interest. The Parliamentary Opposition prior to 1909 was

composed primarily of representatives from North Island districts. Also, it was in the North Island where the National Association was formed. It was the combination of these two conservative groups that formed the basis for the Political Reform League. According to the 1911 census, the North Island possessed a population of almost 564,000 compared to 445,000 in the South Island. It must also be kept in mind that there were forty-two electoral seats in the North Island compared to thirty-four in the South Island. The greater number of seats to be contested in the North Island was undoubtedly another reason for its possessing a larger and more extensive organizational structure.

Although there were many reasons for the Reform party's ascension to power, the effect of a formidable and effective organization must be considered as a prime asset. As it increased in size and efficiency, the party attracted more votes at the polls. In the 1908 General Election, before the Reform party began in earnest to build an organization, the party received 114,000 votes. In the General Election of 1914, the party received 243,000 votes. Not only did the party's total vote increase, but the loss of support to independents decreased. In 1908, 37,000 votes were cast for independent candidates, while in 1914 only 1,000 votes were siphoned off by independent candidates. Through organization, the Reform party consolidated its support and increased its total electoral vote.

Undoubtedly, it was the simplicity and functional aspect of the organization which spelled, to a great extent, the success of the party. But, of course, an organization is only as good as its members and the energy and interest they expend. The Reform party never polled more than forty-seven per cent of all votes recorded in any election; and yet it managed to control the government

from 1912 to 1928. It was able to organize enough support in enough electoral districts to retain their control. Certainly, without an effective and efficient organization capable of arousing public support for the party and dedicated to getting the vote out on election day, the Reform party would have been incapable of retaining its precarious majority position in Parliament.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is impossible to make an adequate statement of appreciation for all the help that has been given to the author in the preparation of this study.

Most humble thanks go to those many individuals in New Zealand who directed, aided and encouraged him in his work. To Professor R. S. Milne and Professor Kenneth Scott, members of the faculty at Victoria University College in Wellington, New Zealand, the writer wishes to direct his special gratitude. It was only through their interest, concern and effort that he was able to compile this work. Special thanks are extended to the staffs of the Parliamentary Library, Wellington Public Library, Victoria University College Library and the Auckland Public Library for their tireless assistance and help.

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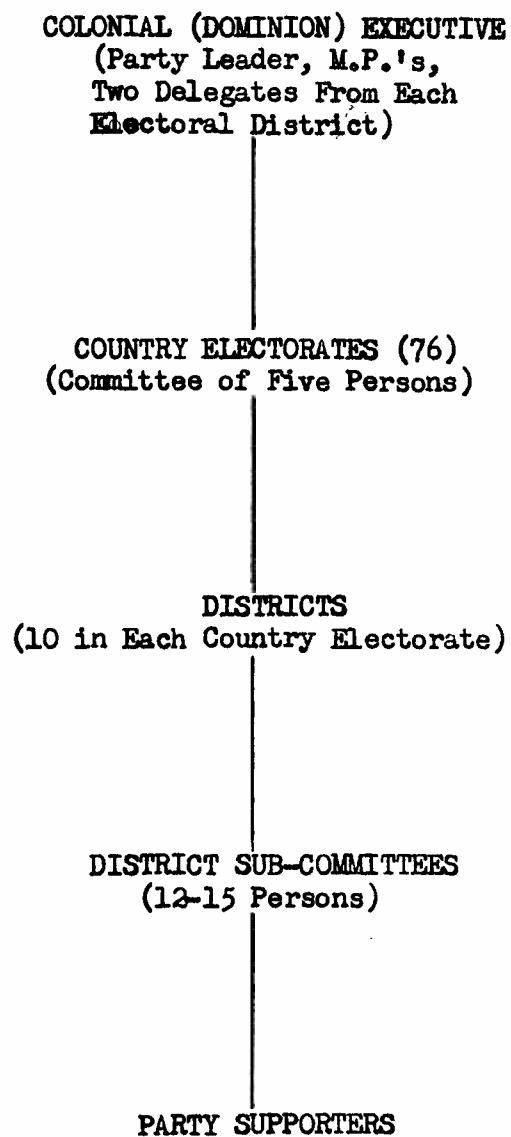
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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX I

