

S. Marsden to W. Hall, 20 November 1813

(Copy)

Mr William Hall—

Parramatta Nov^r 20th

1813.

Sir,

As Mr Kendall is now arrived in this Colony I feel it my duty to write to you on behalf of the Church Missionary Society relative to the Mission intended to be established at New Zealand— you will therefore consider this Communication of a public and not of a private nature. I must now request Permission to express my Sentiments very freely to you in writing, which I have so repeatedly done verbally. I feel no Hesitation in saying you have in my opinion acted extremely wrong as far as respects the Mission. This Observation only applies to the Mission. I will tell you wherein you have done so— you have always shewn a disposition to resi[s]t all Authority; and to take no advice, to follow no Opinion but your own; however plain your Path of duty appeared to me in respect to the work of the Mission— This disposition I have always considered as a serious radical Evil in you as a Missionary. On this Account you are not open to Conviction, and you will allow no man to teach you what you ought to know in order to qualify you in some degree for the important work for which you [f] originally came out from England. You have not sufficient Experience, sufficient Knowledge of men and things of civil and savage Life to enable you to act with prudence and Caution as a public Character

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without the advice and Counsels of those who are older than yourself; and who have seen more into the various Characters of men, and have reflected more upon them. A man who enters upon a public duty as you have done, has a different Task to perform from what he had when in a private Station. He is no longer at Liberty to consult his own Ease, his own Interest or his own Inclination [sic], but to discharge those duty [sic] he has solemnly pledged himself to the public to perform. Yours is a sacred Pledge made to God and his Church; and therefore the obligation becomes infinitely more binding. You should consider, if you had not engaged in the work of the Mission another might have been found who would now have been filling your Place. I am willing to attribute many of your Errors to Ignorance, which is the Parent of Obstancy [sic] and Self sufficiency, and not to design. On this Account I have shewn great Forbearance towards you. The Society have placed great Responsibility in me – I feel it's weight and am anxious to discharge my trust faithfully. [f] It cannot be supposed for a moment that I should give you any wrong directions or wrong advice knowingly. The temporal and eternal welfare of the Inhabitants of New Zealand hath been the warmest wish of my Heart for years before I saw you; and still continues to be. My high Respect for the Society under whose Patronage I have the honor to act, my own public Reputation in this Colony, and elsewhere, and my sincere Concern for the Inhabitants of New Zealand, are motives sufficiently strong to induce me to act with the greatest Caution in every Step I take in this important work. I have a growing Conviction that God

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will in mercy visit these poor Heathens who are literally without Hope at present. Tho' I am sorry to say that I scarcely recollect a single instance where you have followed my advice, or paid the smallest difference [sic] to my opinion or directions in matters relative to the mission, but invariably acted as if there existed no public Relation between you and me; yet I am unwilling that you should relinquish the work to which you were destined. I therefore once more in the name and on the behalf of the Society request that you will no longer halt between two opinions, but will either promise to devote yourself to the work, whenever I may [f] call upon you, or relinquish it altogether [sic]. Let me have your opinion in writing that I may transmit it to the Society for their Information— State your Sentiments fairly, freely and honestly, without any mental Reservation that the Society may know what they have to depend upon, so that if you draw back they may provide. If you have any Grievances to complain of, either real or imaginary, any neglect or Inattention on my Part communicate them fully to the Society— keep nothing back from them. I will forward your Letters either opened or sealed. I am not conscious that you have any just Grounds of Complaint against the Society, or against me, as Agent to the Society. The Society engaged to give you, M^{rs} Hall, and M^r King each £20 per annum when you were employed in their Service— I was also authorised to give you more pecuniary aid should Circumstances render it necessary. We were six months on our Passage from England to Port Jackson, during this time I considered you all in the Service of the Society, and on your arrival here, I

