

ineffectiveness, and, as if to redress the balance, a letter from 'A Liberal' was published which stated that

I hardly think that Mr. Ives, who is but a short comer among us, will have the presumption to thrust his candidature for the Rangitikei seat on us. (19 May 1893)

The pace now warmed up. Ives was invited by 83 electors to address a public meeting in Ohingaiti, the invitation and Ives's acceptance being published (30 May 1893) and his speech reported (6 June 1893). This meeting moved that if Ives wished to be the candidate, they would express a vote of confidence in him. In following issues references to Ives in public, business, and private capacities proliferate; only the most significant are noted here. In the report of his address to another meeting (20 June 1893) Ives expressed interest in becoming a candidate, but was still unsure of his support. He consented to a request by electors in Marton to address a meeting there (21 July 1893). References uncomplimentary to John Stevens, who had been announced as the official Rangitikei Liberal Association's candidate on 27 June, begin to appear. But Ives did not appear too eager to declare himself openly, perhaps wishing to be seen to be gathering a solid base of support:

Mr. Ives, who claims to have a large and compact following in the Rangitikei district, has determined to feel his way among the more settled and populous centres before definitely announcing his candidature. (5 August 1893)

There were two significant factors underlying the Liberal nomination. Rangitikei was a safe Liberal seat and whoever secured the nomination was sure to win the election. Voters outside Marton, the electorate's main town, were apparently dissatisfied with the performance of Stevens, who was the Marton-based Rangitikei Liberal Association's candidate, fearing that he would not represent their interests. Ives held several meetings in Marton, at one of them appealing to the soon to be enfranchised women by advertising that 'the gallery will be reserved for ladies and their escorts' (8 September 1893). Another Marton meeting strongly attacked the Rangitikei Liberal Association:

The coterie of would-be usurpers of the political privileges of the people of this district attended Mr. Ives's meeting at Marton on Friday last, and they received, at his hands, one of the soundest whippings, in the presence of the public, that it was possible for a man to administer. (19 September 1893)

Mentions of Ives flew thick and fast. One example is the reporting of the battle with the Marton *Mercury*, accused of an 'attempt to control the political opinion of the people of this district' by not reporting Ives's speeches (19 September 1893). His speeches and meetings were fully