

MS. 54/80

W. Hall to J. Pratt, 17 June 1814

June 17th 1815

Bay of Islands

New Zealand

Rev^d and Dear Sir/

Through the multiplicity of business I can scarcely find time to write, but I have with thankfulness to inform you that we are safely landed upon New Zealand with our Families— The Rev^d M^r Marsden came out with us from Port Jackson and thought it most prudent to settle us near the place where Duaterra lived— But in a very inconvenient place we are nearly surrounded by high hills so that we can only have the benefit of the Sun a little in the middle of the day— and at such a distance from where the Timber grows that we have great difficulty in getting any— But we have purchased another piece of Ground consisting of Fifty Acres upon the most eligible place of any in the Bay for which we gave five Axes the property of the Society. [f] But we are too few in number to remove there yet, the Natives would take an advantage of us. I am sorry to inform you that Duaterra was taken very ill before the Vessel left us and a few days after she sailed he died, and two days after his death his wife suspended herself upon a tree and they were buried together, which seemed a very mysterious providence to us, and brought to our remembrance that the judgments of the Lord are a great deep and his way past finding out, yet we trust the Spirit of the Lord is with us directing us aright—

We have had large parties of Natives around us from distant parts of the Country but they have done no further injury than pilfering our property— and

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I believe I have suffered the most on that account my Tools being the greatest temptation and the most exposed— One day about two months ago when I was drawing up Timber upon the Beech [sic] and hauling upon a rope amongst a large party of Natives, that by some means or other my Watch [f] was pulled out of my pocket, and taken away by a Native unknown to me; as soon as I missed it I bid a reward for it and had it returned the following day all beat to pieces. I have sent to port Jackson for one, but I am afraid I shall not get a good one from there, and a bad one would be of very little service at New Zealand— Therefore I would be glad if if [sic] you could make it convenient to send me by the next conveyance a good silver hunting Watch and Deduct the price out of my Salary—

I return my sincerest thanks to your Honourable Committee for authorising Mr Marsden to defray my expences out, which I have just now obtained a knowledge of, by a letter that had been detained by the Rev^d Mr Fulton—

We are assisted by a Smith and a pair of Sawyers, and the Rev^d Mr Marsden has been very attentive to us, in supplying our wants from port jackson. [sic] When we first landed we engaged the Natives to build thatched huts for us after their own fashion, which we [f] went into— and since that I have built two wooden Houses besides the Smith Shop— I have also made a Boat out of a Canoe that we purchased from the Natives— I accomplished it by cutting off both ends, and made them up again in a regular manner, I supported its sides with additional planking and made it to pull with six Oars— We call it the experiment it will carry between three and four Tons and sails well. I employ as

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many Natives as I can in preparing Timber for fences, and any other such work, as they are able to do it – I now consider myself as if I were at home in the very Sphere of usefulness, and what my hand findeth to do I do it with all my might –

The Brig Active is just now going out on her second trip to port Jackson – I have been assisting in procuring a Cargo of Timber for her, these five weeks past, she lays about ten miles from the settlement up a River convenient for taking in Timber and I employ Natives to pull the Boat for me, and likewise to fall the Timber [f] and float it down the River convenient to the Vessel and being so much amongst the Natives, I learn the Language very fast, I can converse with them upon any common subject, and I have no doubt but in course of time I shall get the Language complete – I mentioned in a former letter respecting Cloathing being sent out to the amount of my Salary, which if you could make it convenient would be of great service to us – as Cloathing is very dear in port jackson, and I wear mine out very fast among the Timber – and the Natives steal them whenever they can lay hold of them; their Stealing is one of the greatest evils that we have to guard against, but it [is] what we must expect from a people in a state of nature – and may we have grace and strength temporal and Spiritual adequate to our labours – and may we rely upon Him who alone is able to bear up his people under all their trials – [f] We hope in course of time to be able to send better accounts – But we seem as yet to be too small a party, and our Mechanics are not proper Characters – If you could make it convenient to send out a proper person for a Smith, and another

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Carpenter or two ~~after the Settlement is established~~ [sic] – would be of great use, and after the Settlement is established, we might build a small Vessel that would be very useful for collecting Timber and other productions of the Country for the benefit of the Settlement – But these things I leave to your own superior judgement – and may the God of all grace direct you and us aright, that all may work together for his peoples good and his own Glory – I have with thankfulness to inform you that about five weeks ago M^{rs} Hall was safely delivered of a Daughter and has had good recovery – I have sent a New Zealand Garment what the Natives call a pagatey as a curiosity to the Rev^d M^{rs} Pratt [sic], which I beg her acceptance [f] of, as having nothing better to send, – and M^{rs} Hall joins me with our best respects to M^{rs} Pratt with yourself and all Friends, and remain Dear Sir your most obedient Humble Servant and Labourer

In Christ W.^m Hall