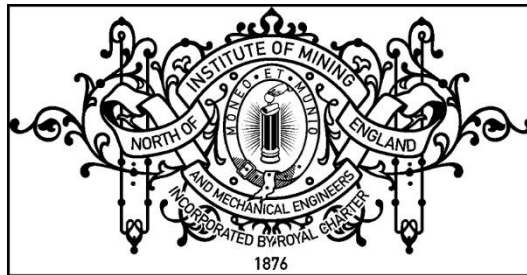


**THOUGHTS**  
upon the  
**HISTORY**  
of the  
**STOCKTON**  
and  
**DARLINGTON**  
**RAILWAY**  
by  
**J.S. JEANS**



**A Critical Analysis**

by

**Les Turnbull B.A. (Hons), M.Ed., MNEIMME**

## The Jubilee Memorial of the Railway System – A Masterpiece of Propaganda

When the North Eastern Railway allocated £5,000 (a third of a million in today's money) for the Jubilee celebrations of one of its constituent parts, the Stockton and Darlington Railway, it was not an act of charity, but a calculated move to promote the image of the company and present the North Eastern Railway as the place where railways began. The idea of celebrating the jubilee of a railway was a novelty. For the ninety or so waggonways of the Northumberland and Durham Coalfield, their jubilees had passed unrecorded; the same was true of their centenaries and bicentenaries. The concept was invented by the North Eastern Railway to promote the image of company: the Jubilee of 1875 was more than a party, it was primarily a publicity event. The workers and the ordinary folk of Darlington provided the crowd at the unveiling of the statue of Joseph Pease, and they were entertained by two nights of fireworks, but the major attractions – the Gala Dinner, the excursions to places of industrial, topographical, or antiquarian interest, and the exhibition in North Road Locomotive Works – were the preserve of the invited guests. Invitations were given to the chairmen and secretaries of all the principal railway companies in the world; the Members of Parliament, bishops, mayors, and town clerks from the areas served by the North Eastern Railway; representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and the principal industries of the North; and the members of the Gladstone's government. The composition of this extensive list illustrates that the motive of the directors was to impress the political and commercial elite not just of the North East of England, nor even Great Britain, but also of Europe and the wider world beyond.

In 1875, James Stephen Jeans<sup>1</sup> was commissioned to write a book, *The Jubilee Memorial of the Railway System and History of the Stockton and Darlington Railway*, as part of these celebrations. It was written in a hurry to meet the pressing needs of the publicity machine of the North Eastern Railway by a young local journalist, not by a professional historian after a lengthy period of research.<sup>2</sup> The book was presented to all the influential guests at the official banquet since it was an important instrument to promote the strategy of the directors. Jeans argued that the railway system of 1875 began with the opening of George Stephenson's line but unfortunately, he does not explain exactly what was meant by the phrase. By 1875, there were two railway systems. The first consisted of mostly private and some public railways which were independent of each other, except where networks had been established, notably on Tyneside. The second was a system of inter-connected railways created mainly by the 'railway mania' of the 1840s which absorbed some of the independent lines. This frenzy of building work and consolidation established a national network which amounted to over 5,000 miles by 1850. Jeans was undoubtedly referring to the latter. However, at its inception, the Stockton and Darlington Railway was part of the first system; it was not until 1841, when it was linked to York and what would later become the East Coast Main Line, that it became part of the second, the emerging national network.<sup>3</sup> Hence the Jubilee was premature; but this was a necessary misconception, otherwise the Stockton and Darlington would not have been a forerunner.

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<sup>1</sup> J. S. Jeans (1846 – 1913) was born at Elgin where he worked on the local newspaper before leaving to work as a journalist in Edinburgh, Newcastle and then Glasgow where he became chief reporter to the Evening Star. He had considerable experience before he was invited to become editor of the Darlington and Stockton Times. He became an expert on the iron and steel industry and later became secretary to the Iron and Steel Institute. He was a prolific writer. He was also a member of the Council of the Royal Statistical Society, the East India Association, and the Royal Society of Arts.

