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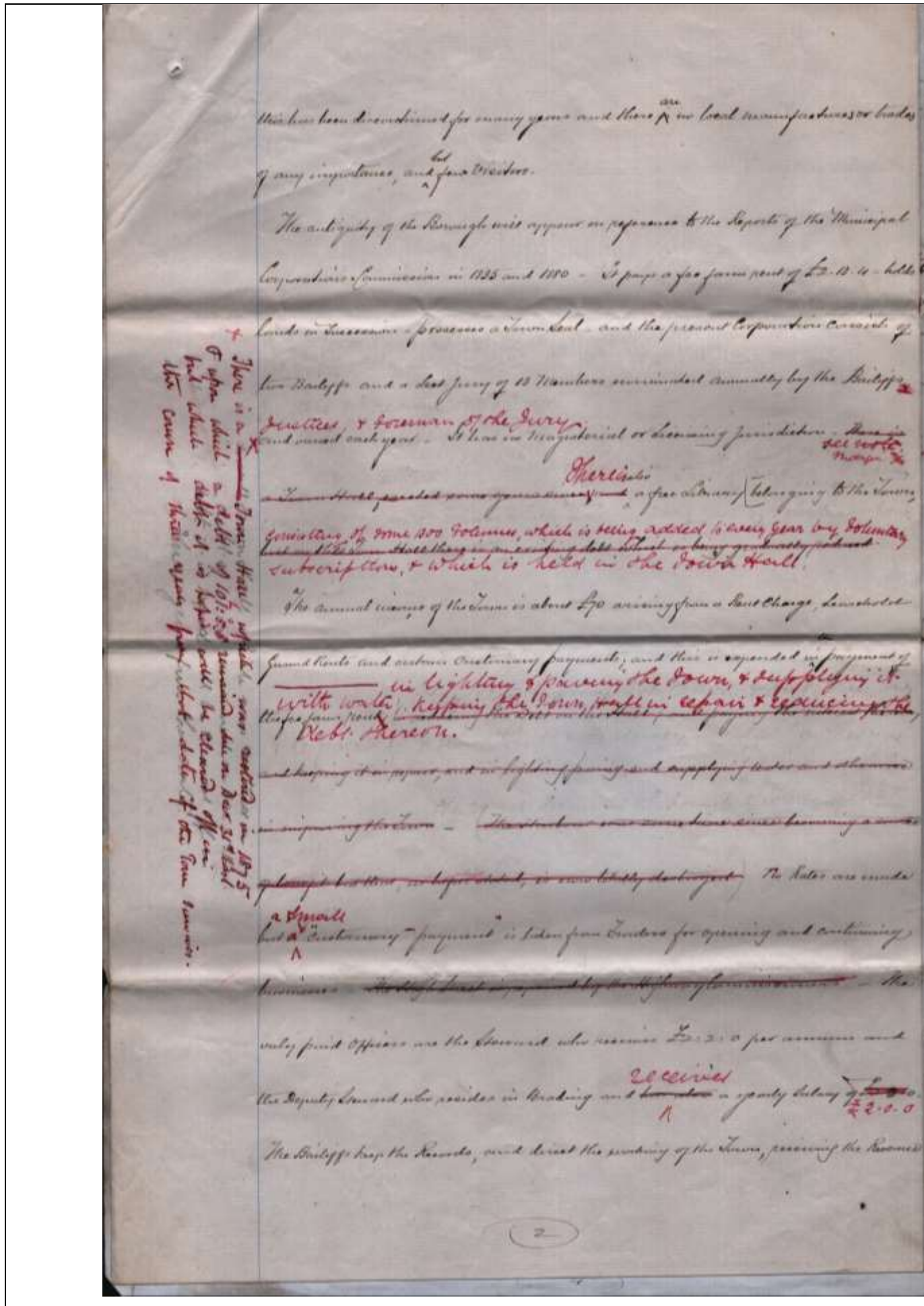
Brading, Isle of Wight
1884 June 28th

Sir,
Borough of Brading, Isle of Wight

Pursuant to your letters of the 23rd February and 6th March last I am directed by the Bailiffs and Jurats to submit to the Lords in Council the following statement of particulars in regard to the Court Leet at Brading, which Court Leet (subject to such modifications as may be deemed necessary by the most Honourable the Privy Council) it is desired to retain; and in further support of such retention I am also directed to forward the accompanying petition signed by 400 of the inhabitants.

The Borough of Brading is situated at the East end of the Isle of Wight, is distant about 8 miles from Newport – 4 from Ryde and 2 from Sandown the other nearest towns.

It includes an area of about 630 acres and has a population of about 860 and Formerly had a Haven or Harbour and Quay up to which latter the sea flowed and vessels sailed and a considerable trade in timber, coals and other goods for the eastern and southern parts of the Island was carried on over this Quay, but this advantage has been cut off by the line of the Railway running to Bembridge which has destroyed the Haven and its use for water passage – There formerly was a market held here but



This has been discontinued for many years and there are no local manufactures or trades of any importance and but few visitors.

The antiquity of the Borough will appear on references to the Reports of the Municipal Corporation Commission in 1835 and 1880. It pays a fee farm rent of £2.13s holds lands in succession possesses a Town Seal and the present Corporation's consists of two bailiffs and a Leet jury of 13 Members nominated annually by the Bailiffs, Justices and foreman of the Jury and varied each year. It has no Magisterial or Licensing jurisdiction.

