

## George Stephenson.

- George Stephenson was an English engineer. He was the main inventor of the railroad locomotive.
- George Stephenson was born on June 9, 1781, in Wylam, Northumberland, **England**. His father, Robert, worked at a **coal mine**. George joined his father in the coal mines at a young age. He did not go to school.
- By 1799, however, he had begun learning to read and write in his spare time.
- By the time he was 19, Stephenson was working with **steam** engines in the coal mines. The engines were used to pump out water. Over time, Stephenson became an expert in steam engines. He was put in charge of all machinery at a number of collieries.
- In 1813 Stephenson inspected a locomotive—a steam engine on wheels. It had been designed to haul coal out of mines. Stephenson decided to improve the design. He created the Blucher, a locomotive that could pull several wagons loaded with coal. The Blucher is considered the first modern locomotive.
- In 1825 Stephenson used one of his locomotives, the Locomotion No. 1, to pull the first public passenger train.
- On September 27 the train carried 450 people from the English town of Darlington to the town of Stockton.
- The success of the Stockton and Darlington railroad caught the attention of other cities. Stephenson was soon hired to build a railroad between Liverpool and Manchester.
- In 1829 a contest was held to choose the first locomotive to run on the railroad. For the contest, Stephenson and his son, Robert, built the Rocket. The Rocket beat three other engines and reached a top speed of 36 miles
- The Liverpool-Manchester railroad opened on September 15, 1830. All of its locomotives were built by Stephenson.
- Railroads soon spread throughout **Great Britain, Europe, and North America**. Stephenson was often asked for advice when a new railroad was being built.
- He died on August 12, 1848, in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England.