

PETITION.

*To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia,
in Session, at Victoria, Canada :*

MARCH, 1897.

A petition for the amendment of the Licensing Law to the Townsite of Steveston, Richmond Municipality.

SIR,—We, the undersigned, resident householders of the registered Townsite of Steveston, in the Municipality of Richmond, do hereby humbly petition your Honourable House that some change should be made at the present Session of Parliament in the Licensing Law to enable same to meet the requirements of our peculiar position, and we respectfully submit for your consideration the following facts and information :—

I. That the Municipality of Richmond, in which the Townsite of Steveston is situate, covers a very large area, and that there are a considerable number of non-resident landholders which renders it all but impossible to qualify for a licence under the "Municipal Clauses Act, 1896," chap. 37, section 192.

II. That the Town of Steveston is situate on the extreme S.W. of Lulu Island, and at a distance of 6 or 7 miles from the bulk of the other residents in the Municipality of Richmond, than whom we, as residents of the Townsite of Steveston, think we are much better qualified to judge of our local requirements ; as a matter of fact, the north side of the Municipality is nearer the City of Vancouver than the Town of Steveston.

III. That we are placed in the anomalous position of not being able to incorporate as a town, as although for about 4 or 5 months of the year we have a population of from 4 to 5000, with every indication this year of still further increase, it is almost entirely transient.

IV. That at the passing of the Municipal Act, we recognised the fact the sudden growth and rise to importance of a town like Steveston within a District Municipality and subject to its laws, could hardly have been contemplated and so would now warrant some exceptional legislation.

V. That the law, as it now stands, tends to create an illegal traffic in liquor instead of being, as we desire, in the hands of responsible traders under proper control, and is detrimental to the general welfare of the fishing industry and public morality.

VI. The immense travelling and transient resident population that annually assemble in Steveston render the granting of liquor licence not only expedient, but an absolute necessity. Because,—

(a.) From the nature of the industry, business is almost at a stand still, unless in the run of the season, consequently it is almost an impossibility for respectable and properly conducted houses to run a refreshment house on temperance principles and at popular prices :

(b.) The nature of the vocation of the majority of the visitors warrants the judicious use of stimulants, and under proper surveillance results would compare favourably with those under the present system :

(c.) When it is considered that daily in the season over 12 stage coaches leave and arrive here, besides the numerous private vehicles, in addition to the regular river traffic, some idea can be formed of the justice and reasonableness of our petition :

(d.) A consensus of opinion of people who have studied the subject and are fully conversant with all the circumstances, are in favour of the granting of liquor licences to the Town of Steveston.

In conclusion, should our petition be favourably entertained, we most respectfully suggest that (failing some more suitable solution of the difficulty which your Honourable House may see fit to legislate) liquor licences should be granted to respectable traders, same to be controlled by a majority of votes of the resident householders in the Townsite, or resident householders within a radius of five miles of the Townsite within the Municipality.

And your petitioners will, as in duty bound, ever pray.

A. H. WESCOTT,
WILLIAM CRAWFORD,
THOS. BENNETT,
G. McRAY,
WM. McCOLL,

And 64 others.

I certify from personal knowledge that the signatures to the foregoing petition includes every resident householder in the Townsite of Steveston, B. C., Richmond Municipality, with the exception of four.

W. MCKINLAY, J.P.,
Richmond Riding.

Steveston, B. C., 6th March, 1897.

VICTORIA, B. C. :

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