<sup>2</sup> Jeans confessed to the short period of time given to produce the book in his introduction. The directors of the NER decided at their meeting in April 1875 to commission the book which was needed for the celebrations in September.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix – The Development of the Stockton and Darlington Railway – below.

The first railway system, the age of the wooden waggonways, laid the foundations for the second, the national network. In 1939, Charles Lee, the President of the Newcomen Society, observed that by 1825 all the technology was in place for the Victorian Railway Revolution: *'it only remained for the need to arise, and the mining engineers of the North East Coast were able to offer the world at large an approved transport system'*.<sup>4</sup> Locomotives, stationary steam engines, gravity powered inclined planes, malleable iron rails, large bridges and embankments, level crossings, signals, service points, and even engine sheds, had all been used on other railways before 1825. There was no new technology on the Stockton and Darlington Railway with the possible exception of the dandy cart introduced in 1828 to make the lives of the many horses used on the line easier. The brilliance of Stephenson's design for the railway determined that most of the journey from Shildon to Stockton was downhill, where for about twelve miles out of the twenty the loaded waggons could be propelled by the force of gravity without any assistance from the horses: they rested in the dandy cart at the back of the train.

The idea of using a railway not just for mineral traffic but also for general merchandise and passengers was first proposed by William Thomas in a lecture to the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1800, when he provided a detailed report upon the advantages of a double track iron railway for mixed traffic between Newcastle and Hexham, which could later be extended to Carlisle.<sup>5</sup> This concept was well established in 1825. By that date, William Jessop had built the Kilmarnock and Troon Railway and William James had made the initial surveys for the Liverpool and Manchester, the London and Birmingham, and a dozen other railways, all for mixed traffic. The Stockton and Darlington was built as a single line railway with passing places; and, like all of the other colliery railways in the Great Northern Coalfield, the bulk of the traffic, over 90%, was coal. Most colliery waggonways also carried small quantities of bricks and wood for the mines, and manure and lime for the neighbouring farms; and, when the opportunity arose, other goods such as lead pigs and ironstone. Passengers were carried unofficially on some of the colliery lines notably Kitty's Drift which transported tourists who wished to visit a coalmine from the staithes at Scotswood to the underground workings of East Kenton Colliery. Like all of the other waggonways, the Stockton and Darlington was conceived as a traditional colliery railway: passenger traffic was an unforeseen addition and always a small part of the company's revenue – 1% in 1833. Furthermore, passengers were carried on only part of the railway, principally between the main centres of population at Stockton and Darlington; and they were transported entirely by horses until the 1830s.<sup>6</sup> The world had to wait until the opening of George Stephenson's Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830 for William Thomas' vision of the modern railway system to be realised.

The governance of the Stockton and Darlington was unique to the North East of England but not to Great Britain. The owners of the seasale collieries used the traditional system of wayleaves to secure their route which was regarded as a private railway; but the Stockton and Darlington committee secured the right to build a railway through an Act of Parliament and

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<sup>4</sup> Charles Lee, *Early North East Coast Railways*, Colliery Engineering, July 1939.

<sup>5</sup> Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tracts, 149, p.9 – 30.

<sup>6</sup> The first intention of the company to carry passengers was in a minute of the sub-committee dated 7<sup>th</sup> October 1825 which provided that a license should be obtained from the magistrate – Jeans, Memorial, p.80. This traffic, which commenced on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October with the company's coach 'Experiment', was never an important part of the railway which was throughout its existence predominantly a mineral line.

therefore it became a public railway.<sup>7</sup> This railway was also unique in that before 1825 most railways in the North East of England were financed by the coalowners, the producers of the principal traffic carried by their lines; the Stockton and Darlington was financed by the merchant community, the principal consumers of that coal. This situation arose because, unlike the great seasale enterprises further north, the landsale collieries in the Auckland Coalfield were too small, and the distances to their markets were too great, to justify the expense of a railway.