E. EARLE VALLE'S PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
FOR THE OPPOSITION (REFORM) PARTY, 1907

APPENDIX II

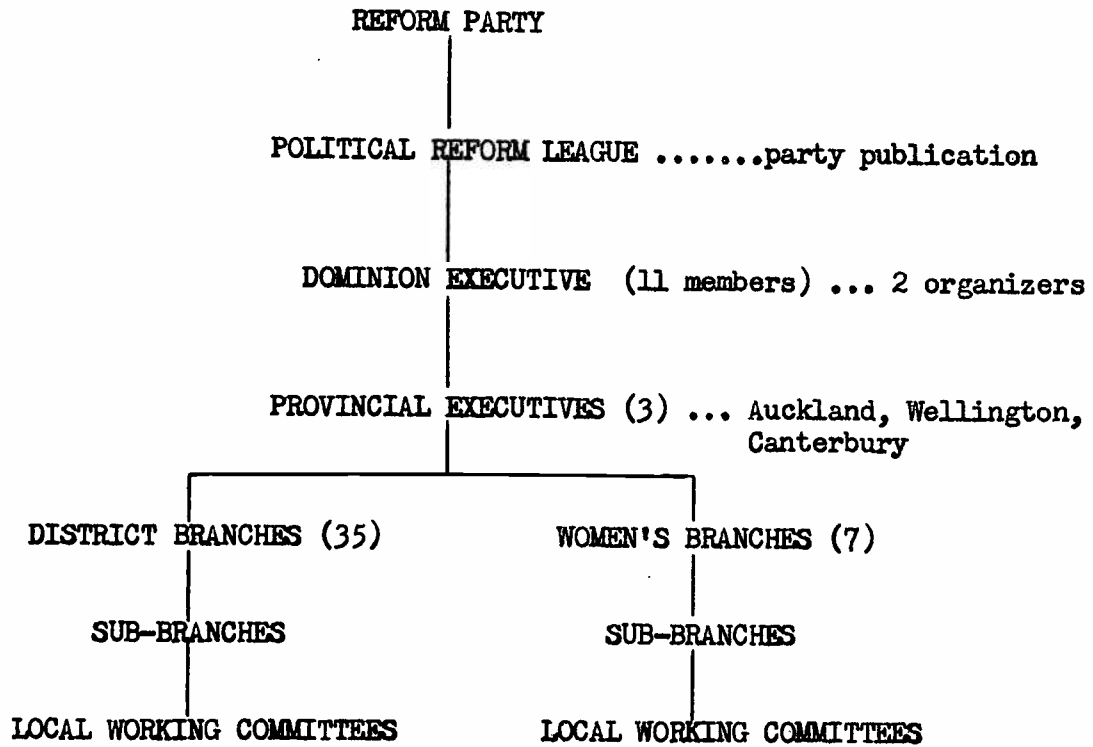
DECEMBER, 1911 ELECTION RESULTS*

	REFORM	WARDIST	INDEPENDENT	LABOUR
WELLINGTON, TARANAKI & HAWKE'S BAY	15	4	0	3
OTAGO & SOUTHLAND	9	6	0	0
AUCKLAND & POVERTY BAY	11	6	2	1
CANTERBURY & MARLBOROUGH	2	11	1	0
WESTLAND & NELSON	0	4	1	0
	37	31	4	4
NORTH ISLAND	26	20	2	4
SOUTH ISLAND	11	21	2	0

* The Christchurch Press, December 21, 1911, p. 7.

