

T&S Canal Co Letters Reporting Activities in 1817

Weekly letters from Brimscombe Agent J R Denyer to Company Treasurer J S Salt in London reporting on current issues, including:

Wall supporting the embankment at Cox's Valley has bulged forward, but no leakage. A two week stoppage planned to reinstate the clay lining at the Coatesfield end of the tunnel. Boat carrying Forest coal to Oxford canal wharf was taken by force back to River Thames. One leak in the summit the size of a common hat has been stopped and other smaller ones. Work has been done to receive stop planks on the summit in place of the useless stop gates. Sensing a bad leak, the stop planks were put in and showed it was between bridges 26 and 29. Making every effort to place a stock of coal on Lechlade wharf to meet a frost. Following the late rains, it is expected that boats over the summit will carry a full cargo.

14 January 1817

The cash account and weekly return are enclosed. I have drawn upon you as per the other side.

The late glut of rain has made several breaches in the canal, particularly in the summit level near the tunnel, by forcing the clay lining. The damage however is by no means so serious as I at one time had apprehended it would be, and preparations are making to reinstate it as soon as the season will allow.

No Date

An account of water drawn from the River Churn for the use of the Thames & Severn Canal from the 17th June to the 10th of December 1816. 844 hours 50 minutes, £272 16s 2d.

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| John Lane | Barton Mill |
| J & E Cripps | New Mills |
| Thomas Tarling | Preston Mill |
| Francis Hoare | Siddington Mill |
| Thomas Haines | South Cerney Upper Mill |
| Richard Haines | South Cerney Lower Mill |
| Thomas Habgood | Cerney Wick Mill |
| Thomas Kaylock | Latton Consolidated Mills |

21 January 1817

The usual weekly accounts together with the Bankers' book are enclosed. I shall be obliged by receiving a card of the Committee meetings for the present year by Mr Miller who went to London yesterday.

I am sorry to say goods from this place to London appear to have almost wholly deserted the canal, but I anticipate an improved coal trade during the present year, which I trust will be permanent. I hope to see the North Wilts Canal proceeded with in the Spring, the completion of which I have not the least doubt will materially improve the tonnage on the T&S.

28 January 1817

Herewith you will receive the usual weekly papers. I have desired Pitt & Co to transfer £100 to the Credit of T&S Co with you, and I am this day going to pay the Churn millers claims for water taken into the canal at Cirencester, £272 16 2d, from the same source.

I am informed a very considerable part of the wall which supports the embankment of the canal at Cox's Valley on the summit level has bulged forward, but as no leakage has appeared, I imagine it to arise from the stones nearest the ground having perished. I do not apprehend any other result than the rebuilding the same. I however intend inspecting it tomorrow and shall give such directions respecting it as appear necessary.

4 February 1817

The cash account and weekly return are enclosed. I have drawn upon you as under to pay for coal. I found the failure at Cox's Valley, mentioned in my last, to arise exactly as I imagined. No other consequences will result than the expenses attending the rebuilding, which is by this time nearly or quite accomplished and will not exceed £5.

1 February 1817. Thomas Ball or order 2 months £200.

11 February 1817

The cash account and weekly papers are enclosed. I have drawn on you 5th inst at 2 months to Hughes & Powell for £33 14s to pay for coal, the importation of which I am discontinuing as fast as the customary engagements terminate.

I shall be much obliged by your paying the sum of £14 5s to the Sun Life Assurance Office on my account on the 23rd inst.

17 February 1817

The weekly papers are enclosed. I have desired Pitt & Co to transfer £100, part of the balance in their hands, to you during the present week.

24 February 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

I am glad to have to remark that Forest Coal is daily increasing in reputation down the River Thames.

4 March 1817

The cash account and other weekly papers are enclosed

10 March 1870

Enclosed you have the cash account and weekly return. I have desired Pitt & Co to transfer £100 to you in the course of the present week and I have drawn upon you as under to pay for coal, the importation of which I am discontinuing as fast as engagements will admit.

10 March 1817. To Parkend Coal Co or order at 2 months £162 17s.

25 March 1817

The cash account and weekly return are enclosed. I have desired Pitt & Co to transfer £100 to you in the course of the week.

1 April 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I have drawn on you since my last as under to pay for bricks.