[in margin] There is a Town Hall which was restored in 1875 and upon which a debt of £101.5.5 remained due on Dec 31st last but which debt it is hoped will be cleared off in the course of three years from that date if the town survives.

There is also a free Library belonging to the Town. Consisting of some 1300 volumes which is being added to every year by voluntary subscriptions and which is held in the Town Hall.

The annual income of the Town is about £70 arising from Rent Charge, Leasehold Ground Rents and certain customary payments and this is expended in the payment of fee farm rent, in lighting and paving the town and supplying it with water, keeping the town hall in repair and replacements debt thereon.

No Rates are made but a small customary "payment" is taken from traders for opening and continuing businesses.

The only paid officers are the Steward who receives £2.2.0 per annum and the Deputy steward who resides in Brading and receives a yearly salary of £2-0-0.

The Bailiffs keep the records and direct the working of the town receiving the Revenue

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The antiquity of the Borough will appear on references to the Reports of the Municipal Corporation Commission in 1835 and 1880 - It pays a fee farm rent of £2.13s - holds lands in succession possesses a Town Seal - and the present Corporation consists of two Bailiffs and a Leet jury of 13 Members nominated annually by the Bailiffs, Justices & Foreman of the Jury.

It has no Magisterial or Licensing jurisdiction.

There is a Town Hall which was restored in 1875 and upon which a debt of £101.5.5 remained due on Dec 31st last but which debt it is hoped will be cleared off in the course of three years from that date if the town survives.

There is also a free Library belonging to the Town. Consisting of some 1300 volumes which is being added to every year by voluntary subscriptions and which is held in the Town Hall.

The annual income of the Town is about £70 arising from a Rent Charge, Leasehold Ground Rents and certain customary payments, and this is expended in the payment of fee farm rent, in lighting & paving the Town, & supplying it with water, keeping the Town Hall in repair & expending the Debt thereon.

No Rates are made but a small customary "payment" is taken from traders for opening and continuing businesses.

The only paid officers are the Steward who receives £2.2.0 per annum and the Deputy Steward who resides in Brading and receives a yearly salary of £2-0-0.

The Bailiffs keep the Records, and direct the working of the Town, receiving the Revenue

and making all payments, and the functions of the Corporation have been exercised for
many many years by the Bailiffs and Leet jury - There are two Constables who collect
the Rents and customary payments, and a Hayward - The Leet jury is composed of
Principal
the ~~best~~ inhabitants of the Town who are willing to serve and the accounts are made
(checked by the jury) *(distributed) (Copies of ¹⁸³⁵ for the last three*
years are enclosed herewith)
yearly and printed - *The Commissioners in 1835 reported that there was then*
no Manufacture in the Town and it was very little affected by the rapid increase of
small Summer Residences which were then taking place in the Island and that
the very little importance which it then possessed was not likely to be either increased
or diminished - These remarks still apply - *The Commissioners in 1835 also*
reported that the inhabitants were principally petty Shopkeepers and the same still
holds good - There have been some new Houses erected, but since the closing of the
Harbour, which at high water ^{is} a pretty object of view, the chance of Visitors is very
small and many houses are empty - There are no resident gentry in the Town
of any considerable means - The place is too small and too poor to be governed
by a Local Board, ^{and if a} in the rating incident to such a governing body would be to
drive out the few retired Tradesmen and others who have settled there especially
by reason of its exemption from Rates, and would cripple the native population
It is too far distant from any other District to be amalgamated with such and
the inhabitants feel that the ^{affairs of the Town could not be more}
economically managed than by the ~~the~~ Court Leet Jury.
~~and that they should not be governed by a Local Board~~

and making all payments and the functions of the Corporation have been exercised for very many years by the Bailiffs and the Leet jury. There are two Constables who collect the Rents and customary payments and a Hayward. The Leet Jury is composed of the principal inhabitants of the Town who are willing to serve and the amounts are up yearly, audited by the jury, and printed and distributed. (Copies of those for the last years are enclosed herewith). The Commissioners in 1835 reported that there was then no manufacture in the Town and it was very little affected by the rapid increase of small Summer Residences which was then taking place in the Island and that the very little importance which it then possessed was not likely to be either increased or diminished. These remarks still apply. The Commissioners in 1835 also reported that the inhabitants were principally petty Shopkeepers and the same still holds good. There have been some new houses erected but since the closing of the Harbour, which at high water was a pretty object of view, the chance of Visitors is very small and many houses are empty. There are no resident gentry in the Town of any considerable means. The place is too small and too poor to be governed by a Local Board, as the effect of a rating incident to such a governing body would be to drive out the few retired Tradesmen and others who have settled there especially by reason of its exemption from Rates, and would cripple the native population. It is too far distant from any other District to be amalgamated with such and the inhabitants feel that the affairs of the town could not be more economically managed than by the Court Leet Jury

~~you are justified~~ ^{f 20. The Leet} They are for the best of the town
~~suggested by the Leet~~ ^{the place and people are pretty poor}
~~and hence they fear the expense and loss they may sustain if the Court Leet~~
~~with its ancient association be abolished~~ ^{the Court Leet}
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Any further details required I will gladly supply
& also if necessary ^{produce} the Town Books containing the
Presentments & Ordinances of the Court, from which a
clear view of the way in which the Town is managed
may be obtained I am Sir
Your obedient servant
Mr John Banks
Steward

To The Secretary
Privy Council Office
Whitehall - London

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The place and people are pretty poor
and hence they fear the expense and loss they may sustain if the Court Leet
with its ancient association be abolished.

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To The Secretary,
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