A Baptist in the Nest: William Wade and the C.M.S. in New Zealand

ABSTRACT

William and Sarah Wade were probably the first Baptists in New Zealand. They were, however, members of the Anglican C.M.S. mission. William Wade's correspondece reveals the tensions within the mission and his frustrations with the local leadership, especially Henry Williams. Land purchases and other 'secular' activities are criticised. These factors combined with Wade's history, his personality and his Nonconformist piety to make his position with the C.M.S. ultimately untenable.

Samuel Pearce, one of the founders of the British Baptist Missionary Society, dreamed of taking up the missionary challenge among the 'fierce Maoris' of New Zealand.[1] Like William Carey, Pearce was greatly influenced by the reports of Captain Cook's voyages to the South Seas. Pearce was to die young, having not left Britain. Carey and his friends went to India. The B.M.S. was never to establish a field in New Zealand. Not until 1882 would Baptists make an organised attempt to evangelise among Maori and this initiative of the Auckland Tabernacle would prove a disappointing failure.[2] Yet there was a Baptist presence in New Zealand mission from as early as

1 S. P. Carey, *Samuel Pearce M.A., the Baptist Brainerd* (London: Carey Press, n.d.) p. 23. See also B. Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society 1792-1992* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1992) pp. 1-20.

2 A.D. Mead, 'Baptist Mission to the Maoris: An Early Venture and a New Beginning', *Bulletin of the New Zealand Baptist Historical Society*, No. 4, December 1956, pp. 1-10.

December 1834 when William and Sarah Wade arrived under the auspices of the Anglican Church Missionary Society. This couple deserves recognition as the first Baptists in the land. Unfortunately, William Wade was a 'nonconformist' in more ways than one and his inclusion, even in the evangelically oriented C.M.S., was not a successful experiment.

William Wade's Baptist connections have barely been noticed, much less explored. His place in the New Zealand historical record has been secured by his literary effort, rather thant his religious significance. Wade's account of *A Journey in the Northern Island of New Zealand* undertaken in 1838 has been criticised as 'marked by suspicion of and contempt for the New Zealanders', yet it remains one of the standard early European accounts of Maori life.[3] His private correspondence, by contrast, has been largely ignored. This is a pity, as this surprisingly extensive deposit reveals something of Wade's personality, his religious struggles, and his disillusionment with the New Zealand mission.

Wade was sent to New Zealand to be superintendent of the C.M.S. printing press. This appointment has been the source of some confusion, as the press is properly identified with Wade's more famous friend and colleague William Colenso.[4] There are

3 P. Gibbons, 'Non-fiction' in T. Sturm (ed) *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature* (Auckland: O.U.P., 1991) pp. 25-104, p. 34. Despite these criticisms Wade's account is still depended upon for vivid pictures of personalities encountered in his timein New Zealand see *Dictionary New Zealand Biography* Vol. 1 entries T1, T11 & T82.

4 Peter Lineham mistakenly describes Wade as Colenso's assistant - 'To Make a People of the Book' in R. Glen (ed) *Mission and Moko: Aspects of the Work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand 1814-1882* (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship 1992) pp. 152-69, p. 157 (his entry in the biographical appendix is, however, more accurate on this point). Wade receives no mention in R.A. McKay (ed) *A History of Printing in New Zealand 1830-1940* (Wellington: Wellington Club of Printing House Craftsmen, 1940) or in the more recent P. Griffith etc (eds) *Book and Print in New Zealand: A Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa* (Wellington: Victoria University Press,

good reasons why Wade's intended role has not always been recognised. He was not a tradesman printer, his experience was as an editor and his appointment was to manage the press, rather than to operate it. Moreover he did not actually function as superintendent once in New Zealand. Writing in 1839 he gave the following summary of his position.

