

Thames and Severn Canal Company: Letters Reporting Activities in 1824 (Gloucestershire Archives TS/224)

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

Coal imports in last year considerably higher than any former year.
Richard Miller disposing of his barges and boats, including Neptune, but still in debt.
Concern about effect on trade of proposed Stratford & Moreton railroad.
Proposed Thames & Isis Steam Navigation Co was later dissolved.
Reduction in inland duty paid on coals going below Staines on the River Thames.
Maintenance work to include replacing lock gates and repairing the summit level.
Condition of summit found to be worse than expected, and shortage of manpower due to other major projects in the area.
Proposal to convert the warehouse at Lechlade into a malthouse.
An acrimonious meeting of the Stroud Canal Committee agreed to reduce tolls to combat railroad from the Severn, but railroad promoters want a bigger reduction.
Looking forward to good trade as canal is full of water at a much earlier period than usual, but trade disrupted by floods on the Thames.

6 January 1824

Enclosed you will receive the halves of sundry cash notes value £100, remaining parts per coach this day.

6 January 1824

I returned home from closing the wharf accounts late on Saturday evening and found your letter of 31st December accompanied by sundry entries of payments etc to which due attention shall be paid. Herewith you will receive the weekly papers and enclosed the corresponding parts of cash notes remitted per post this day value together £100 to the credit of the T&S Canal Co.

Another lad drowned in the canal at Chalford on Thursday last.

12 January 1824

Usual weekly papers are enclosed. I have directed Messrs Pitt & Co to pay you £100 to the credit of the T&S Canal Co. Coals continue to arrive sparingly.

4 February 1824

I reached home on Saturday evening and found the business had gone on in the regular course during my absence. The meeting of the Commissioners of the Thames is fixed for the 11th instant at Henley, of which I have appraised Mr Lane by sending him the Oxford Paper containing the advertisement covering the meeting.

I shall pay the Churn millers and make other payments next week after which I will remit such portion of the balance remaining as the business will allow.

I am happy to say the statements of coal imported etc for the past year exhibit a very considerable increase in quantity beyond any former year; the demand is now becoming slack and I do not expect the late advances can be maintained much longer.

The weekly accounts in arrears are now enclosed together with the proprietors Old Register which it appears the Clerk to whom the forwarding of it was entrusted omitted doing at the time.

9 February 1824

The usual weekly papers accompany this.

I have directed Messrs Pitt & Co to pay you £100 during the present week. I pay the Churn millers at Cirencester this day.

1 March 1824

I duly received yours of 24th February. Enclosed you have the usual weekly papers. I hope the measure proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer respecting coals will be carried into effect as it will enable inland coals to be taken into the London market at a reduction of 9 shillings per ton, a circumstance I trust that will cause no inconsiderable quantity to pass through this canal. I fully expect a trial will be made as soon as the reduction is made certain.

8 March 1824

Usual weekly accounts are enclosed. The return of arrivals and departures of vessels begins to feel the effects of the late mild season, and I much fear the number will continue to decrease. I understand it is nearly the same upon most canals dependent upon on a coal trade alone.

Mr Miller has commenced as auctioneer upon his own stock or, as he terms it, "Barge Stock", two of his barges he has sold (or I rather think made over to persons for money due to them) and they are broken up. He has now left:

1 T&S sized canal boat worth about £35

1 W&B sized canal boat worth about £15

1 Severn barge worth about £35

exclusive of the Neptune, respecting the sale of which I enclose a hand bill and which all together may produce £100, a sum that will go but a small way in paying his debts.

15 March 1824

Usual weekly papers are enclosed. It is truly lamentable to have so little trade while the canal is overflowing with water.

I understand Mr Miller did not dispose of property sufficient to pay the expenses of the day.

22 March 1824

The corresponding parts of three £10 notes sent per post this day you have enclosed £30 also draft W Harvey on Chiles & Co £48 8 and draft Gurney & Co on Barclay & Co £23.11 to the credit of the T&S Canal Co.

I am duly favoured with your letter of 18th. 50 shares sold by Mr J Fell to Mr Palmer are all of the best sort.

Coals being sold (at least the sort I calculate for the London Market) in the Forest by weight and in London by measure, it will be necessary to ascertain some fact before anything in the shape of an accurate calculation can be made out, which I hope to be enabled to do previous to the General Meeting next month.

