

Copy  
Recd 15<sup>th</sup>  
and 20<sup>th</sup> in obs.  
H.M.  
New Westminster F305  
April 13<sup>th</sup> /63!

Sir

Please to inform me  
if a Piano which I brought  
up from Victoria on the 11<sup>th</sup> inst.  
which I require for use in the  
practice of my profession as  
a teacher of music, is legally  
chargeable with duty any more  
than a Barister's books or a  
Carpenter's tools.

I am Sir

Your obedient Servant  
To the Attorney General  
British Columbia Alfred Cobby

FILE 305 COBBY, A. COLONIAL CORRESPONDENCE PABC

H. P. P. Crease Esq.  
Attorney General  
British Columbia

Copy  
General  
Rd. 26 May  
J. Customs  
Piano Duties 2  
F 305  
New Westminster May 22<sup>nd</sup> /63

To His Excellency the Governor  
Commissioner of Customs for  
British Columbia.

Sir,

I take the liberty of  
appealing to your Excellency  
as Commissioner of Customs  
against a decision of the  
Collector of Customs at New Westminster.

I shall with permission  
to state my case as concisely  
as I am able. I am a Professor  
of Music, I hold the situation  
of Organist at Holy Trinity Church  
and give lessons in Singing and  
Harmony &c.

On Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> of April  
last I brought with me from  
Victoria a Piano, not for sale  
but wholly and solely for use in my  
capacity as a Music teacher

I was permitted to take the Pianos to my home by one of the Revenue Officers, on the condition that I entered it on the following Monday, which I did,

I was then told I should have to pay duty on it, to which I objected under clause 3 of the Customs act, dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1859, which states that Household furniture, and Professional Apparatus of Passengers shall be admitted free of duties.

I was allowed till the end of the month to pay the demand, and in the meantime I obtained a written opinion from the Attorney General, a copy of it I take the liberty of enclosing.

Attorney General Office  
20<sup>th</sup> April 1863

Sir

If the Pianos be your bona fide professional apparatus and not intended for sale: <sup>It cannot be charged with duty</sup> In that case you will understand that it cannot be changed away without subjecting you to penalty;

To Mr. A. Cobley  
Organist &c

Yours Obedt  
H. P. Green  
Attorney General

I did not pay the duty demanded on the completion of the month and on May 18<sup>th</sup> the Revenue Officer armed with an Exchequer warrant in aid, and 3 men entered my Rooms and said unless the money (\$25. 60.) was paid, he should have to take the Pianos away. I paid the money under protest. And the next day

I obtained a Landring Warrant.

I am a bonafide  
Music teacher resident at New  
Westminster, and gain my living  
in no other way, and my Piano  
is absolutely necessary to enable  
me to carry on my profession.

I would therefore most  
respectfully submit to your  
Excellency that my Piano is  
to all intents and purposes of the Act  
my professional Apparatus.

I can ill afford to lose the  
\$ 25. 60. and I trust your Excellency  
will please to exercise the power  
invested in you under the Customs  
Consolidation Act, and command  
the collector of customs to repay the  
money to me.

And your petition will always remain

Alfred Cobby.

Alfred Cobby  
New Westminster  
18th Dec 1865