
REPORT
OF THE
COLLECTOR OF VOTERS
FOR THE
VANCOUVER CITY ELECTORAL DISTRICT.

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VANCOUVER CITY ELECTORAL DISTRICT,
OFFICE OF COLLECTOR OF VOTERS,
VANCOUVER, 1900.

*To the Honourable James Dunsmuir,
Premier for the Province of British Columbia:*

SIR,—I have the honour to report the conclusion of the work of compiling a new list of Voters for the Electoral District of Vancouver City, in accordance with the terms of the Order in Council, dated 6th day of September, 1900.

Facilities for Registering.

The following particulars convey some idea of the work entailed. Between the 10th September (the date of the cancellation of the old list) and the 20th October (the last date on which applications could be received to qualify for entry on the Register by the statutory time fixed for the Court of Revision) 5,810 names were handed in. In order to render this possible the office was kept open continuously each week day, from 9 a.m. till 10 p.m., with a short interval between 5 and 7 p.m. for meals. Of the 5,810 claims no less than 91 were, upon close inspection, found to be duplicates or non-residents, bringing the total number of allowed claims to 5,719.

I would here take the opportunity of remarking, in order to secure that every qualified person was registered, means were taken by public notices in the press, by canvassers employed by the City Council, by political agencies and other methods for reaching every person qualified to exercise the franchise, and I have reason to believe that end was attained.

Justification of Government Action.

It may be pointed out that the discarded list contained no less than 7,940 names, or 2,221 names in excess of the present list. This more than justifies the wisdom of the course pursued by the Government in cancelling the old list. The imperfections of that list in containing the names of persons long ago deceased, and of persons who have left the country, as well as duplicates to an incredible extent, together with non-qualified persons, are made apparent by the decrease in the electoral roll of 2,221 names.

Extent of the Work.

Adverting again to the work of making the new list, the full names, addresses and descriptions were, in the first instance, copied in duplicate for publication, according to the terms of the Act; each of the particulars was afterwards written separately on a card—one for each person—for sorting into alphabetical order; and, finally, each set of particulars were entered in the Register, and two copies made for the Queen's Printer. Each name, address and description were, therefore, necessarily written six times over, the total number of words in one copy is 77,000, making a total for the six transcriptions of 462,000 words. In addition

to this some 2,000 forms were filled in by the office staff for the signature of claimants who applied personally at the office.

Suggestions for Consideration.

During the work of compilation and subsequent Revision of the List several matters of real difficulty arose, which it is my duty to lay before you, and at the same time I desire to offer for your consideration certain suggestions of a practical nature, with a view to removing these impediments to the work of registration.

Want of Identification.

The point of primary importance is the want of means of identifying the applicants, or the witnesses, whose names are handed in. The method, permitted under the Acts, of forwarding to the Collector a written application for a name to be placed on the list is attended by grave dangers, and opens the way for imposture and fraud. Under that method the course which is naturally taken is for a political agent or a private individual, as the case may be, to apply to the Collector for a quantity of forms. These are taken away and some time afterwards portions of them are returned, from time to time, filled up with the name, address and occupation of a supposed elector, but there is no means of preventing fictitious names being appended either as applicants or witnesses.

Collector has no Test.

It is therefore obvious that in the hands of unscrupulous persons these forms thus distributed present an opportunity of swelling the list with fictitious names. The Collector, as a matter of duty, may keep his office open far beyond the prescribed hours, but with such a method in operation he does not have the opportunity of seeing, face to face, a very large proportion of the number of persons whose names he has to record. Neither has he any means of ascertaining whether the original signatures are given, or otherwise.

Case in Point.

A form was handed in—with a number of others—bearing the name of Robert Brown of 36, Carrall Street, Labourer. The name and address were both distinctly written twice, as required by the form. The application was duly posted on the list of claimants, being numbered 5,205. Upon compiling the Register the name was placed in its proper order, being No. 585. In transcribing the list for the Queen's Printer attention was drawn to the fact that the numbering of Carrall Street commenced at 300. A registered letter was therefore forwarded to the name and address given. This was returned marked "not found." A second registered letter resulted in the same way. A personal visit was made by a member of the staff to Carrall Street, and he inquired at No. 360, and also at a boarding-house in the same street to ascertain whether there was a room numbered 36 occupied by Robert Brown. He could discover no trace of the man anywhere in the street and his name was eliminated from the list.