The last week's imports are rather more cheering than of late. The consumption of coal by steam engines increases fast.

I am informed it is in contemplation to continue the Stratford & Moreton Railway to communicate with the Wilts & Berks Canal. The effect it would have on the T&S I am not at present in possession of particulars sufficient to ascertain, but it must be most narrowly watched if brought forward which I presume it cannot this session.

22 March 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of three £10 cash notes, the corresponding parts per coach this day.

29 March 1824

The corresponding parts of cash notes remitted per post this day are now enclosed amounting to £80, also draft G Franklin on D Davies, accepted at ?? pole & Co London, £67 7. Total £147.7 to the credit of the Proprietors.

An advertisement appeared in the Gloucester Journal of this day for red or best black T&S shares. Are you aware of any for sale and price? If you are I should be obliged by your informing me.

29 March 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of 8 £10 cash notes, the remaining parts per coach this day.

31 March 1824

Enclosed you have drafts Cox & Co Oxford on Jones Lloyd & Co London for £55 18 11 to the credit of the T&S Canal Company.

I have written Mr Dunsford respecting Mr Littleton's shares and will inform you upon receiving his reply.

5 April 1824

I have this morning received a letter from the Clerk of the Wilts & Berks Canal stating 24 shares to stand in the name of Mr J Littleton in that canal. He also says the price now asked in town for W&B shares is £11 and £11 5. I however am informed Mr Raine sold 100 on Wednesday last by auction at £10 each.

In consequence of this being the last day of the T&S half year and several vessels not having completed their voyages, I shall defer sending the cash accounts till Monday next. I go to the different wharfs tomorrow. I should have done so last week but having the roof of my house off and every thing (both furniture and persons) exposed to the mercy of the weather I delayed it until I could see something like security from the rain and which I am happy to say will be effected this day.

I will thank you for the Bankers book as soon as convenient.

13 April 1824

I now enclose the remaining halves of cash notes remitted by post this day, nine at £20 and ten at £10, total £280 to the credit of the Company. You will also receive the usual papers for the two last weeks. I am proceeding with the half yearly accounts and hope to have them ready to forward you the early part of the ensuing week. In consequence of many of the boats being thrown out of employ early in the season, (as mentioned in a former letter), the gross amount of tonnage will fall far short of what I at one period anticipated. The Bankers book etc arrived safe.

Miller's eldest boy (the half idiot) died last week.

13 April 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of sundry cash notes value £280 - the corresponding parts per coach this day. I was prevented forwarding the above yesterday owing to the non arrival of a salt vessel, the tonnage arising from which is included in the year ending 5th instant but the exact amounts could not be ascertained till her return which did not take place in time for the post.

19 April 1824

Herewith you will receive the corresponding parts of cash notes remitted per post this day, one £20 - £20, three £10 - £30, one £5 - £5, total £55 to the credit of the T&S Company. You will also receive with this the following papers:

Balance sheets of T&S Ledger.

Half Yearly statement of receipts and payments to 5th instant.

General statement of the affairs of the T&S Co.

Cash Account, Weekly Return, Bankers Book. The net proceeds of the last half year although not equal to what I at one period calculated they would be, still surpass those of any corresponding period for some years and will allow of a dividend for the year as under:

Balance to October 1823 - £1181.10.1

to April 1824 - £1924.15.11

Total.....£3106.6 - .

The list of Proprietors I will bring with me.

19 April 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of cash notes value £55, the remaining parts per coach this day together with the Half Yearly statements etc. Stroud Canal dividend £19.

26 April 1824. Letter from Charles Dicks, Brimscombe Port.

Not being certain that you would have time to call upon Mr Jeffery and conceiving the following communication copied from his return received this morning to be of importance, I thought it proper to lose no time in transmitting it to you.

Letter from Joseph Jeffery: One of the gentlemen belonging to the Thames & Isis Steam Navigation Co is now here at the New Inn. He has with him an engineer and another. He has been with me a few hours and much conversation passed respecting trade etc. Everything he tells me is arranged and they are going to commence business almost immediately. I have not time nor room to say more now.

