

An Attempt to Improve Navigation on the West Fork River

From the date of settlement west of the Blue Ridge until 1840 people in America thought waterways were of first importance to bind the east to the west and to transport the products of the country. In 1750 Washington feared that if the western territories were not given transportation to the east, they would turn to Spain with the Mississippi as their outlet to the sea.¹ As early as 1765 the Virginia House of Burgesses took steps to clear the great falls of the James River. Jefferson in speaking of the Little Kanawha River pointed out that "Perhaps its northern branch, called Junius's Creek [Leading Creek?] which interlocks with the western the Monongahela [West Fork] may one day admit a shorter passage from the latter to the Ohio."² The first settlers on the West Fork River traveled the stream to Fort Pitt to exchange "skins, furs, jerked venison, and other products of the wilderness for ammunition and necessities."³ After the Virginia General Assembly in 1783 and 1784 had been bombarded with petitions to make the Potomac and James rivers navigable above their fall lines---George Washington visited the Assembly in 1784 in behalf of the contemplated improvements---the Potomac Company in 1784 was incorporated.⁴ Washington was the first president of the company "for opening and extending the navigation of the Potowmack River...to the highest place practicable on the North Branch."⁵

In 1790 Rufus Putnam in Marietta, Northwest Territory, was so certain of the future of water transportation that he wrote: "and their [sic] is not the lest [sic] doubt that when the navigation of the Potowmack is compleated with the carrying place to the Monongahela, according to the plan of the undertakers, the transport of goods into the western country will be lowered 50%...Also goods will be moved by the James River and the Great Kenhawa [Kanawha]."⁶ By 1796 the James River Company was collecting full tolls and was showing a profit.⁷ In 1801 goods were frequently boated "as high as Fort Cumberland, whence they are taken by wagons to Brownsville, a distance of about eighty miles."⁸ The writer noted that the cost of transportation per 100 pounds from Alexandria to Brownsville was \$2.50, a savings of \$2.50 in the 100 pounds when brought all the way by land; that the headwaters of the Cheat and the Potomac come together; that "The navigation of the Monongahela is pretty good in its middling state of water for periogues, keels, canoes, and skiffs from Pittsburgh to Brownsville, and thence to Morgantown, a distance of about 100 miles; above this the navigation is frequently interrupted by rapids, but small crafts may go up with difficulty as high as Clarksburgh about forty miles above Morgantown. The West branch of this river in high water is navigable for fifteen miles, and communicates with a Southern branch of the Little Kenhawa [Kanawha] by a portage of eight miles."⁹

The almost non-existence of specie in the young country, a situation which stood in the way of improving and expanding the waterways, ceased to be an insurmountable deterrent after the spread of the idea that banking could be successfully united with public improvements. "A factory, or canal, or some years later a railway, if combined with a bank, could be financed by the money created by the latter; construction was paid by the works constructed."¹⁰ The idea sprang up shortly after 1800 and lasted for "forty costly years."¹¹ In 1809 it was proposed in Congress that the Bank of the United States be replaced by a "general national establishment of banks throughout the United States whose profits should be devoted to public roads and schools."¹² An economy in which barter had provided the medium of exchange was being replaced by one concerned with contracts, negotiable instruments, and other such invisible abstractions. "Money per se was giving way to promises to pay money, most of which were never performed."¹³

A short-lived prosperity followed the War of 1812. In Clarksburg, Virginia, John G. Jackson was turning out wares at his factory at Mile's End and salt at his works on the West Fork River, lumbermen were felling trees, farmers were producing cattle and grain to be sold in the marketplace if there was some way to carry them there. Already Clarksburg had a wildcat bank, the Saline, organized circa 1812 with Benjamin Wilson, Jr., president, and John Webster, cashier. In 1814 the bank applied to the Virginia Assembly for an act of incorporation "in order to promote the navigation of the Monongahela River, the manufacture of salt and iron, wool, cotton, etc., and the encouragement of Agriculture."¹⁴ The Committee on Banks of the Virginia House of Delegates reported on the floor of the House January 5, 1815, that "a prejudice has gone

1 Gwathmey, p. 417.

2 Jefferson, p. 13.

3 McWhorter, p. 159.

4 Hening, Vol. XI, pp. 510-25.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 510.

6 Putnam, pp. 234-5.

7 Gwathmey, p. 420.

8 Zadok, pp. 15-6.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Hammond, p. 171.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 157.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 148.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 247.

