

MSL 8/5

Mrs George Stephenson
Newcastle upon Tyne
England

Mariquita, Colombia April 28th 1825

My Dear Mother

I was much obliged by your kind letter to me, it was just the kind of letter I wanted, it was full of news, every line contained a fact and what rendered it still more interesting they were all about home, and how all our friends were going on- I was extremely sorry to hear of the death of my Aunt Ann, my uncle's family must certainly be badly off- I hope my Aunt Betty's family is all well and recovered from the fever. You must give my respects to them all and let them know I was glad to hear from my cousin Thomas who I hope will loose [sic] no opportunity of writing- I was also much pleased with the letter I received from John Higham & John Burrell. They all request me to answer their letters; only conceive if I was to sit down to write letters to all those who wrote to me I might be kept writing for a month- My friends in England must recollect that where they write one I will have to write a dozen- I let no opportunity pass by when I can possibly have time. I was glad to learn that you attended the Musical Festival and that you were pleased with it. I should have liked much to have accompanied you but I had other fish to fry-

You will I know like to hear what sort of a house we are living in here- I will endeavour to describe it as well as I can. The house altogether is large containing three spacious apartments our furniture consists chiefly of the instruments and rough wooden package cases we brought out from England with us. There are two or three chairs which have the appearance of being two or three hundred years old- One of the rooms Mr Empson has been pleased to call the dining room - it has four corners which by the bye is not universally the case with rooms in this country- in one corner stands the Dining Table, which to hide the roughness of the workmanship is covered with coarse leather- beneath this covering dwells thousands of ants, which sally forth at meals in unconquerable numbers I am quite weary of killing them I soon found it was no use- In another corner of this room stands our wine & spirits it has rather an English look but there is a great contrast between it and the next which contains a large ugly coarse deal box which answers the purpose of a [Cornbing?] for our mules- a fit piece of furniture for a dining room. The remaining corner which I had almost forgot to describe contains a huge, ugly, old, rickety table which serves the purpose of a side board- If we [are] to make any attempt to remove it I really believe it would drop limb from limb. The other room is our office in which we have all our instrument[s] a table for drawing plans on- you may therefore conceive pretty well what it's like- The next room is the one where I make my chemical experiments which stinks with all sorts of gases- Bottles and glass jars stand all round just like a doctors shop- Empson says its the most respectable part of the house and he takes all the credit to himself of having made it so-

I will take care to procure as many fine seeds as I can but if you mean to grow them in England you will have to get a Greenhouse. I suppose you will have one when you go to Bealington but you are not gone yet- There are around this town