

Topic Page: [Massey, William Ferguson \(1856 - 1925\)](#)

Summary Article: **Massey, William Ferguson**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

New Zealand right-of-centre politician, prime minister 1912–25. He concentrated initially on controlling militant unions and the newly formed Federation of Labour. He drew upon fellow farmers, 'Massey Cossacks', to act as special constabulary strike breakers in the goldfields and Wellington docks in 1912–13. He also led the country through World War I, supporting the UK war effort, although he was intellectually an isolationist. He attended the Paris Peace Conference at the war's conclusion and was re-elected with a large majority in December 1919. He died in office, and remains today New Zealand's longest-serving prime minister.

Born at Limavady in Country Derry (now Northern Ireland), into a staunch Ulster Protestant family, he emigrated to North Island, New Zealand, in 1870, and settled near Auckland. His father became a dairy farmer and William Massey also worked as a farmer, before being elected to the house of representatives in 1894. He emerged as a spokesperson for the agrarian community and, from 1903, became leader of the Reform Party, which he had founded as an offshoot of the Conservative Party. After a decade in opposition, in July 1912 Massey became prime minister.

During World War I, Massey invited the Liberals under the leadership of Sir Joseph Ward to form a national coalition government with his Reform Party, which lasted until 1919, when tensions arose with Ward, especially over the resettlement of returning soldiers. Though the public heavily supported Massey in the general election of that year, economic difficulties lessened the Reform Party's appeal and in the election of 1922 it lost its overall majority. Under the growing strain of office Massey's health failed and he died on 10 May 1925.

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Massey, William Ferguson. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/massey_william_1856_1925



© RM, 2018. All rights reserved.



© RM, 2018. All rights reserved.

APA

Massey, William Ferguson. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/massey_william_1856_1925

Chicago

"Massey, William Ferguson." In *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon. Helicon, 2018. https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/massey_william_1856_1925

Harvard

Massey, William Ferguson. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. [Online]. Abington: Helicon. Available from: https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/massey_william_1856_1925 [Accessed 12 November 2019].

MLA

"Massey, William Ferguson." *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon, 2018. *Credo Reference*, https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/massey_william_1856_1925. Accessed 12 Nov. 2019.