27 March 1817. To Thomas Amphlett & Co or order £29 14s.

10 April 1817

Enclosed you have the halves of the following cash notes: one £20, three £10, three £5, six £5 5s, total £96 10s to the credit of the Proprietors of the Thames & Severn Canal. The corresponding parts will be sent per coach this day together with the weekly papers. I shall direct Pitt & Co to transfer part of the balance in their hands to you in the course of next week. I shall be obliged by receiving the Banking book per return of coach.

10 April 1817

The corresponding parts of cash notes remitted by post this day are enclosed, value £96 10s, receipt be pleased to acknowledge per return.

18 April 1817

Herewith you will receive the Bankers book, cash and weekly return, half yearly statement of receipts and payments to the 1st inst and balance sheet of the Company's ledger to the same period. The whole would have been forwarded on Tuesday last had I not been subpoenaed on that day to attend the County Sessions from which I returned only last evening. I desired Pitt & Co to transfer £100 to you this week which I presume they have done. The particulars relating to the Churn millers required by Mr Lane I will bring with me on Sunday.

8 May 1817

The last two weeks' cash accounts and weekly papers are enclosed. I have also enclosed a list of the proprietors of the T&S Canal on 1st April last, by which I perceive Mr Rolleston has transferred the whole of his shares and ceased to be a proprietor, Mr Disney having 80 and Mrs Rogers 5. Of this number, only 20 were subscribed to and 65 not subscribed to, presuming from the consideration viz £6 each paid by Mrs Rogers that hers are part of those not subscribed to. I have so entered them, and if wrong, shall be obliged by your informing me in order that I may correct the same. As no place of residence is given in the certificate of transfer lately sent me, of course I have not inserted any. The blanks in your transfer book may be filled in as under:

13 November 1797. M Goosetree to M Walhouse No 651, 652

14 May 1810. J Horton to E Horton No 793

11 October 1815. L Shadwell to J R Denyer Nos 2111 to 2113.

You will also receive a list of articles removed from Thames Street to your house at the period the Company gave up the former. Some alteration has since taken place but as the expense was considered not to increase the value beyond the sum standing to the account called "Furniture at No.80 Lombard Street" it has been charged to other accounts and consequently the additional articles do not appear. If upon your removing to No.20, a list of such things as belong to the Company is taken, I will insert the same in the ledger where it will always appear against the sum charged.

I have received a letter from Mr Cox of Oxford stating that he had written to Mr Hallett, chairman of the Wilts & Berks Canal, respecting the propriety of applying for part of the Exchequer Bills to finish the North Wilts Canal and requesting me to do the same to the T&S Committee. I have given the subject considerable attention since you mentioned it to me and I certainly do think the case of the T&S Company is as fit a one to further the application of the North Wilts as any that can or will be submitted to the consideration of the Commissioners to be appointed, and it certainly will be a most desirable object if attainable upon fair terms. The Wilts & Berks will also be able to make out a case, and I think the Forest of Dean Colliers, and Railway Company, at all events their interest will assist.

PS. I will direct Pitt & Co to transfer part of the balance in their hands to you next week and replace the same with local notes from this place.

13 May 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I have desired Pitt & Co to transfer £100, part of the balance in their hands, to the Proprietors credit with you.

On Monday or Tuesday next, I intend stopping the canal for the purpose of reinstating the clay lining etc at the Coatesfield end of the tunnel. I shall also embrace the opportunity for doing some minor repairs in other parts of the canal. I fear the work to be done at Coatesfield will occupy a full fortnight.

On the other side you have particulars of a bill drawn to pay for timber

12 May 1817. To William Price or order at 2 months £25 5.3.

20 May 1817

Copy folio 166: Debit Sir Edward Littleton and Edward L Loveden Esq

24 June 1788. To S Smiths draft on Mr William Stevenson in favour of Edward L Loveden Esq a deposit for lands belonging to the See of Salisbury £243 10 1.5.

25 November 1789. To cash being the full deposit for land belonging to the See of Salisbury £27 4s.

The above is a copy of the particulars of the sum standing in the balance sheet in the name of Sir E Littleton and E L Loveden, respecting which some conversation took place at the General Assembly. I understand the parties for whose benefit it was vested have very lately received it and consequently the account should be closed. Messrs Child no doubt have not paid them without satisfactory documents which I presume should belong to the Company. The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

27 May 1817

I am favoured with your letter of 23 inst. I certainly think the Company ought to possess some document proving the payment of the money for the land taken into the canal belonging to the See of Salisbury, but whether they can insist upon Child & Co giving up the voucher, I am at a loss to determine. It appears by the Ledger that although the money was vested with Child & Co it has never been considered as done with, otherwise it would have been passed to the account of Thames & Severn Canal which it has not. Probably some gentleman of the committee conversant in the law would point out the mode proper to pursue prior to my writing Child & Co.

