

an investigation made and get a report from unprejudiced officers, who will desire to see justice done. Another office that has been closed in my county is at Jacket River. I do not think that office was closed from any partisan spirit. It was closed, I think, after some consideration; but it is situated in an important section of the country, and it served a great many people along the coast. The closing of that office has been a great inconvenience to a thickly populated district, as well as to a large settlement in the rear. I think a memorial was sent to the Postmaster General, largely signed by the inhabitants, asking that it should be reopened. I would ask the Postmaster General if he did not receive such a memorial?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. I cannot say from memory.

Mr. McALISTER. I am informed that such a memorial was sent, and I hope the Postmaster General will give the matter his favourable consideration.

Mr. GUITÉ. (Translation.) As I have just heard my hon. friend from Restigouche (Mr. McAlister) complaining about the Oak Bay Mill post office having been closed at my request, I deem it my duty to give the reasons why I have taken such a step. This post office was of small importance, being kept open only in the interest of a few individuals who could without any trouble mail their letters at the nearest post office, at Oak Point.

Mr. BERGERON. (Translation.) What is the distance between the two places?

Mr. GUITÉ. (Translation.) About two miles. In that portion of my constituency, over a distance of 22 miles, between Oak Point and Metapedia, there are six post offices for the accommodation of a population of 1,383 inhabitants, while throughout the whole county of Bonaventure there are forty-five post offices for the accommodation of a population of 20,835 people, which gives for the whole county a ratio of one post office for every 463 people; while for the western portion of the county of Bonaventure, in which my hon. friend for Restigouche seems to take such an interest, there are but 1,383 inhabitants, which gives an average of 230 people for every one of the six post offices now in operation. It was at my request that the Oak Bay Mills post office was closed, as in the public interest it was not considered as needed. I am not aware of anybody having complained about its being closed, and I do not know of any petition being sent to the department to the effect of having it reopened. I am at a loss to understand why the hon. member for Restigouche takes such an interest in the post offices of the county of Bonaventure. He has just stated that, if I asked for the closing of that post office, it was because I was ignorant of the real state of affairs.

Mr. McALISTER.

The hon. gentleman is quite mistaken. I may tell him that I am well posted as to the number of post offices in operation in my constituency and about the localities where they are most needed. I did not take that step without knowledge, and I venture to tell him that the public are perfectly satisfied as well as the Government. I have also pressed upon the Government the desirability of opening other post offices in more convenient localities and I hope I will succeed in having some opened at several points in my constituency. For instance, in the parish of Maria, where I live, we have but three post offices for a population of 2,433 souls, and I think we should have at least the double of that number.

Mr. BERGERON. (Translation.) Mr. Chairman, I would ask the hon. member for Bonaventure for what reason he did not ask for the closing of the Oak Point post office, the revenue from which is little more than half the revenue derived from the post office which has been closed at his request?

Mr. GUITÉ. (Translation.) I will tell the hon. gentleman why I did not ask for the closing of that post office: it is because Cross Point is thirteen miles distant from Escuminac, and the Oak Point post office is midway between those two post offices. I thought it preferable to close the Oak Bay Mill post office so as to give everybody an equal chance.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. With regard to the inquiry why Jacket River post office was closed, I will make full inquiry, and give the hon. gentleman the information at a later stage. As to the Oak Bay transaction, I presume he has had a full explanation from the hon. member for Bonaventure (Mr. Guité). It is within two miles of Oak Point post office, and not necessary. However, I will make inquiry of the proper officers, and see whether they consider that that office is necessary in the public interest.

Mr. BENNETT. I would like to ask the Postmaster General for an explanation, if he can give it, in reference to the appointment of a postmaster at the town of Gravenhurst. A short time ago I put an inquiry on the Order Paper in reference to the matter, and the facts of the case, partly to my own knowledge and partly from information given to me by responsible people, are about as follows. A Mr. J. P. Cockburn, formerly postmaster at Gravenhurst, a gentleman of about fifty-five years of age, according to the statement of the Postmaster General, resigned the position and his son, a young man, I am informed, of twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, was appointed in his place. The Postmaster General, on coming into office, took very high ground, making the statement publicly that if it could be shown that any wrong-doing or collusion was practised under his department, he