

**NOTE:** The original of this document is in the Stevens Family Papers, #1210, at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York 14853.

751016-A.LTR<sup>1</sup>

**TO: John P. Acker**  
**FROM: R. S. Stevens**

Oct. 16, 1875

John P. Acker, Esq.  
Fiscal Agent  
New York City

Dear Sir:-

Mr. Carver and Party have come & gone. He will tell you results. Some of those with him examined our property, both real and personal, carefully in a business manner & are prepared to both talk & act understandingly.

Our business prospects were never better, but no one can begin to realize the troubles & complications the Company is involved in. Often since here I have determined to quit & leave the work of resurrection to some more ambitious man - and each time, decided try a little longer. If the truth were told me, it would not be 1/2 so difficult. But so different is the situation each day proven from what has been told me, that from this forward no statement will be made by me, save what is based on my personal knowledge.

Mr. Carver repeatedly told me & others that the Co. did not owe a dollar for steel rails! At same time notes to nearly \$40,000 were out, one of \$12,000.00 I have paid. Another of same amt is due the 25<sup>th</sup> inst. - another is due Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>. Not one single statement made as to financial status of Co. is proving true. The lands involved, say 90,000 acres, are worth say \$5 per acre (instead [of] \$10). The recent sales said to have been from the ?several lands at average of \$13 are from lands long since sold, and contracts therefor cancelled.

It was insisted that Van Evey or Shortridge had contracts. It turns out otherwise. Both had them & they were respected for six months. The Books of the Co. show a large sum due Van Evey. Can we impeach our own Books, no matter if incorrect? Shortridge's contract was on its face all

---

<sup>1</sup>FROM: Letter Book, "FROM R.S.S. - 1875-1876."

straight. He worked under it for six months, when twas arbitrarily cancelled.

Epperson gave right of way to Co's miners under assurance from both Messrs. Morse & Carver that no coal should be mined, save for company's use, yet thousands of bushels have been shipped to various points & sold.

So with everything - not a pledge kept, not a promise fulfilled. Understand me not as censuring you or Mr. Carver, but stating to you facts, in reference to which some have been badly deceived. Tis useless for Mr. Morse, or anyone else to raise the cry and charge, fraud, corruption, collusion, &c., on the part of Mr. Lamb who made the Van Evey & Shortridge contracts without coming forward with proof. Mr. Lamb has testified and clearly, positively, and most full, acquitting himself of any interest in the contracts, or of collusion with either party. Will Mr. Morse state that Lamb has sworn false? Mr. Jobson, on returning and finding he could not have his own way, determined to make us pay 7° or run short of coal. So he commenced putting up price of mining. Result was he closed [the] mine Friday. I have put a man in charge and am getting our supply from Epperson and Godfrey at 6° per bush. Expect to open coal mine Tuesday, under new management. We can have during Nov., Dec., Jan. & Feby, shipment of from 600 to 1000 cars coal per month, if it can be mined. Our relations with C. B. & Q. are being restored and the old status re-established by which a large business for the last year diverted to Iowa route will be returned to ours.

Our fast train will not be run after this week. Our parlor cars run at a great loss are taken off, our freight and coal cars are being put in good order.

I am ?mesmerizing you with a long letter, but tis right you should know the facts.

When I came here, certain plans of management were agreed upon. Our earnings were to be kept here to meet payrolls, taxes and settlement of previous debts. All drafts on the Treasurer were to be sent thro me, so that I could be kept advised thruout how to meet them. Has this promise been kept?

Drafts are drawn on Treasurer and that Officer told to pay them without referring same to me. To what will this lead? Is it expected that I will allow this to be done, and the monies, for which I am held accountable, to waste away and soon bear the disgrace and stigma of ignorance or fraud?

I am writing plainly but tis the true way. If you and Mr. Carver desire any other course than I am trying to follow, advise me promptly and I will retire.

Respectfully yours,

R. S. Stevens

General Manager

P.S. If this does not ?wrong you, I will give you <?>.