The Stockton and Darlington Act of 1821 was the twenty first since 1800: other public railways such as the Surrey Iron Railway (1801), the Swansea and Mumbles (1804), and the Kilmarnock and Troon (1812) had been established previously in England, Wales, and Scotland; and the last two lines carried passenger traffic. The Lake Lock Railway near Wakefield, established in 1796, claims to be the world's first public railway. However, the neighbouring Middleton Railway to Leeds, owned by the Brandling family of Tyneside, was in fact the first to be built following an Act of Parliament in 1758, many decades before the Stockton and Darlington opened. And it was also the first to successfully use locomotives after John Blenkinsop introduced his design in 1812. So, Jeans' book begins with a falsehood: *'Fifty years ago, there was only twenty-five miles of public railroad open to the world – the Stockton and Darlington line'*. The use of the term railway system was a smokescreen to blank out or obscure the importance of the railways which had existed beforehand. This was later admitted by William Weaver Tomlinson, another employee of the North Eastern Railway, in his epic study of the company: *'It was really the Jubilee of the Railway which the North Eastern directors proposed to celebrate'*.<sup>8</sup> Jeans' opening sentence was the beginning of a masterpiece of propaganda aimed to promote the Pease family, the town of Darlington, but primarily the image of the North Eastern Railway. The book was brilliantly successful and perverted the narrative of the history of the railways for more than a century. The myth was perpetuated by the London and North Eastern Railway in 1925, British Rail in 1975, and in the present century by postcards sold by the National Trust, articles in Wikipedia, and the forthcoming Railway 200 project.

The preamble to the Act of 1821 stated that the Stockton and Darlington was to *'facilitate the conveyance of coal, iron, lime and corn'* from the interior of County Durham to Darlington and the port of Stockton. There was no mention of passengers, locomotives, or the seasale market. The principal traffic envisaged on the railway was coal for the landsale trade with South Durham and North Yorkshire where the merchants financing the line lived. Otherwise, the Bill would have been blocked in Parliament by the powerful lobby representing the Tyne and Wear seasale coal trade. As an insurance policy, Lord Lambton secured that the Stockton and Darlington, which charged 4d per ton per mile for landsale coal, could only charge 1½d for coal shipped from Stockton. The map produced for the Parliamentary inquiry of 1830 into the coal trade with London<sup>9</sup> did not include the Stockton and Darlington Railway because, being primarily a landsale railway, it was not important enough. However, events would show that this safeguard proved ineffective. Once the line was opened, Joseph Pease, Jonathan Backhouse and Nicholas Wood promoted large modern collieries in the Auckland Coalfield to supply

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<sup>7</sup> The S&D was a joint stock company owned by its shareholders whose actions were governed by Acts of Parliament. Although the Liberal Party had called for nationalisation of the railways from Gladstone's time in office, public ownership was not achieved, apart from brief periods during the two World Wars, until the Labour Party nationalised the railways in 1948.

<sup>8</sup> Tomlinson W. W., *North Eastern Railway*, David and Charles, 1967, p. 673.

<sup>9</sup> Report of the Select Committee on the State of the Coal Trade in the Port of London, 1830.

primarily the lucrative seasale trade which became the principal traffic on the railway during the 1830s.<sup>10</sup> There was also an expanding export trade mainly to Europe.

Jeans continues with another outrageous claim. Using the same argument about the origins of the railway system, he noted that *'fifty years ago, the railway interest employed less than three hundred hands'* and emphasised the great expansion of this system which had taken place since 1825 by adding, *'now it employs more than three hundred thousand in Great Britain alone'*.<sup>11</sup> Presumably, he was unaware (or chose to ignore) the fact that a report presented to Parliament in 1792 by the coal trade of the River Wear, recorded 780 railway workers comprising of the following: 40 waggon smiths, 100 waggon and way wrights, 60 enginemen and brakemen, 500 waggonmen, and 80 creasers or permanent way men.<sup>12</sup> Other railwaymen served on the River Blyth but the greatest number by far were employed on the River Tyne. This distortion of the facts was a necessary part of Jeans' agenda – to diminish the contribution of the railway system which had been in existence during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for the greater glory of the North Eastern Railway. Or was he simply ignorant of this early railway history?