This case was one accidentally discovered and may be illustrative of many others.

Improper Applications.

By the present method there is nothing to prevent improper applications being made by persons who are not entitled to register on the City List.

Case 1.

On September 20th a form was received from a political agent and witnessed by another political agent, claiming a vote for Rechab Gore, of 49, Pender Street, Gardener. The name was entered on the list of claimants same day and numbered 1,101. In due course it was entered on the cards for sorting when it attracted the attention of Mr. Rowland Green, one of the staff. It appears that Green had met Gore prior to the 20th September and asked him whether he had re-registered. He then replied, "No, I reckon I can't do so as I am living out of the City." This fact led to inquiry and it was found that Gore was living and was registered in Richmond District, although he had given his address, and answered the 8th interrogatory, by quoting 49, Pender Street. The name was therefore struck out.

Case 2.

Another instance of a person taking advantage of the facilities of recording names without personal appearance is furnished in the case of Frank McManus, who gave his address and occupation as 618, Princess Street, Vancouver, Engineer. This man, in the first instance, applied personally at the office, where a form was filled up for his signature. Before completing it, in answer to Question 8, he said he lived at present at Barnet. He was told he was disqualified and went away considerably annoyed. On the last day for receiving forms, namely, October 20th, a large batch of names were received from a political agent. They were all in due course posted on the list of claimants. Among them was one which received the number 5,801, signed by Frank McManus, residing at 618, Princess Street, and giving the address at Question 8 as 618, Princess Street. Not only so, but the man did more than the form called for. He signed his name and *added his address to it*, thus:—

Frank McManus, 618, Princess Street, Vancouver.

Inquiry was made at the C. P. R. sheds for the man's address and it was given by the foreman as Barnet.

Registered letters were sent to both places requiring his attendance, but without avail. The letters were not returned however.

Waste of Forms.

The present system leads to a great waste of Forms and contributes to their improper use. The following account, which is an approximate one, speaks for itself:—

No. of forms in hand on September 10th (date of cancellation of old list), about.....	300	
Received from Queen's Printer to meet demands	15,000	
		<u>15,300</u>
No of forms filled up and deposited in the office	5,810	
Now in hand, about.....	650	
		<u>6,460</u>
Unaccounted for		8,840
		<u>15,300</u>

Inaccuracies lead to Loss of Votes.

Attention is drawn to the fact that the forms are, in hundreds of cases, filled up by persons who are not acquainted with the practice of supplying information on legal forms, as well as by others who do not take the trouble to read the printed matter. A considerable per centage of the total forms tendered were handed back to the persons tendering them on account of inaccuracies or omissions. Messenger boys, women, and disinterested persons often bring in these forms, as well as a number received through the post, and it is more than probable that many voters' names are not recorded through the failure on the part of the applicant to correct and re-deliver the rejected claim. Such instances also lead to dispute with the Collector, some applicants asserting that although they remember filling up and forwarding a form to the office, yet their names do not appear on the list. The informality of the claim often passes from mind and the Collector incurs unmerited blame. When the forms are filled up in the Collector's office in the presence of the applicant, who attaches his signature, no such inaccuracy or consequent unpleasantness can occur.

Wholesale filling up of Blanks by Agents and others.

It came to the knowledge of the office that the replies to interrogatories are filled up in bulk, many in one handwriting, in readiness for coming applicants. Many instances can be produced where this plan has been adopted. The forms on the file in this office clearly substantiate this statement.

A reference to the form of application will illustrate this. For instance, the following interrogatories are dealt with as indicated:—

- Q. No. 2—"Yes."
 Q. No. 3—"Natural born."
 Q. No. 4—"No."
 Q. No. 5—"Yes."
 Q. No. 6—"Yes."
 Q. No. 7—"No."
 Q. No. 8—"Yes." (Leaving space for address.)
 Q. No. 9—"As above."

Case in point.