> The Com[ee] were pleased to place sufficient confidence in me to entrust to my charge the Superintendence of a Printing Concern to be established in New Zealand and accordingly sent me out here;....When, however, we arrived in New Zealand, we found that the intentions of the Missionary Brethren here were diametrically opposed to those of the Com[ee] at home. The Printing concern was placed entirely in Mr Colenso's hands, and we were told we must be otherwise employed. After waiting unemployed, except in picking up a little of the language, till August 1835, we then went to Tauranga and formed a Mission Station there, but in the following April received a peremptory order from the Com[ee] at Home to return to the Bay of Islands. In short ... the Press became the subject of appeal and counter appeal. Orders from Home of the most decided character were totally disregarded, or at best trifled with, by the Missionary Committee, & I with a wife and family (I have now three little ones) have been living in a state of most uncomfortable and unprofitable suspense up to the present moment.[5]

Frustration at being denied any clear role was a key factor in Wade's falling out with the New Zealand leaders of the mission. However, the reassignment from superintendency duties was not due solely to the whims of the local committee. In truth Wade had little heart for the management of the press. He wanted to be a missionary, and he wanted to be ordained. It would be the refusal of the New Zealand committee to grant him this status which would drive a growing sense of resentment as the five years of his service progressed.

1997).

5 Letter, William Wade to Rev. Saunders, Aug. 24/39. In quotations from Wade's correspondence I have retained original spelling and punctuation.

After moving to Te Papa (Tauranga) in August 1835 Wade wrote to Dandeson Coates, Secretary of the CMS in Britain stating his preferences.

> Our removal here was against my judgement but not against my inclinations, and I am now disposed to view it as one of those gracious but myste[rious] movements of providence, which, in a way that we know and seek not, bring about the very secret desires of our hea[rts]. You know, my dear Sir, my early inclination to the work [of] ministry & will not therefore be surprised [were I to] continue as a Miss^{y} here at Tauranga rather than [return to] the Press.... Should the Comm^{ee} at Home determine on my return to the Press, I trust I sho^{d} be found faithful to its duties though unwilling to resume them. But sho^{d} the Press continue at Paihia & Paihia continue as it was when we were in the Bay I sho^{d} much doubt whether I could not better serve the cause of Christ by returning to England, if there were any prospect of my entering the ministry there. My desire is to be permitted to end my days here, if the liberty of conscience wh. I have hitherto enjoyed be continued to me.

There are important themes here. The censorious comment about Paihia hints at a disapproval of the conduct of the mission which would grow to be pathological. The reference to 'liberty of conscience' is also crucial. Both issues feature frequently in Wade's correspondence, giving an important perspective on the history of the New Zealand C.M.S. and shedding light on Wade's version of nonconformist piety.

By April 1837 Wade was back in the North, having been shifted there to escape tribal conflict in the Bay of Plenty. By now he was open in his contempt of the conduct of the mission. In a letter to Coates he declared his decision not to continue to record the required daily journal due to his despondency at the state of affairs. Emblematic of his concerns was the fate of the 'Native Boys School' at Waimate of which he had been given temporary charge. This venture, he contended was failing 'owing to the secular work in this Station, and other

hindrances'.[6] Wade's description of the school provides a counterpoint to Robin Fisher's contention that the Maori schools were 'a central part of missionary work'.[7] Fisher refers to the later 1820s. Wade's testimony suggests a decline by the mid 1830s, by which time the leading missionaries were increasingly exercised by the material needs of their families. The secularity of the mission's activities in farming and trading etc was an affront to Wade's sense of its purpose in the country. He would persist in this charge with increasingly damning accusations over the next two years.

Whilst disaffected at his own treatment and dismissive of the direction of the mission Wade nevertheless records vibrant expressions of Maori Christianity. On a journey to Otana he visited the dairy farm of Rawiri Taiwhanga ('David') a prominent Nga Puhi convert who 'has hitherto maintained the consistency of his Christian profession'.[8] At Otana, in the 'very neat native Chapel', Wade was 'somewhat cheered...by the apparent state of the people'.

> The congregation on Sunday morning did not exceed 60 or 70; but their attention was very marked, and their afternoon School, was divided into three classes which were so arranged as quite to occupy the area of the chapel, and I found the first class capable of reading the scriptures with tolerable facility. At their request our

6 Wade to Coates, April 7 [1837], p. 1. The manuscript records the year as '36' but references in the letter show this to be incorrect. Wade's description of the school provides a counterpoint to Robin Fisher's contention that the Maori schools were a central part of missionary work. Fisher refers to the later 1820s.

7 R. Fisher, 'Henry Williams' Leadership of the CMS Mission in New Zealand', *New Zealand Journal of History*, Vol. 9, No. 2, October 1975, 142-153, 147. On the basis of Henry William's reports Coates cited success in the Northern Schools to the Lords select committee on New Zealand as evidence of the effectiveness of the mission - p. 187

8 On Rawiri Taiwhanga see Wade, *Journey*, pp 16-20; numerous entries in L,M. Rogers (ed) *The Early Journals of Henry Williams, 1826-1840* (Christchurch: Pegasus, 1961); *DNZB* Vol. 1 entry T4, pp. 417-418.