APPENDIX III

REFORM PARTY ORGANIZATION AS OF JUNE, 1913



APPENDIX IV

NEW ZEALAND POLITICAL REFORM LEAGUE
PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION AS OF JUNE, 1913

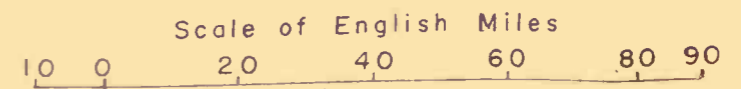
MAP NO. 1 NORTH ISLAND

MAP NO. 2 SOUTH ISLAND

NEW ZEALAND
NORTH ISLAND
ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —



AUCKLAND
" WEST
" CENTRAL
GREY LYNN EAST

PARNELL

MARSDEN

KAIPARA

WAITEMATA

MANUKAU

THAMES

FRANKLIN

OHINEMURU

RAGLAN

TAURANGA

WAIKATO

BAY OF PLENTY

TAUMARUNUI

GISBORNE

HAWKE'S BAY

TARANAKI

STRATFORD

WAIMARINO

EGMONT

PATEA

WAIPAWA

NAPIER

WANGANUI

RANGITIKEI

OROUA

PALMERSTON

PAHIATUA

OTAKI

MASTERTON

WELLINGTON SUBURBS &
COUNTRY DISTRICT

WAIRARAPA

WELLINGTON
" NORTH
" CENTRAL
" EAST
" SOUTH

MAP No. 1 - NORTH ISLAND

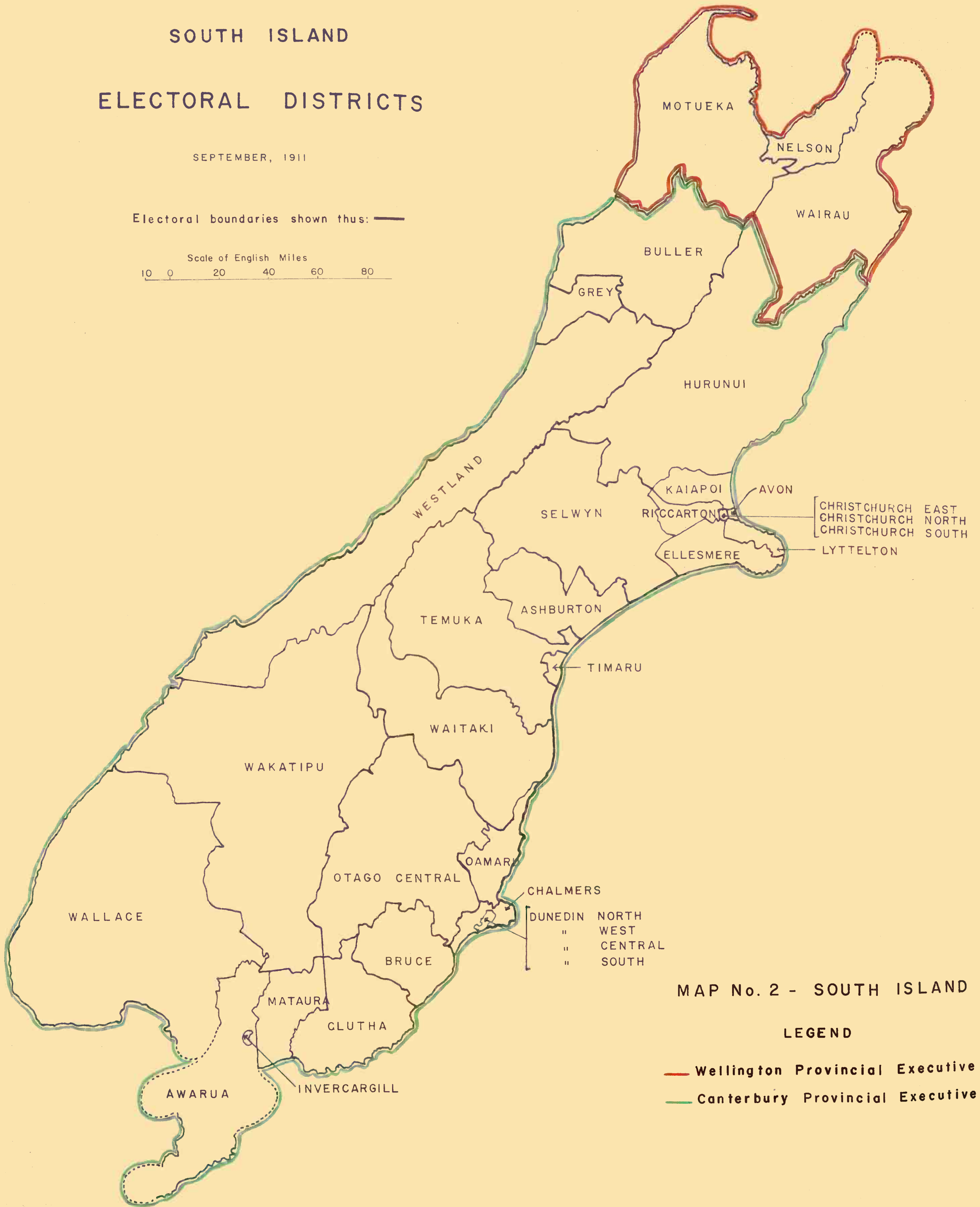
LEGEND

- Auckland Provincial Executive
- Wellington Provincial Executive

NEW ZEALAND
SOUTH ISLAND
ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —



MAP No. 2 - SOUTH ISLAND

LEGEND

- Wellington Provincial Executive
- Canterbury Provincial Executive

APPENDIX V

NEW ZEALAND POLITICAL REFORM LEAGUE
PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION AS OF OCTOBER, 1913

MAP NO. 1 NORTH ISLAND

MAP NO. 2 SOUTH ISLAND

NEW ZEALAND

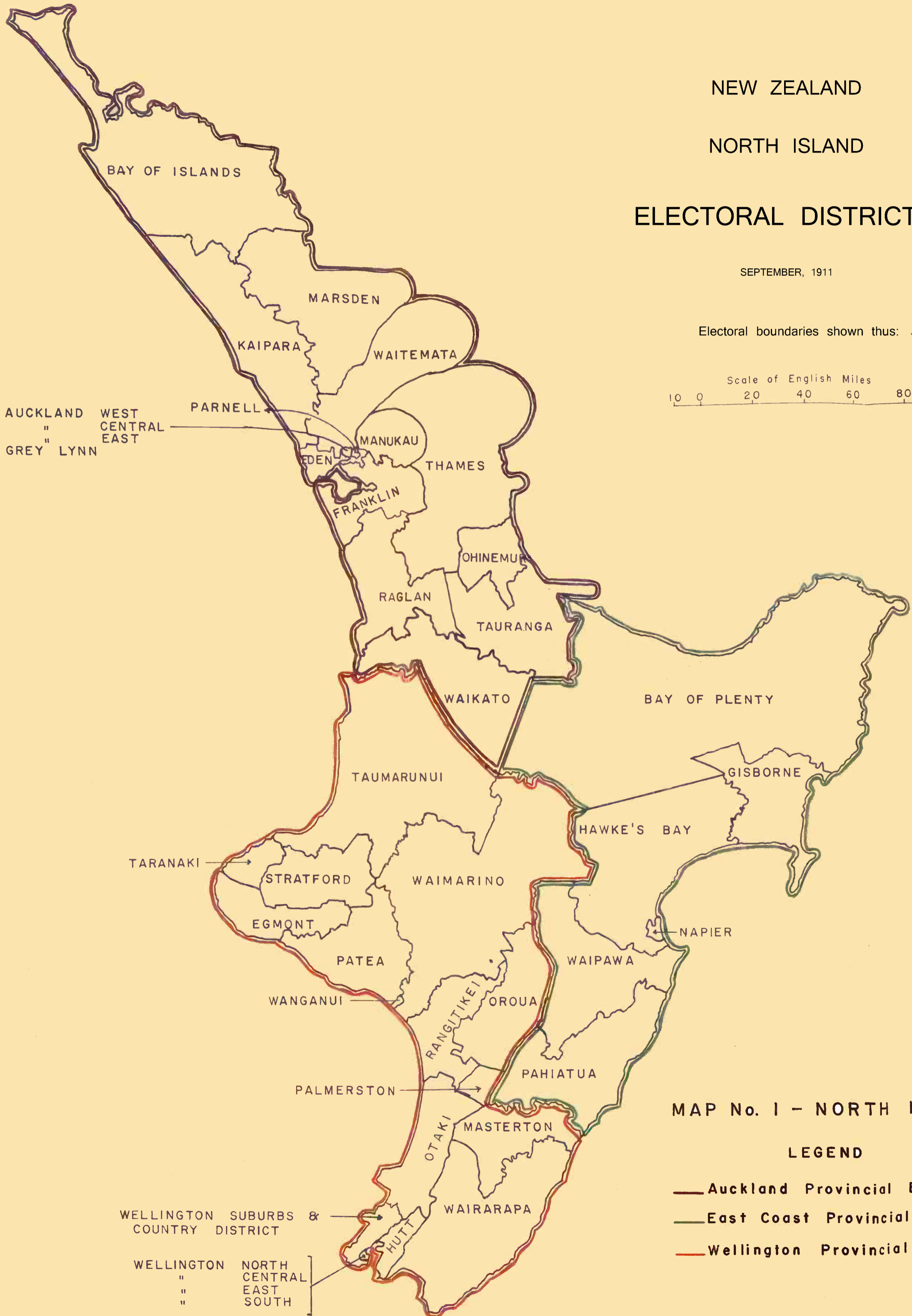
NORTH ISLAND

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —

Scale of English Miles
10 0 20 40 60 80 90



MAP No. 1 - NORTH ISLAND

LEGEND

- Auckland Provincial Executive
- East Coast Provincial Executive
- Wellington Provincial Executive

