



**Rev. John BUMBY**

**SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION**

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## THE WESLEYAN MISSION 1822 -1840

- 1822 Beginnings with Rev. Samuel Leigh.  
1823 Whangaroa Mission site established.  
1827 Mission destroyed and plundered; withdrawal.  
1827 New start at Hokianga, Mangungu.  
1834-38 Southward expansion: western side of North Island.  
Mar 1839 Rev. John Bumby [Pumipi] arrived; District Chairman (aged 30).  
1840 Death of Rev. Bumby, aged 31.

## NOTES ON BUMBY

1808

Born Nov. 1808 Yorkshire.

1830

Probationary Minister Birmingham.

1838

Joined group of ministers who offered for missionary service, response to Centenary of Methodism. Another was Rev. John Waterhouse, to be superintendent of South Seas Mission, based at Hobart. Sailed 1838.

1839

March 19, 1839 — arrival at Hokianga with group of new missionaries.

May — chartered The Hokianga; sailed down East Coast

June 7 — Hobbs and Bumby preached at Te Aro [later Wellington]. Memorial cairn and plaque In Courtenay Place, at the site. Then to the South Island (Cloudy Bay and Queen Charlotte Sound), Mana Is., Kapiti Is., then to Kawia. Overland Journey 250 miles (Waikato, Manukau, Kalpara) to Mangungu.

1840

February 12 - 2nd. signing of Treaty at Mangungu. Bumby absent in Hobart.

May 8 — arrival of Mission Ship Triton at Hokianga — Gift for Centennial of Methodism — with new missionaries. Bumby sailed South (Western Coast) on Triton, with new missionaries to Kawia. Bumby returned overland, via Hauraki Gulf area.

June 24 — to Fairburn, Anglican Church Missionary at Maraetai. To Waiheke Is. to get a canoe. June 25 — to Motutapu. June 26 — Paddk north in calm. Sail later raised, canoe overturned. Bumby and twelve companions drowned (11 Maori, 1 Tongan). Six survivors. Memorial plaque by fellow missionaries now in Pitt Street Methodist Church (formerly in High Street Wesleyan Church).

July — Land purchase, Waitemata, for new Capital.

Sept 18 — Flag raising ceremony, Britomart Point

## THE BACKGROUND

To mark the centenary of Methodism, John Waterhouse and John Bumby were sent from Birmingham to Australia and New Zealand as missionaries. Bumby, a young man, was appointed to be leader, or Chairman, of the Wesleyan Mission, based on the Hokianga. He handled the Mission affairs with skill, made deep friendships, and worked at learning the Maori language.

His last journey was made to put new missionaries in place in the Kawhia-Raglan area, and plan for further south, including Wellington. The return home was overland via Waipa, to Maraetai, then north. The Methodists named in the extracts are from the Hokianga, and Kawhia-Raglan. The older Anglican Mission is represented by Fairburn at Maraetai, and Taylor at Waimate (North). A church 'treaty' allocated Anglicans and Wesleyans to eastern and western areas, respectively.

When the mission ship *Triton* arrived, change was underway and the future uncertain. The Treaty had had its second signing at Mangungu during Bumby's absence in Australia, his sister Mary an able hostess on the occasion. Already a site for a new capital was planned. The missionaries, particularly Anglican and Methodist, were of great importance in the conclusion of the Treaty. The Maoris were dependent on their advice; the missionaries deeply concerned for their flock. Auckland exists because of that Treaty.

Maraetai was the initial Anglican mission site here. Bumby arrives and confers with Fairburn. He avoids the favoured route home, and chooses the one regarded as dangerous. He has his reasons.

The first news of the disaster is a letter of sympathy — confirmation and details follow. It is the story not only of Bumby, but of five Maoris from Mangungu, three from Kawhia, and a Tongan. It is also a story of survival, incredibly. Communication is slow, by letter, by foot, by boat; by quill pen, by multiple copies. It comes out of the Maori language initially; and the accounts not only differ but conflict. The Mission investigated, reported, reorganised. And the missionaries recorded the event in the first Methodist church in Auckland.



High Street Methodist Church

**IN MEMORY  
OF THE  
REV. JOHN H. BUMBY**

**Who having approved himself a Christian minister  
of great usefulness in England was placed at  
the head of the Wesleyan Mission in these lands  
where he zealously pursued his holy calling, until  
by a mysterious Providence he was drowned by the  
upsetting of a Canoe between Rangitoto and  
Tiritiri Matangi, on the 26th of June 1840.**

**This TABLET is erected by his  
brethren the Wesleyan Ministers in  
New Zealand.**

Plaque in Pitt Street Methodist Church.  
Removed from High Street Methodist Church 1874

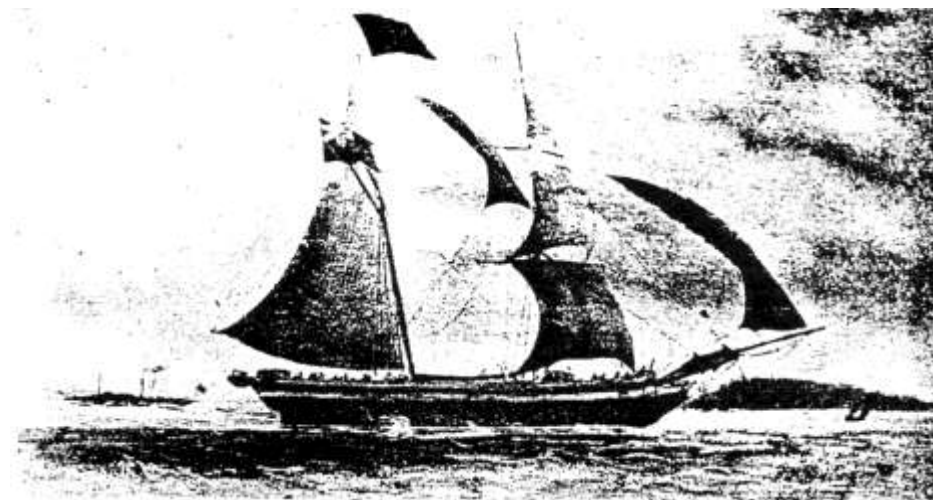
## PREFACE

Forget Bumby? Then we forget our own history. In June 1840, Auckland was a nameless site for a future capital, a creation of the Treaty. Bumby and the Wesleyan Mission are part of Auckland's history!