> Evening Service was held at an early hour. A baptized Native from Kaikohe, named Benjamim.... spoke with great propriety to the people.[9]

Such encouragement at the possibilities for effective work only served to feed Wade's frustration. He was caught in the gap between local practice and home policy. He was prevented by local decisions from exercising his designated role with the Press, and was in any case disinclined, even if asked, to take up that work. On the other hand he was conscious that the parent committee would not release him for straight missionary work. This tension left him with the sense that he and his family 'are neither one thing nor the other, and my mind is often tempted to the uncomfortable reflection that we have no business here'.[10]

Wade's discomfort continued. By February 1939 he was convinced he had to leave. The tension between the home committee and the local group had grown in his mind to intolerable levels. 'At times I feel so complete a prostration of both mental and bodily energy as to be unfit for any thing, and am now looking forward with anxious hope for release.'[11] Complaints about the conduct of the mission were again canvassed before Coates. To succeed it must be established 'not on the basis of wealth or worldly influence'. In the 'worldly influence' sphere the Mission had become, in Wade's view, more hindrance than help. In the late 1830s the British resident James Busby made various fruitless efforts to establish informal authority over both Maori and Pakeha. Frustrated by lack of support from the Colony in New South Wales Busby endeavoured to set up regular 'governance' meetings of leading Chiefs and settlers in order to institute some form of law and order. The venture did not succeed, partly due to lack of interest

9 Wade to Coates, April 7 [1837], pp. 2-3. Coates quoted this favourable report (though not its critical context) to the Lord's select committee on New Zealand in 1840 – p. 191.

10 Wade to Coates, April 7 [1837], p. 3.

11 Wade to Coates, Feb. 6, 1839, p. 1.

from key participants. Among these were the missionaries. Wade, a cautious supporter, nevertheless regarded Busby's appointment as farcical due to the lack of official backing he had received. However, it was not just colonial authorities who had undermined Busby's initiatives. The missionaries too had distanced themselves from him. The reason for this breakdown in relations was clear to Wade and symbolised his own disaffection with his mission leader.

> To this I might say, that in the affair of the non-attended meeting which gave so much offence to Mr B[usby] there might be a pretty equal balance of blame attachable to each side. The preponderating side (if either) has always appeared to me to be that of the Rev. H. Williams, whose uncouth, self-important & over-bearing manner very few know how to put up with.... If [Mr Busby] had had another to deal with instead of Mr W[illiams] there would not have been any collision....Mr Busby appears chargeable with over cautiousness, want of energy, and unwillingness to be advised (or from the manner in which advice has been given it might be more correct to say, unwillingness to be controlled).[12]

Three weeks later, in a long private letter to Coates supported by no fewer than nine enclosures, Wade argued his view that 'nothing short of attaching the whole of New Zealand to the possessions of the British Crown will permanently promote the welfare of its inhabitants'.[13] Wade shared the concern of many that unscrupulous land dealers would exploit any less decisive step. He related his observations on the dynamics of Maori society and the threat of the 'private adventurers'.

It is unlikely that any of this was new to Coates. What may have been more disturbing was the continuation of Wade's allegations about the conduct of the mission. The themes of unauthorized changes of policy, secular activity and the pursuit of private wealth again surfaced. Especially worrying was the 'converting of the Society's landed property into private property by allowing it to be purchased by some one or other of

12 Wade to Coates, Feb. 6, 1839, p. 3.
13 Wade to Coates, Feb. 28, 1839, p. 5.

the missionary body.' The transfer of land at Te Puna to the faithful John King might seem fair, but this 'dangerous precedent' had already been applied to Kerikeri and 'the next will be the valuable Waimate Farm'.[14] In Wade's view the situation was dire.