In the nineteenth century, local newspaper editors were not usually paragons of objectivity, and Jeans was no exception judging from his description of the town where he worked: he declared that *'as the birthplace of the railway system, Darlington stands unrivalled and alone'*.<sup>13</sup> When the Stockton and Darlington opened, the main line ran not to Darlington, as the name of the company implied, but to the West Auckland Coalfield: the railway facilities at Darlington were principally a landsale coal depot at the end of a branch line. It was not until the foundations of the East Coast Main Line were laid in this area, by the opening of the Darlington and York Railway in 1841 and the Newcastle and Darlington Junction Railway in 1844, that Darlington emerged from the shadows. Before the railway arrived in 1825, the town had a thriving textile industry: indeed, one of the main reasons for building the railway was the need to supply the textile industry with cheaper coal. The development of the iron industry on Teesside in the 1850s led to the opening of heavy engineering industries in the town beginning with the Darlington Forge in 1854 and the South Durham Ironworks in the same year. These were followed by the Darlington Iron Company in 1858, and the Skerne Ironworks and the North Road Locomotive Works of the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1863. All played a part in supplying the enormous quantity of ironwork needed for the expanding network of railways within Britain and elsewhere. From then on Darlington, like several other places, could claim to be a railway town – but not in 1825. However, the diversity of industry in the town meant that Darlington was never a railway town for the North Eastern Railway in the sense that Swindon was for the Great Western or Crewe for the London and North Western. And, having worked as a journalist in Newcastle, Jeans could not have been unaware that the principal locomotive works of the North Eastern was at Greenesfield in Gateshead – not Darlington.

The editor of the rival newspaper, the Darlington and Richmond Herald, regarded Jeans book as *'the dullest of dry books'* which *'omits all mention of the three breakdowns and two accidents which occurred'* on the opening day. He criticised Jeans' *'bald, meagre, and incomplete account of the early days of the line'* noting that *'there is no allusion – or next to no allusion – to the*

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<sup>10</sup> Joseph Pease opened Eldon Colliery in 1829, Adelaide in 1830 and Deanery in 1834; Backhouse developed the new Black Boy Colliery and Wood Eldon Colliery.

<sup>11</sup> Jeans Memorial, Introduction, vii.

<sup>12</sup> The Common Room/NEIMME/Watson 2/2/224: A Statement of the Number of Persons Employed in the Coastal Trade from the River Wear in 1792.

<sup>13</sup> Jeans, Memorial, p.274.

*employment of horses for coal leading*’ when in fact horses were the main source of power.<sup>14</sup> It cannot be without significance that the logo of the company depicted a horse pulling coal waggons not a locomotive hauling carriages: there was a gulf between what existed when the railway opened and what the North Eastern Railway wished to portray as their heritage in 1875. But it was not the transport of passengers, nor the use of locomotives and stationary steam engines, which distinguished the Stockton and Darlington from other colliery waggonways, but its length: being 25 miles long, it was more than twice the length of the longest waggonways, such as Pontop and Risemoor; and three times the length of Stephenson’s first railway, the Hetton Railway. But Pontop and Risemoor both carried more traffic, and the Hetton line to Sunderland far exceeded the Stockton and Darlington in its use of steam power. When the Hetton Railway opened, it had five locomotives, two stationary engines, and five inclined planes on the surface alone; and, in addition, there were two steam engines, three inclined planes, and about 60 horses employed on the railway underground. There were also four large steam engines to connect the underground railway with the surface railway together with an even larger steam pumping engine to keep the mine open.<sup>15</sup>

Commenting in his journal upon the Pontop Way in the Derwent Valley, the distinguished minerologist Gabriel Jars, a member of the Academy of Sciences in Paris, noted that these early railways were very busy lines: ‘...*le chemin est presque toujours couvert de chariots*’. Consequently, the movement of traffic on the waggonways had to be tightly controlled in order to handle the large volume using the line as the histories of the Plessey Way to Blyth and the Willington Way to Wallsend demonstrate.<sup>16</sup> But during the early years of the Stockton and Darlington, when the company allowed access to the track to five colliery owners and six coach proprietors, life seems to have been something of a free-for-all not the exemplar of railway practice that Jeans suggests. A more disciplined order was instituted when the company bought out the coach proprietors and implemented its own passenger services in 1833. Also, the phasing out of the use of horses by the increasing use of locomotives, operated solely by the company’s drivers, heralded a more competent running of the railway in the 1830s.