14 Haymond, p. 403.

abroad... [that] the policy of Virginia is essentially hostile to commerce and to the rights of commercial men."¹⁵ The committee stated that the area from which came most of the petitions for branches or independent banks lay either westward of Allegheny, between that and the Blue Ridge or just below the Blue Ridge. The same committee recommended that since money may be truly said to beget money and banks to create it, the Assembly charter fourteen additional banks, all of them in the west and one of them in Clarksburg. The legislature took no action on the recommendation. No additional banks were chartered and banking continued to be restricted to Richmond. On October 28, 1815, citizens of Harrison County petitioned the Assembly for the incorporation of the "Monongahela Navigation Company": "We believe that some of the Un-incorporated Banks would willingly accept of a Charter, upon the condition of executing this interesting work."¹⁶

The Virginia General Assembly chartered the Monongalia¹⁷ Navigation Company on January 29, 1817, authorizing the company to open books in Clarksburg and Morgantown "for receiving and entering subscriptions to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars of stock in shares of one hundred dollars each... to be paid for in gold or silver coin or in the notes of such chartered banks as may be approved by the president and directors of the company."¹⁸ Men authorized to open books for the sale of stock in Clarksburg were John G. Jackson, Benjamin Wilson, Jr., James Pindall, George I. Davisson, William Williams, and David Hewes; in Morgantown, John Stealey, Ralph Berkshire, Felix Scott, Thomas Wilson, John Rogers, and George S. Daring.

The charter authorized the company to carry through the plans as projected in the petition of 1815 with the stipulation that work begin within a year and be completed within ten years. The company had authority to improve the navigation of the Monongahela River from Stone Coal Creek to the Pennsylvania line. The petition of 1815 had stated that because the principal impediment is a want of water in the summer and autumnal seasons which required citizens to resort to horse mills or to a journey of twenty to fifty miles to mills on the Tygart's River for grinding, the company could secure an eighteen-inch level of water in the West Fork River throughout the year by diverting water from the Buckhannon River to the headwaters of Elk Creek, a branch of the West Fork River, and by erecting dams and locks on the West Fork.

The Buckhannon River rises in the mountains, according to the petition, and is fed by springs that keep its flow constant. Near the mouth of the river, where it flows into the Tygart's River, it is close to the headwaters of Elk Creek that meanders for twenty-six miles before it flows into the West Fork River at Clarksburg. The plan of the company was to build a dam in the Buckhannon River to cause the water to back up Regar's Run¹⁹, "a gentle stream of little fall."²⁰ From Regar's Run, which is one hundred feet higher than Elk Creek, a three-mile-long canal would contain the water as it tumbled toward the drain of the West Fork River.

The directors were authorized, by the Act of Incorporation of the Company, to build mill dams of such height as they might think proper with a good and convenient lock thereto at least sixteen feet wide and so constructed that there would be, at times of low water, at least eighteen inches depth of water standing in the lock. The company had the power to condemn and purchase one acre of land on each side of the river at the dam sites to erect necessary buildings for mills, the maintenance of dams and locks, and the collection of tolls.

From May 1817 when the books were opened until November 1817 when -- according to law -- they were closed, "great exertions were made to induce subscriptions [of stock] and every doubt which incredulity could invent had to be encountered."²¹ John George Jackson was so

15 Virginia. General Assembly. House of Delegates. Report on Banks Presented to the House of Delegates on the 5th of January 1815.

