

1873.

NEW ZEALAND.

PETITION FOR A LIGHTHOUSE ON CAPE WANBROW.

Presented 1st September, 1873, and ordered to be printed.

To the Honourable the House of Representatives of the Colony of New Zealand.

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED MERCHANTS, TRADERS, AND OTHERS, RESIDENT IN THE TOWN AND DISTRICT OF OAMARU, IN THE PROVINCE OF OTAGO, SHOWETH,—

That it is necessary that a Lighthouse be erected on Cape Wanbrow, at Oamaru.

That from the statistics stated below, it will be apparent to your honourable House that the Port of Oamaru is an important port of the Colony, and that the erection of such Lighthouse would be beneficial to all vessels sailing on the eastern coast of the South Island.

That on the extension of the harbour works now in course of construction at the said Port of Oamaru, the exports and imports of the said port will be enormously increased by the export of Oamaru stone (which cannot now be shipped or landed) and other articles.

That the erection of a Lighthouse would be of the utmost service to vessels and steamers passing along the coast (especially during South-west gales), by enabling such vessels to ascertain their exact position, to travel in smooth and comparatively safe water instead of in the heavy sea outside, to pass in safety Fish Reef and Danger Reef (where several wrecks have taken place), and to seek shelter in the aforesaid port and other neighbouring ports.

That the proposed Lighthouse would be placed in one of the most commanding positions on the coast, at such an elevation and in such a position that the light would be visible for many miles, from all quarters of the compass, and would be a great boon not only to vessels frequenting the Port of Oamaru, but also to vessels wishing to make the Ports of Timaru, Moeraki, Dunedin, and other ports on the coast.

That no other Lighthouse is situate within forty-two miles of the Port of Oamaru, and no other position is equally eligible or necessary as the site for a Lighthouse within a great distance thereof.

That during the night many steamers and vessels (including vessels and steamers from Melbourne and various other ports in Australia), owing to the want of a Lighthouse on Cape Wanbrow, being unable to ascertain their exact position, or to approach the coast, pass the Port of Oamaru or other ports, thereby causing serious loss of time, and delay in obtaining despatch, and incurring great loss and delay to shipowners and merchants, and often losing the advantage of favourable winds for many days.

That during the year ending 30th June, 1873, the following have been the statistics of the Port of Oamaru, as obtained from the Officer of Customs resident at the said port, namely:—

	Vessels.	Tons.
Inwards	242	29,910
Outwards	240	29,551

Number of bales of wool shipped during the same period, 9,477.

And that owing to the facilities for shipment of the building stone (for which the district is celebrated), grain, and other goods, which will be shortly afforded by the extension of the harbour works now in progress, and the rapidly increasing population of the Oamaru District, the trade of the said port will shortly be increased to an enormous extent, and probably more than doubled.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that your honourable House will take such steps as may lead to the erection of a suitable Lighthouse on Cape Wanbrow, and may grant such other relief in the premises as to your honourable House may seem fit.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

[Here follow 123 signatures.]

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

COASTING and Intercolonial steamers bound to Oamaru invariably leave Port Chalmers or Timaru in the evening, thereby arriving off Oamaru about midnight, and it frequently happens that they get past the port, causing several hours delay after daylight in returning, thereby losing the best part of the day, as early morning is mostly calm and sea smooth.

Again, mail and other steamers bound South, especially in heavy south-westerly weather, would steer so as to pick up the light about the Waitaki; they would then stand along shore in confidence of a guide past Fish and Danger Reefs, carrying fore-and-aft canvas, with the wind off the land, in comparatively smooth water, and escape the heavy sea and dead-on-end wind in the offing, thereby making a passage when the vessels in the offing would have to heave-to.

During south-easterly weather, when vessels have to leave Oamaru through a sea setting in, a light on Wanbrow would enable them to keep handy to the port, and so get in as soon as the sea was down. As it is now, in the absence of a light, they invariably get far off shore and get becalmed, taking sometimes ten, and frequently seven, days in returning to port again.

WM. SEWELL,
Deputy Harbour Master, Oamaru.

No. 2.

THE placing of a light at Cape Wanbrow is very desirable: such a light would be most valuable to coastal and Australian steamers; it would frequently obviate considerable delay by enabling vessels to keep closer to the land. Vessels coming from Lyttelton, bound for Dunedin, in south-easterly weather make for the Waitaki, thence proceeding along the coast. To be able to pick up a light at Cape Wanbrow would be a very great advantage, and masters could proceed with confidence, opening out the Tairaroa Head light as soon as Cape Wanbrow light was lost. I have no hesitation in saying that my opinion will be coincided in by all masters of vessels, particularly of steamers visiting this part of the coast of New Zealand.

A. KENNEDY,
Commander p.s. "Paterson."

I fully coincide in the desirability of a light at Cape Wanbrow.

E. WHEELER,
Master s.s. "Taranaki."

No. 3.

WE, the undersigned masters of vessels trading to ports on the East Coast of the Middle Island, are of opinion that a light should be placed at Cape Wanbrow, as it would be of great advantage by frequently obviating delay by enabling vessels to keep closer to the land, and affording a beacon for Fish and Danger Reefs.

JOHN RUSSELL,
Schooner "Cora."
THOS. UNDERWOOD,
s.s. "Alhambra."
M. CAREY,
s.s. "Wellington."
ANGUS MATHESON,
Schooner "Emulous."

By Authority: GEORGE DIBSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.