When the first train set out from Shildon to mark the opening of the Stockton and Darlington, it consisted of the engine and tender, five waggons of coal, one with flour, one carrying the surveyors and engineers, then the coach ‘Experiment’ with the committee and their friends, six waggons with strangers, fourteen waggons with workmen and others, and finally six waggons with coals – a total of twenty eight vehicles.<sup>17</sup> This festive scene involving the general public hitching a ride on the coal waggons was similar to that which had taken place a decade earlier on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1813, when John Blenkinsop’s locomotive was introduced to an animated crowd on the Kenton and Coxlodge Railway near Newcastle’s Town Moor; or the celebrations a few days later when William Chapman’s engine was first tried on the Heaton Main Waggonway nearby. Bearing these facts in mind, it is instructive to reflect upon how the opening of the Stockton and Darlington was received by the local press. To the editor of the Durham Gazette, the paper principally read on Teesside, the event was headline news; but to the editor of the Newcastle Courant, it was not: a short article was wedged between the announcement of the appointment of Mr Porter as surgeon to the Durham Light Infantry and

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<sup>14</sup> Darlington and Richmond Herald, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1875.

<sup>15</sup> Turnbull, Les, Hidden Treasures, NEIMME, 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Turnbull, Les, Recollections upon Stephenson’s Stockton and Darlington Railway, NEIMME, 2022, p 18 – 20 and

Turnbull, Les, The Willington Way – a Rival to the Stockton and Darlington, NEIMME, 2024.

<sup>17</sup> Jeans, Memorial, p.69.

the prosecution of Robert Bailey for keeping a disorderly public house in North Shields. Perhaps this was because steam locomotives were a novelty on Teesside in September 1825 (as indeed was also the railway) but further north, on Wearside and particularly on Tyneside, where locomotives had served the seasale trade for over a decade, the novelty seems to have worn off. The arrival of yet another colliery railway for a group of minor collieries excited nobody.

In the Memorial, Jeans displays his crude understanding of the history of the Great Northern Coalfield and the railways which were its transport arteries for over two centuries before 1825. For example, he writes that: *'Lines of tramways had been opened here and there for the convenience of colliery proprietors; but being private property, they were little known, and never used, by the mass of people, while horses or stationary steam engines were the motive power mainly employed.'*<sup>18</sup> Nothing could be further from the truth. Clearly, he did not understand the difference between a tramway and a waggonway.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the only tramway in the Northumberland and Durham Coalfield was built in 1808 as an improvement to Christopher Blackett's Wylam Way, which had been in operation since 1756; and, ironically, from 1814 all the traffic was handled by steam locomotives – the famous Puffing Billy and Wylam Dilly, both of which are now preserved. Certainly, the waggonways within the coalfield were not used by the mass of the people, but nor was the Stockton and Darlington; and these early railways were well known as being the epitome of railway technology, not only in Britain but throughout Europe, where they were referred to as 'Newcastle Roads'. Jeans is correct to note that horses and stationary steam engines were the principal source of power on these lines although several waggonways used locomotives from 1813 onwards, and inclined planes were also commonly employed. But Jeans apparently did not realise that horses and stationary steam engines, not locomotives, were also the principal source of power on the Stockton and Darlington until the 1830s.