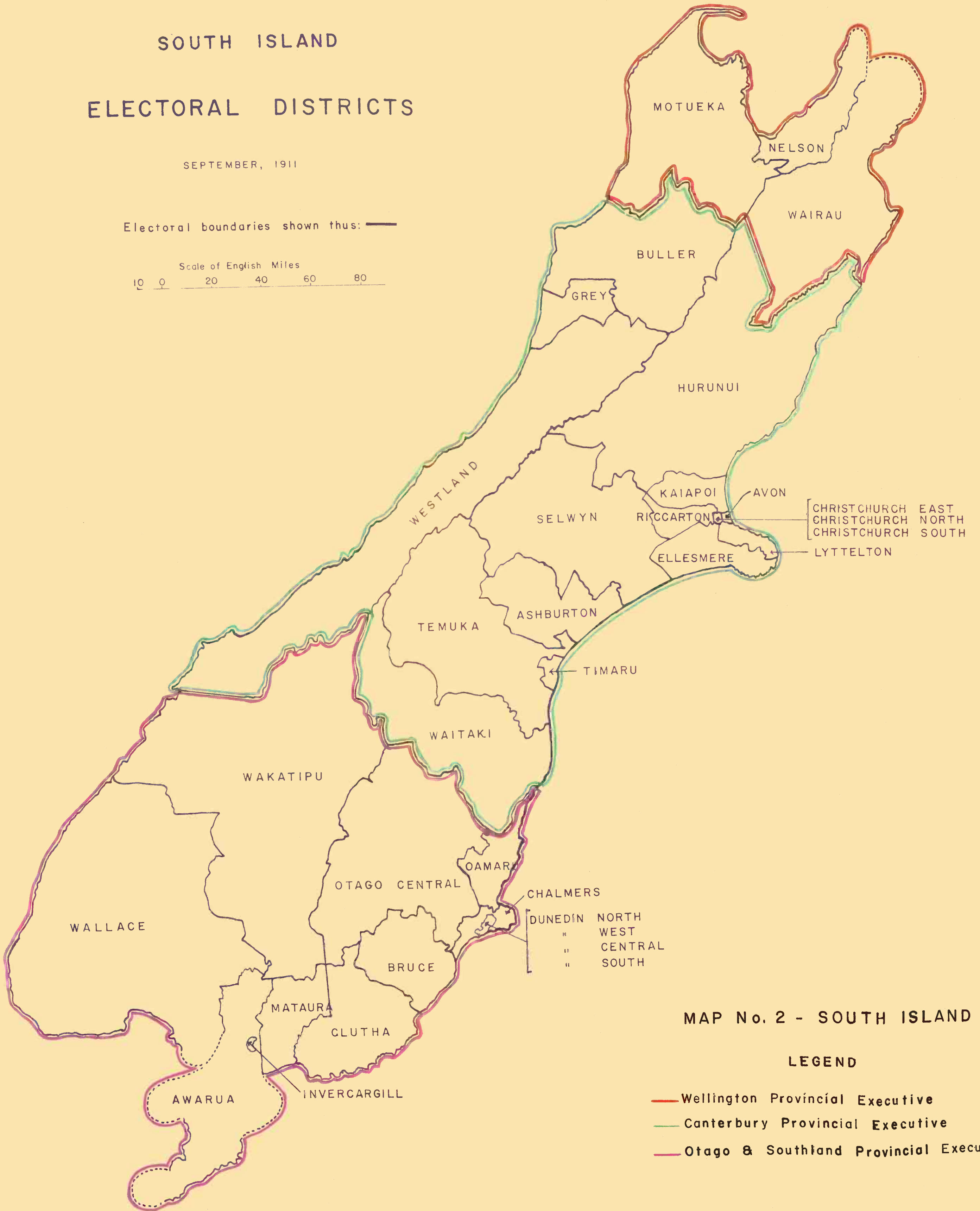
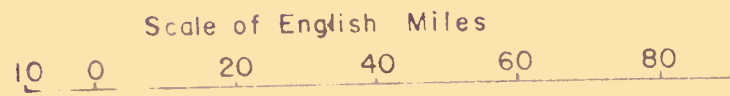
WELLINGTON SUBURBS &
COUNTRY DISTRICT