16 Virginia. Legislative Petitions. "Request for Incorporation of Monongahela Navigation Company", October 28, 1815.

17 Confusion exists as to the spelling of the name of the company because the act passed January 29, 1817, was entered in the records as "An Act incorporating a company for improving the navigation of the Monongalia river, and the west fork of that river." Since this is clearly in error, in this paper the spelling will be Monongahela Navigation Company unless the word appears in a direct quotation.

18 Virginia. General Assembly. Acts Passed at the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia Begun and Held in the City of Richmond, 1816-1817, pp. 103-10.

19 No stream by the name of "Regar's Run" near the mouth of the Buckhannon River appears on present-day maps. A "Reger's Run" exists at present in the southern part of Upshur County. The stream named in the petition may be present-day "First Big Run."

20 Virginia. Legislative Petitions. "Request for Incorporation of Monongahela Navigation Co.", October 28, 1815.

21 J. G. Jackson to Joseph Johnson January 29, 1819.

interested in the project that he declared he would "take the unsubscribed balance of stock when the period for closing the books arrived."²² He did. The company entered into an agreement with Thomas Chapman whereby he would build a "company" dam, slopes, locks, and mill at the mouth of Jack Run four miles below Clarksburg.

After the Virginia Assembly passed a law that increased the capital stock of the company to \$150,000 and authorized that, after three fifths of the stock had been subscribed, the newly established Board of Public Works could supply from the fund for internal improvements the remaining two fifths of the \$150,000²³; and after a member of the Board of Public Works had visited the site of the projected improvements, the stock was thought by some to be a "great thing."²⁴ The Jackson family, consisting of John G. Jackson, Edward Jackson, Edward B. Jackson, Daniel Kincheloe (a brother-in-law of J. G. Jackson), and Jonathan Jackson²⁵--- all directors of the company---controlled a majority, or \$57,000, of the \$90,000 stock held by individuals. In addition to the Jacksons, the following men (in 1819) were directors: James Pindall, William Martin, John Stealey, Lemuel E. Davisson, George I. Davisson, Edwin S. Duncan, Jacob Israel, and Joseph Israel.²⁶ John George Jackson was president; Jonathan Jackson, secretary; John Webster, treasurer.

Differences developed between John G. Jackson and Benjamin Wilson, Jr., old antagonists who had staged warfare in 1809-1810 over the site in Clarksburg of the second Harrison County courthouse, when Jackson was so determined to have the building across from his residence on the corner of present-day Maple Avenue and East Main Street that he carried the issue to the Virginia Assembly which decided that the structure would be raised on land owned by Benjamin Wilson, Jr., near the southwest corner of present-day West Main and Third Streets.²⁷ The die was cast for the second war between the two when Wilson, who owned \$10,000 of the stock in the Navigation Company and served one year as a director, was defeated in a bid for another term as director. Jackson wrote, in refuting that the company was controlled by one family, that some of Wilson's closest friends were directors and that four of the directors were "decidedly opposed to us [the Jacksons] in politics."²⁸ Jackson added that he thought "Suspicion in political affairs to a certain extent, so far as it prompts a vigilance, is a virtue and its indulgence to that extent becomes a duty. But it is radically different from that grovelling spirit which finds its choicest aliment in the defamation of a supposed enemy which to inflict a wound upon him prompts its professors like a blind, infuriated Sampson to pull down the edifice that supports his own reputation and the fame of his best friends."²⁹ In pointing out the need for the improvement, Jackson said that in 1817 he had traded nine tons of pot metal in part payment for a farm he purchased from his Uncle Samuel Jackson in Wood County. "Last spring [1818] he came on to this place and built a boat about fifteen tons burthen to carry down this metal and has been detained ever since waiting for a sufficiency of water. I might add that Mr. Wilson has had boats and pig metal ready to descend the river ever since July and that a quantity of mine after lying there [in the boatyard on Point Comfort?] for twenty months has been recently taken back to my forge and converted into bar iron."³⁰

