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No. 63a.

MAPLE CREEK, N.W.T., May 10, 1905.

WALTER SCOTT, Esq., M.P.,
(West Assiniboia)—Ottawa.

MY DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of May 6, 1905, *re* telephone facilities in West Assiniboia generally and town of Maple Creek and district surrounding, would say:

This town and district has not yet enjoyed such facilities, yet look forward to the time when such will be within their reach.

Why should not the Dominion of Canada through the Post Office Department operate the whole telephone system of the country for general good, and as a commencement erect and operate such, in what is at present known, as the North-west, there is not a doubt that such would be a paying proposition for the department presided over by Sir William Mulock.

If such is not at present advisable, every encouragement should be given to municipalities, town and county, to erect and operate, keeping in view that sometime they would become part of a national system.

No franchise should be given to any company unless subject to local authority of municipalities in which erected in regards to erection, rates, &c.

If such franchise has been already granted, such should be amended so as to bring them under such control at least in the many districts in the North-west and other portions of Canada, where up to the present no steps have been taken to give such facilities by erection or otherwise.

But above all national ownership and operation is desirable.

Yours respectfully,

W. R. ABBOTT,
Mayor.

No. 64.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
OTTAWA, May 15, 1905.

DEAR SIR WILLIAM,—Referring to your letter of the 20th ult., asking for information relative to telephone investigation, I wish to state that after waiting for several years for the Nova Scotia Telephone Company to build a branch line into my constituency, the people in the county of Antigonish and in the municipality of St. Marys took the matter up themselves and formed a joint stock company and commenced the construction of an independent line which joins the main line of the Nova Scotia Telephone Company at the town of Antigonish. This company is called the Antigonish and Sherbrooke Telephone Company, Limited. Permit me to quote an abstract from the last yearly statement made to the shareholders of this company by the secretary, Mr. James R. MacDonald. It is as follows:

'The company has now in operation 170 miles of telephone lines, with 83 telephones, including two instruments ordered and daily expected, and there is a constant demand, both for the extension of their lines, and for the installment of more instruments in the territory already covered. The yearly rentals of the above 83 telephones aggregate \$1,500 and the long-distance tolls earned will at a low estimate (based on the experience of the past months) bring the company's income, even without any extension beyond its present capacity, up to \$1,800 a year. It is proposed to put \$500 a year to the credit of a sinking fund, and it is estimated that \$500 more will cover the ordinary yearly expenses of the company, leaving a surplus (besides sinking fund) of \$800 a year. The capital already expended is about \$7,000. The earning capacity is therefore very good.'