11 May 1824

Enclosed you have the two last weeks' papers. Nothing out of the common course of business occurred during my absence. I will reduce the present balance of the cash account by a remittance next week. I find the person who came here respecting the Steamboats is very sanguine as to the result. Mr Leach is written to respecting the inland duty upon Coals and if his reply proves satisfactory, those for Mr Lane and yourself shall be immediately attended to.

May I trouble you to allow your porter to take Mr Palmer's parcel and receive 5 shillings for me.

13 May 1824. Letter from Stephen Leach to John George

In reply to your letter I have to inform you that I have received instructions to collect but one shilling per ton Kings duty instead of ten shillings as formerly and 1 shilling 3 pence per ton City duty on coals coming below Staines from and after 5th April last, but my instructions are also to oblige the parties paying the duty to enter into Bond (a copy of which I am furnished with) to pay the difference between the present and former duty in case the Bill now before Parliament should not pass into a law The bond is to be drawn on a 20 shilling stamp in addition to which I am to demand from the parties the sum of £2 1 0 to be transmitted with the Bond to the solicitor to the Customs and carried to the Crowns Account.

If your consignment would not admit of the above expense and trouble (for I apprehend you must execute the Bond on behalf of the Company) I will send you a line when I receive the new instructions which will no doubt be given when the Bill altering the duties passes. It has I believe just passed the House of Commons.

17 May 1824

The remaining parts of cash notes remitted per post this day are now enclosed value £110 to the credit of the Proprietors of the T&S Canal, the receipt be pleased to acknowledge. The

weekly papers, together with a copy of a letter from Mr Leach upon the subject of the Inland Duty upon Coals are also enclosed. The expense of entering into Bond etc will of course prevent that for Mr Lane and yourself etc being sent during the pending of the Bill for the Reduction of the Duty, but it shall be attended to the moment the Act is passed. I am glad to see the whole of the salt duty is to be taken off, as I think it will tend to increase the consumption very materially.

17 May 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of sundry cash notes value £110, the corresponding parts per coach this afternoon.

24 May 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

Observing in the newspapers the “Thames and Isis Steam Navigation Company” had opened an office (64 Broad Street), I have addressed a letter to the secretary Mr Lynd requesting him to furnish me with such information of the intended plans etc as may enable me to answer the enquiries continually made to me upon the subject, and should his reply contain any new matter, you shall be made acquainted therewith.

Whitsuntide being the usual period for stopping the Wilts & Berks, Kennet & Avon and other canals for repairs, I have arranged with the Stroud Company for stopping theirs and this on the 7th June for the same purpose, and preparations are making accordingly. I have the heaviest pair of lock gates upon the canal to reinstate, and unfortunately our principal carpenter is taken seriously ill and I much fear I shall be deprived of his services at the time if not forever.

On the other side you have particulars of drafts drawn to pay for coal and for the new roof to the house I occupy. These are the only drafts I shall have occasion to draw for some time.

31 May 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed together with the particulars of the sum of £377 10.5 to the credit of the last half yearly statement for Housage and Wharfage. The carpenter is much better and will I hope be sufficiently recovered to superintend and direct the repairs to be commenced upon next week. I have not yet heard from the Steam Company.

31 May 1824

Particulars of the sum of £377.10.5 entered to the Credits of Receipts & Payments from October 1823 to April 1824 as “Housage & Wharfage”.

At Brimscombe –	On Coal	£217. 8. 4
On Merchandise	41.12. 4	
	On Forest Stone	10 .3.11
	On other Stone	2 11 10
		£271.16.5
At Wallbridge	On Merchandise	1.19.8
At Thames Head	On “ & Coal	2. 3.5
At Cirencester	On “ & Coal	68 15 8
At Cricklade	On “ & Coal	17 9 -
At Lechlade (sic)	On “ & Coal	15 6 3
		£377.10 5

I cannot divide the Coal from the Merchandise at “Thames Head, Cirencester and Lechlade” without the Wharfage books belonging to those wharfs, but if you wish those particulars I will visit them on purpose.