On March 10, 1819, the General Assembly passed an Act suspending the funding section of the Act of February 1818 and substituted "That the Board of Public Works shall, with all convenient dispatch, cause to be made a survey of the Monongalia river and its branches...and an estimate of the probable cost of accomplishing the same; either by the public Engineer, or some other skilful person approved by them."³¹ After the survey, the Board of Public Works was authorized to subscribe two fifths of the fund for improvement if "they deem it expedient."³² An engineer by the name of Mr. Moore³³ recommended that the work proceed; the state would supply its share of the funds. The company advertised that at a meeting of the directors on July 30, 1819, at the house of Col. Hewes, "It was ordered that the stockholders...pay...two dollars on each share of stock...on or before the first day of September next; also one dollar and one third on each share on or before the first day of December next."³⁴

22 Ibid.

23 Virginia. General Assembly. Acts Passed...1817-1818, p. 119.

24 The Spectator, Morgantown, Virginia, January 9, 1819.

25 Jonathan Jackson was the son of Edward Jackson and the father of Thomas Jonathan (Stonewall) Jackson.

26 J. G. Jackson to Joseph Johnson.

27 Haymond, p. 238.

28 John G. Jackson to Joseph Johnson.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Virginia. General Assembly. Acts Passed...1818-1819, p. 95.

32 Ibid.

33 John J. Allen in a letter, n.d.

34 Republican Compiler, Clarksburg, Va., October 1, 1819.

Rumor tied the Saline Bank with the navigation venture since John Webster, cashier of the bank, was treasurer of the company; accused J. G. Jackson of saying the charter gave the company banking powers; questioned depositing funds of the company in a bank of the type of the Virginia Saline; and suggested that the company was speculating with state funds.³⁵ The president and the directors, according to rumor, were "about to sell the site where Thomas Chapman has been engaged by them to build a dam and sawmill. I hope it is not because the larger stockholders wish rather to purchase than to pay."³⁶ At a polemic held at the Bridgeport Schoolhouse on Thursday, August 26, 1819, to discuss "Would it or would it not contribute to the interest of the country to improve the navigation of the Monongahela River agreeable to the act of the legislature incorporating a company for that purpose?"³⁷ those assembled stated that the law was unconstitutional because it authorized the company to take from individuals two acres of land at dam sites and that the dams would inundate low ground; that without waiting for the survey demanded by the legislature the company erected a dam and a mill (Chapman's); that the plan was impractical from danger, labor, and expense of having to tumble over fifty slopes or pass through as many locks on the way to Pittsburgh; that fords would be flooded necessitating the building of causeways over the river: "People returning in the evening exhilarated at having finished business might get out of a right line and precipitate himself [sic] from the causeway."³⁸ Another polemic on the same subject as the one in Bridgeport was held in Shinnstown (Shinnston) on Thursday, September 30, 1819.³⁹

The effects of the financial panic of 1819⁴⁰ may have been one cause for the stockholders not paying in specie the amount called for by the directors. On July 26, 1819, the directors had ordered the treasurer to admit a credit to each stockholder for such sums which he or they may have or shall pay to Thomas Chapman...so that the sum does not exceed one per cent on each share; on February 10, 1820, the directors allowed credits for sums paid Chapman if the sum did not exceed two percent on each share.⁴¹ This allowed the shareholders to use supplies and labor to barter the sums owed.

March 2, 1821, the Assembly directed that the capital stock of the company be reduced to \$35,000 and that the portions of former acts authorizing the company to build dams, locks, and slopes between Stone Coal Creek and the "company dam" (Chapman's) be repealed.⁴² This ended the grandiose scheme of diverting the waters of the Buckhannon River into Elk Creek. The act allowed the company to construct adequate locks and slopes only on dams already constructed on the river above the "company dam."