> Everything is running in the current of private interest, this has masked the Parent Society's plans - perplexed Printing arrangements – caused the Mission School to dwindle to nothing – and so secularised the mind and conversation of some of the Missionary Body [as to] cause the very name of a church Miss[y] to be evilly spoken of all round the Bay of Islands.[15]

The extent and manner of purchases of land by missionaries was to be a major factor in the undoing of the C.M.S.'s influence in New Zealand. Governor Grey and Bishop Selwyn would lead actions, particularly against Henry Williams, culminating in his dismissal from the mission in 1847. This is not the place to examine the controversy in detail. The affair has been examined by a number of writers – some, it must be said, with an apparent commitment to exonerating Williams.[16] In truth none of the principals comes out well and Wade's comments remind us that there were questions raised within the mission long before Grey uttered his 'blood and treasure' dispatch in 1846.

Attempts had been made to define a policy on land ownership from as early as 1830. In 1838 returned C.M.S. missionary John Flatt gave evidence to the House of Lords listing substantial land holdings by some of the C.M.S. missionaries. This caused great consternation among C.M.S. officials in London who, it seems, were unaware of the extent of the private purchases. As the details emerged, a resolve grew in London to restrict purchases. In February 1840 Coates instructed the missionaries to terminate the embarrassing practice. By the time that decree arrived Wade had left the

14 Wade to Coates, Feb. 28, 1839, p. 10.
15 Wade to Coates, Feb, 28, 1839, p. 11.
16 See e.g. L.M. Rogers, *Te Wiremu: a biography of Henry Williams*, (Christchurch: Pegasus Press, 1973), pp. 218-282.

mission and had taken up a post in Hobart. But he was not finished with the issue of land, nor with his criticism of Henry Williams. In part to justify his earlier statements he wrote one more time to Coates in October 1840, accusing Williams of misleading the parent committee.

> The C.M. Soc^{y},... have been and are deseived(sic)....Mr W. is said to have 4000 acres, which divided among eleven children is made to appear but little. Mr H.W. has evidently conveyed home the impression intended in his reply to Mr Flatt's statement. Mr F. puts down 4000 acres to Mr W.. The Soc^{y} inquire about it. Mr W. replies that he has no objection to Mr F.'s statement, as to the quantity of land, seeing to intimate that it is correct; and so he is understood. But why has he 'no objection' to the number 4000? Not because of its correctness, but as being greatly below what he really possessed at that time: and at the time...he could not be possessed of less than 24 000 acres![17]

The accusation of serious misconduct, amounting to dishonesty was taken further by Wade to imply misinformation regarding the progress of the mission itself.

> I find reports are going home of the prosperous state of the Mission, and that many natives are being baptized with very little inquiry, by that very individual [Williams], who thus seems to answer the ends of his Mission, while his great aim for some time past has been to amass property for his family.[18]

Wade denied that these accusations were 'the mere effusion of a spirit of discontent' but his statements are intemperate. Williams had certainly adopted a belligerent, maybe even obfuscatory, attitude to the land question, but the picture Wade

17 Wade to Coates, Oct. 26, [18]40, p. 2. Flatt had suggested Williams held seven square miles at Titirianga. See Flatt's evidence before the House of Lords Select Committee on the State of the Islands of New Zealand, *British Parliamentary Papers*, New Zealand, 32-55, 38. In a letter of 21 October 1841 Williams would inform Coates that he held some 11000 acres – see Rogers, *Te Wiremu*, 278 n. 28. He would claim this holding before the land commissioners in 1844 and be awarded 7010 acres, later increased to 9000. See Rogers (ed) *Early Journals*, Appendix III, 484-6.

18 Wade to Coates, Oct. 26, [18]40, 2.

painted of a man directed merely by cynical self-interest hardly rings true. A case against Henry Williams built on Wade's evidence alone would be unwise. What is certain is that Wade was irredeemably estranged from the leader of the mission.

What were the roots of such deep acrimony? Wade clearly had some cause for grievance. His anomalous position regarding the Press was exacerbated by the apparent determination of the New Zealand leaders to manage affairs as they, rather than the home committee, saw fit. Wade's case was not unique. John Flatt, who came out to New Zealand with Wade and Colenso and whose evidence would later precipitate debate over land purchases, though engaged to be agricultural assistant to Richard Davis, reported that 'Henry Williams told me that they could make better use of me, if I had no objection to become a Catechist.' Flatt left the mission in May 1837.[19]

