

S. Marsden to J. Pratt, 15 March 1814

Parramatta, March 15th 1814

Rev^d Sir,

I was honoured with your Letter by Mr. Kendall, who arrived here in the Earl Spencer, which communicated to me the opinion of the Society relative to a Vessel for navigating these Seas. I am fully convinced that little can be done in these Islands of the South Seas, without a Vessel; and that the owners of that vessel must (whether they are a public Body, or private Individuals) feel a lively Interest for the welfare of the Heathen, and a sincere desire to promote the Glory of God. The arrival of Mr. Kendall, and the Communication contained in your Letter determined me to embrace the first opportunity, either to freight a Vessel, or to purchase one so that I might have her under my own directions. My first object was to freight a Vessel if I could get one upon moderate Terms — I made several offers but could not succeed — I could have hired one of about 100 Tons [f] for £100 per month upon Condition that I victualled her, and paid the Ship's Company, the expence of which would be about £120 more per month. Could I have got this Vessel for two months for Mess^{rs} Hall & Kendall to have visited New Zealand I should have taken her up; but the owner w^d. not let me have her for less than six months certain. This would have been too heavy a Sum, and I declined the offer. A few days after a Brig from India, called the Active, was offered to me for Sale. She is about 110 Tons — very good Accommodation and a strong good Vessel — I purchased this Brig for £1400 Sterling, fitted her out immediately & She sailed yesterday for New Zealand with Mess^{rs}. Kendall & Hall. The Expence of fitting her out was about £500

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more. The first Cost and outfit near £1900 Sterling. About £1200 of this Sum I can command from my own private Property. I may be compelled to draw upon the Society for £700, trusting that the Society or private [f] Individuals will be kind enough to advance this Sum by way of a Loan. I will make the Vessel answerable for the Principal and Interest, if she returns, and any unforeseen Circumstances should prevent the Establishment of the Mission. I consider myself responsible to the Society for all that I have done; and I should not have drawn upon them for any money on Account of the Vessel, if my own means would have accomplished this object. I trust the Society will not protest my Bills, as it is my full Intention to pay them, whether the Mission succeeds or not. Should the Mission not answer I shall sell the Vessel as soon as possible, and remit the Sum I may draw for — and if it should prosper, (of which I have little doubt) I am persuaded the natural Productions of New Zealand will cover much of the Expences when brought to Port Jackson, and sold — Such as Hemp, Timber &c &c. [f]

The documents which I shall transmit by this Conveyance, will give the Society some Idea, of the Frauds, & Oppressions, Cruelties and Murders that have been committed by the Masters and Crews of European Vessels; and convince the Society, that nothing can so effectually remove the Dread and Horror which the Natives must feel, at the Approach of a Ship near their Shores, as a friendly Vessel, when they are once convinced of the Intentions of the Society. The Safety and Comfort of the Missionaries, and the Success of the Mission, according to human Estimate, will greatly depend upon this Vessel.

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The unknown Hardships and Insults which Duaterra suffered before he reached his native Land will never be forgot by him or his Subjects tho' I used all the means in my Power to procure him a safe and certain Passage to his Country. What Indignation must he have felt when he had assisted the Master of the Fredrick, for six months to fill his Ship with oil; had gone on Shore and procured every Refreshment for the Vessel previous to her sailing for England, and as a Reward for his faithful Services should be carried, [f] notwithstanding his Tears and Supplications, away from his Country and Friends, after he had been absent so many years, and landed naked and friendless at Norfolk Island and afterwards brought back again to me. Few Masters of Vessels can be trusted, when once they lose Sight of Land. Their Tyranny and Avarice is incredible. I pledged myself to Duaterra, that I would send a Vessel to the Bay of Islands, and that the Master and Crew should be instructed to treat them with more Justice and Humanity – New Zealand is one of the finest Fields for Missionary Labors – The Inhabitants are numerous, their Climate and Soil is good, and they near to Port Jackson – Numbers of British Subjects have been cut off at New Zealand in Consequence of their Cruelty to the Natives – The Establishment of a Mission there will tend to the Security of the South Sea Whalers, who put in to the Island for Refreshments. This is an object of some Importance – It is my Intention to keep up a regular Communication with the Missionaries [f] by means of the Active Brig, and at the same time bring the Natives to, and from Port Jackson, with a view of promoting their general Improvement in the Arts of Civilization and Agriculture; and in the Principles

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of the Christian Religion. Whether I shall have the means of doing this independent of other aid I am not certain yet till I see what value the natural Productions of the Island are of; and how they may be procured. Could I have visited the Island myself I then sh^d have been better able to have judged what could be done to lessen the Expences of the Vessel; which will not be less by Estimation than £1500 per annum. "The Gold and the Silver is the Lords." If this work is from him he will carry it on, and make it prosper. I wish to commit the whole to him – I have no Connection with any Person whatever in the Vessel – so that none can thro' [sic] any difficulties in the way in that Respect. There is no object of Gain in view, excepting of poor Souls to Christ – At the same time I should think [f] it no Crime if there should be found any valuable Natural Productions, to have them brought to Port Jackson, and sold for the Benefit of the Vessel. The Arts, and Commerce will correct the vagarant [sic] Habits of the Natives more than any other means and prepare them for the Gospel. But upon these things I cannot speak with Certainty at present. The Vessel is gone, and I hope the time is come for the "Lord to prosper Zion." I shall be exceedingly rejoiced when I see her return, if the Lord has made their way to prosper, and they come back with a full Intention of returning and settling amongst the Natives. I could not make up my mind to let the women and Children go at present; lest the Natives should retain any Anger for the Injury Europeans have done them at different times. Much blame w^d. attach to me, if they had gone, and any serious Calamity had happened to them. I have no Fear myself; and would go without Hesitation. If I get some of the Children belonging to the

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Chiefs to Port Jackson and keep them here at School, this will secure [f] I hope the safety of any of our People who may live at New Zealand. I am convinced Duaterra will either come himself or send some of his Subjects who are of Consequence. Cowheetee the Son of one of their great Priests, who lived with me, will receive them gladly. I have now stated to you what I have done for the Information of the Society. I wish it to be clearly understood that I am answerable for the whole of the Expences of the Vessel as I had no possitive [sic] Instructions from the Society either to freight a Vessel, or to purchase one. I am under no apprehensions but I shall eventually be able to retire the Bills I may at present be obliged to draw, should the Vessel make no return, and should any thing happen to prevent the Establishment of the Mission. From the time that Mr. Hall embarked his Support and Mrs. Halls, as well as Mrs. Kendalls and Family will be charged to the Society.

I have the honor to be

Rev^d Sir

Your most obed^t hum[ble] Ser[van]^t

Sam^l Marsden

Rev^d J. Pratt