The report of the company to the Board of Public Works on November 20, 1821, stated that for an estimated \$2,600 Thomas Chapman had built on a site purchased by the company⁴³ a dam nine feet high, slope, sawmill, dwelling house and grist mill. A precise accounting of the expenses had not been made because the lock had not been built. The company had chosen sites to locate the dams allowed in the law of March 2, 1821, but "Various causes beyond their control have delayed the completion of this duty."⁴⁴

Perhaps some of the directors wished to resign, for the Assembly enacted a law on March 2, 1822, that if directors were not elected at the time prescribed by the law "the said company shall not thereby be dissolved, but the directors in office shall continue until an election can be had."⁴⁵ On April 16, 1822, the directors of the company met at John Webster's office and voted that "Whereas it appears...that from the terms of the existing laws regulating the company, it is doubtful whether said company can beneficially carry into effect the objects for which the company were [sic] created"⁴⁶ it was resolved that the stockholders meet at Clarksburg on Saturday next to take into consideration the surrendering of its charter.

35 The Spectator, Morgantown, Va., January 9, 1819.

36 The Independent Virginian, Clarksburg, Va., August 11, 1819.

37 Ibid., September 1, 1819.

38 Ibid., September 1, 1819.

39 Ibid., September 22, 1819.

40 Jordan, p. 35; White, p. 119.

41 Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1821-1823, II, p. 33.

42 Virginia. General Assembly. Acts Passed...1820-1821, p. 37.

43 Thomas P. Reynolds, John Reynolds and his wife conveyed 10 acres opposite and below the mouth of Jack Run "where the said company have erected mills" to the Monongahela Navigation Co. on April 1, 1820, "when Thomas, then a minor, arrived at lawful age." (Harrison County. Deed Book 14, p. 452). Sites for dams built later were rented.

44 Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1821-1823, I, pp. 61-2.

45 Virginia. General Assembly. Acts Passed...1821-1822, p. 41.

46 Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1821-1823, II, p. 25.

Nine of the stockholders met on April 20, 1822, and elected Edwin S. Duncan president pro tem. They voted to keep the charter and selected three commissioners to contract with John G. Jackson to build seven dams of white oak logs in front, logs of white oak in back 12 feet from the front, the logs in front to batter two inches to the foot, with the space between the front and back to be filled with stones. The dams were to be planked; locks 70 ft. long and 16 ft. wide, and a sawmill were to be built at each site. Jackson was to be paid \$21,000 in four installments, the last when the work was completed. Jackson agreed to have the work finished by December 1, 1823. Jacob Coplin, Daniel Morris, Edwin S. Duncan, John Webster, and Jacob Stealey signed as securities "that the said John G. Jackson shall well and truly do and perform his aforesaid undertaking."⁴⁷

The business of the board during the summer and fall of 1822 consisted chiefly of "ratifying" contracts for the sites for dams and certifying changes in directors.⁴⁸ In its annual report on November 30, 1822, the company cited \$5,530 received by the treasurer from the Board of Public Works and \$11,220 paid to the treasurer by stockholders. A note was added to the report to explain the barter system used: "...it was ordered that payments made by the individual stockholders to the contractor...should be valid. Chapman's contract formed a precedence for this resolution...found to be mutually convenient and beneficial in the absence of a sound circulating medium."⁴⁹ The directors added that had they followed the letter of the law, rather than the spirit, the said quota would not have been paid.

The directors may have feared the work would be stopped, through the efforts of those in opposition, before the dams could be finished, for two petitions "We the undersigned declare ourselves to be opposed to repealing the law creating the Monongalia Navigation Co."⁵⁰ were sent to the legislature. Names signed were those of individuals living in areas south of Clarksburg. Those in the northern portion of the county who opposed the work of the company ---people in Bridgeport and Shinnston areas---sent petitions in December 1822.⁵¹ In addition to objections cited earlier, the petitioners (Benjamin Wilson, Jr., was the first name signed to the petition from Bridgeport) feared the passage of fish would be impeded by the dams, stagnant ponds created would be a menace to the health of the citizens, and water in the stream during twelve months of the year would prevent "the procuring of Stone Coal and Iron Oar [sic] out of the bed of the river."⁵² When the Committee of Resolutions on January 23, 1823, presented the petitions from Harrison County on the floor of the Virginia House of Delegates and recommended that since the Board of Public Works was fully authorized to handle the matter, the committee be discharged from "the further consideration of the subject referred to them", the House agreed with the committee.⁵³

