

April 6th As I was going up to the lecture at St John's School I met a fine young woman, well dressed & tall - with remarkable good address - quite drunk I had passed her without remark when she accosted me in a very familiar way & wished me good night. Hereupon I turned back to see who it was, but found she was entirely strange to me - She invited me to go to a Public House, and gave significant assurances that I might, if I choosed, co-habit with - I confess this was the strongest and most sudden, as well as direct temptation that ever I experienced of this sort. I was staggered completely and had not a Man been coming apparently up the road I may not answer for the result. However to her evident surprise I left her & saw her no more - The confusion in my in my mind was a considerable ere it subsided

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[1847]

Died April 26th. 1847. My Cousin Margaret Margerison Boardman aged only 26 years - She died in Childbirth of her second child, and left one son.

May 13th 1847. The Old Subscription Bowling Green at Cicely Hole having been broken up in a consequence of the Railway passing the same, a new Green was purchased of Joseph Feilden Esq^r Witton House, situate in the Bull Meadow near St Peter's Church & adjoining the Free Gram^r [Grammar] School. It was opened this Day in due form, after which a party of the Members sat down to a Cold Collation, provided at the House of Mr Birch, the St Leger Inn. - Where a very happy Evening was spent. John Alston, Esq^r presiding, and M^r Martland occupying the Vice-chair.

June 17th & 24th Meetings held of the B P [Blackburn Philanthropic] Burial Society at which I had great difficulty to overtaken the prejudices raised by the Old Committee, who were about to be disbanded. A great number of Alterations were introduced into the Rules some of which, I fear, will operate to the disadvantage of the Society.

The Election took place in this Town on Thursday the 29th Day of July 1847 The Candidate were four:- viz:

John Hornby Esq ^{re}	Con.
William Hargreaves Esq ^{re}	Whig
W. P. Roberts Esq ^{re}	Chartist
and James Pilkington Esq ^{re}	Whig

The Whigs endeavoured to throw John Hornby out, but he headed the poll by a respectable majority - 39 over Mr Pilkington, and 250 over Hargreaves. I voted for Hornby & Pilkington the latter on account of family connection. The Election was conducted in a very peaceable manner.

Some time after the Election the excessive Calls¹ for Railway caused a tremendous stagnation in business - several very eminent Houses failed in London, Manchester & Liverpool. The funds declined to 79: and the aspect of things was very gloomy. My business, with the exception of a few Railway Jobs was almost at a stand, and money was so bad to get in that I was obliged to borrow to pay a part of my London Account.²

¹ Demand for payment of lent, pledged or unpaid capital: *OED* 'call' n. 13.a.

² The crisis of 1847 came after the economy weakened partly due to the slowing in the boom in railway shares and poor harvests during 1846 and 1847. After the Bank of England raised the Bank Rate, cut back lending and sold government bonds, as its response, the Bank's notes began to be in short supply. Cutting investment, in the railways to make cash available to other industries was proposed as a solution. After the Prime Minister and the Chancellor wrote to the Governor of the Bank of England on 25 October 1847, allowing him to increase lending, the crisis ended (Mike Anson, David Bholat, Miao Kang, Kilian Rieder and Ryland Thomas, 'The Bank of England and central bank credit rationing during the crisis of 1847: frosted glass or raised eyebrows?' *Bank of England Staff Working Paper*, No. 794 (April 2019), p.20; *Blackburn Standard*, 22 September 1847).

[1847]

The following Letter was written to prevent the Bolton Company selling their interest into the hands of a Competing Line.

EAST LANCASHIRE AND BOLTON RAILWAY STATIONS.

To the Editor of the Blackburn Standard.

SIR,—Perhaps you may have seen, in the *Preston Guardian* of Saturday last, a letter signed "A Bolton Shareholder," on the subject of the intended amalgamation of the stations of that Company and the East Lancashire. As we have a respectable newspaper printed in this town, I see little reason why its columns should not be preferred to those of a Preston paper, and if you consider my remarks relevant to the subject, they are at your service.

On the main, I agree with that writer's line of argument; but for a Bolton shareholder, I must confess he has taken a lamentably weak view of the question. Can he, for a moment, forget, that the East Lancashire has been, and is, at this time, the most determined, uncompromising, and impracticable opponent of the Bolton line? In every stage—by every means,—at an enormous expense,—in Parliament and out of Parliament,—that Company has attempted to *defeat*, and in short, to *destroy* the projects of the Bolton and Blackburn Company. And though at great expense and by indomitable perseverance, they have been defeated in their main object,—yet now they leave no course untried to obstruct that which they could not overturn.