I believe I mentioned when in London Mr Waters intention of taking an Oxford Canal Boat loaded with Forest Coal from this place into the Oxford Canal and disposing of it on the Canal Wharf there. He has since done so in part. He had her taken to the wharf and paid the tonnage, after which some of the canal people by force took her from the wharf and turned her into the River Thames. I have not seen Mr Waters to learn the full particulars, but I fully expect the matter to terminate in a court.

The canal is at present stopped in several places for repairs. The Basin at this place is also drawn off and the wharf (or quay) wall is being continued. Drawing the water out of the basin produced a fish which I took the liberty of directing to you and hope it proved as good as I wished it.

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

9 June 1817

The usual weekly accounts accompany this.

The water was levelled in the summit on Saturday, and I doubt not but the repairs done there will prove very advantageous in the saving of water. One very considerable hole near the engine was discovered, and I think I can venture to say effectually stopped. The external orifice was about the size of a common hat, but as we followed it we discovered, about 3 feet under the surface of the original ground, a vacuum sufficiently large to hold a man. Many other leakages of less magnitude were discovered and repaired. We took the opportunity of putting in the necessary work for receiving the stop planks ordered by the committee, in lieu of the useless stop gates, and I mean to take the earliest opportunity of proving their utility in discovering faulty lengths.

I duly received your letter of 7th to which I will pay the necessary attention. I do not think there can be a doubt as to finding one third of the money required to finish the North Wilts, provided government will advance the remainder, which I sincerely hope will be the case. I remember an order being given for Smith's map of the strata, and I know Mr Disney has received it, but I very much mistook Mr Disney if he did not say at Freemasons Tavern that he had paid Smith and that the £5 5 was due from the company to him. The packing case for

a globe I do not think can belong to the company. At all events I do not know of any globe belonging to them.

The Staffordshire etc Coal Owners' report respecting the 10,000 tons of coal is correct, being taken from the half yearly statement of the Stroudwater Canal Co. But it is to be observed it includes all coal, a very large portion of which is Staffordshire and Shropshire:

From 9 April to 8 October 1816 16,342 tons 8 cwt and from 8 October 1816 to 8 April 1817 26,088 tons 12 cwt. Nearly two-thirds of the increase came into the T&S Canal.

The undermentioned draft has been drawn upon you to pay for coal:

4 June 1817. To Hughes & Powell or order at 2 months £33 14s.

I will thank you for a blank receipt to fill up for my dividend per the guard.

16 June 1817

The cash account and other weekly papers are enclosed.

I have been turning the subject of the proposed transfers in my mind in order to commit to paper, and a very material question arises which I shall be glad to have answered viz at what price per share the 1140 red shares are to be carried to stock

23 June 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

Having some considerable payments to make along the line of canal next week without any great expectations as to the receipts, I have retained a larger balance to meet such demands than I otherwise should. Upon my return I shall transfer such portion as may not be required at this place. Below are particulars of a draft drawn upon you to pay for coal.

18 June 1817. To Parkend Coal Co or order at 2 months £44 16 10.

1 July 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I have also sent my receipt for the dividend upon T&S shares £4 10s which amount I have passed to your debit in the cash account

9 July 1817

Enclosed you have one £20, six £10, four £5, total £100 to the credit of the T&S Canal Co, the receipt to be pleased to acknowledge per return. I have also directed Pitt & Co to transfer £200 to you to credit of same account. I have heard Mr Walters has succeeded in obtaining a wharf at Oxford under the Commissioners of Sewers, with a promise of another if the one alluded to is found insufficient. I am also informed Bilston Coal is advanced 1s per ton and Wednesbury 2s per ton at the pits. If these reports are correct, I fully expect a brisk Forest Coal trade very shortly.

The weekly papers you have herewith.

14 July 1817

I am duly favoured with your letters of 8th and 10th inst. I hope Mr Crowdy has satisfied the Commissioners appointed to lend the Exchequer Bills for employing the poor, so as to ensure a loan for completing the North Wilts Canal.