On a calm, mid-winter day in 1840 a canoe overturned in the Hauraki Gulf. The Rev. John Hewgill Bumby and twelve companions drowned. News from the Maori survivors took several days to reach Mr Fairburn and two or three weeks to reach the Wesleyan stations. Whiteley came from Raglan, Hobbs and Smales from the Hokianga, Hobson and Clarke during a journey. The Wesleyans were stunned and their work for a time disorganised. Then their faith responded.

The faith lives on. But although fully recorded in the church archives, the story has been neglected. The selection of archival extracts is subjective, but it creates an impression. I have preserved the flavour as much as possible. Changes are minor, mainly paragraphing for the longer passages. Let the people tell their own story.

*Ivan Whyte*



*The Triton*

## GUIDE US SAFE HOME

### FAREWELL BIRMINGHAM

I have counted the cost... I have thought about the storms of the elements, and the perils of the seas, to which I may be subject; and of the privations, inconveniences, and dangers of residence in a foreign land .... But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.

*Bumby*

A number of highly valuable works in History, Science, Biography and Criticism were presented, in the name of the Birmingham Societies.

*Farewell: Newtown Chapel, Birmingham, September, 1838*

### PRIVATIONS AND INCONVENIENCES

I have lately been at Waima [Hokianga] with a number of lads for nearly a fortnight preparing the house for Mr. Warren. I never worked so hard either before or since I was a minister but I find a Missionary must be a man of all work .... My dear Brethren I must conclude. It is near midnight and I am weary in body and have a load of care upon my mind which presses me to the dust.

*Bumby, Mangungu, April 13, 1840*

Tho' he was twice buried up to the armpits in mud and mire in crossing the dykes and swamps on one of which occasion he had the misfortune to spoil his gold watch and was often without a dry thread about him yet he held on the way with a cheerfulness and perseverance that were both surprising and encouraging.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

Ever since our return I have been afflicted with ophthalmia, and a dreadful complaint of the eyes from which I have suffered the most intense agony and been rendered almost blind. This morning the third blister was removed from my forehead, which I am thankful to say has abated the inflammation and benefited my sight.

*Bumby, Mangungu (Hokianga), Sept. 9, 1839*

We had a rough job of it indeed in consequence of the rains & floods and were about a week absent. But not withstanding the fatigue of the journey he accompanied me on my return all the way to Kaipara, another four days' journey in weather the most wet and unfavourable.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

I was fourteen days in going to Launceston, two in getting to Hobart Town — ten in sailing to Sydney, three in Sydney where I preached three sermons — and

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eighteen in coming down to Mangungu;— so that I should think though I am not much given to boasting that no one will attribute idleness to me. I have had so much anxious care and fatiguing labour together with change of climate, that on several occasions I have been very ill....

*Bumby, Mangungu, Feb. 22, 1840*

The household was large; and, to provide lodging-room for his friends, he slept in the cheerless store on the Mangungu premises, void of proper furniture, and with only a mattress and cloak, or something of the kind, thrown on the bare boards; and he caught cold by so doing.

*Barrett, Life of Bumby, 1852*

## **STORMS OF THE ELEMENTS**

We were thoroughly saturated with the heavy showers that had fallen, except those who were fortunate enough to have their Mackintosh cloaks.

*Waterhouse Journal, May 15, 1840*

At two in the morning, Triton crossed the Hokianga bar.

23d. — We are now out at sea, amidst an almost entire calm; but several of our company seem disposed to be sick.

Sunday, 24th — The morning is favourable. Mr. Bumby preached an encouraging sermon on the doctrine of Divine Providence....

Towards midnight the wind increased nearly to a gale. We were about twenty miles from Kawia. It continued for thirty-six hours: all the passengers were sick. Three men were stowing the jib, when, by a sudden jerk of the ship, they were all thrown into the water, but, each retaining his hold, they rose unhurt. For the last twelve hours, we had little prospect but of a lee-shore on an iron-bound coast. At length the wind took a favourable change; and, on Wednesday morning, we found oursel-ves driven back nearly twenty miles south of Hokianga. We tossed to and fro till Thursday morning, not knowing whether it would be best to go round the North Cape to the Bay of Islands.

A little before seven a.m. I called the Captain back up, and had a consultation with him and Mr. Buck, the chief Mate: his views were exceedingly gloomy. I said, "Well, come! We must have a little faith, and its legitimate fruit, works." After pausing a little, he said, "Come then, Mr. Buck, about ship." Immediately the wind became a little more favourable; and at five o'clock that evening we crossed the bar at Kawia, and at six anchored in safety, with dreadful weather out at sea.

The Captain came to me, and said, "Sir, I am much obliged to you for the self-possession you displayed this morning, and the advice you tendered. Under God, we are indebted to you for our safety this night." As I had felt great diffidence in speaking to him on the subject of our making another attempt to reach Kawia, such a declaration was the more gratifying. We sang our usual doxology, "Praise God,

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from whom all blessings flow," &c.; and at the family-altar, "This, this is the God we adore," &c.

*Waterhouse Journal, May 23 - 28, 1840*

## **MOST PROMISING FIELDS**

The Mission at Kawia was commenced in May, 1835, under the patronage and protection of Haupokia, a renowned warrior and influential chief.