Let the "Bolton Shareholder" enquire how many *thousands* of pounds it has cost his Company, successfully to oppose the East Lancashire in their vexatious attempts to annihilate the Clitheroe and North-Western Line! Let him refer to the Chairman's speech at the last half-yearly meeting of the Bolton Company, when that highly-respected gentleman gave some idea of the *tender mercies* of the East Lancashire. They talk about *public convenience*—it is mere twaddle. What do they care for the public convenience of Blackburn,—except so far as to fill their own pockets? Absolutely nothing!

A "Bolton Shareholder" must be dull indeed, if he has not learned by this time, to know, that in reference to an opponent so resolute,—and a grasping competing line,—his only watchword ought to be "*no surrender*." Let me ask him, and all my brother shareholders, what has the East Lancashire done for Blackburn? Grieved am I to reply, they have cajoled it out of one of the best and most beautiful lines in the kingdom, i. e. the Blackburn and Preston. They have done more,—they have reduced Blackburn to a mere secondary road-side station; and last—not least—transferred the whole patronage to Bury. Public advantage,—quoth you! If the East Lancashire Company are so anxious and so accommodating to serve Blackburn, let them tell the Bolton Company, that as they have a convenient and unoccupied plot of ground on the west and north of their station-house, they will sell it to that Company, on which an INDEPENDENT STATION may be erected. That would be a course of conduct which all men might rightly understand. No doubt the Bolton Company would be ready to accommodate them with an equivalent quantity of land adjacent to the East Lancashire's Luggage Warehouse. I speak advisedly when I say that they have offered to do so. By these means the public would be really benefitted; the difficulties of the matter would at once be surmounted, and each Company would command an *independent right to manage their own affairs*, in their own stations. All public inconvenience would thus be avoided, and the Companies might work comfortably together.

Depend upon it, unless this be done;—if the Bolton shareholders agree to any terms short of these,—they will, assuredly and effectually, *sell their interest and ruin their line*, as ever the Blackburn and Preston Company have done.

I trust a "Bolton Shareholder" will excuse the warmth of the above remarks. He appears to be a well-meaning, but somewhat timid man. You can scarcely say what side he is favourable to. But I think the case demands decision,—unhesitating and firm decision. The Bolton shareholders have the key in their possession which unlocks the direct northern traffic to Manchester and London. They can control this traffic—but let them allow the fingers of the East Lancashire to snatch that key out of their hands,—and I will make bold to affirm,—that it will be the most suicidal and insane act ever perpetrated by any Railway Company, and one resulting in the most disastrous consequences to their interests.

Sir, in conclusion, I will briefly notice the great bug-bear expense. And to make short work of it, I will ask the Bolton shareholders this question,—what difference will there be in the working an independent station, and in *renting* a small part of one, by the sufferance of another Company? I am told, on good authority, the amount per annum is insignificant. Then where is the reasonableness of *deferring* that which they have so nobly and resolutely begun? I would say, gentlemen, your own interest and the interest of Blackburn demands an onward movement.

I am, Sir,

Your's faithfully,

AN OLD BOLTON SHAREHOLDER.

[1847]

PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF THE RAILWAY STATIONS OF THE EAST LANCASHIRE AND THE BOLTON COMPANIES.

To the Editor of the Guardian.

SIR.—You will have heard, no doubt, of the intended amalgamation above-mentioned. It is a project of the highest importance to this town, and as it involves the interests of a most respectable body of men as shareholders in the Bolton and Blackburn Company, I am anxious, through the medium of your journal, to draw public attention to the subject.

I will not occupy your space by arguing the question as to the mere desirableness of both companies using the same terminus. I take it for granted that two opinions cannot exist on that point. But, it must be remembered, that however desirable such an arrangement might be, it was found that the respective companies could not, and *did not*, agree as to terms, when the matter was formally proposed. The result was that the shareholders of the Bolton Company were informed at their last half-yearly meeting that no such amalgamation would again be proposed.

Being myself present at that meeting, I recollect this announcement was received with unanimous approbation, and the firm tone adopted by the Directors was more than responded to by the strong determination of the shareholders, that rather than submit to be crushed by the heel of the East Lancashire, they would have an independent station. So settled did the question appear to be, that shortly after the meeting the Directors felt fully justified in adopting measures for the erection of a station house, and, in fact, we find that the building has been proceeded with to a considerable extent, and would quickly have been completed.