A form was received from a newspaper office signed John Brenhard Berentsen, 1107, Barnard street; profession, "Theatricals." Question 3, "Are you a natural-born or naturalised subject and which?" was filled in "Natural Born," in the same handwriting as the witness'. The application was duly posted and numbered 4113. Date of application October 4th, 1900. On the 8th October the applicant called at the office, and in accordance with his request the following endorsement was made on the back of the form:—

"To the Collector of Votes, Vancouver:

"The application on the other side was made by me through a misunderstanding. I am not a natural-born or naturalised British subject, but of Norwegian nationality, and I therefore request that the application be cancelled.

"Signed this 8th day of October, 1900.

"B. J. BERENTSEN."

The misunderstanding referred to was that the man did not know that naturalisation was requisite, and that nothing was said to him when he signed the form about nationality or naturalisation.

Duplicates.

Upon scrutinising the applications received during the forty days the list was open no less than 90 were found to be in duplicate, while one was in triplicate. The last mentioned was investigated by requesting the applicant to attend at the office. He acknowledged the authorship of the three applications, but explained that his recollection was hazy as to the time and place of signing two of them. It appeared that whenever he had imbibed rather freely he was seized with an infatuation to fill up a voter's form, but no wrong was intended. The duplicates, however, bring to notice a state of affairs naturally resulting from the imperfect method now in vogue. Nearly every case is illustrated by the following supposititious case.

A. is a supporter of No. 1 political party. A canvasser waits upon him at his residence, or (as is more frequent) at his place of employment. He knows the canvasser belongs to No. 2 political party. When asked to sign a form he does so, and the canvasser places it with others received at the same time. Afterwards A., upon reflection, comes to the conclusion that as his vote would be given for the opposite party to that of the canvasser there is little probability of his name being forwarded to the Collector. He therefore signs a second form to insure his registration. Hence the duplication. Most of the cases are indicated by the above illustration, and point to the necessity of the preparation of the applications being retained in the hands of the officials appointed by the Government.

Paid Party Canvassers.

The expediency of allowing the forms supplied by the Government to be used as levers to control votes or worked under the influence of any particular party is open to grave question, as in many cases political canvassers use the forms for the sole purpose of drawing voters to their own party in consideration of that party taking the trouble and going to the expense of enabling them to vote.

Doubt as to Originality of Signatures.

During the process of receiving forms the receiving official could not fail to notice when going through several batches the striking similarity between the signatures. In many cases the names are evidently signed by the same person who had filled up or witnessed the form (most of the handwriting of which portions is readily discernible), and not by the person

making the application. I have now before me a case in which it is beyond question that the man who signed the request at the top of the form is an entirely different individual from the one who signed the interrogatories at the foot. If the one is in the handwriting of the applicant then the other is not.

I have considered it my duty to place on one side a number of forms in which I have considerable doubt that they are signed by the applicants at all.

This there is no means of checking under the present system, which renders it possible for a fictitious application to be filed, attested by an equally fictitious witness.

Serious difficulty concerning Voters registered at Hotels.

One of the most pronounced infringements of the "Provincial Elections Act Amendment Act, 1899," is that which occurs, under the present method of application, in connection with the 6th Interrogatory set out in sec. 40, chap. 25. This requires that an applicant should have resided or had his chief place of abode in the Riding for a continuous period of one month prior to the date of application.

Of course, every application placed on the list by me contains this assurance.

But an analysis of the list reveals a curious state of affairs. Many of the smaller hotels, where there is barely the minimum number of 16 beds required to be provided as a condition for holding a hotel licence, are quoted as the abode of a number of men far out of proportion to the usual ratio.

An analysis of the list has been carefully made, and a copy of the same is attached hereto. It will be seen that 437 persons are returned as living in dollar-a-day hotels and saloons in the city. Of these, a large proportion belong to occupations which necessitate their residence elsewhere. The first house on the list gives 13 voters for an accommodation of 18 rooms, leaving very scanty room available for casual callers. The same remark applies to several houses on the list.

Glasgow Hotel.

An example of the misuse of hotels as place of chief residence and continuous abode is furnished by the Glasgow Hotel. The Licence Inspector returns the accommodation afforded as 30 rooms. The number of voters giving this house as their place of abode is 36, still it is a matter of common knowledge that the hotel is by no means full, and fresh applicants for board and lodging are being provided for each day.

Terminus Saloon.