WELLINGTON NORTH
" CENTRAL
" EAST
" SOUTH

NEW ZEALAND
SOUTH ISLAND
ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —



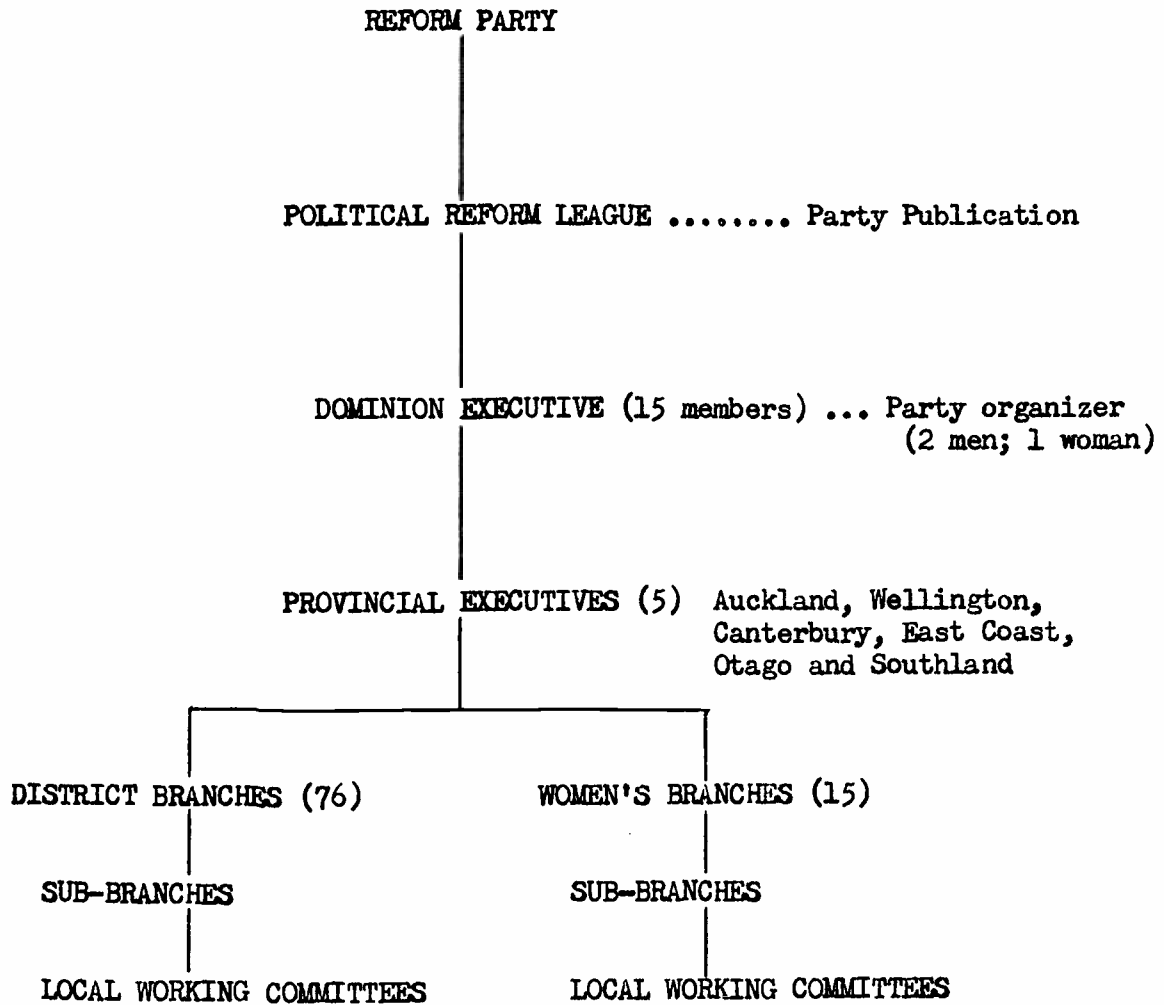
MAP No. 2 - SOUTH ISLAND

LEGEND

- Wellington Provincial Executive
- Canterbury Provincial Executive
- Otago & Southland Provincial Executive