*Bumby*

On his return to the Mission station at Kawia he made all speed to prepare for his journey overland to Hokianga, & on Friday June 12th he left for Waingaroa; the brethren Whiteley & Turton accompanying him as far as Aotea. Sunday, Monday & Tuesday he spent at Waingaroa, where he preached (as we suppose) his last sermon from "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content."

*Whiteley, Waingaroa [Raglan], July 16, 1840*

Yesterday was to me a most gratifying Sabbath. Suppose there could not be less than six or seven hundred people at the chapel in the morning. The day was fine and the liveliness of the natives as they moved along the surface of the water in their numerous canoes at the conclusion of the service rendered the scene one of the most interesting I have witnessed in the land. In the afternoon I preached in English and in the evening we baptized about 50 persons, men women and children & married seventeen couples. In my opinion Mr. Wallis has before him one of the most promising fields of usefulness to be met with in New Zealand.

*Bumby, Waingaroa, July 15, 1840*

## **EXCEEDINGLY ANXIOUS TO GET HOME**

James Garland says that the deceased was very anxious to reach home, and would scarcely stop at the places where they refreshed, for the food in the native ovens to be cooked and that in almost every instance when they examined the Pork potatoes etcetera all were nearly raw and this they regarded as a bad omen and after their native custom of interpretation a sign of death, and James said "We shall be upset somewhere" and so it came to pass.

*Woon, Mangungu, Sept. 8, 1840*



## MYSTERIOUS PROVIDENCE

### Me Haere Tatou Nei:

### Let Us All Go

#### THE FRITH OF THE THAMES

[His] intention [was] to proceed by the way of Waipa; from thence he crossed over to the Thames, taking a canoe at Wakatiwai he came down to Maraetae (Mr. Fairburn's residence) on Wednesday June 24. He arrived there about 12 o'clock — made himself known to Mr. F. and family as Mr. Bumby, Wesleyan Missionary and took dinner with them. He desired Mr. F. to enquire among the natives if there were a road by land to the Bay of Islands and was informed that they knew of none.

Mr. F. advised him to go by the way of Kaipara — he said he had a dread of that place and asked him if he thought he could get a canoe to take him by the Eastern coast to Wangarei (which is about 70 or 80 miles from the Thames and perhaps 40 from the Bay of Islands) from whence there is a road to our station at the Northern extremity of Kaipara. Mr. F. again urged him to go by the way of Kaipara and offered him the use of his small Boat to take him up the Tamake river to Otahuhu the neck of land between the Thames & Manukau. Mr. F. says that he understood that he had decided to go by that route and went out with him for the purpose of getting the Boat ready for him.

They urged him to remain with them all night but as the weather was fine he was anxious to be on his journey. Mr. F. has also a very large Boat and it appears that Mr. B's natives had asked him to lend it for the purpose of taking them by the way of the Eastern coast. To this Mr. F. objected saying he had no one to send to bring it back and was afraid to trust it with natives alone. It is very large like a little Cutter. While Mr. F. was getting ready the little boat to take Mr. B. & a part of his natives to Otahuhu the rest being to go by land. — Mr. B. went to his natives and we suppose was informed by them of their request to Mr. F. and of his objections, and one of them who had some relations on the other side the Frith at Waiheke proposed that they should go there and get a canoe.

Mr. B. therefore said to Mr. F. "Well Sir, my lads have altered their minds, they wish to go over to Waiheke to see their relations and they say we can there get a canoe to take us altogether." Mr. F. says he supposed he meant to take them altogether to Otahuhu without a part of them going by land. He therefore assented and they went across in the canoe which brought them from Wakatiwai.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

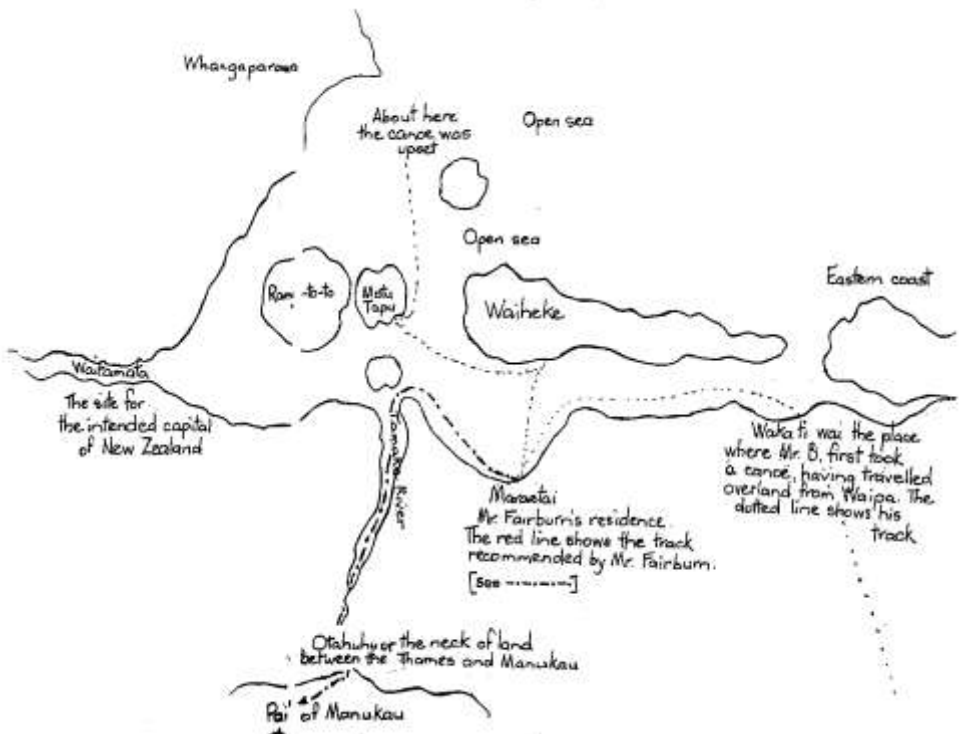
On Wednesday morning the 24th of June he called at our house on his way to the Bay from Waikato, he had with him 13 natives, and seemed exceedingly anxious to get home by the shortest possible route, and asked me to interrogate the natives

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to find if he could not make his way nearer and safer from Mahurangi than to go the way of Kaipara, he seemed to have a particular dread of crossing the heads of that place, none of our natives however appeared to know anything of a road from Mahurangi to Hokianga, I also strongly persuaded him to relinquish such an undertaking as he would have to cross two deep bays and not less than 35 miles by water.