There other factors, however, personal to Wade, which made his continuance with the C.M.S. ultimately untenable. He was, frankly, a difficult character, something he recognised in himself. In an early letter to Coates he asked for patience if comments in his public letters appeared harsh.[20] His history after leaving the mission confirms the impression of a stubborn, unbending individual, unable to compromise on matters of principal. Within three years of commencing as pastor of the Baptist Church in Hobart he was prepared to split his congregation on the question of open communion. Ironically, given his complaints about Williams, he had to defend himself against accusations that he was seeking to 'wrest the property from the hands of those who had a right to it'. The tone of his letter of resignation in 1842 resonates with the earlier ones to Coates, exhibiting similar criticisms of named individuals, rigid moral certainty and the apparent supremacy of his own

19 Evidence of John Flatt to the House of Lords, 33.
20 Wade to Coates [1835], 1.

conscience above all considerations.[21]

Conscience, and his right to exercise it as a Dissenter, were prominent in Wade's mind as he wrote a public resignation letter to Coates in Jan 1840. Although his views were known by the C.M.S. at the time of his appointment they seemed then to present no barrier to his service. However, when the New Zealand leaders sought to reassign him from the Press, he was caught in a destructive limbo which would prove fatal. The local committee would not set up the Press adequately; the parent committee 'will not have a dissenter engaged in direct missionary work'. Wade was a Baptist cuckoo in an Anglican nest. He informed Coates that, convinced that there was no future for him in the C.M.S., he had enquired of possibilities for Baptist ministry in the Australian colonies.[22]

The enquiry had been made six months earlier to Rev. Saunders of Sydney. Wade gives a long account of himself, his circumstances and his religious credentials. The letter is almost certainly the first piece of Baptist spiritual autobiography written from New Zealand. Like many such documents it may be expected to be idealized. Naturally enough, Wade was seeking to impress. Yet the story goes beyond a conventional portrayal of the Nonconformist conscience, disclosing significant stages in Wade's formation. The key narrative passage is important enough to be quoted extensively.

> It pleased the Lord first to awake me to a sense of my condition as a sinner when a boy at school. Strong convictions, however, ended in a state of legal bondage, which was got rid of, not at the cross, but in the world & for a few years I was the alternate subject of conviction & carelessness till my nineteenth year, when the Lord was pleased to bring me again under strong exercise of mind.... It was at this time that the erection of Claremont Chapel, & the Rev[d] John Blackburn, whose name you cannot fail to know, was shortly

21 Wade to 'the Church of Christ...Harrington Street, Hobart Town' October 5, 1842. In the event Wade would limp on as minister until November 1844.

22 Wade to Coates, Jan. 13, 1840.

appointed the stated Pastor.[23] At first we used to attend at Claremont on Sunday Evenings, all of us being sensible of the superficial monotony of Mr Reule's Sermons. Mr Blackburn's preaching led me to take a new interest in my Bible, and its truths began to open before me. We attended more constantly & became connected with the Sunday School, and finally joined the Church, convinced that its constitution was more in accordance with the churches of the New Testament than that of the Church of England. For the first time I now enjoyed true Christian Communion & made some little advance in spiritual things. For five years I continued a member at Claremont and a teacher in the Sunday School, and latterly used to supply a preaching station connected with the Christian Instruction Society. There were, however, several members besides myself who had for some time felt dissatisfaction at Mr B.'s preaching & at his political views, as ill calculated to satisfy such as were longing for spiritual nourishment & desiring to advance in the divine life.[24] Often have I gone with a longing for some help for a poor fainting soul, and after listening to an interesting critical or historical sermon have returned sorrowing with the conviction 'this is not what I want.' It was at John St[25] of a Tuesday Evening I found what I could not find at Claremont. The doctrines of grace and the dealings of God with his people, the

23 John Blackburn was a leading Congregationalist in England in the nineteenth century. See the various entires in R. Tudor Jones, *Congregationalism in England 1662-1962* (London: Independent Press, 1964).

24 Blackburn was no radical, holding conservative views on social matters. He was, though, active on a number of fronts concerning Nonconformists. See M.R. Watts, *The Dissenters Vol II: The Expansion of Evangelical Nonconformity* (Clarendon: Oxford, 1995) p. 546; Wade's comments seem to indicate that his objection was to the introduction of any sort of politics in the pulpit.