7 Jun 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. The repairs upon the canal commence this day with very fine weather. The carpenter is sufficiently recovered to give occasional attendance at the lock and direct the erecting of two pair of new gates (between this place and Stroud). Mr Jones will renew and strengthen the bottom and sides of part of the summit level. The carpenter at Siddington will repair some of the lock gates on that part of the canal and I purpose, where practicable, relieving some of the ponds (sic) of mud. My principal attention will be directed to the putting in the lock gates below this place so as to admit vessels from the Severn with coal for the supply of the steam engines etc, although from having given timely notice, I expect the stocks on hand will be quite ample. The stocks of coal upon the canal and down the Thames are fully adequate to the demand for the period which upon the upper part of the canal will be nearly or quite a month, but I hope not more than half that time below this place. But for the expenses attendant upon the repairs I should have remitted part of the balance of cash at this place. I expect however the sums I shall have to pay previous to any receipts will make a very considerable reduction in it.

I have sent Mr Lane an Affidavit of the debt due from Mr Miller, agreeable to the instructions of the General Assembly, having previously given him notice that such would be the case if the money was not paid by the 1st of this month, to which he replied (as below) and that is all the notice he has taken of it.

Copy of letter from Richard Miller Chalford 12th May 1824.

Sir, In reply to yours of the 10th inst, I shall do everything in my power to meet your wishes in regard to the discharge of the T&S Co Account.

14 June 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. The repairs at this end of the canal go on as well as expected, but I learn those on the summit level are found to be of greater magnitude than imagined. Mr Jones is likewise deficient of proper men to do the work, none having applied as expected, and as is usual on such occasions, although notice was given in the quarter most likely to produce them, the fact I presume to be, their meeting with a prospect of much longer employ on the Gloster & Berkeley Canal, Haw Passage and Mythe Bridges across the Severn and the roads etc connected therewith, with other roads etc now making in this County. I purpose going to the Summit tomorrow. Mr Jones has written me a letter in which he says "a great part of the joining of Mr McIntosh's work to the old (at Smyrrel) is in the same state as that at Truesbury was last year and positively where he did a length of side as well as the bottom adjoining is as bad as any of it" That new and old puddling will very frequently separate from each other is well known, particularly where a new bottom to a canal is attempted to be united to the old side puddles, and this I recollect was the case of the work in question, but the argument at the period and in which Mr Jones participated was that as the side paddles were tolerably good, the experiment was worth trying. In the event of its not succeeding, the expense would not be thereby increased and the side puddles could at any time be renewed, but where Mr McIntosh renewed both sides and bottom there is no excuse for its failing, and did I know whether Mr McIntosh was in the County or likely to be previous to the Canal being again navigable, I would send to him as I am satisfied he would either come or send and inspect it.

Mr Jeffery has written me a long letter, and I presume he has to you, upon the subject of Somerset coal. All I can say upon the business is that I do not think it the interest of the Company to encourage an article by selling it at their wharf, the tonnage upon which is only 2s per ton against one for which they receive 4s 6d per ton. If Somerset coal finds its way into the markets (which I do not think it can generally) against the Forest Coal, it must be by other means than encouragement from the Company.

17 June 1824

I am duly favor'd (sic) with your letter of 15th. The 62 Red Shares standing in names of the late Sir E Littleton's Executors are numbered 1908 to 1969, both inclusive.

I went along the Summit level yesterday (Tuesday being very rainy) and certainly found much worse leakages than I had anticipated. In mentioning to Mr McIntosh the failure of some of the new work done by his people, I will thank you to say it is that part done by Hughes adjoining to the stop gates on the Thameshead side of Coxes Valley and where I understand there was a deficiency of clay, of which Mr Jones says he complained at the time (I presume) to Coursy, Mr McIntosh's superintendent. Mr Jones has a good supply of materials at the various parts requiring repair but is at present very deficient of navigators, probably Mr McIntosh would accommodate the Company with about a dozen for a fortnight if he was made acquainted with the circumstance, but it must be immediately in order to open the canal again with the least possible delay.

I think it highly necessary that a copy of the Act altering the duties upon coals going to London should be kept in this office for the information of Traders etc. Mr Leach has not yet communicated any alteration, perhaps the Act does not operate immediately.

As the present week's papers (and until the Canal is opened) will be mere blanks, I shall not send any parcel.

I have just received a note from Mr Stone with Mr Campbell's opinion that Sills & Co are liable to an action (and to which he says they can have no defence) for the monies received for the freight of goods in transit at the time of Miller's bankruptcy. I do not expect they will pay without an action being commenced, a very unpleasant circumstance, but I have but one line to pursue:- Mr Campbell entirely negatives Mr Ludlow's opinion.