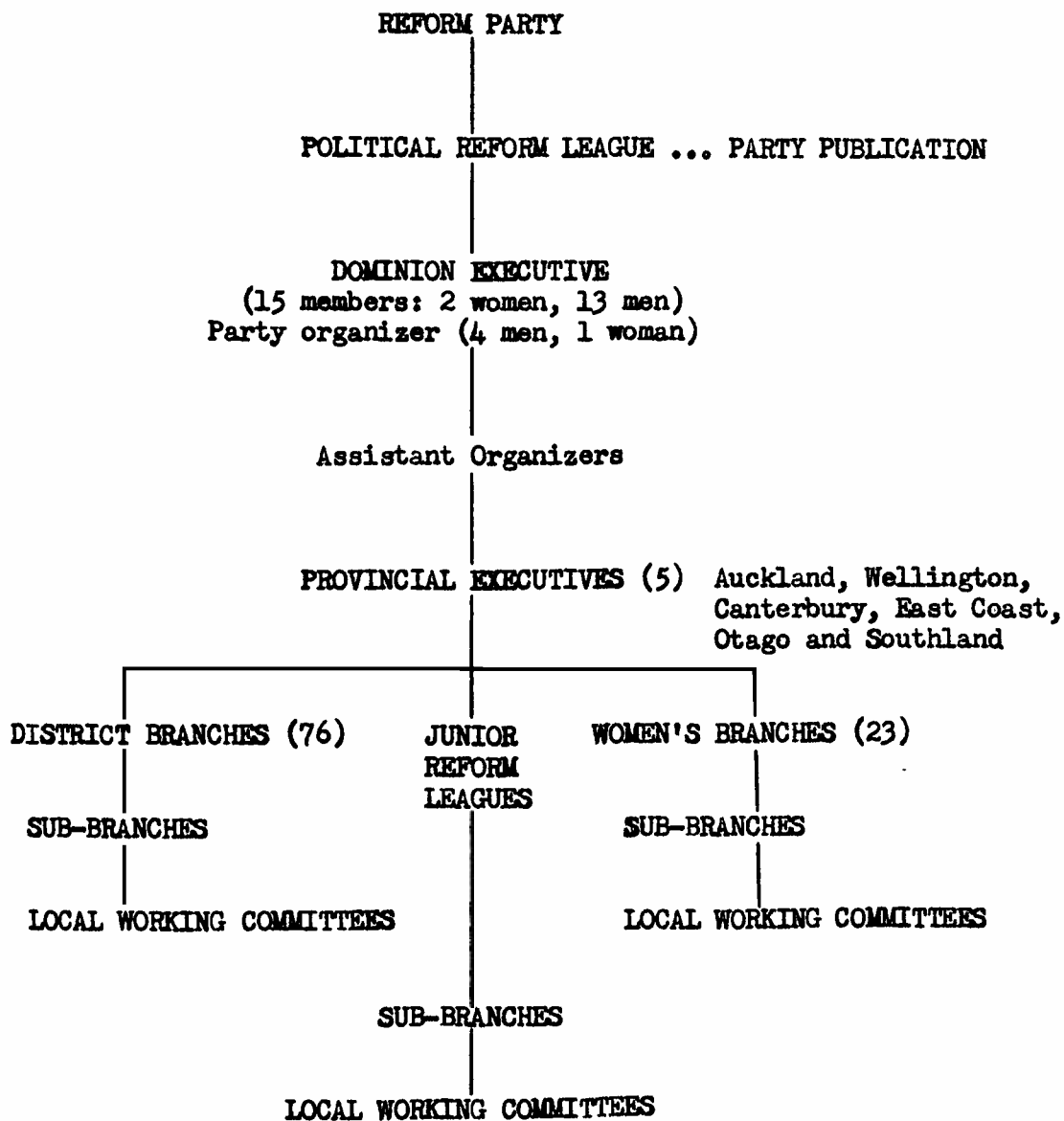
APPENDIX VI

ORGANIZATION OF THE REFORM PARTY AS OF OCTOBER, 1913



APPENDIX VII

ORGANIZATION OF THE REFORM PARTY AS OF AUGUST, 1914



APPENDIX VIII

NEW ZEALAND POLITICAL REFORM LEAGUE
DISTRICT AND SUB-DISTRICT BRANCHES AS OF JUNE, 1913

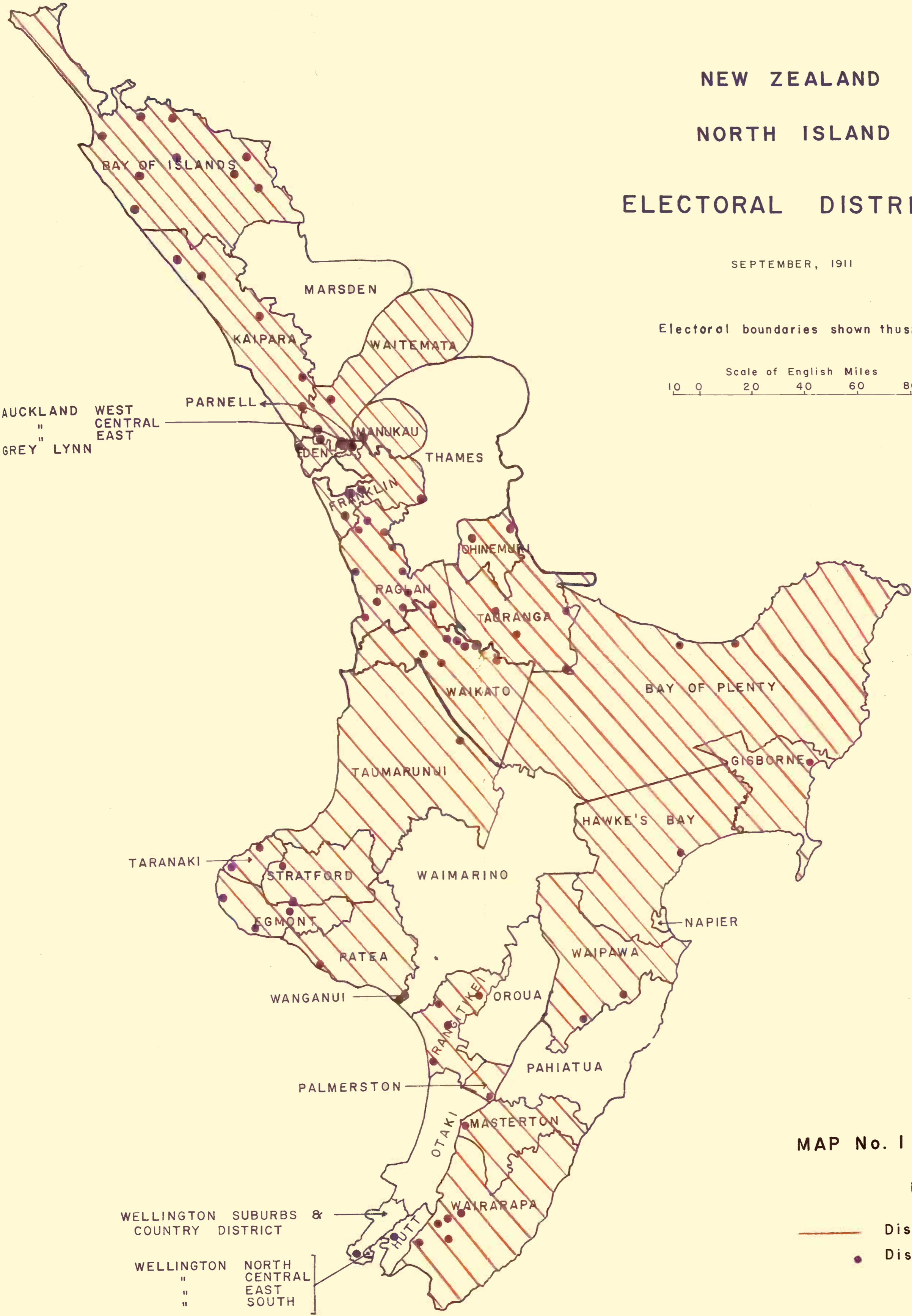
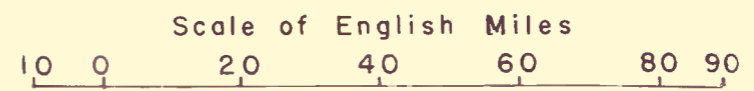
MAP NO. 1 NORTH ISLAND