25 James Harrington Evans, formerly an evangelical Anglican set up a Calvinist Baptist Chapel in John St, Holborn in 1816. See D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1890s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989) p. 78; W.T. Whitley, *The Baptists of London 1612-1928: Their fellowship, their expansion with notes on their 850 churches* (London: Kingsgate, nd), p. 147.

depths of Satan, the horrible depravity of the heart, & the unfathomable love of Christ were now opened to me as they never were before....

Wade's account of his pilgrimage reflects conventional Nonconformist piety of the day. The importance of preaching, persuasion from scripture, consciousness of sin and the significance of congregational church life. Neither is his passage from Church of England through a Congregational phase to a Baptist conviction extraordinary. Much more revealing of his personal struggles is the story of his first attempt to become ordained.

But I must now go back to tell you that at the commencement of my connexion with Claremont my mind was exercised on the subject of the Ministry. Had my views accorded with those of the Established Church my dear Mother (since deceased) would not have opposed my wishes, for she was decidedly in favour of Episcopacy, although, through my father, she had been so long in communion with a Dissenting Church. As it was, I could do nothing but cherish the desire which I believed the Lord had kindled. Somewhere about the beginning of 1829 Mr Blower one of the Deacons gave encouragement to my secretly cherished hopes, & I was led to lay the subject before Mr Blackburn. At first (as was always his practice) he said all he could to discourage in order to try me. I was placed under a course of probation preparation & subsequently received the kindest encouragement from Mr Blackburn. In the mean time I had a hard struggle at home, my Mother being still utterly averse to my entering the Ministry as a Dissenter. At length her aversion appeared gradually to yield and I placed the disposal of the question in the hands of Mr B. and the Deacons, who came to the conclusion to present me to the church as a candidate, proposing that I should be sent by them to Highbury College. Accordingly I delivered a probationary Sermon before a full Church Meet[ing], and was afterwards informed that it gave general satisfaction. But when my Mother saw that matters had gone so far she induced my father to write to Mr Blackburn beseeching him in the strongest terms not to proceed any further. Upon the receipt of this letter Mr B. & the Deacons met, and advised me, as the opposition of my Parents was so strongly renewed, to take it as an indication that I must abandon all idea of the Ministry. Judge, my dear Sir, the effect of this unexpected blow at a moment when my dearest hopes seemed

about to be realized. But I had placed my cause, under God, in their hands, and there was no alternative; though I afterwards heard there was a good deal of dissatisfaction that the Pastor should so hastily decide without reference to the Church the case being already before them. Had the matter been exposed I might have been carried through, but the Lord had other wise determined. – I fear I am trying you – From that time to this my mind has never altered as to the work in which it is my desire to spend and be spent. When I made an offer of my services for New Zealand to the Church Missionary Society it was with the hope of being employed in a work which seemed to come the nearest of any to that of the sacred Ministry, my non con views hindering me from coming out any other way. In New Zealand I have been engaged as a catechist, taking in turn the Sunday duties both in Native and English the same as the Ordained Brethren (Sacrament only excepted). But the day is fast approaching when laymen in this Mission will be much more restricted that heretofore.... The time is come to take some decisive step.

Wade's frustrations had not begun in New Zealand. His first ministerial ambition was stymied by his mother, representing Anglican suspicion of Dissenting orders. Perhaps because of his age the Congregationalists at Claremont declined to proceed. Not for the last time was he stranded between two authorities, prevented from fulfilling what he regarded as his calling. The parallels between this early experience and that with the C.M.S. are unmistakable. In New Zealand as in England a 'parent' body would refuse to contemplate his ordination. Nonconformist leaders in England refused to advance his case; evangelical missionary leaders in New Zealand behaved similarly.

Much has been suggested about the impact of evangelical spirituality on the missionary history of pre-colonial New Zealand. The distressing cases of Kendall and Yate have attracted particular attention.[26] The limitations of the early

26 Both have received the attention of Judith Binney, for instance. See J. Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt: A Life of Thomas Kendall* (Auckland: O.U.P., 1968) and 'What Happened to Poor Mr Yate: An Exercise in Voyeurism', *N.Z. Journal of History*, Vol. 9, No. 2,

nineteenth century evangelical world view were real, if overstated. Judith Binney's commentary on 'the poverty of mind of the evangelicals' is a case in point. She bases this view on their supposed 'essentially emotional experience'.[27] Yet David Bebbington has shown that emotionalism was a still a 'novelty' in this period.[28] Even if useful generalizations can be made, the characteristics of the C.M.S. missionaries, should not be assumed to apply simply to Wade. The religious world of Nonconformists was very different even from that of evangelicals in the established Church. The repeal of the Tests and Corporations Act in 1828 had relieved Dissent of the threat of penalty, but a surprisingly long list of systemic obstacles remained. The energies of some turned to the disestablishment of the Church of England. At a time when Anglican evangelicals were becoming more committed to the Church, this activism by Dissent was not welcome. Indeed, as Bebbington has noted, 'from the 1830s onwards...the gulf between church and chapel generally yawned much wider than before.'[29] Anglican evangelicals might have been committed to the redemption of