28 June 1824

The two past week's papers accompany this. The two Canals from this place to the River Severn were made navigable on Saturday last and the vessels are beginning to arrive. I am sorry to say only three men have offered themselves to assist at the repairs of the summit level since I wrote to you, and I have in consequence deemed it necessary to direct Mr Jones not to commence more work than he can complete by Saturday the 10th July with his present number of men, beyond which period I think it would be very injurious to keep the canal shut.

I have not yet heard from the Thames and Isis Steamboat Company. I purpose going to the Wharfs on Wednesday next.

5 July 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of cash notes amounting to £90, the corresponding parts of which will be sent per coach this day.

5 July 1824

The corresponding parts of cash notes remitted per post this day are now enclosed: six £10, six £5, also debit Knapp & Co on Bennington & Co £72 18 10, Total £162 18 10 to the Credit of the T&S Canal Co, the receipt be pleased to acknowledge per return.

I had seen an account of the dissolution of the Thames and Isis Steamboat Company prior to the receipt of your letter of 2 inst. I am very sorry for it and much suspect the Kennet & Avon Canal Co took an active part in promoting its dissolution.

It being so exceedingly uncertain where to meet with Mr McIntosh (the extreme points of the works he has on hand being about 30 miles apart), I have written to him to the Bell Inn Gloucester requesting him to inform me when and where I can see him. The short time the Canal will continue shut (till next Saturday) rendering any assistance he could have afforded Mr Jones useless, and the defects in the work I mentioned being repaired, nothing is left to be

done but to apprise him of the circumstance. I expect another stoppage of three weeks or a month must occur in the summit level this year after corn harvest when men must be more plentiful.

In my letter of 7 June, I mentioned that my principal attention would be directed to the repair below this place so as to be in readiness to receive the Severn vessels at a certain spring tide, the effect of which will be clearly seen by a reference to the return of vessels accompanying this, the whole of which must otherwise have been lost to the canal.

I have directed Mr Stone to prepare a power of Attorney and forward me as soon as possible, and on its receipt it shall be expedited without delay to Messrs Harris & Co.

9 July 1824

I have taken the liberty of sending the papers for Mister Thym undercover to you and which I hope will meet him previous to his leaving Amsterdam. Any expenses I shall feel obliged by your paying and charging me with through the T&S Account or I will repay you in any more preferable way.

12 July 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of sundry cash notes value £110, the remaining parts per coach this day.

12 July 1824

The corresponding halves of cash notes remitted per this day's post are now enclosed amounting to £110 to the credit of the T&S Canal Co, the receipt be pleased to acknowledge. The usual weekly papers also accompany this.

I have likewise enclosed a copy of an advertisement which appeared in the Gloster Journal of this day respecting a projected Tram or Rail road, and some of the parties this day called upon me to state their objects to be directed against the enormously high rates of tonnage charged by the Stroudwater Canal upon coals or goods delivered between Severn and this place and not against the T&S Canal whose concurrence to the measure they hoped to gain. My reply was that the subject was of that description that precluded me hazarding even an opinion respecting it, much less entering into the merits of it, but as there would be a General Meeting of the proprietors held at this place on Monday 16 August I would lay any communication before them or some of the parties might attend.

Bill drawn No 1188 9th July 1824 To Acraman & Jones or order £22

Mr Marsh sent me a message today that Messrs Nettleship & Co have declined advancing him the money on mortgage but as he did not say why and as I have not seen him, I am at a loss to conjecture the reason.

19 July 1824

The usual weekly papers accompany this.

Enclosed you have a calculation of the cost of various sorts of coal upon the Canal and River Thames agreeable to Mr Herrick's memorandum accompanying your letter of 13 inst for Mr Perry's, if this is the calculation those gentlemen required me (when they were at this place) to make for them. I much regret misunderstanding them, as it could have been furnished immediately, but that which I understood them to desire I find altogether impracticable to obtain. Myself and Mr George (Mr Protheroe's agent and who is very frequently at the various wharfs upon the River Thames) have omitted no opportunity of endeavouring to do so, namely the component parts of the cost of all coal sold upon the River Thames in opposition to that passing this canal. I mention this (I shall feel much obliged by its being stated to those gentleman) to explain what would otherwise appear to be negligence and inattention.