The annual report of the company on November 15, 1823, listed \$3,046 due from the Board of Public Works and \$5,569 due from private stockholders. The company owed Jackson the third installment on his contract, or \$5,150.⁵⁴ The seven dams were not finished on December 1, 1823. One reason for the delay was "the unprecedented state of the waters during those two seasons (summer and fall 1822-1823). The river continued almost constantly too full to permit the erection of the dams."⁵⁵

The Board of Public Works in the spring of 1824 sent its principal Engineer, Claudius Crozet, to visit the works. Fate in the form of bad weather continued to plague the navigation company for Crozet arrived May 29, 1824, immediately after "an unprecedented freshet had considerably injured the works. The waters of the west-fork rose in a few hours to a height

47 Ibid., II, pp. 25-8. After he accepted the work as contractor, Jackson must have resigned as president. E. S. Duncan, Jacob Coplin, and L. E. Davisson signed various reports between April 1822 and November 1822 as presidents pro tem. William Martin signed the annual reports in November 1823 and November 1824 as president. James McCally, the man who called the polemic in 1819 in Bridgeport, signed the annual report in November 1825 as president of the company.

48 Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1821-1832, II, pp. 31-32. Jonathan Jackson lost a directorship through transfer of stock; Edwin S. Duncan resigned. Edward B. Jackson and William A. Harrison were sworn in as directors. Jonathan Jackson continued to be the secretary.

49 Ibid., pp. 22-4.

50 Virginia. Legislative Petitions, November 4, 1822, November 18, 1822.

51 The petition from Bridgeport is dated Dec. 9, 1822. The petition from Shinnston does not have a date but the tone of the document would place it probably in December 1822.

52 Virginia. Legislative Petitions, December 9, 1822.

53 Richmond Enquirer, January 25, 1823.

54 Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1821-1823, III, p. 162.

55 James J. Allen in a letter. n.d.

of at least 30 ft., and even the company dam (Chapman's) which has stood for many years, had been partially carried away."⁵⁶ Crozet found that "As far as the dams, locks, and mills were completed...that the contractor had complied with his contract. There is usually too little water in the river to supply at the same time the wants of a somewhat active navigation, and the wasting power of a saw-mill. This ought to have suggested the propriety of making the locks only 8 ft. wide instead of 16 ft., and of also dividing the lift; by this means only one fourth of the water would have been required for each boat, and...the locks would have been more secure in a freshet."⁵⁷ He must have recommended work to proceed, for after he returned to Richmond the Board of Public Works released the third installment owed the company, a sum they had earlier refused to pay. Crozet reported a log house built at Dam No. 7 and houses partly finished at Dams No. 1, 3, 4, and 6 plus the following:

<u>Dam</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Height</u>	<u>Locks</u>	<u>Slope</u>	<u>Sawmill</u>
No. 7: mouth of Lambert's Run near Simpson's Creek	325 ft.	10½ ft.; slopes to 3 ft.	part of lateral walls completed	completed; carried off by freshet	completed
No. 6: above mouth of Tenmile Creek	285 ft.	8 ft. slopes to 4 ft.	part of lateral walls completed	completed; frame raised by freshet	completed
No. 5: Shintown (Shinnston)	251 ft.	9 ft.	part of lateral walls completed	completed; 28 ft. in length.	frame only erected
No. 4: above mouth of Bingamon Creek	278 ft.	8½ ft.	not started	28 ft. long; not planked	frame erected
No. 3: about 2 mi. below Dam No. 4	259 ft.	10½ ft.	crib partly up	35 ft. long; planking raised by freshet	frame erected and carried off by freshet
No. 2: mouth of Booze [Booth's] Creek	not started				
No. 1: below White Rock	239 ft.	10 ft.	principal crib partly raised	42 ft. long	half finished; carried off by freshet 58