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paid you not only six months, but twelve months Salary. This Sum I considered quiet [sic] sufficient for your immediate wants, as the Society had been so liberal in your outfit— [f] You wanted neither Clothing nor Tools &c &c. As there was no immediate Opportunity for you to begin the work of the Mission, I thought just that you should provide for yourselves for a time, as you alone from the high Price of Labor could by moderate Application earn 8^s or 10^s per day. Shortly after our arrival Information was received of the Loss of the Boyde. In a few weeks more of the murder of Tippahee, and every man woman, and Child that could be met with in his District, by the Masters and Crews of the different whalers who were then on the Coast of that Island. These unexpected and unfortunate Events rendered it imprudent for you to proceed to New Zealand at that time, as we were ignorant what effect these murders might have upon the minds of the natives. In a few weeks some natives of New Zealand came to Port Jackson again, three of these men besides Duaterra I took into my own House. A fair opportunity now occurred for you to begin the work of the Mission by acquiring the Language, and forming an Intimacy with the Natives. I proposed to assist you one Hour every morning in my own Study along with a [f] New Zealander to learn the Language and to arrange it a little for you. I proposed also to make you an allowance for the whole or any Part of your time that you might devote to the work— I offered M^r King £60 per annum if he would devote his time to his own Improvement in the Language of New Zealand, and to the Instruction of the Natives, but this he

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declined. The last time I spoke to you upon this Subject, I promised you £100 per annum if you would follow my directions; and devote the whole of your time to the work of the Mission in New South Wales, and superintend the Establishment I was anxious to make for these Islanders; but this offer you declined alledging that you could make £150 per annum by manual Labor, and more. I told you in making the liberal Proposal I had done to you, I had far exceeded my Authority from the Society, but my Anxiety for the Improvement of these People was so great that I would not spare any reasonable Sum if I paid it myself. But all I could say was not sufficient to induce you to enter into my views; and make a beginning. I must also remind you, that not long ago I wished you to visit New Zealand, as a vessel was going merely to examine the Natural Productions in which [f] were two or three of my Friends, amongst the number M^r James Gordon who was intimate with the natives: but I could by no means prevail upon you. I had procured you good Accommodations, and a free Passage, I offered to pay your Expences and take Care [of] your Family, but all would not do— This strange Conduct was very painful to my Feelings, and made me completely despair of your ever entering into the work of the Mission. I thought it would have been a Satisfaction to yourself to visit the Island: and also to the Society: as you could then have stated, from your own personal Knowledge, what Prospect there was of establishing a Mission amongst the natives, but my Hopes were too sanguine, they were greatly disappointed. I then informed you that as you would not attend to the mission in any way;

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or upon any reasonable terms I thought the Society would be justified in calling upon you to refund to them all the money that had been expended upon you, when in England, and since you came here; and that you might expect such a call as you acted so directly contrary to what they had Reason to expect. As far as respects the Mission your duty & your Conduct appear to me totally irreconcilable [sic] as a man professing Godliness. Had I been fully aware that you would have acted in this way I should long here [sic] this have applied to the Society for others to have supplied your Place. If you would only be candid and tell me what you [f] will do and what you will not do, I should know how to write to the Society, and what Steps to adopt in this Country, for promoting the great object of the Mission. If it is your secret determination to retire from the work of the Mission, and to establish yourself in this Colony; as every thinking Person must conclude this to be your object, it would be but fair and honest on your Part to say so at once. Should you finally determine to renounce your Engagements with the Society, in that Case I must request you to deliver over to me all the Property belonging to the Society now in your Possession, such as Smiths & Carpenters Tools &c and the necessary Articles for dressing and spinning Flax, as they may hereafter be wanted for their Original Purpose. I have now stated my Sentiments to you fully upon this Subject, and I trust you will in reply state yours. I wish you would consider well before you finally make up your mind, and not to return an hasty answer. Examine the natural Bias of your own mind, your fixed Habits of acting and thinking. To form

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any Resolution against strong fixed Habit, tho the Resolution may be good, yet it will rarely be performed – I am persuaded if you do not regulate your final determination by your known fixed Habits, you will act hereafter as you have hitherto done with Regard to the Mission; and your Conduct will be a Source of painful disappointment to the Society; of Grief and Vexation to all who may have any thing to do with you, and of much uneasiness and distress to yourself. The Cause of God will suffer; the wicked will blaspheme and the Hearts of the [good] will be made sad –

I remain your Friend and

wellwisher,

Sam^l Marsden