I shall be glad to have the Act of Parliament relating to the duty upon inland coal as I think of sending that for yourself and Mr Lane directly if the Act is in operation. I shall also be glad to know to what wharf they are to be sent which Mr Lane promised to inform me. The quantity altogether will be about 24 or 26 tons.

I enclose a copy of an advertisement in this day's Gloster Journal respecting opposing the projected Tram Road. Who put it into the paper or by whose authority the T&S Co's name is inserted I know not.

I shall be obliged by knowing whether any alteration respecting the Committee meeting in the Country has taken place.

Copy of advertisement in the Gloucester Journal 19 July 1824. To the Public. A meeting having been called for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of making a Railroad from the Severn to Stroudwater and the neighbouring villages:- Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Proprietors of Land through which such Road is designed to pass and also the Proprietors of the Stroudwater and Thames and Severn Canal Navigation will be convened in due time for concerting such measures as will give the most determined and effectual opposition thereto.

2 August 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. The resolutions of the projectors of the Tram Road are inserted in the Gloster Journal of this day, and I presume will also appear in The Times newspaper at the same time.

May I take the liberty of troubling you to bring with you or send a blank T&S dividend receipt for me to sign.

9 August 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I am sorry to learn from Mr Lane your intention of not visiting this place this summer. I shall forward the Committee boat in readiness for Friday morning next.

23 August 1824

The usual accounts for the two past weeks accompany this. On the other side you have particulars of a bill drawn to pay for Coals. The gentlemen of the Committee left this place on Monday and Tuesday last. I shall feel obliged by your forwarding the enclosed to Mr Herrick.

27 August 1824. Letter from Thomas Hipsley, Lechlade.

Sir When the Committee of the T&S was at Lechlade, they said that if Mr Watts would take the warehouse at Lechlade for a malt house, they would convert it into one and desired me to bear it in mind which I have done. On the other side you have Mr Watts reply to me on the subject. You will please to observe the ? of malt made there would be sent through the canal as he never sells any but consumes all in his own trade. Mr Denyer being a near neighbour to him could settle it without much expense or trouble and I wish the T&S Co had six more such customers.

Copy of Mr Watts reply to my letter. In reply to your letter concerning the proposed conversion of the warehouse at Lechlade into a Malthouse, I shall have no objection to take them provided they are made convenient and the rent be no more than fair. Should the Committee determine to make such alterations, I should like to be present when the plan was submitted in order that convenience might be attended to and which I must be a better judge of them than most who plan these buildings.

30 August 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of 5 £10 and 6 £5 notes, the corresponding parts per coach this day. Also check J Disney on Gosling & Co £13, Total £93 to the credit of the T&S Canal Co.

I have also enclosed my receipt for the dividend due upon my two shares £2 2 which with a sum received of Mr Palmer on my account 5s, total £2 7s I will thank you to place to the credit of same account and acknowledge receipt.

13 September 1824

Enclosed you have the papers relating to the last week's business at this place. I have directed Messrs Pitt & Co to pay you £100 out of the balance in their hands.

I perceive by a notice in the papers that the Stratford & Moreton railroad proprietors intend applying for an Act to continue the same into a district that in the event of their succeeding will most materially affect if not totally annihilate the sales of Coals at all the wharfs on the River Thames above Oxford. This will therefore require most serious attention.

The projectors of the railroad from Severn into this neighbourhood are indefatigable in their exertions and so extremely close in their proceedings that but little of their intentions made public but, from what I can collect, they do not purpose bringing it farther than Stroud. They will require very narrowly watching when before Parliament.

P.S. I shall commence putting up a pair of new lower lock gates tomorrow at Chalford. This will occupy about a week, but as most of the boats are purposely sent on voyagers which will take nearly the same time to perform, but little or no interruptions to the navigation will occur.

20 September 1824

The usual weekly papers accompany this. I have directed Messrs Pitt & Co to pay you £100 this week. I hope to have the canal again navigable on Wednesday night. The demand for coal down the river Thames is very considerable.