He took dinner with us, and I frequently suggested to him that I should greatly prefer returning home overland from Manukau were I in his situation. I told him he had better remain all night with us, and in the morning I would furnish him with a boat to put him and the natives across a small river called Mangimangiroa when they would be in a fair and short road to Manukau, he said he would adopt my plan, only he would much prefer going that evening, — finding him so anxious to get on his journey I had the boat immediately launched whilst he went to hasten his natives with their food &c.

*Fairburn, Maraetai, Thames, July 6, 1840*



A rough sketch of the Thames, not very correct or complete but sufficiently so to show the course our beloved brother was pursuing ....

## WAIHEKE AN ISLAND

And it was unanimously agreed that moving by land with all its laboriousness and fatigue is better at this season of the year than venturing to sea in an open boat of whatever dimensions & capabilities.

*Bumby, Waingaroa, July 15, 1840*

*Whiteley, Kawia Aug. 3, 1840*

After a short time I went to him, and found his own natives had induced him to alter his mind. It appears one of the lads named (I think) More had relatives living on Waiheke an island directly opposite about three miles distant, — whom he much wished to see, and that they could proceed from thence in his (More's) friends' canoe to Manukau by stopping at Waiheke only one night I regretted that he had ever taken this step. After having replenished his travelling store with two or three little matters he embarked in the canoe and we wished him a good evening....

*Fairburn, Maraetai, Thames, July 6, 1840*

At Waiheke he remained all night, procured a Canoe and left the next day about 11 o'clock.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

I enclose Mr. Bumby's [pencilled] note to me thinking his dear Sister might wish to see the last thing he probably had written.

*Fairburn, Maraetai, July 6, 1840*

The Rev. Fairburn  
Mission House  
My dear Sir,

If you should have an opportunity, I shall feel much obliged if you will forward the enclosed letters to Capt. Symonds. I should have left them yesterday, but did not think of it. We are about to try to reach home by way of Wangare. With many thanks for your kindness to a stranger in a strange land.

I am yours affectionately,  
*John H. Bumby.*

*[Waiheke Is.] June 25, 1840*

## NIGHT AT MOTU TAPU

Mr. Fairburn saw them depart and was surprized to see them make for the sea instead of bearing up for the Tamake river as he had expected, but as the weather was very fine and very still he had no idea but that they would go safely. That night they made Motu Tapu where they slept, but the natives say Mr. B. had no

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sleep; he was up all night observing the signs of the weather, the state of the tide. reading, mending the fire &c.

*Whiteley, Waingaroa, Aug. 3, 1840*

Our Chairman twelve natives of his and six of the Island of Waiheke, left that place on Thursday, the 25th of June. for the Island of Motu-tapu, intending to proceed from thence to Wangare and afterwards to the Bay of Islands. They arrived at Uhi, a point on the South East side of Motu-tapu, in the evening, where they spent the night.

The next day Friday, they waited until noon before they started for want of a breeze. They then started with much glee; Mr. Bumby's natives being much excited with the prospect of soon being home.

*Smales, Mangungu, Sept. 14, 1840*

## **THE SEA OF TE RAPU**

The next morning they rose early and as soon as prayer & breakfast was ended they again set out intending to stretch across to Wangaparaua. It is not unusual for Canoes to make this cut tho' it is more common for them to go round the Island Rangitoto, which is 8 miles Diameter, and then over to the Northern shore. But as the weather was fine the sea smooth and the Canoe good they ventured on the shorter cut. Indeed they do not appear to have dreamt of the least danger and this fancied security was doubtless the first cause of the melancholy disaster.

The Canoe was large & deep — 4 ft. 3 ins. wide & 37 ft. long — a noted canoe for going out in wind & sea. As is always the case in deep canoes they had a stage or deck, made by tying small sticks together, from one end of the canoe to the other fixed about midway between the top & bottom of the Canoe. On this stage the rowers sit in order to raise them sufficiently high to row the paddles and it is usual to put all the heavy luggage below, under the stage. In this case however they had imprudently (or not thinking that caution was required in such fine weather) put all their luggage, potatoes, kumeras, &c. food for their journey, above deck so that the natives' food, Mr. Bumby's baggage, and the weight of 17 or 18 natives made the Canoe completely top-heavy.

After paddling about 3 or 4 hours, they fell in with a shoal of porpoises and as these animals are regarded by the heathen natives with a superstitious sort of veneration & dread — some of the natives (who had not seen such a sight before and who were in high spirits with the fine weather and the prospect of getting prosperously along) got up in derision to make a speech to cast off Gods of their forefathers. This produced some merriment & disorder.

