

MS notes written by Henry Pease (1807-1881) for an address given c.1875

Notepaper headed "Stanhope Castle Darlington"

The pamphlet of which the directors request your acceptance – gives so full a statement of preliminary efforts to obtain better communications that I do not deem it right to occupy your time with these. Direction and Extent of the Rail[wa]y state of the district if communication N. of and E.A – population – employment rates of — state facts

The project for a line meets with almost unanimous opposition and ridicule specially from the more influential and how can we wonder when Landlords taught their tenants [*sic*] that they would be ruined as no horses would be wanted - would that some [of] these were living in 1875 when the farmers produce so few horses that a Comm[ittee] of the house to which so many Honourable Gentlemen here belong, applied its wisdom to see how the dearth could be met, but so far as we outsiders are aware the law of supply & demand is a law to which even they must bow. Before going further with the history of the line of Rail[wa]y allow me a few facts as to Stephenson's Character – he was essentially a modest man – of few words but destined to his purpose – having the power of the concentration of mind to the object in hand and not eas[il]y moved from his judgement. Hence the investigation of problems and circumstances – between him and Mr Pease was not unfrequently as it were inch by inch - for on a right determination might depend much of the success of that which the public began to look upon with a heavy scrutinizing eye. Then imagine [*sic*] the business conducted and Stephenson comes with a large family of juniors to partake of the family meal – he is plain George Stephenson better known in his duties as Geordy – he makes no silly affectation of manners – but gives an anecdote or suggests an original question – or teaches the young Ladies a better attention or argues other inferences to his character - the friendship which now commenced and strengthened during their [??] life – 10 years of it.

The Bill for the Railway was thrown out of [parliament] in ——— but not daunted was reintroduced in the following year – but the scheme had so little outside support that but for a further investment of 10,000 at the 11th hour the bill could not have been lodged – success attended the effort and the royal assent given on the ———.

No time was lost in preparations to commence the work which the short-sighted and faint hearted paraded their wisdom in declaring never would be accomplished – or even if made they would [??] the coals that would be carried.

Great was the care and economy which the Comm[ittee] evinced – bringing to bear the business principles of their own undertakings – thus we find the prime mover of the work stating that after years of toil and anxiety that he had never had 1^d reward. Perseverance triumphed and when does it not – and now we celebrate the opening of the line on the 17 of Sept. 1825 – looking back over the intervening ½ century we mark changes and results which many Gent[leme]n here are fully as capable of appreciating as I am. As regards the proceedings on the opening day – I think you will allow me to quote a few extracts from the very interesting memorandum of Mr Meynell the Chairman of the Comp[an]y and of that occasion.