A stronger case than the above, even, is that of the Terminus Saloon. Formerly, this house was recognised as a hotel, so the Licence Inspector now informs me, but, owing to the number of rooms being insufficient, the Licence Commissioners only issue a saloon licence. He believes that there are 10 rooms over the saloon, and these are quoted as the place of abode for 34 voters, exclusive of the business staff. Twenty-one of the 34 are loggers and 6 are miners, whose place of employment is at some distant logging or mining camp up the coast or in the interior. In this case also, fresh visitors are constantly coming and going, and the accommodation is seldom taxed to its utmost. Scarcely any of the men, not officially connected with the establishment, could be found there at any given time. The explanation lies in the fact that these men have their chief place of abode at a logging or mining camp, where they work, eat, and sleep for perhaps 11 months in the year. The hotels in the city are only used by them as headquarters at election times, when they flock in from all parts, as well as during the periodical visits they pay to Vancouver on such occasions as Christmas, Queen's Birthday, Dominion Day, or other occasions of festivity. In no sense of the word can these hotels be termed their places of chief or continuous abode. We know as a matter of fact that, in order to get these men to register at Vancouver, batches of papers, without regard to quantity, were forwarded up the coast by steamers and returned in the same way. On the other hand, there are a few loggers employed at a distance who have a home and wife and family in Vancouver, and are properly domiciled here; these, there is no doubt, are properly entitled to record their names, but men who simply pay a passing visit to hotels and have no other abode here ought not to answer the 6th interrogatory in the affirmative, as they have their chief and continuous place of abode in the Electoral District where they spend their days. This question constitutes an important issue in a city like Vancouver.

Naturalisation.

The means of securing the use of the franchise to persons of British nationality only are not sufficiently safeguarded by the forms of application. Question 4 only applies to persons of British birth who may have taken the oath of allegiance to some other power. It is highly essential that the form should be revised so as to require the date and place of naturalisation of every person who claims by reason of being a naturalised subject, if it does not require the production of the naturalisation certificate.

While on this subject attention should be called to the unfortunate choice of words in Question 3, "natural born"—a term associated in historical writings with irregularity of descent. Many persons have taken exception to the expression, and I would suggest that it be replaced by "A British born or a naturalised subject."

Mongolian Registration.

On or about the 15th of October, one Japanese, named Tomey Homma, accompanied by another Japanese, whom I took to be the secretary of the Japanese Consul, appeared at my office and stated that he, the supposed secretary, had come to demand that his countrymen who had taken out naturalisation papers should be registered on the voters' list. He pointed to Tomey Homma and requested that I should receive his application.

I informed him that it would be contrary to the Provincial Statutes of British Columbia to register any Mongolian or Indian on any Voters' List in this Province. He demurred, stating in reply that as many Japanese had become naturalised they should have all the rights and privileges of British subjects. This ended the interview.

On the 19th October, Mr. Harris, of Harris & Bull, barristers, called at the office and applied for the registration of Tomey Homma. I pointed out to him that I could not, nor would I under any circumstances, register a Mongolian on the Voters' List, for it would be a violation of the provisions of sec. 8, Chap. 67, Revised Statutes of British Columbia. Mr. Harris replied, "Our statute conflicts with Dominion legislation on this point," or words to this effect.

Again, on the same day, a clerk from the office of Messrs. Harris & Bull called at the office and formally tendered the application of Tomey Homma, which I declined to receive.

I was subsequently served with a notice of appeal from my decision to the County Court of Vancouver. I reported the matter to the Honourable the Attorney-General and received instructions from the Deputy Attorney-General to retain Messrs. Wilson & Senkler to represent the Crown in this case. Those instructions were followed, and Mr. Charles Wilson, K.C., has charge of the case.

On looking into the Dominion Electoral Franchise Act, Revised Statutes of Canada, I find that Chap. 5, Statutes of 1886, expressly provided that no Chinaman or Mongolian was eligible for registration on the Voters' List of any Province in the Dominion. I was exceedingly thankful to find that Dominion legislation on this important question was in perfect accord with our own, and felt perfectly safe in having refused the Japanese registration.