By the time Jeans was born, the Victorian Railway Revolution was well established in Britain, Europe, and America; by the time he was a young man, public railways powered by steam locomotives were common place. However, he could have had no experience of the extensive network of wooden railways hauled by horses or even the early days of the Stockton and Darlington, when horses were still a major source of power on that line. Judging from the Jubilee Memorial, as the editor of the Darlington and Richmond Herald observed, Jeans appears to know little of the great early railways, such as the Pontop with its High Level Bridge carrying the road and railway over the River Derwent, or the Tanfield Railway with its massive embankments, one a hundred feet high and a hundred yards wide. During the second half of its independent existence, in the 1840s and 1850, the Stockton and Darlington developed into a very busy, trans-Pennine, mineral railway chiefly as a result of the development of large seasale collieries in the Auckland Coalfield, and the spectacular growth of the iron industry in South Durham, Cleveland, and Cumbria. By the time Jeans first visited the Stockton and Darlington Railway, it was a completely different enterprise to the colliery waggonway created in 1825. Jeans' account is written from the perspective of 1875, when the Stockton and Darlington had been absorbed into the empire of the North Eastern Railway. This point, together with his ignorance of the civil engineering and the huge volume of traffic on the waggonways, is important to recognise. Perhaps it explains why Jeans totally exaggerated the importance of the early years of the Stockton and Darlington, in particular the role of locomotives and passenger

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<sup>18</sup> Jeans, Memorial, p.65.

<sup>19</sup> On a tramway the flange guiding the waggon was on the rail giving it an 'L' shape section; on the waggonway the flange was on the waggon wheels and the rail was 'T' shape in section.

traffic, to establish the narrative of history which the North Eastern Railway wished to create. And as a consequence, dismissed over two hundred years of railway history as irrelevant.

The true narrative of railway history does not begin with George Stephenson, Edward Pease and the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The new technology of the wooden railway was introduced by Huntington Beaumont from the Midlands, who built three short lines from Bebside, Bedlington and Cowpen to the River Blyth at the beginning of the seventeenth century. By 1621, there were at least five railways on Tyneside from collieries at Benwell, Elswick, Whickham, Jesmond and Heaton.<sup>20</sup> When William Gray wrote the first history of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1649, railway workers were a well-established part of the community;<sup>21</sup> and their names start to appear in the parish records beginning in 1635 with a lady, Widow Howborne, a level crossing keeper on the Whickham Grand Lease Way. Accidents on the railways are also recorded: on the same railway the son of Robert Middlemast was 'slayne with a waggon' in 1650.<sup>22</sup> The records of the Duke of Northumberland for Whitley Colliery in the 1670s reveal the enormous advantages to be gained by transferring from road transport operated by the local farmers using their wains and carts, to a railway owned by the shareholders of the colliery: an 80% saving in manpower, a 73% saving in horsepower, nearly a threefold increase in the capacity of the system, and, because the railway now owned the waggons, complete independence of the farmers.<sup>23</sup> This was the First Railway Revolution. By the eighteenth century, all the major seasale collieries in Northumberland and Durham were using railways. The volume of traffic carried by these lines far exceeded that carried by the Stockton and Darlington in its early days; as did the civil engineering, notably the size of the larger bridges and embankments.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, these early railways were a source of wonder to the scientific community of the eighteenth century both in Britain and Europe – men of the calibre of Gabriel Jars from Paris, William Smith the father of geology, the great antiquarian Dr William Stukeley, the Midlothian polymath Sir John Clerk, and others. Towards the end of the century horses became more expensive to use. Therefore, improvements were made to the railway to make them more efficient by replacing the wooden wheels and wooden rails by iron wheels and iron rails. Then horses were increasingly replaced by machinery – inclined planes, stationary steam engines and locomotives. All of this technology was in place by 1825 for the Victorian Railway Revolution to take place when the need for a more diverse railway system, carrying merchandise and passengers, as well as mineral traffic, arose. Then this new technology, developed by the mining engineers of the Great Northern Coalfield, spread across the globe, and changed not only the transport system but also the civilisations of the world.

