

*Samuel Marsden to Thomas Kendall*

Bay of Islands April 26 1820

Dear Sir

As a vessel sails this morning for Port Jackson I embrace the opportunity to write you a Line. I am still in the Bay of Islands - A few days after you sailed I walked to the Gambier on the western side and spent more than a week with the hospitable Chiefs on its Banks who were overjoyed to see me - I have felt great Pleasure in their Company - The morning I returned, when I reached the long wood, it began to rain very heavy - I remained in the wood all night,- tho' very wet - The next morning I set off for Kiddee Kiddee - The Rain had fallen in Torrants all night, and still continued - The Swamps and Creeks were all full and the Streams very rapid and deep - I had to wade thro them all as the Natives could not attemp[t] to carry me the waters were too strong - As I cannot swim, I was obliged to have too with me that could, to assist me in deep Places - In the Evening I reached the [f] Settlement wet and weary - most of the natives did not get in till the next evening, only two accompanied me, the rest remained in the wood all day - I have since been round by Sea to the Gambier in the Dromedary but the Captain was afraid there was not sufficient depth of water for for so large a Ship being only 19 feet upon the Bar at low water, and therefore returned - I have visited Wangaroa as well as all the districts round the Bay of Islands - and was very kindly received - They all want Missionaries - I expect we shall visit the River Thames. New Zealand as you well know is ready for any Blessing the Christian world will be ready to impart - and those who love the Cause of Christ, and are willing to devote themselves to it, will be

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welcomed here – As far as concerns the natives there is no obstruction in the way of their Civilization. The Path is as clear as can be in any Heathen Country, so that I need not say a [f] word to you upon that Subject, as this you are well convinced of – I shall now say a little on the State of the Mission – you know in what great Confusion I found the Europeans in when I arrived – I had no time previous to your sailing to make any Inquiry, or I should have made a representation by you to the Committee – I found you had all fallen into that accursed Traffic with Muskets and Powder again, notwithstanding all the Resolutions that had been past against it when I was with you in August last. Mr Butler had been guilty also – I felt the keenest Anguish when I learned these things – I am convinced such Conduct will bring a Curse upon N. Zealand, and not a Blessing – I was informed you had open a Cask on Board the Dromedary directed to you, and had been shipt by me (not knowing its Contents) with five muskets in it – I could hardly believe the Report, had not a Gentleman told me who would not assert an untruth – The morning you sailed, you will remember about 40 Canoes [f] came into the Harbour from a war Expedition – I went on Shore, when the Canoes were landed, and there beheld the most distressing Scenes: the miserable Captives of war, embracing the Heads of their departed Fathers or Chiefs, and cutting their own Bodies after their manner, and mingling their Blood with their Tears – when I considered that the Missionaries were furnishing the Instruments of death to these poor Savages, by supplying them with Muskets and Powder, I could not but feel the greatest Indignation at such a Thought – no Arguments which you or any other can use, will ever

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convince me but that this is a great Sin in the sight of God, and Scandal to the Christian name. I regretted that I had supplied M<sup>r</sup> Butler and his Colleagues with a Pound of Powder - I did it for their Preservation in Case any unforeseen Tumult should happen in N. Zealand - I shall leave the Mission in [f] future under the divine Protection - They shall not depend upon an Arm of Flesh - As soon as I could I called a Committee, stated again what I had often stated before, my Sentiments upon the nefarious Barter, and told the whole that I would have no more to do with their Settlement, or any of them if they would not put away this accursed thing - I would give up the Cause altogether for the present as far as I was personally concerned, and have no more Connection with them - and this I am fully resolved to do-The Argument generally urged, has been that neither Timber nor Pork could be bought from the natives without Muskets and Powder - This I do not credit - and I hope I shall stay long enough to prove that this opinion is not current - The Rev<sup>d</sup> J. Butler and all the Settlers have once more promised to have nothing to do with [f] this Traffic in future - I have explained to all the neighbouring Chiefs, that the Settlers must not barter with them on no account with Muskets and Powder, and if they will not supply them with what they want, they must return to Port Jackson - none of them will hear of the Settlers leaving them - I think it much more to the Honor of Religion and the Good of N. Zealand to give up the mission at the present than trade with the natives in these Articles. I hope you will bring none out with you. If you do, they will be of no use to you when you return, unless you have a Sanction from the Committee to dispose of them

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which I think will not be granted - I need add no more on this Subject, further than to assure you that all Connection between me and you, as far as the Mission must be at an end, if you entertain any Idea of repeating what has been formerly done [f] in this respect. This Barter has been the Cause of all the evils that have existed amongst you - It destroyed all Christian Love, it incited avarice and Jealousies, and Murmurs, and Suspicions, and neglect of all your proper duties - and turned you aside from the right way, laid you open to the Attacks of your Enemies - covered your warmest Friends with shame, and caused them to weep in Secret - I am sure God will not bless any of you in your own Souls while you are guilty of such things - but will in righteous displeasure bring Trouble and Anguish upon you - no Plea can justify such a Crime in the Sight of God - I pray that all concerned may be convinced of the evil of that Barter - With Respect to M<sup>r</sup> King, I have had little Communication with him since I arrived - I have now done with him - and have left M<sup>r</sup> Butler to settle all his Concerns in future. He will not hear a word I have to say to him - You told me M<sup>r</sup> King had been [f] not well treated - You could not be serious in this Assertion - you cannot justify his Conduct - you have contemned it again and again - I, as Agent cannot shut my Eyes to public or private evils which affect the Mission - I must notice them - I have no doubt but God will bless these poor Heathens, and that nothing shall prevent his gracious designs from being accomplished - It "is impossible but that offences will come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh" - I must now conclude - Your

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Family are all well – and all your Colleagues – I wish you may return full of a real missionary Spirit, when you come – and remain

Yours sincerely

Sam<sup>l</sup> Marsden

Mr Th<sup>s</sup> Kendall

P.S. I have sent Mr Kendall's Letter open for your Inspection and will thank you to hand it to him when you have read it –