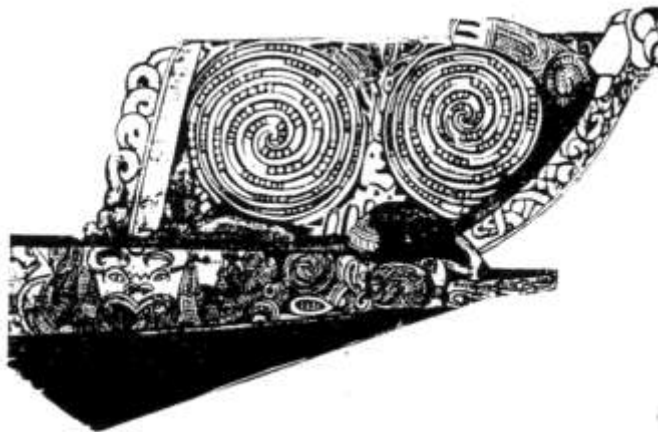
Just after, the wind sprung up a little and they said "Let us put up the sail the wind is fair." The sail as usual was made of Raupo, & of most injudicious construction being in the form of a triangle inverted, the base being hoisted in the air and the point on the stage or deck, so that it also was top heavy. In raising the sail it fell a

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little to one side and several of the natives, being off their guard, reached over to the same side in order to save the sail from going into the sea, and thus the canoe being before top heavy and having now the additional weight of the sail and several natives reaching over to the same side, she went over and our beloved brother who the natives said was reading a book apparently unconscious of danger was plunged into the sea.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

At this time there was a strong ripple in the sea, but it shortly became more calm.  
*Smales, Mangungu, Sept. 14, 1840*



## By the Upsetting of a Canoe

### PLUNGED INTO THE SEA

He was immediately recovered by a Tonguese named Joel and they succeeded in lifting him onto the canoe as she lay bottom upwards, one of my domestics who accompanied him searched his pockets at once for a knife and cut and tore off all his clothes excepting his shirt, — they then righted the canoe, got him in and commenced pushing it backward and forward to get out the water.

An ornamental piece of wood striking up at the stern called the Rapa prevented the water flowing out and they tried to break off the Rapa. In attempting this they again turned over the canoe! — Joel brought up our brother a second time and a second time he was got into the canoe — by this time one of the most favourite natives was gone — they succeeded in getting off the Rapa — & tried again to get out the water— but she went over again and again Joel succeeded in recovering him & getting him into the canoe!....

But many now began to be exhausted and benumbed with cold for tho' the day was fine the wind was from the frosty South. Several got upon the sail but it gave way with them and two or three sank to rise no more. Others began to cling to the Canoe — she went over a fourth time, Mr. B. said "Kamate" — (it is death) and sank into the waters of the deep — The faithful and expert Joel looked round and mournfully exclaimed "He's gone —The white man's gone," and immediately sank either in grief & despair or with a hope of again recovering him but he was not seen afterwards.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

This lad's account [James Garland's] differs from Mr. Fairburn's who mentions Mr. Bumby going down with a native. The natives disappeared one after another before dear Mr. Bumby was drowned!

... They were almost paralyzed with the cold; and the last position of our dear brother was upon the bottom of the canoe, crossed legged, supported by James Garland when the wave came and separated them from each other, and the lad says that he afterwards saw the soles of his feet, and then the whole of his person going down, when life must have been extinct. But he is now eternally happy and we are left to suffer, and mourn his melancholy and premature end.

*Woon, Mangungu, Aug. 8, 1840*

### KAMATE! KAMATE!

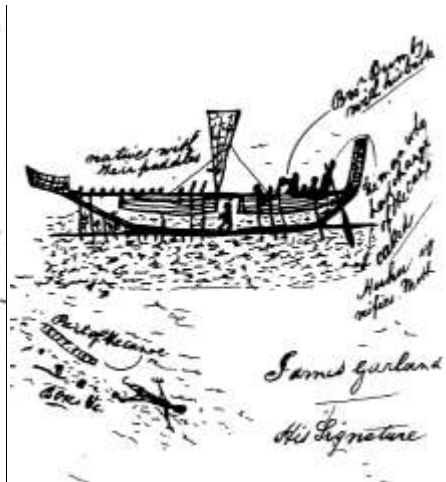
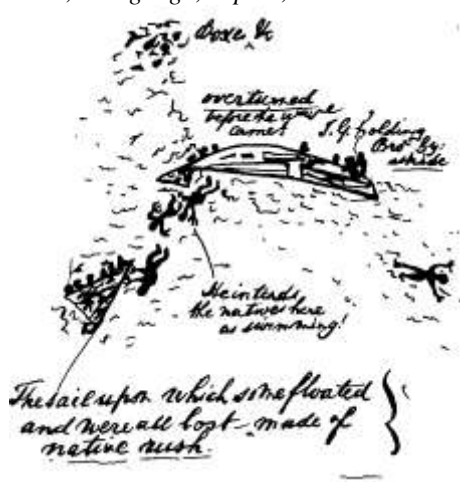
There were 19 souls in the canoe, and one of them a fine lad of Tonga, who came with Mr. Hobbs & lived with him here, and who was returning home in the Triton, but who appears to have been so sickened by the voyage to Kawia as to give up returning home, and came with Bro. Bumby when he also met with a watery grave.

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*Woon, Mangungu, Aug. 8, 1840*

[James and Joel] got him upon the bottom of the canoe where James and our dear Brother sat astride Joel being in the water holding him with James when all at once from exhaustion Joel went down to rise no more, and our dear friend and the lad referred to were in each other's embrace. In this situation our departed friend exclaimed "O dear, dear, dear, me" "Kamate kamate" (i.e. We are dead) when a wave came and swept him into eternity.

The lad having with great difficulty recovered the canoe having been thrown a great distance and looking under him saw the feet of our dear brother and then the whole of his person descending into the deep beneath, there to remain until the sea shall give up her dead at the resurrection at the last day.

*Woon, Mangungu, Sept. 8, 1840*



This is James Garland's production, a New Zealander, representing in his way the canoe before and after it overturned. It appears that Mr. B. & J.G. sat astride near the stem of the canoe and not in the middle as described elsewhere.