I purpose commencing putting in the aqueduct at Latton the first Monday in August.

The cash account and weekly papers are enclosed.

23 July 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

I beg leave to lay before the Committee the following particulars of a subject I had reserved for their consideration at the meeting appointed to be held at this place in September, as the business could, if found necessary, be better investigated. Such meeting being doubtful in consequence of the absence of some of the members, I have concluded, upon its being laid

before the Committee on the 31st inst. Some time since, a boat belonging to William Phipp (a man whom the Committee fined £2 for endeavouring to defraud them of tonnage last year) loaded a quantity of coal for Radcott for which he brought a certificate of the delivery at that place and received the drawback of 2s per ton. Some months afterwards I was informed 3 tons, part of the cargo, was bought back in the boat and delivered at Buscot to Levi Lewis, steward to Mr Loveden, the T&S Co being thereby defrauded of 2s per ton upon those 3 tons, the Stroud Co 6d per ton and the Lydney Railway Co 2s 6d per ton. Finding upon enquiry the information I had received was correct, I gave William Phipp notice that in future he would not be allowed the bounty upon coals he might carry down the River Thames until the Committee's pleasure upon the fraudulent transaction was known. And I must here beg leave to remark that, unless the business is treated in a serious manner, the drawback certificate will become a mere farce and the Company liable to be continually defrauded. In consequence of the above I understand Mr Loveden has taken the business up for Phipp and has written one letter to Mr Waters and another to the Stroud Company stating that I am injuring those parties as well as the T&S Co, by endeavouring to create a monopoly, than which nothing can be more unjust or untrue. He likewise, as I understand, insinuates that I participate in the advantages derivable therefrom, upon which I presume I need not make any observation.

28 July 1817

Enclosed you have the cash accounts and weekly returns. I have directed Pitt & Co to transfer £100 to credit of the Proprietors account with you.

I wrote you on the 23 inst to which beg leave to refer you. I have now enclosed a blank certificate in order to show the proof required of the coal having been delivered to places to which the Company allows the drawback prior to such drawback being paid. Without some signal mark of the Company's displeasure being shown in the case of Phipp, they will become perfectly useless in a very short time and the Company liable to be continually defrauded.

4 August 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

I perceive by the Oxford Paper another meeting is called upon the subject of the Wilts & Berks continuing their canal from Abingdon to Aylesbury. Tomorrow I shall commence the aqueduct at Latton, for doing which I hope to have favourable weather.

11 August 1817

The cash account and weekly return are enclosed.

The cutters are getting out the place for putting in the aqueduct at Latton, and as every material for the work is ready at the spot, I hope speedily to get it executed. I have had a stank made across the mill stream above and below the work and diverted the water into the canal and out again for the supply of the mill which otherwise must have been stopped and of course been paid damages which would have been rather serious, whereas the expense of diverting the stream will not exceed £5.

16 August 1817 Letter from William Crowdy

I beg to inform you that at the meeting yesterday relative to the proposed extension of the Wilts & Berks canal to the Grand Junction, it was decided, after first adding to the committee the Marquess of Buckingham, the Earl of Bridgwater, the Earl of Macclesfield, the Lord De La Zouche and Earl Nugent, that the mode of Junction and line of communication should be reconsidered and that the committee should be requested to call at such time as they should think proper and report to another general meeting the most eligible mode of accomplishing the object.

From the course taken at the meeting the subscription was not opened and the consequence is that the proposed application to Parliament must stand over the ensuing session.

16 August 1817

The weekly accounts are enclosed. I have drawn upon you at 2 months dated 11 inst to Thomas Ball for £48 to pay for coal and I have desired Pitt & Co to pay you £100 I shall be obliged by knowing whether the Committee meet here on 1 September in order that the boat may be sent from here in proper time to meet them at Lechlade, which must not be later than Tuesday the 26th

25 August 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I will thank you to pay Pole Thornton & Co £26 6.3 on account of Bengough & Co Bristol in the name of Richard Miller, and charge the same to the debit of Proprietors of T&S Canal. It is for a draft drawn by C Callen on the Company for Tenby Coal which Bengough & Co sent Mr Miller to receive and pay as above on their account.

The weather prevents the building of the aqueduct at Latton proceeding as fast as could be wished. The water in the part excavated is so excessive as to require the aid of horses to work the screw pump night and day. The masons commence laying the foundations this day. The Oxford Journal contains some particulars respecting the Wilts & Berks and proposed Abingdon & Aylesbury Canals worthy of notice.

