

Samuel Marsden to CMS Secretary Josiah Pratt

Parramatta March 3^d 1817

Rev^d & Dear Sir/

Allow me now to write you a few lines of a private nature relative to myself— I have past thro very severe trials during the last eighteen months— The Settlers at N. Zealand, from their improper Conduct have given me much pain with the exception of M^r Kendall, whose Conduct I can not too highly approve. When I was at N. Zealand M^r Hall formed a determination to remove from the Place where I had fixed them— This I would not consent to— I considered the Safety of the settlers, and their usefulness to the natives to be the two grand Considerations. Both these objects were sure, where they were settled— They were settled in one of the largest Villages; and under the protection of one of the greatest Chiefs. M^r Hall had set his mind upon a Place called Whytanghee, because the Land was rich, and it possest other local Advantages— he had influenced both Mess^{rs} King and Kendall for a time— and it was with some difficulty, I could dissuade them from their Purpose— I made them promise that they would remain where I had fixed them; and if they would not agree to this I would bring them and their Families back again with me to Port Jackson: as I was sure [f] they would be robbed, if not murdered, if they went to live in a lonely Place where they could have no protection. At length, after considerable difficulty they promised to remain where they were— and I saw them comfortably settled before I left them— M^r Hall was to procure a Cargo of Spars for the Active against her return, M^r King

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was to collect the Flax which the natives brought for Sale – and M^r Kendall was to devote himself to the School – Mess^{rs} Hall & King were also to instruct the natives in Agriculture or any thing they could for their general Improvement – Under the idea that they would attend to these Arrangements I left them, and returned to port Jackson leaving them sawyers to cut Timber for their Houses, and also to prepare some Plank for the Active against her return – When the Active returned to N. Zealand, M^r Hall had left the Settlement, and had gone to Whytanghee. Not a Spar, nor a Plank had been procured for the Vessel to bring back – which was a very great disappointment, as well as a very heavy Loss – I made up my mind to hear of M^r Hall and his Family being murdered for their Property, and was apprehensive this might occasion civil war in the island, as the natives were so partial to the Europeans where they lived, I knew they would [f] immediately seek revenge for any Injury offered to any of the People I had left. M^r Hall had employed the swayers to build his House at Whytanghee, and neglected the whole of what he ought to have done, and incurred a heavy loss to me, and also great expense to the Society – When the Active returned and brought me these distressing Accounts, as I was sure some thing serious would happen, I knew not what to do – M^r Hall had too much Property to live in a lonely Place, 10 miles from the Settlement without danger – he would have been murdered even in this Colony, in Situations not half so exposed to danger – I trembled for the Consequences. At length Information arrived that M^r Hall had been robbed and

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M^{rs} Hall had been wounded— and that he had been compelled to return to the settlement— The Chiefs rose in every direction to revenge the Injury; and destroyed the Houses of those who had come to rob M^r Hall; and some of them wanted their Countrymen to be put to death— The head Chief recommended that, they should not die, but be punished some other way, and the Business [sic] ended— The work men had lost their Property, and claimed Remuneration, and at M^r Kendall's Request I have paid them— All the Buildings and other materials, which the workmen and M^r Hall had now built at Whytanghee, were an expense that was now lost— [f] besides disappointing the Vessel of a Cargo of Plank— I had sent over a Carpenter and two pair of Sawyers to assist in building the School &c. From one Circumstance and another the Settlers disagreed amongst themselves and this brought on misunderstandings between the workmen— some preferring one, and some another— so that there was no unity amongst them— The sending the Sawyers and workmen had been a very heavy Expense, and had not answered what I had reason to expect— I had disappointment after disappointment and Vexation after Vexation that I knew not what to do— I had only one Comfort, and that was, every thing that the natives could do for the settlers where they lived they did with great Pleasure— and the Prospect of finally succeeding in the object was very gratifying to my mind, even if the present Settlers should relinquish the work. I have already expressed my approbation of M^r Kendall's Conduct, and a more proper man in my opinion could not be found.