*W. Woon [Mangungu, Sept. 8, 1840]*

To the poor lads much credit is due for their endeavours to save their beloved master: to him they were tenderly attached and appear to have been more solicitous for his safety than for their own. Among those who perished was me "flower" of the Mangungu station and we entertain the pleasing hope that they, too, have gone to be "for ever with the Lord." They were all commending themselves to God and some were praying audibly until their voices became indistinct as they gradually sank beneath the yielding element.

*Buller, Kaipara, Aug. 29, 1840*

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The son of Haupokia, the Chief at Mr. Whiteley's who will be in great distress at his loss, went down which they regarded as an omen of their fate and the natives appeared to have given themselves up as James Garland called to them who were swimming about to come and die together with our beloved friend.

*Woon, Mangungu, Sept. 8, 1840*

## **SURVIVORS**

The 18 was now reduced to six and the Canoe being less encumbered, they succeeded in getting out the water and returned to Motu Tapu having first looked round and recovered three Boxes belonging to Mr. B. One of them [containing Bumby's papers] the survivors took by the way of Otahuhu and Kaipara to Hokianga and the other two with a few trifling articles Bro. W. has recovered from the surviving natives of Waiheke. Three of them were saved — two of the Kawia natives & one of Mr. B's from Mangungu. The survivors did not return to Waiheke or to Mr. Fairburn's but direct by the Tamake river and Mr. F. only heard of the mournful affair by accident several days after.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

## **NEWS OF THE DEATH**

My dear Miss Bumby,

I cannot refrain from writing a few lines to sympathise with you in the great loss which I have just heard you have experienced in the sudden removal of your dear brother....

*Taylor, Waimate, July 11, 1840*

The consternation into which we were all thrown, with the overwhelming distress which agonized our dear Sister Bumby may be better conceived than described. Though Mr. Taylor's letter supposes that we were in possession of all the particulars, nothing as yet had been received by us giving us the least idea of the awful event.

*Hobbs, Mangungu, July 15, 1840*

With much sorrow of heart I beg to give you an account of the melancholy catastrophe of the death of poor Mr. Bumby and 12 natives by drowning.

*Fairburn, Maraetai, Thames, July 6, 1840*

On my arrival at the Thames with His Excellency the Governor we were deeply afflicted at the news of the death of our greatly esteemed friend and brother Mr. Bumby who was suddenly removed from us by one of those mysterious providences to be cleared up hereafter. [Hobson anchored off Waiheke. July 4; attended divine service at Fairburn's, Maraetai, Sun. July 5.]

*Clarke, Waimate, July 12, 1840*



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At the time we received the affecting information we had been daily expecting him here on his return from the Waikato district and were indulging the fondest anticipations of the pleasure we should derive from his company for a few days at this station.

*Buller, Kaipara, Aug. 29, 1840*

Two of the lads, furnished by Bro. Whiteley, to accompany Mr. B. have arrived here, with one out of the six young men who left with Mr. B. from Mangungu named Hemi Karana (James Garland) an old servant of ours, who has given us the whole account, and who remained with our dear brother to the last, when a wave came and swept them off the canoe, and they were separated to see each other no more, the lad having had two narrow escapes of being swallowed up also Morley, John Beecham, Theophilus, John Turner and Nehemiah were the five who left here with James Garland, and they have all perished with our dear Chairman.

*Woon, Mangungu, Aug. 8, 1840*

## **OUT SEARCHING**

Mr. Fairbum told me the natives had been our searching for the bodies but none had been found. I offered them a handsome reward for the body of Mr. B. and authorized Mr. F. to pay them if they succeeded in finding it. I had resolved to spend some time in searching for it and if I succeeded to bring it to Kawia for interment, but the state of the weather and the difficulty of procuring a boat prevented me going further than Waiheke.

*Whiteley, Kawia, Aug. 3, 1840*

On Thursday we sailed up the Frith of the Thames (I would just remark, you will perhaps remember, our dear Chairman had left the Island of Motutapu (or Sacred Island) and was on his way to the Island of Tiritiri Matangi, when he was upset in the canoe). We sailed up close to the Island of Tiritiri Matangi, and their laid our course, as near as the wind would allow us, towards Motutapu. The distance between those two Islands appeared to be about fourteen miles. And the waters we found rougher than those in the open ocean; by reason or me many currents met, occasioned by the waters running out of the river being repelled by the Islands in the Frith. The place is quite unsafe for a canoe. Whilst viewing this place we could not but be affected. Everything appeared to wear a melancholy gloom. There was the point of land from which our dear brother, and his party, last departed, the Island to which they were going, and the expanse of water between. We could picture to our eyes the spot where the canoe upset....

After sailing round the Island of Waiheke; the Island on which our dear Chairman spent his last night but one, we landed at Mr. Fairbum's, the Church Catechist, on Friday, at noon, (Aug. 7th). Here we learnt Mr Whiteley, had been over from Kawia, and after obtaining two small boxes, that had been saved, and offering ten

**Rev John Bumby Commemoration: ed I. Whyte 1990**

pounds to anyone who might find the remains of our dear Chairman, had again returned, on account of the indisposition of Mr. Whiteley.

*Smales, Mangungu, Sept. 14, 1840*

Mr. Turner, listen thou to me. Dead is Mr. Bumby by the turning over of a Native Canoe in the water at Hauraki (River Thames)... Mr. Clarke (Chief Protector) and the Governor went to Hauraki to see, and arriving there found he was dead .... Mr. Hobbs also went to Hauraki to search. Listen thou to me. Who were the men that went with him — Morley White — Theophilus — John Beecham — John Turner — Nihimaia — James Garland — (all of Mangungu). The others were from Waikato.