October 1975, pp 111-125. Binney, whilst making confident assertions about evangelical spirituality (arguably as foreign to her as Maori culture was to the missionaries), nevertheless makes the fair point that Kendall's and Yate's lack of understanding of Maori culture lead to inaccurate interpretations. These two, however, should not be assumed to be representative. John Flatt, for example, testified that 'several of the missionary body' recognised they were 'ignorant of the real Superstition of the New Zealanders, having not enquired sufficiently into it.' - evidence before the House of Lords Select Committee on New Zealand, pp. 45-46.

27 Binney, 'Whatever Happened to Poor Mr Yate,' p. 113.

28 'Reason, not emotion, had been the lodestar of the Evangelicals' - *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* p. 81.

29 Bebbington, p. 99. See also R. Glen, 'Those Odious Evangelicals: The Origins and background of CMS missionaries in New Zealand', in R. Glen (ed) *Mission and Moko: Aspects of the work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand 1814-1882* (Christchurch: Latimer Fellowship, 1992) pp. 14-37, pp. 23-24 and Watts pp. 453-458

the individual, but they were also members of the power elite; Dissenters were told in a myriad of ways that they were not. The significance of this experience of exclusion should not be missed. Natural access to secular power was built in to the assumptions and expectations of the Anglican missionaries. Wade, by contrast, though born into the established Church, experienced first hand the disempowerment of dissent.

Not once, but twice Wade was frustrated in his search for significant ministry. A typically Baptist desire for immediacy in his relationship with God is clear in his account of his spiritual journey. In this version of piety any sense of call seems sure and unshakable. Yet twice he was prevented from acting upon it, not just briefly, but for years. A third, analogous situation arose in Hobart when Wade sought to lead a party favouring open communion out of the existing group. In this too he was frustrated, his plans undone by the need to defend the charge that he had designs on the property. Wade's determined Nonconformist conscience allowed little compromise on matters of principle. Family dynamics, missionary tensions and Church politics precluded him from taking an effective stand on that conscience. The outcome was disappointment, frustration, bitterness and a sense of isolation. Hence the persistent need to justify himself – seen in the private letters to Coates and the long missive to the Hobart Church on his resignation.

The sense of isolation continued. In 1844 the prospect apparently arose that Wade might be invited to take up a position with his old mentor James Evans at the John Street Church. While the outcome was still unclear Wade wrote to his sister, gloomily hinting that he could not afford to return to England in any case. His portrayel of his situation had taken up the language of Exodus. He hoped 'it may yet please our Guide to take this cloud off the Tabernacle and direct us homeward.' In the meantime they must continue in this 'land of bondage'

which was 'likely to become a sink of iniquity' as convicts were released.[30] The John St opportunity did not materialise. Once more a ministerial opportunity slipped away. Wade's wilderness experience would continue. The 'land of bondage' would remain his home. Until his death in 1891, he performed miscellaneous ministry roles in Tasmania and Victoria.[31]

William Wade may be said to have pioneered Baptist witness in New Zealand, though his was hardly an auspicious start. However Wade's embittered departure for Australia had roots which ran deeper than ecclesiology, into his spirituality. The exigencies of pioneering mission called for compromises which many of the Anglican evangelicals were willing to make. Wade's rigidity were such that he could not. His position in the C.M.S. was anomalous from the beginning, creating such frustration that resignation was inevitable. When the final breach came, Dandeson Coates, by then struggling to limit the damage spreading from land purchases, can only have been relieved.

Martin Sutherland

30 Wade to 'My dear Sister' Nov 20, [18]44.

31 Wade's Australian career is described in L.F. Rowston, *Baptists in Van Diemen's Land*, Launceston, Baptist Union of Tasmania, 1985, pp. 28-50.