In August 1824, the Monongahela Navigation Company advertised for rent the dam known by the name of the "company" dam (Chapman's), Dam No. 7 and Dam No. 6.⁵⁹ The annual report of November 18, 1824, stated \$1,039.20 as due from stockholders and \$692.80 from the Board of Public Works. The total capital expended on the works was \$18,918.00.⁶⁰

The contractor and the individual holding the greatest number of shares⁶¹ died suddenly on March 28, 1825, at the age of forty-eight years. His son-in-law wrote a few months after the death: "From an examination of the documents in relation to the company, it is evident that it derived all its support, as far as individuals were concerned, from the late Judge Jackson; he was the largest stockholder; the contractor to make the improvements; he paid up all the installments on individual stock-taking liens on the stock, looking to its future value for his indemnity; and that it has been since his death that the affairs of the company have fallen into their present state of confusion. Since that event attempts have been made, and are still making to produce an impression that as a contractor he was in default, and to affix upon his memory the imputation of being a fraudulent defaulter...The sacrifice of health and fortune must be borne, but I cannot silently witness an attempt to add to this the loss of

⁵⁶ Claudius Crozet in "Report on John G. Jackson's Improvements on the Monongahela River", Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1824-1826, I, p. 16.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 16-21.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Clarksburg Intelligencer, Clarksburg, Va., August 21, 1824.

⁶⁰ Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1824-1826, I, p. 57.

⁶¹ 134 shares in 1822.

his fair fame. It is dear to his many friends, those with whom he acted and cooperated for many years and through the worst of times."⁶² Jackson's venture as almost the sole source of public subscription to the company plus his other business enterprises in the lean years after the panic of 1819 "at his death left his princely estate heavily embarrassed."⁶³

Claudius Crozet visited the works of the Monongahela Navigation Company early in August 1825. He found the dams in a state of disrepair and "From the almost incredible power of the freshets to which this river is subject, it is evident that works of a much more substantial nature should have been constructed; while on the other hand, the evident deficiency of water during the summer months, ought to preclude the thought of incurring such an expense for a doubtful object...there is certainly not water enough at all times, for the double purpose of navigation and machinery."⁶⁴

The experience of the company had not ended the determination of Clarksburgers to live on navigable waters. On hearing that the War Department had authorized a survey from the summit level on the Alleghenies to the Cheat River pursuant to the possible construction of a canal, citizens met at the courthouse on June 18, 1825, elected James Pindall president and Edwin S. Duncan secretary. The two men, along with Daniel Kincheloe, were authorized to petition the President of the United States to investigate the feasibility of connecting the Potomac and the Ohio rivers by a canal from the summit of the Alleghenies to the Little Kanawha River.⁶⁵

The last annual report of the Monongahela Navigation Company on November 22, 1825, cited \$19,952.20 expended in the work, \$412.80 due by the Board of Public Works, and \$20,937.20 paid by stockholders.⁶⁶ "In 1829 proceedings were instituted in the Circuit Court by the Board of Public Works to declare the rights and franchises of the company forfeited and vested in the said Board. The dams constructed by the Monongahela Navigation Company were declared a common nuisance and the sheriff ordered to abate them."⁶⁷

62 James J. Allen.

63 Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. V, p. 550.

64 Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1824-1826, III, p. 226.

65 Clarksburg Intelligencer, Clarksburg, Va., June 25, 1825. During the 1820's and the 1830's the woods were full of engineers and surveyors taking the grades of different watercourses. (Browning, p. 201). After publishing in three successive weeks long editorials in favor of a Potomac canal, the Clarksburg Intelligencer on November 22, 1823, announced that the "Chesapeake and Ohio Convention of Delegates" would meet in Washington on December 6, 7, 8, 1823. In 1828 the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was chartered to extend to Pittsburgh; until 1841 work continued on the canal. (Moore, p. 272).

66 Virginia. Board of Public Works. Annual Report 1824-1826, II, pp. 212-3.

67 Haymond, p. 428.

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