*Aminadab [Native teacher], Kororarika, July 20, 1840*

On Saturday morning, Aug. 8th, Brother Hobbs and I crossed over from Mr. Fairburn's to one of the natives, who was with our Chairman when the accident happened, that was fishing near the Island of Waiheke. On inquiry he gave us the following particulars: That the canoe in which they were upset, with the two other Waiheke natives that were saved, had gone to Coromandel Harbour, a distance of upwards of twenty miles. The canoe, he described as pretty large, being an old war canoe.

They continued to disappear until there was only six left, who again righted the canoe and picked up two or three articles that were floating and returned to relate the melancholy intelligence. They are three belonging to Waiheke and three of Mr. Bumby's natives. The latter arrived at Mangungu during our absence.

He then told us that they went, three days after the accident, and spent a whole day without success, in search of the bodies. They went again nine days after the accident, and sought three days, yet not one was to be found.

When we viewed the extent of water and the strong tide where the accident occurred, we had no hope whatever of ever finding the remains of our dear Chairman; but consoled ourselves with the thought, that the greedy sea shall give up her dead and that the material as well as the immaterial part of man shall be raised to eternal happiness and glory. After conversing at the long side of the canoe for an hour and a half and obtaining all the information we could, we left a small present, and returned.

Finding we could do nothing more; for there was not the least hope of finding anything, had we been able to go and seek, but we had not even a canoe for this purpose, we started in the afternoon for Manukau.

*Smales, Mangungu, Sept. 14, 1840*

## **In the Discharge of their Duties**

### **ADVICE TO BRETHREN**

It is an indispensable qualification for a New Zealand missionary that he should be a good walker.

*Bumby, Mangungu, Dec. 20, 1839*

I wish to perform an act of kindness to my brethren who may be entering on the Mission work by persuading them by all means to learn to swim for in all probability had our dear brother been an expert swimmer his valuable life might have been saved, and his usefulness continued in the cause. It would also be advisable for all engaged in voyaging in the discharge of their duties to possess the newly invented life preserver, that they may be buoyed up should they upset in a similar way.

*Woon, Mangungu, July 17, 1840*

### **TRULY HOLY INFLUENCE**

When we think on that truly holy influence which attended his ministrations at home, and which had begun to develop themselves here also; and of that spirit of sacrifice in which he came out, and which manifested itself in all his movements in this foreign land, we cannot but view him as a martyr to the cause of the New Zealanders which is now exciting such attention in the religious world! Our dear brother is the first Missionary who has fallen in the New Zealand field, and one of more splendid talent for his Master's work we never expect to see on these shores!

*Woon, Mangungu, July 15, 1840*

. . . Birmingham, where he shone with such distinguished lustre for several years, and where hundreds, perhaps thousands, were instructed under his eloquent ministrations....

Never since I left my native shores... have I enjoyed such seasons as those experienced while listening to the beautiful language which flowed from the lips of our departed brother when it fell to his lot to occupy the English pulpit on the afternoons of Lord's day on this station, and whose sermons and prayers we shall never forget! His own happy act of conveying religious truth was singularly terse and elegant and at once riveted the attention of his hearers; and we fondly hoped that he would in the dialect of the New Zealanders make known to them "the unsearchable riches of Christ" many of whom frequently dropped in at the English services to witness his fervour & devotion in his public ministrations and prayers. But in our English class meetings he was most felicitous in his counsels and advice.

*Woon, Mangungu, July 17, 1840*

**Rev John Bumby Commemoration: ed I. Whyte 1990**

In his sermons I scarcely ever heard any preacher throw out such pithy remarks and they were eloquent and original. But his forte appeared to be in class where he met every description of experience with advice well timed and with counsel of the richest kind wise and truly exhilarating.

I expressed myself on one occasion respecting my safety when I should pass through the valley of the "Shadow of Death" when he told me I was like a man on a journey who had to cross a river, who was all anxiety about getting to the other side and when he got there found a boat to take him across. The simile will be at once seen and I felt relieved. Many times his countenance was lighted up with a most benignant smile and in his sermons floods of eloquence would be poured forth and fall upon his hearers' minds like rain upon the mown grass, & all were charmed and delighted.

I have been out with him on several occasions to the native settlements and he took a lively interest in the welfare of the natives, and was kind to a fault, to them, and they have all expressed their grief at their and our loss. His heart was set upon the salvation of his people

*Woon, Mangungu, Sept. 8, 1840*

**Minutes of the New Zealand District Meeting held by adjournment at Kawia, Waingaroa, and Mangungu, 1840.**

[Question]4. What Preachers have died &c. —

John H. Bumby, who was born at Thirsk in the North Riding of Yorkshire on the 17th of Nov. 1808. He was blest with pious parents who trained him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and gave him a good commercial education. At the age of 15 years he was awakened to a sense of his danger under the Ministry of the Rev. John Sedgewick .... His subsequent life showed the genuineness of his conversion and a dispensation of the Gospel being given to him. he began to exercise his talent as a Local Preacher at an early period and was called by the Church to devote himself entirely to the work of the Christian Ministry in the year 1830. He travelled [was a probationer] with great acceptance in the Waltham Abbey, Halifax, and Birmingham Circuits, five years.

In 1838 he offered himself for the Missionary work and in Sept. of the same year commenced his voyage to the new field of labour, which he reached in March 1839. where having entered on the onerous duties of his office, as Chairman of his District he laboured with great zeal, diligence, and enterprize until by the mysterious providence of God he was drowned by the upsetting of a Canoe in the Thames on his return from the South where he had been purposing to accompany the new brethren to the South to their intended Stations, but the incessant wet, &c. led him to alter his plan, and on a fine day when everything indicated an expeditious return to his own house, he sank to be seen no more till the sea shall yield up her dead.

**Rev John Bumby Commemoration: ed I. Whyte 1990**

His intellectual powers were of a superior order, his understanding was clear, his imagination was lively, his judgment sober, and his memory retentive. His mind was well furnished with treasures of evangelical truth. His pulpit themes were the atonement and work of Christ, the plan of salvation by faith, the great and precious promises of the Gospel, the Christian's privilege and duty, the sovereignty of God in the administration of his providence and the awful responsibilities of man as a candidate for eternity.