On a further examination of the Dominion Statutes, I was astonished beyond measure to find that the Electoral Franchise Act of 1898 repealed the Act of 1886 without making any provision whatever for the exclusion of Mongolians. In point of fact, section 6 of Chapter 14 of 1898 makes express provision for the enfranchisement of any person or class who may have been excluded by a provincial statute, so that I am reluctantly compelled to express grave doubts as to the ability of the Government to maintain the wholesome and highly necessary restrictive legislation which is intended to protect this Province from being dominated by Mongolian hordes who have nothing in common with Anglo-Saxons.

The Japanese and Chinese themselves regard naturalisation privileges as merely a licence to fish. They are not capable of understanding and appreciating the dignity and responsibilities in British citizenship. They are for the most part heathens, who are here to acquire all the wealth they can at the expense of British workmen.

That by far the greater part of the naturalisation papers acquired by Mongolians have been fraudulently obtained I verily believe, and am of an opinion that they should be cancelled if cancellation be possible; and that all persons who either aided or connived at this fraudulent naturalisation should be punished with the utmost severity.

In view of the facts imperfectly set out in this connection and the tremendous issues involved, I earnestly trust that whatever the issue of the appeal case may be I shall not be

called upon to perform an act which my conscience does not approve of, and that I shall never be made the instrument by which the name of any Mongolian shall be registered on this Voters' List.

Appendices.

Appended hereto is a list of the hotels and saloons referred to, and also a form of application.

Instructions asked for.

In view of the facts set out in the foregoing, I would respectfully request that definite instructions be given me as to whether you think it advisable that steps should be taken to prosecute further inquiries with a view to the detection of parties who have violated the privileges of the Franchise Acts.

In conclusion, I would respectfully point out that the abuses I have referred to cannot be corrected by any Collector, the Legislature alone being competent to deal with them.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) THOMAS CUNNINGHAM.

LIST OF DOLLAR-A-DAY HOTELS, WITH NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Name of House.	No. of Rooms.	No. of Voters registered.	Miners.	Loggers.	Fishermen or Seamen.	Others.
Acadia	18	13	2	3	1	7
Arlington	16	5				5
Avenue	18	9				9
Blackburn House	25	12	1			11
Bridge	16	5	1			4
Cabinet	16	10	1	3		6
Carter House	30	15	4	1		10
City	30	10	1	3	1	5
Clarence	20	10				10
Colonial	20	3				3
Columbia	25	15		6		9
Cosmopolitan	18	11	2	1		8
Delmonico	18	9		1		8
Dougal House	25	13			3	10
Europe	50	25	2	9	2	12
Gambrinus	25	4	1			3
Glasgow	30	36	1	8	2	25
Gold House	28	10	3	2		5
Grand	16	8			1	7
Granville	35	29	3	15	1	10
Imperial	16	6		2		4
King's	18	2				2
Klondyke	18	4				4
New Fountain	24	11		1		10
Norden	20	12		3	2	7
Ottawa	25	7	1			6
Palace	18	10			1	9
Queen's	16	2				2
Regina	25	4				4
Revere House	18	8			1	7
Second	35	13	1	1	1	10
Sherman House	40	19	4	2		13
Sunnyside	30	13				13
Union	16	3				3
Waverley	25	15	3			12
Western	16	4	1			3
Central	18					
Golden Gate	30					
		385	32	61	16	276

SALOONS, WITH NUMBER OF VOTES REGISTERED.

Name of House.	No. of Rooms.	No. of Voters registered.	Miners.	Loggers.	Fishermen or Seamen.	Others.
Balmoral	No accom-	7	.....	1	.....	6
Barnard Castle.....	modation	4	.....	.....	.....	4
Boulder	registered.	7	.....	2	.....	5
Terminus.....	.....	34	6	21	.....	7
		52	6	24	.....	22

HOTELS WITH HIGHER TARIFF, WITH NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Alhambra	6	.....	.....	.....	.....
Badminton	10	.....	.....	.....	.....
Commercial.....	17	.....	.....	.....	.....
Leland	5	.....	.....	.....	.....
Metropole	10	.....	.....	.....	.....
Strand	3	.....	.....	.....	.....
Vancouver.....	23	.....	.....	.....	.....
	74	.....	.....	.....	.....

Total number registered—

Dollar-a-day hotels	385
Saloons	52
Higher tariff hotels	74

511

Miners	38
Loggers	85

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