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Smith at Quebec, William Smith at Montreal, C. K. Ogden at Three Rivers, Isaac D. Purkis at Prescott, H. D. Morehouse at Kingston, J. T. Townsend at St. Catharines, Norman W. Bethune at Troy—for then, as now, the Montreal Company had lines in what Howells, the novelist, calls "the Greek and Roman portion of New York State." Mr. I. D. Purkis was a well known telegrapher as far back as 1852, first with the Montreal Company, later with the B. N. A. Company, and within a decade or two, with the Dominion Company.

Among the "old timers" in Canadian telegraphy is Mr. William Cassils, for many years superintendent of the M. T. Co. at Quebec, and more recently one of its directors at Montreal.   Some of his reminiscences are very interesting.   Speaking of 1850, he says: "In those days, before Victoria bridges or sub-marine cables, the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers were crossed by wires suspended from great heights.   To maintain these crossings was a hazardous and expensive operation, for every gale of wind or storm of sleet brought down the wire.   In 1852, by permission of the Imperial Government, masts 215 feet in height were erected on St. Helen's Island, in the St. Lawrence, corresponding ones being placed on the mainland, near Molson's brewery in Montreal.   A light wire was stretched on these, and all the shipping in the harbor passed under it.   In winter, when the river "took," the wire was lowered to rest on temporary poles stuck in the ice.   The lines across Niagara River, too, were iron wires strung from masts.   Not till 1854 did well constructed cables come into general use, when the use of masts in crossing rivers was abandoned.

"In 1854 the first steam vessel of the Allan Line, the 'Canadian,' reached Quebec.   Five years later the steamers of this line were running weekly, and a telegraph wire was built to Father Point, Que., to handle European despatches for the New York Associated Press, Mr. Robert F. Easson being the first operator at that then remote point.   By 1866 the laying of the second Atlantic cable had shorn Father Point of its importance, except as a pilot station and light-house.   Mr. Edwin Pope, now telegraph superintendent at Quebec, entered that office as a student in 1854."   The Montreal Company acquired by purchase early in 1865 all the lines on the north shore of New Brunswick, from Sackville to Campbellton, and built a line via the Metapediac Valley, thus forming a new route from the west to St. John and Halifax.

There was opposition in Canadian telegraphy at an early day.   While the Montreal was the parent company, a line through Hamilton from Niagara Falls to Toronto was started about 1850; then the Provincial, engineered by a man named Snow; a line from Hamilton to London; the Montreal and Bytown Company; the B. N. A. line; the Grand Trunk Telegraph line, from Montreal to Quebec via Sherbrooke (no connection with the Grand Trunk Railway). All these existed during a period from 1850 to 1866, but the Montreal Company acquired most of these.