MAP NO. 2 SOUTH ISLAND

NEW ZEALAND NORTH ISLAND ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —



MAP No. 1 - NORTH ISLAND

LEGEND

- District Branches
- District Sub-Branches

AUCKLAND
" CENTRAL
" EAST
GREY LYNN

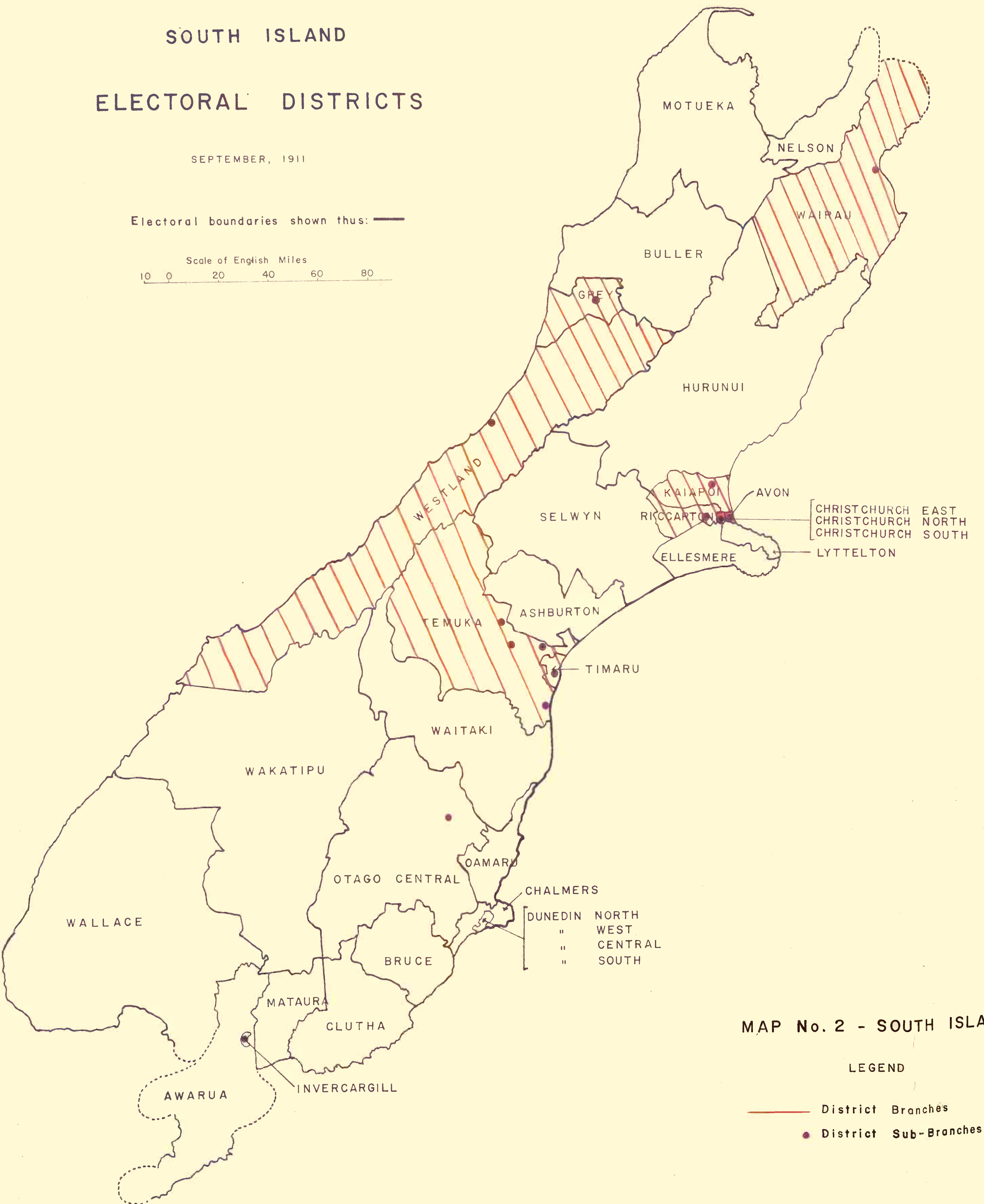
WELLINGTON SUBURBS &
COUNTRY DISTRICT

WELLINGTON NORTH
" CENTRAL
" EAST
" SOUTH

NEW ZEALAND
SOUTH ISLAND
ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —



MAP No. 2 - SOUTH ISLAND

LEGEND

- District Branches
- District Sub-Branches

APPENDIX IX

NEW ZEALAND POLITICAL REFORM LEAGUE
DISTRICT AND SUB-DISTRICT BRANCHES AS OF AUGUST, 1914

MAP NO. 1 NORTH ISLAND

MAP NO. 2 SOUTH ISLAND

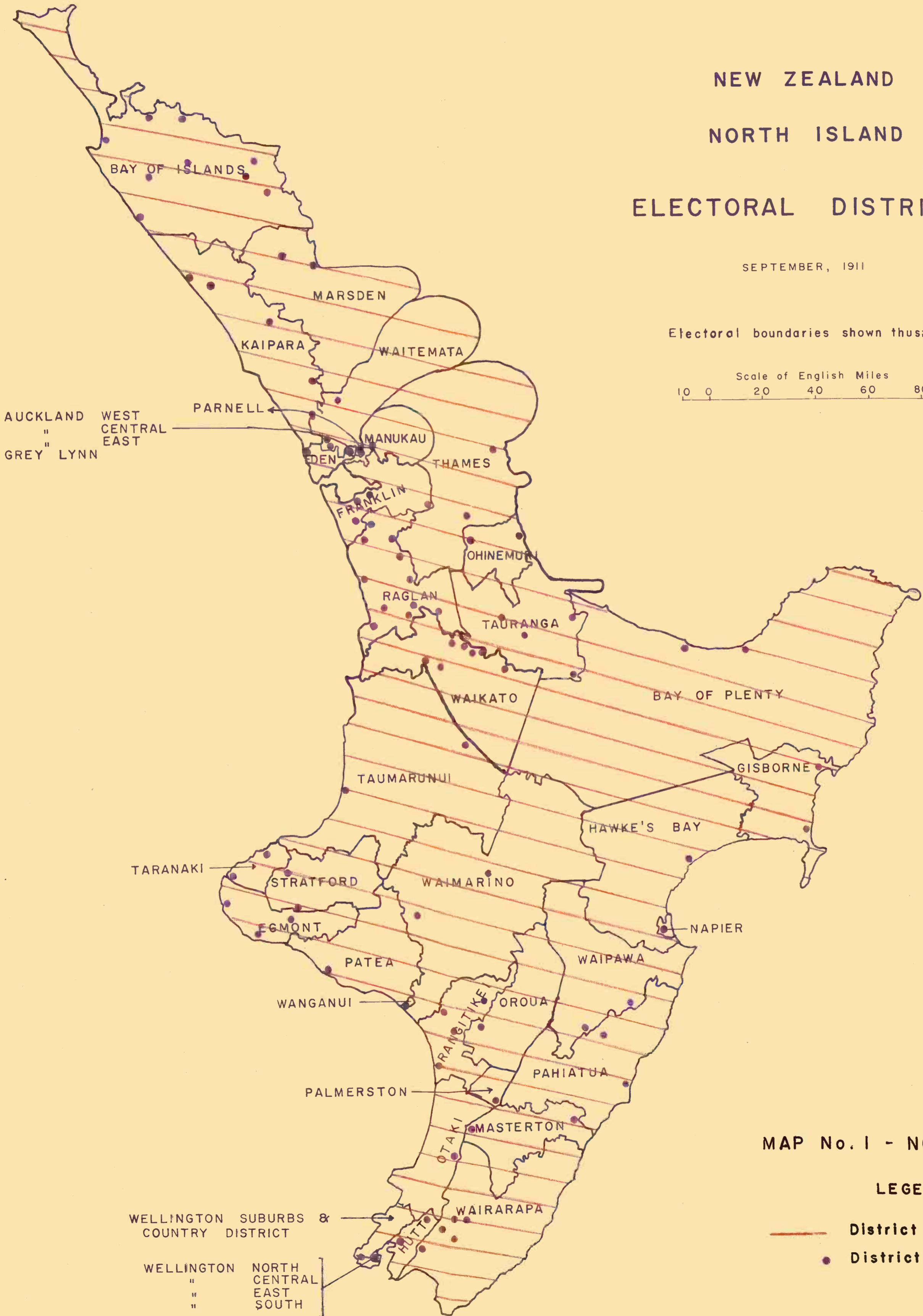
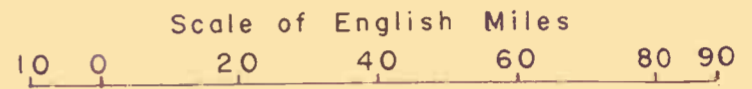
NEW ZEALAND

