

From Thomas Kendall [to Basil Woodd]

Bay of Islands Dec^r 10 – 1818

Rev^d and Dear Sir,

It has pleased Almighty God of his goodness to preserve me and my Colleagues with our families in safety at this place during the past four years, and it affords me unspeakable satisfaction to be enabled to acquaint you, that we are now under no fears respecting our personal safety, the natives, making due allowance for their wild habits, being reconciled to us, and we to them. On their part there is no apparent obstacle in the way of our usefulness, except as must be expected, their unsettled turn of mind; and we have every encouragement to indulge the hope, that by a patient perseverance in the path of duty, with a single eye to the glory of God and their benefit, a blessing will attend our feeble exertions. I am now anxiously expecting some person of talent to assist me in fixing the New Zealand Language. One friend of a kindred spirit possessing greater abilities than I do, would be very useful to me and I could be useful to him. As [f] soon as the Holy Scriptures are in print, or such parts of them, as, the general knowledge of which are essential to salvation, and the Natives are taught to read them, a general blessing, in dependence upon the Divine Promises may then, and perhaps not before then, [be] expected. Although the New Zealanders are exceedingly superstitious, and what religion they profess is constituted of Rules the most horrible and offensive to an Englishman and a Christian, yet it certainly is a very encouraging circumstance that parents do not at all object to their children being

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instructed by us, they rather wish it, and the children themselves have always been ready to repeat their lessons when called upon, and have been kept in a state of discipline far superior to my expectations when we have had it in our power to give them an handful of victuals. You have, I have no doubt, been highly gratified with the accounts of the many children who have attended the Society's School. Those accounts, I do assure you, were correct; and I must say, that at the time they were written, notwithstanding my spirits were often ready to sink, by reason of the frequent troubles which afflicted this settlement, my heart was [f] filled with joy and thankfulness at the fair prospects then before me. And it is not the fault of the native children that my harp is once more hung upon the willows. It is because I have not been able to feed them for more than five or six months during the past year. I have long since declared, that if the children were not regularly fed twice per day, with an handful of potatoes, or a little rice, the school would be in a great measure deserted. I wish M^r Marsden was directed to provide for the School as a separate establishment, it will not answer for the Schoolmaster, whoever he be, to depend upon the will, or contribution of the Settlers. One hundred pounds per annum, should it be required, would only be a trifle with the Society, and would well maintain Fifty or Sixty Scholars. I wish only to give them just as much as will keep them generally collected together; I do not want to pamper them. I have told M^r Marsden and M^r Pratt all I mean to say upon this subject, whatever may be determined, I trust I shall do the best I can; I have been very unhappy lately,

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having wrought hard with my hands for two years in order to procure necessary accommodations, and then to be [f] crippled in my work, on account of the little support and the different plans carried on in the Settlement the one having a tendency to check the other. When I am in trouble I am but ill calculated to do good. The Active returned from Port Jackson with supplies for the Settlement in the month of June last. About five pounds worth of trade and five hundred pounds of rice were laid aside for the School. I do not think the School has been out of my thoughts since that time one single waking hour. I do not attach any blame to Mr Marsden or any one else. Mr Marsden I am sure has at heart the welfare of the natives. The difficulty arises chiefly from the ready attention of the Native children to the School, and to the want of a settled plan from the first, for their support, and to keep them when once collected together. If supplies are not sent out to Mr Marsden already for the School some thing ought to be sent by the Catherine provided a School is to be supported here at all. Should they be sent out by the way of Port Jackson it might possibly be two years before I received them. [f] Mrs Kendall unites in grateful recollection. It is now nearly six years since we joined with you all in communion, but our hearts are still with you. I am glad to hear of your good health. I bless God my Wife and seven children are well, and I have had my health ever since the day I landed here. I shall be forty years of age on the 13th of this month. My father lived until he was ninety three. I have not yet attained to half that period, yet I am covered with grey hairs. If it pleases the Lord to spare me

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I pray to him that I may be usefully employed in promoting the Kingdom of his Dear Son. If he has any thing for me to do upon earth he will prolong my life in it, yet as I was led in my fancy some evenings ago into your company, and you pull'd out your watch and told me" it was time to think of going" so the caution applies to me. I trust whenever it may please God to call us we shall meet in his Kingdom above.

I have received your memoir of Mowhee, I hope before this time my young friends Toi and Teetaddee have [f] been also with you. Their friends are well. Should the native Mayree call upon you he will tell you a little about us. I expect he will return in the Catherine. I shall be glad if you will write me a short note by the Catherine. If it or any parcels are sent to M^r Bennets country house they will be taken care of. Captⁿ Graham has been very frequently at the Settlement. I wish he could see you, but I am afraid he will think your residence too far distant.

M^{rs} Kendall unites in dutiful & affectionate regards to M^{rs} Woodd, yourself & all friends—

My kind respects to M^r Rowe M^r & M^{rs} Mortlock M^r & M^{rs} Capusac— Miss Mary Woodd, M^r Charles Woodd M^r Will^m Woodd Your Cook— M^{rs} Gibbard &c^a

I am with much affection

Your faithful Servant

Tho^s Kendall

M^r Bennett lives I believe in Rotherhithe