28 September 1824

Mr Watts having appointed yesterday for me to accompany him to Lechlade upon the subject of altering the Company's Warehouse there into a malthouse, will account for the weekly papers being deferred till this day. When I have procured estimates of the expense I will lay the subject fully before the Committee.

I perceive by the resolutions passed on Friday last at the meeting of the promoters of the railroad that they purpose extending it to this place. This will most seriously affect the T&S Co by interfering with what I consider the best part of their canal, namely between Stroud and Brimscombe, in which district a very considerable consumption of coal arises, producing a great revenue to the Company compared with the distance on the canal, and that it is supplied with water without expense. Mr Pelly, the Chairman, informed me he was deputed to wait on some of the Gentlemen of the Committee and I gave him your address. If they persist in coming beyond Stroud, they must be most strenuously opposed in Parliament. The Committee of Proprietors Registers left at this place I will forward weekly with my returns, by which I presume they will reach you without additional coach carriage.

5 October 1824

The enclosed two drafts becoming due on the 8th inst. I will thank you when paid to pass to the credit of T&S account - £50

I go to the Wharfs this day and shall make a further remittance on my return. I am obliged to defer sending the Cash Account etc in order to bring in all outstanding items previous to closing the books for the past half year.

11 October 1824

Herewith you will receive the remaining parts of cash notes sent per post this day: one £50, one £20, twelve £5, also draft H W Pelly on Lewis & Davis £50, draft G Franklin on D Davis 61.12.7, total £356.12 7 to the credit of the T&S Canal Company. Owing to some tonnages

belonging to last half years account remaining outstanding, I am obliged to defer sending the last week's cash account till they come in. The other papers are enclosed.

11 October 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of Sundry Cash notes £245, the corresponding parts per coach this day.

18 October 1824

The usual weekly Returns accompany this. You have also a copy of the report of the Railroad Committee, by which it appears (and as I anticipated would be the case) they have made friends of the Gloster and Berkeley Canal Co by commencing at a Wharf upon that line of canal and paying them a certain tonnage. This I consider a great acquisition to the Railroad projectors, Gloster & Berkeley Canal being in a certain degree the property of Government and consequently powerful in Parliament. I have also enclosed a circular received this day from the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Co office, Bradford, Yorkshire, respecting two railroads, from Liverpool to Birmingham and from Liverpool to Manchester to which a reply is requested by that Company.

On the other side you have particulars of bills drawn. I hope to forward the half yearly statement etc by Wednesday or Thursday's coach.

Bills drawn on J Salt: 12 October 1824 1194 To Geo Rogers or order £6 17 2

13 October 1824 1195 To Acraman & Jones or order £38 4 8

20 October 1824. Letter from Thomas Jones Chairman of the [Stroudwater] meeting.

Your letter of the 16th of August has been laid before the General Meeting of the Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation and they think that their determination on the subject of it cannot be made with propriety until after the question of the establishment of the projected Railroad has been settled.

21 October 1824

Herewith you will receive the half yearly statement of receipts and payments to 24th inst together with the balance sheet of Proprietors ledger to same period. The balance of the former account, although not so great as that of the corresponding half-year, will I trust be fully made up in April next, having a very great demand for coals on the River Thames with a canal full of water at a much earlier period than usual.

I fully intended to have informed you the result of the Stroudwater Canal Co's General Assembly held yesterday, and for that purpose sent a note to Mr Hawker who I learn has been too ill for several days to attend to business and was not at the meeting, nor can I learn the determination they came to respecting the Railway. I have not seen Mr Palmer.

The Bankers book is also sent herewith.

8 November 1824

The corresponding parts of one £20, four £10, eight £5 cash notes remitted per post this day are now enclosed amounting to £100 to the credit of the T&S Canal Co, the receipt be pleased to acknowledge per return.

The Committee of the Stroud Canal Co (to whom the power of altering their present rates of tonnage was delegated by a late General Assembly of that Company) held a meeting last week when the supporters of the present rates were outvoted and a reduction of 1 shilling per ton on coals to Wallbridge carried. Mr Snowden and Mr Wilson have in consequence (being I believe the only persons in the minority) sold their shares (3 each). The promoters of the Railroad have subsequently held a meeting for the purpose of taking into consideration the above reduction and as it is not to the extent they wish have determined upon proceeding with their application to Parliament. It is as singular as true that Dr Darke, a proprietor of 11

shares who has been the most strenuous supporter of the high rates, was the very person who proposed the reduction of 1s. A county election was never carried on with greater animosity and party spirit. Enclose a copy of the Railroad promoters' resolutions. I enclose one of the squibs which have appeared.