8 September 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. The aqueduct at Latton I expect, if the present weather continues, to have finished by the latter end of this week. It will be necessary to unite the basin wall with the walls of the aqueduct in order to keep the mill stream in its proper course. This, together with the foundation of the bridge, I purpose proceeding with as fast as circumstances will allow. I perceive by the Oxford Journal the North Wilts Co are about going forward with their canal.

6 October 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I have drawn upon you as under to pay for coal.
10 September 1817. To Parkend Coal Co or order 2 months £93 14 5
4 October 1817. To Hughes & Powell or order 2 months £33 14.
Will thank you to send the Bankers book.

20 October 1817.

Herewith you will receive the half yearly statement ending 6 inst, balance sheet of ledger, Bankers book, 2 weeks cash accounts, 2 weeks returns of arrivals etc, 2 Oxford Journals. I directed Pitt & Co to transfer £100 to you which I presume they have done. Finding the water in the summit level very fast, I ordered the stop planks to be put in, in different parts, in order to discover which length was most defective. I am happy in being able to say that the length from Coatesfield round house to Daneway Lock maintained its level or nearly so, leaving the channel to be tolerably watertight, at that height being about 3 ft 4 ins. The principal leakage appears to be between Bridge number xxvi and Bridge number xxix, a great part of which length must be repaired early in the ensuing spring. I hope soon to see an increase in the water, which is a present very low in the brooks and springs, as there are orders for very considerable quantities of coal to go down the Thames.

5 November 1817

The cash accounts, weekly returns etc are enclosed. I am sorry to say the late rains have not made that alteration in the springs that I anticipated and consequently the water in the summit

continues rather short, but I hope soon to see it improve as the demand for coal through and along the line of the canal is very considerable

I find instead of the wharf lately occupied by the T&S Co at Lechlade being taken by the Oxford Canal Co as reported, it is taken by two persons with a view of selling coal there in place of Mr Walker, who I believe to be declining the trade. The coal of course will pass through the T&S.

10 November 1817

The cash account and weekly papers are enclosed.

I expect the present week's importation of coal into the canal will be very considerable, the demand for which is very great, and I trust the result will be a productive half year's tonnage.

17 November 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I understand the springs in the tunnel are considerably improved so that I hope to find the water in the summit level daily increase.

The following drafts have been drawn to pay for coal etc since my last advice.

11 November 1817. To J M Child or order at 2 months £23 12 9

15 November 1817. To Hughes & Powell or order at 2 months £33 40

22 October 1817. To George Rogers or order at 1 month to pay Dean & Chapter of Bristol Trespass £6 17 2.

24 November 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

I am making every possible arrangement to place a stock of coal on Lechlade wharf to meet a frost. I am sorry to observe the late rains subsided before the springs were fully broken.

The undermentioned bill has been drawn to pay for coals:

20 November 1817 To Thomas Ball or order at 2 months £30

1 December 1817

The cash account and weekly papers are enclosed. The weekly return exhibits a good import and export of coal. The weather at present has every appearance of increasing water in the summit.

8 December 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

I am sorry it is not in my power to comply with your request respecting a map of the T&S Canal, not having one of the description you wish. I observe upon reference there were only two at the period Mr Newman became agent, and I think they were given to some of the proprietors, but I am not certain. I have searched the iron chest and every likely place, but to no purpose. I have sent one of the first that was executed, of which I have several more, but it is not from the plate you wished.

I expect every day to be called upon to settle for building the aqueduct at Latton together with some other approaching payments, otherwise I should have directed Pitt & Co to transfer part of the balance in their hands to you.

PS. I am in possession of the plate itself of the plan you wish.

15 December 1817

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I have drawn upon you as under to pay for coal.

The summit level at length begins to feel the effects of the late rains and I hope in a few days the boats will carry full cargo.

10 December 1817. To Parkend Coal Co or order at 2 months £125 18 4.

11 December 1817. To Hughes & Powell or order at 2 months £66 17 7.

I believe I mentioned when in town that I should be under the necessity of coming up again the latter part of November upon business relating to the arrangements of the late Mr Thistlethwaite's affairs, the period appointed for commencing which is settled for Monday 22 inst when it will be requisite for me to attend.