His preaching was instructive and pleasing, his conceptions of divine truth clear, his language appropriate and persuasive, his zeal ardent, and his appeals to conscience powerful. He was a warm, affectionate and constant friend, a valuable colleague, and successful minister. His missionary career was short but laborious and self-denying, and though dead yet speaketh in the truth he taught, the missionary spirit he breathed, and the example he has left.

He was the first Minister whose life has fallen a sacrifice in the New Zealand Mission.



**Mission Station, Mangungu**

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

We have not yet examined any of his effects. Such was his self-denial, that he slept in a store where the Mission property was deposited; and mere his hats, shoes, papers &c., lie undisturbed as he left them ... he took the key with him.

*Woon, Mangungu, Aug. 4, 1840*

## **Minutes of the New Zealand District Meeting held... 1840**

Finding that Mr. Bumby had not waited on His Excellency the Governor, [Mr. Waterhouse] addressed a letter to him ... in which he gave the Governor an assurance of the ready and cheerful co-operation of the Rev. J.H. Bumby and the Wesleyan Missionaries in New Zealand to afford their aid in promoting the benevolent design of Her Majesty. To that communication the following answer was returned to the Chairman, which on account of Mr. Bumby's death was not seen by him or answered.

**Rev John Bumby Commemoration: ed I. Whyle 1990**

Government House, Russell. 29th May, 1840.

Rev. J.H.Bumby

Sir,

It gave me great satisfaction to receive this morning a letter from the Rev. Mr. Waterhouse, dated the 19th of May in which your name is connected with his, on behalf of the Missionary body under your care.... I beg leave to address you, both on your own account, and as the organ of the Wesleyan Mission in New Zealand.

Previous to the receipt of Mr. Waterhouse's letter, I had resolved to express my thanks to you, and the Wesleyan Mission generally, on the occasion of proclaiming the authority of Her Majesty over these Islands.

I have now a double motive for addressing you, first, to acknowledge the active, zealous, and able assistance that was rendered by the members of the Wesleyan Mission during my negotiation with the native chiefs at Hokianga and Manukau when I was in treaty for the cession to her Majesty of the Sovereignty of these Islands, and, secondly, to return thanks to yourself and Brethren for the compliment you were pleased to pay me personally, and for your promise, on behalf of the Mission to promote the benevolent designs of Her Majesty which I am directed to carry into execution.

In conclusion I beg to assure you that I fully appreciate the powerful aid I derived from the Missionaries, and that it shall always be my study, as it is my duty, to render the influence of Government conducive to the advancement of the hallowed cause in which you are engaged.

Wishing you and your Brethren health and peace and praying earnestly that the blessing of God may rest on your efforts for the diffusion of the Gospel.

I have me honour to remain. Sir,

Your most obedient Servant, *W. HOBSON. Lt. Governor.*"



**Present-day Mission House**

# MAORI HYMN

On the Sabbath [May 17, 1840] before the *Triton* sailed, he gave out a remarkable hymn in the native love-feast in our chapel, the only native he ever spoke from the pulpit.

Woon, Mangungu, Aug. 4, 1840

In the afternoon we had native service at Kawia .... Mr. Bumby gave out the hymn. Waterhouse, Kawia, May 31, 1840

APPENDIX—SUPPLEMENTARY TUNES

648

1082

Cranbrook.—8.M.

T. OLIVER.

Me haere tatou nei  
Ki teira wahi pai,  
Ki runga ru ki Kananā  
Ko reira noko ai.

Teira te potonga  
O nga mea pepai;  
Teira ano te haranga  
O te Ariki pai.

Teira ra a Ihu  
Te Kingi atawhai,  
E karanga iho ana—  
E koutou, haere mai.

Ko reira hahi ai  
Te mau i te pai,  
Ko reira tino hitea ai  
Te Kingi atawhai.

Me urakorongo pu  
Tatou nei koutou,  
Me haere ki a Ihu ra  
O tatou aotirua.

Me haere tatou nei  
Ki teira wahi pai,  
Ki runga ru ki Kananā  
Ko reira noko ai.

"Let us all go  
To that good place  
Above in Canaan,  
And there stay."

"There's the assemblage  
Of good things;  
There's the joy  
Of the good Lord."

"There's Jesus,  
The merciful King,  
Calling down,  
'You, come up hither.'"

"There's rejoicing  
With the happy people;  
There they really see  
The merciful King."

"Attend fully  
All of us here,  
And go to Jesus  
All our souls."

"Let us all go  
To that good place  
Above in Canaan,  
And there stay."

Words: Nathaniel Turner  
Tune: Cranbrook  
Barrett 1852

From Primitive Methodist Hymnal (1889) (Auckland Archive)

Tongan notation

$\frac{3}{4}$  KEY of D MAJOR

3̣	7-8	76	52	3-7	39	87	87	68	5-4	7:7-8
3̣	7-6	54	39	3-5	57	68	63	93	3-9	9:9-3
3̣	3-3	37	76	5-3	3	3	3	7	7-1	9:9-3
3̣	5-6	7	7	3-3	3	3	60	43	7-	

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97	89	3̣				4	4-3	94	4-6	7-7
49	34	5				4	4-4	44	44	4-6
		5	5-6	75	78	99	8-8	77	68	9-0
		3	3-4	53	56	77	6-6	79	44	7-0

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3-3	39	3̣	-4	5-5	54	5-5	4	3	3-9	3-1
5-5	54	5	-7	7-7	77	7-7	6	6	5-4	5-1
	-7	3-3	39	35	-9	3-3	33	8	58	7-7
	-7	3-3	57	3	-7	3-3	33	6	56	7-7