On the evidence of the *Jubilee Memorial of the Railway System*, James Stephen Jeans was a competent journalist and statistician, but his skills as an historian were limited, as was his knowledge of the Great Northern Coalfield and its railways. His book proved very effective in corrupting the narrative of railway history but it is neither a balanced nor scholarly *History of the Stockton and Darlington Railway*. However, Jeans provided what his paymasters had demanded – a masterpiece of propaganda.

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<sup>20</sup> Turnbull, Les, *The Willington Way – a Rival to the Stockton and Darlington*, NEIMME, 2024.

<sup>21</sup> Gray, William, *Chorographia or a Survey of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1649*, p.84.

<sup>22</sup> Lewis, M.J.T., *Early Wooden Railways*, R.K.P., 1970, p.95

<sup>23</sup> Turnbull, Les, *The Railway Revolution*, NEIMME, 2019, Chapter One.

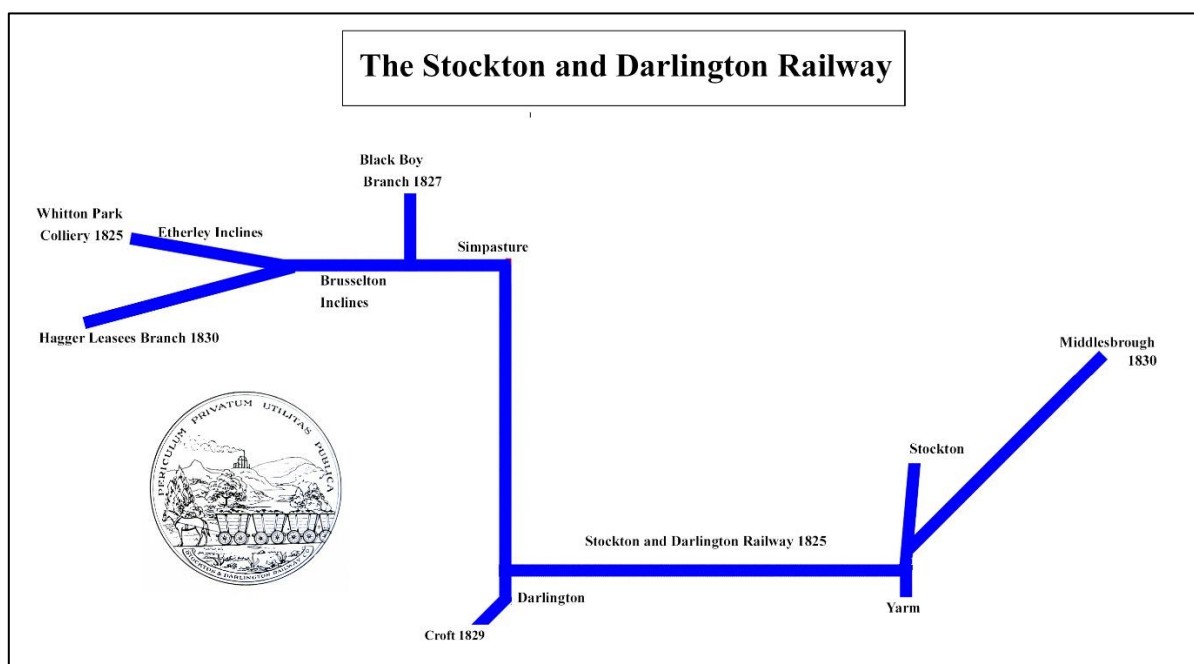
<sup>24</sup> Turnbull, Les, *The Willington Way – a Rival to the Stockton and Darlington*, NEIMME, 2024.