NORTH ISLAND

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —



MAP No. 1 - NORTH ISLAND

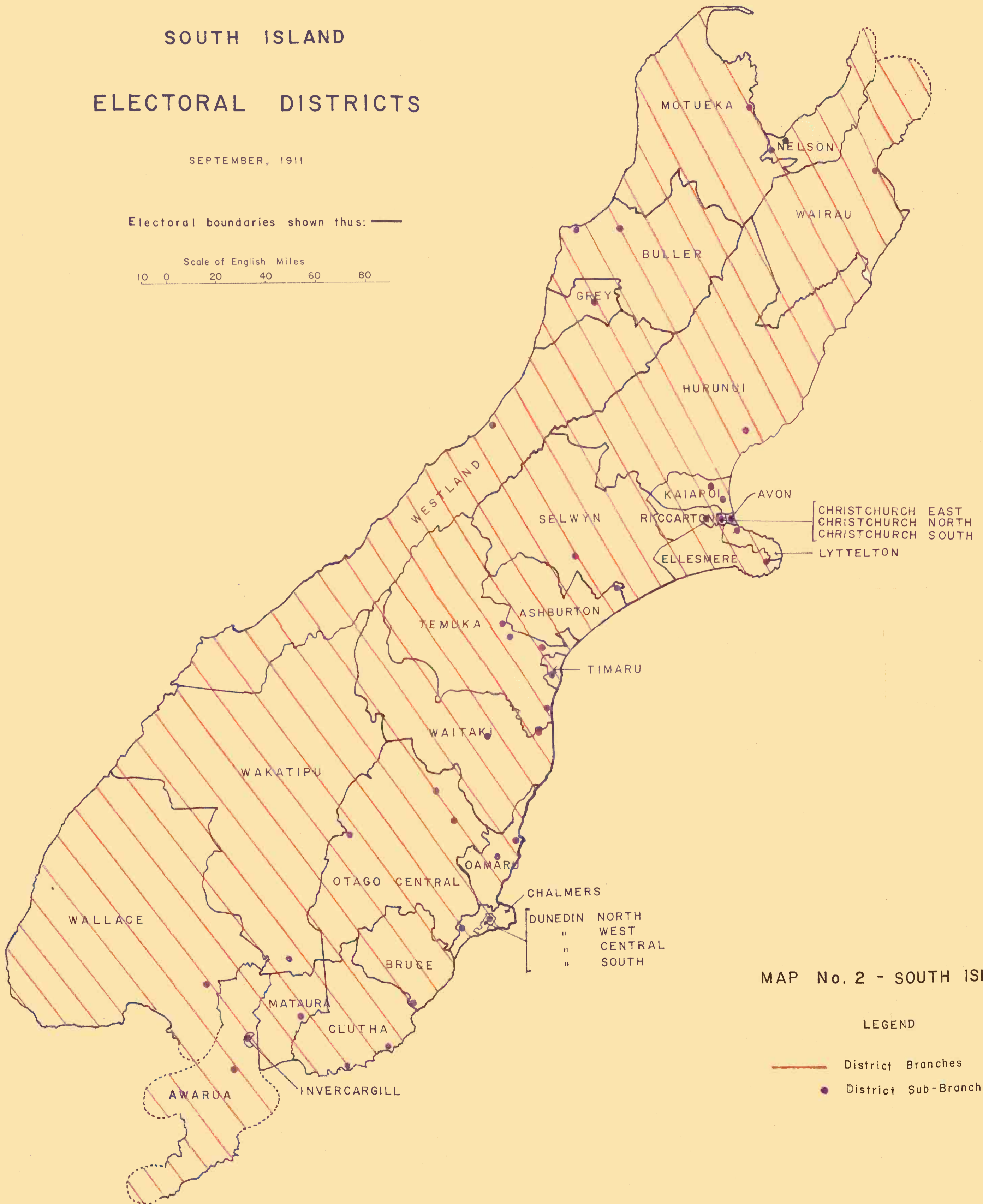
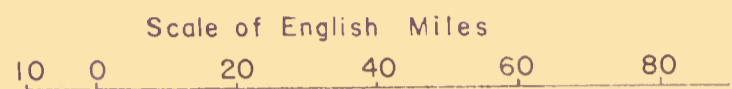
LEGEND

- District Branches
- District Sub-Branchees

NEW ZEALAND
SOUTH ISLAND
ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

SEPTEMBER, 1911

Electoral boundaries shown thus: —



MAP No. 2 - SOUTH ISLAND

LEGEND

- District Branches
- District Sub-Branches

ORGANIZATION OF THE REFORM PARTY
IN NEW ZEALAND

by

DONALD RANDALL HILL

B. S., Kansas State University, 1956

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

1960

It is the expressed purpose of this thesis to reconstruct, analyze and study the organization of the Reform party in New Zealand. The effective organization of the Reform party constituted a major reason for the eventual success of the party at the polls. The thesis shows the various lines of authority and responsibility in the party organization, enumerates the various tasks involved, and points out the fact that as the party's organization increased in magnitude, so did its success at the polls.

The thesis traces the organization of the party from its formative stages up to the point at which political organization ceased, as a result of the outbreak of World War I. It shows how the organization developed, spread, and eventually engulfed the entire country.

The organization of the Reform party gained its impetus through the foresight and initiative of several individuals, and the amalgamation of certain conservative groups. The New Zealand Political Reform League was a prime asset in the party's electoral success.

The basic organization was simple and functional. The lines of authority, command, and decision were always well defined. The various groups which comprised the organization knew where they belonged in the organizational hierarchy and what duties and functions they were to perform. Organizational boundaries were laid out, and the areas of responsibility were relatively closely adhered to.

The Reform party never polled more than forty-seven per cent of all votes recorded in any election, and yet it managed to control the government from 1912 to 1928. The party was able to organize sufficient support in enough electoral districts to retain its control. The evidence indicates that without an effective and efficient organization, capable of arousing

public support for the party and dedicated to getting the vote out on election day, the Reform party would have been incapable of retaining its precarious majority position in Parliament.

Unfortunately, the Reform party is a dead political entity and over three decades have elapsed since its final days of power. For reasons unknown to the writer, little concerning the Reform party was consigned to writing. As a result, the author has had to rely on the newspapers of that period as his primary source of information, supplemented by several Reform party publications, interviews, and the review of studies completed concerning this period of political history.