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He will have his trials, and I feel for his Situation; as his Colleagues will not second him in the work, but hinder him all they can, and traduce I fear his good name – unless they should shew a very different Spirit from what they have hitherto done – Mrs Hall is a good women and a good missionary – [f]

You will easily perceive how all these things must distress my mind – and particularly in a pecuniary Point of View, as the Expenses have been so much increased by all these unpleasant Circumstances – The last time the Active went the voyage proved very unfortunate – The Master who is an aged man, and a good Sailor (Mr King married his daughter) behaved very ill – After carrying Supplies to Nedw Zealand, the Active went on to Otaheite with the missionaries belonging to the London M[issionary]. S[ociety]. The Captain took his wife with him in the Vessel directly contrary to my written Instructions – She is a very infamous drunken woman and completely master of her Husband – To please her as I was informed, he stood in to the North Cape of N. Zealand so close to Land, for his wife to trade with the natives, that he got the Active a Ground twice – Her false Keel was knocked off; and before they got to the Society islands, she became very leaky, and was afterwards obliged to be hove down upon one of the islands – The Master he gave himself up to drunkenness along with his drunken wife so that the vessel lay for three months at one of the Society islands before she was fit to go to Sea – [f] the Active returned again to Port Jackson with very little Cargo, thro the neglect and drunkenness of the Master and his wife. I had fitted her out at a

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very heavy Expense and she was to have returned with a Cargo of Pork— but brought about 12 Tons— From the Injury she has sustained I am compelled to new sheath her Bottom which will be a very heavy Expense in this Colony where Labor is so high— All these things have been almost more than I could bear— I have none to assist me, either with Advice or money— The Cloud is at present so thick, that I cannot see my way thro'— and what the End will be I cannot tell. My Soul is pained within me, and my Sleep is often depar[t]ed from me— none know what I Suffer, and what I fear— In the midst of all, my Enemies are many; and powerful, and they hate me with a tyrannous Hatred— I know no Cause that I have given offence by, excepting my Endeavours to promote the welfare of the poor Heathen— This is the only Crime that they can lay to my Charge— I feel fully confident that the Society will give all the Support they can; but it will be out of my Power ever to lay my real Case before them— I am strongly inclined to return to England— if the same difficulties continue and the same opposition is made it will not be [f] possible for me to remain— If it was not for my large Family I would take up my residence in N. Zealand immediately— I would not hold my public Situation in the Colony— with Respect to N. Zealand I have no doubt, but the mission will succeed— All is well with the natives— Some of the persons sent out as missionaries will always turn out bad Characters when they arrive at their destination, and this must at all times be expected— Many Missionaries sent out to Otaheite by the L[ondon] M[issionary] S[ociety] have turned out men of very bad

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Characters— have been guilty of drunkenness, whoredom &c in this Colony. that I have had my Vexations with them: a number of them are now in these Settlements some bad, and some good— The bad when they want to go to Otaheite I have always prevented them, when I have found them out— The Missionaries at the Society islands are men that can now be depended upon— The bad ones have been sorted out from time to time— This will be the Case with the greatest Care amongst those that are sent to N. Zealand— Some will turn out bad men, and will injure the Cause— [f] This I expect, but their misconduct will not prevent the divine Purposes from being accomplished— I shall feel much more happy when the time comes if my Colleagues will feel themselves at Liberty to espouse this important work. I do not hope for this Favor under the present Administration. However, whatever may be the Issue of this Mission, and whatever may be the Opinion of the Society and my friends I can solemnly declare that have done all that my means or Body or mind could do— unforeseen and distressing Circumstances could not be avoided— and the heavy Expenses, from the misconduct of others cannot be justly charged upon me. A vessel must be maintained for some time yet, for the Benefit of the Natives, and the Comfort of the Settlers— and I hope the Society will see the necessity of this; and that the Head of the Church will open the Hearts of those who have the means to assist in this glorious Cause. Had I not persevered, in urging the missionaries of the L[ondon]. M[issionary]. S[ociety]. From time to time, to return to their work in the Society

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islands, when they came despairing; and had given up the Cause altogether [sic], and told me it was no use the poor Heathens in these Islands would not now have cast their Gods (their idols) into the Fire— many of them now believe the Gospel, and nearly all profess it— nothing like this has happened since the Apostles days— These are consoling Thoughts to me, in my Trouble

I am dear Sir Yours truly

Sam^l Marsden

Rev^d J. Pratt