

MSL 8/8

St. Ana Silver Mines
near Mariquita June 20th 1826

Mrs George Stephenson
Forth Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
England

My Dear Mother

A letter from England is to me in my present situation like meeting an old acquaintance, and they are rendered so much the more interesting from the scarcity of them, but I will not make you uncomfortable by commencing all my letters with complaints as I believe I have done hitherto with all my friends but I will say nothing more about it, as the period is fast approaching when neither seas or foreign lands shall divide me from my home or my kind parents. My dear father's letter which I received a few days ago, was an affectionate one, and when he spoke of his head getting grey, and finding himself descending the hill of life I could not refrain from giving way to feelings which overpowered me, and prevented me reading on. Some, had they seen me, would perhaps call me childish; but I would tell them that such feelings and reflections as crossed me at that moment are unknown to them, they are unacquainted with the love and affection due to attentive parents, which in me seems to have become more and more acute as the distance and period of my absence has increased. You say you long to see me in England, believe me dear Mother the wish is mutual. It is impossible for me to describe to you precisely my situation: for my own credit I am almost obliged to stay till I receive consent from the Directors to leave, on the other hand I wish most sincerely to reach home to take the weight of business off my fathers back which he so justly complains of; his situation I can readily imagine is a very unpleasant one; but he must endeavour to keep up his spirits a little longer with a hope that he will see me if my voyage from this country should be a speedy one. The account of the opening of the Darlington Railroad pleased me much the description of the scene in West Auckland took me there in a moment. I can imagine the coaches, gigs & people running about in all directions, every one with a gay countenance - I need not tell you how delightful I would have been to have witnessed the performance of the Brusselton Engine with the long Patent Rope which they talk about in the newspaper. I have wondered what the patent Rope was I suppose it is something new since I left: indeed the accounts which I have been able to catch in this country about the grand inventions which have lately come to light in England, quite puts me in bad spirits. I sometimes think that I shall not be able to make up the ground which I have lost and my father in one of his letters tells me I shall be a long way in the background when I return, but we will see - If you have got great things to show me I have got great things to tell you, and perhaps after all I shall have a balance in my favour. When I consider the vast space of country which I have already travelled over, and that which I must yet do to get home, I feel astonished, and yet can scarcely believe I have been two years from home; my mind has been so taken up with new scenes, new people, new customs and in short new every thing that the time has slipped away without my knowing how, yet if I had been asked when I landed