8 November 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of sundry cash notes value £100, the remaining parts per coach this day.

15 November 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed.

Every exertion is making to forward a supply of coals along the canal and down the Thames in anticipation of a frost. The heavy rains of last week will, I fear, cause some trifling stoppage on the Thames by raising the water too high for the boats to navigate. Having received directions to attend the meeting of the deputation from the Railroad Committee on the 25th inst, I will bring the bill for the coals sent you with me.

22 November 1824

The remaining halves of cash notes remitted per post this day are now enclosed amounting to £70 and I have directed Messrs Pitt & Co to pay you £100, both sums to the credit of T&S Canal Co. The usual weekly papers are also enclosed.

22 November 1824

Enclosed you have the halves of seven £10 cash notes, the corresponding parts per coach this day.

6 December 1824

Herewith you will receive the accounts for the two past weeks. The flood on the Thames has totally stopped the navigation of that river, but I hope it will be sufficiently abated for the boats to work, if not impeded by frost, in about a week.

I enclose you the particulars of the cost of conveying Bullo Rubble Coal to London for the information of any coal merchant requiring the same. I have no hesitation in saying I think the present obstacle in the way, a want of upward freight, would soon be removed by the establishment of a regular conveyance, the quantity of goods consumed by the manufacturers in this district (and which are now chiefly brought by land carriage) being fully adequate to effect so desirable an object.

The subject upon which the Committee met the deputation from the Railroad Company has occupied the greater portion of my attention since my return, and I think I am prepared to show those gentleman that by interfering with the T&S Co's present rates they will derive no advantage whatever and that a mileage tonnage would not only not tend to reduce the tonnage payable by them upon coals delivered between this place and Stroud but to increase it. I doubt not being able to exhibit this in a manner not to be controverted and for that purpose shall commit it to paper in as plain a way as possible and forward to you in a few days.

I enclose a letter from Mr George to Mr Walker respecting coals which is left open for your perusal after which I will thank you to wafer it and send with your letters to the post office.

10 December 1824

Enclosed I hand you the statement I mentioned in my last letter.

13 December 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. The flood on the Thames having caused an obstruction to the wharfs on the banks of that river in the neighbourhood of Lechlade has tended to

increase the sale of coal at the Company's wharf there. The water I hear is decreasing very fast and the boats are expected to be able to navigate in a few days. One of Mr George's vessels coming from Oxford last week, empty, purposely deserted the course of the river and sailed across the flooded meadows for three miles. The stocks of coal are lessening very fast and the supply to this place is not what it ought to be.

20 December 1824

The usual weekly papers are enclosed. I perceive by the Gloster Journal of this day a meeting of the land Owners and Occupiers, through whose land the projected Severn and Stroud Railway is intended to pass, is called (by a number of most respectable signatures) to be held on the 27-instant for the purpose of considering the best mode of opposing such project. I also observe a scheme is on foot for making a railroad from Bristol to Gloster, Tewkesbury, Worcester and Birmingham to unite with the proposed railroad from Liverpool to the latter place. This (if carried into effect) will I think prove a death blow to the Gloster & Berkeley Canal. At the same time it will be of most important consequence to the "Severn & Stroud Railway" as the two roads must cross each other between this place and the River Severn and of course open a communication from this neighbourhood to almost all parts of the kingdom. After closing the Christmas accounts I will direct part of the balance in Cirencester bank to be transferred to you.

28 December 1824

I did not send the weekly papers yesterday (which are now enclosed) in consequence of attending the meeting of landowners through whose property the projected railroad is to pass, the result of which was a proposition to the Stroud Company to make a further reduction in their tonnage and to the railway promoters to abandon their project upon such reduction being made, leaving it to the consideration of another meeting (to be held in a fortnight) as to the measures they (the landowners) should adopt in consequence of the answers they may receive. The full particulars I will lay before the Committee on Tuesday next. I sent one cask of butter per wagon on Friday last which I think and hope will prove good. The first quantity shipped is unquestionably lost in the Bristol Channel.