## Appendix: The Development of the Stockton and Darlington Railway 1825-1863

The diagrams on the following pages, showing the development of the Stockton and Darlington Railway during its period of independent existence between 1825–1863, are provided as a key to understanding Jeans' book and the falsehood of his claim that the opening of the railway marked the beginning of the modern railway system. Further information is available in the seven volumes of the Early Railways Series published by the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers in conjunction with the Newcastle upon Tyne Centre of the Stephenson Locomotive Society. These are distributed by The Common Room. Contact Jennifer Hillyard for further information:

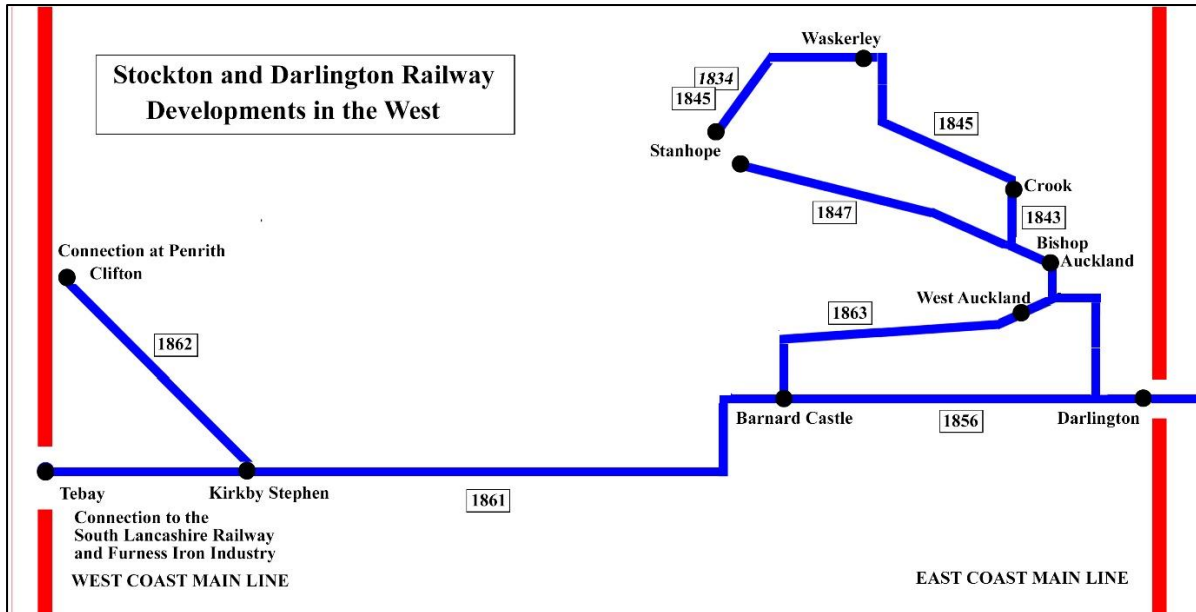
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The diagram above shows the Stockton and Darlington Railway in its early days, between 1825 and 1830, when it was primarily a colliery railway serving the Auckland Coalfield. In 1825, the line ran from Whitton Colliery, over the Etherley and Brusselton inclines, to Shildon and on to Stockton, with short branch lines to Darlington and Yarm. Soon after the opening, further branches were added: to Black Boy Colliery in 1827, to Croft in 1829, and to Haggerleazes and Middlesbrough in 1830. Later, in the eastern part of the railway, branches were built to Redcar in 1846 and Guisborough in 1853 principally to serve the ironstone mines of the Cleveland Hills. In 1861, the Redcar line was extended to Saltburn in an attempt to develop a seaside resort. But these later additions are not marked.

The diagram below shows the growth of the railway in the west, first into Upper Weardale to access the deposits of ironstone and limestone for the iron and steel industries of South Durham and on Teesside; then into Upper Teesdale, and finally over Stainmore and into Cumbria to deliver Durham's coke and limestone to the iron industry in Workington via the Furness Railway and to return with haematite, non-phosphoric iron ore, for the blast furnaces on Teesside. By the time the Stockton and Darlington was merged into the North Eastern in 1863,

it was a major trans-Pennine mineral route linked to both the East Coast and West Coast Main Lines – a complete transformation from the colliery waggonway of the early days. Jeans had no personal experience of the early days of the Stockton and Darlington but was very familiar with the later years, not least because of his interest in the iron and steel industry. This may partly explain his distorted account of the history of the railway.



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