Now, sir, I would ask the Directors what has transpired in the arrangements of the East Lancashire to alter or set aside the resolutions of that meeting? Or what can justify them in abandoning the project of erecting their separate station-house? Am I to be told it is for the *convenience* of the public, and to *save expence*? I distinctly deny the correctness of both propositions, so far as regards convenience and expence, and particularly as it respects the best interests of the Bolton shareholders. And first, as to *convenience*. It is acknowledged on all hands that the present station-house is inadequate to meet the wants of the traffic of the East Lancashire. Look at its position. On the very spot where a joint station ought to have been erected for the Bolton Company, you find the ground pre-occupied by an extensive range of luggage warehouses. On the east, and within 500 yards of the station-house itself, you have the tunnel from which will emerge the joint traffic of the Clitheroe and Accrington Branches, and cutting off the most remote possibility of using the ground for accommodation room, while every inch of

space room is destined for engine sheds, &c., for the East Lancashire. Where, then, is the additional convenient space to be had for the accommodation of the Bolton Company's offices, their engine-sheds, passenger and luggage carriage, and their warehouse room? "Oh, says one, you must convert your station house into warehouses." So, then, the Bolton Company are to have the *advantage* of having their warehouses a quarter of a mile from their station; while—mark the contrast—the East Lancashire will appropriate to their own use the whole of the land adjacent to their station-house.

Will the Bolton shareholders be satisfied with such like *convenience* as this? It is childish in the extreme to expect such an absurdity. As for the *public convenience* view of the matter, common sense declares it a nonentity.

Again, consider, say some persons, the saving in the expence. Well, I am for as economical measures as any man; but with proper deference to those people, I conceive there will be no saving at all. For either you must enlarge the East Lancashire station at the cost of the Bolton Company, or that company must erect for itself a station house in the immediate proximity of the East Lancashire. Then exhibit to me the saving? If the present station-house be too small for one company, by what process of reasoning can these simple people persuade themselves or the public that it is sufficiently eligible for two lines, one of which, mind you, will be a *direct line* from Manchester, the commercial metropolis of the north? Why, this is a greater absurdity than the first proposition,—and, it is needless to add, quite untenable.

Sir, I would call the serious attention of the Bolton shareholders to these matters. Their half yearly meeting will very shortly be held, and I think it is due to them that the Directors should, prior to any arrangement with the East Lancashire, ascertain their feelings and wishes on the subject. The Directors having proceeded so far as to commence the erection of a separate station-house, cannot, I apprehend, relinquish that undertaking, or enter into any bargain with the East Lancashire, except by the express resolution of a general meeting of the shareholders, and this I am persuaded the shareholders will not carry, unless the East Lancashire offer *equitable* and *advantageous* terms.—I am, Sir, yours, respectfully,

Blackburn, Aug. 18, 1847. A BOLTON SHAREHOLDER, cJ

[Though decidedly favourable to only one station ourselves, we are willing that the public should hear all that can be said on both sides.—Ed. P.G.]

At a Meeting of the Shareholders held on the 26th Aug^t. It was resolved to proceed with the Building of a separate Station House, tho' Mr. Hornby was in favor of a joint one.

[1847]

The dreadful & disgraceful situation of the Grammar School caused me to write the following. The complaints against their Master were universal, and his conduct to the Children brutal in the extreme. Not only so but his stupid & dogged system of teaching only one thing had driven the Inhabitants to send their children to other Towns, and as the letter will shew the School had become a dead letter.

adjourned.

BLACKBURN FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

To the Editor of the Guardian.

1847.

SIR,—In former years, you must understand, it has been customary to hold an examination of the above school, and, as a friend to education, and one particularly anxious that Blackburn should possess the advantages and privileges of a first-rate classical academy, I wish to make the inquiry, through the medium of your journal, whether the governors of the Blackburn Grammar School intend to resort to their ancient practices. I am informed, on the best authority, that the present number of pupils—(independent of the children of the master)—is only *three*, and that in fact there have not been more than half-a-dozen during the twelve months. That a town like Blackburn, of 40,000 inhabitants, should be satisfied with a state of things so lamentably disgraceful as this, is, I think, perfectly incredible. It is still more astonishing that out of the *fifty* governors, of this ancient school, there should not be found any gentlemen of sufficient public spirit to demand a full investigation of the causes which have led to this wretched and most miserable state of the school. It is well known, that if the commonest A. B. C. schoolmaster of a factory short time establishment, could produce no better results than what have been produced at this school for the last two years, he would be summarily dismissed. But, sir, looking upon the matter in the most charitable point of view, and giving the present master full credit for the highest attainments, it must be self-evident that there is something wrong somewhere,—a rottenness either of the system,—or a most determined obstinacy on the part of the public. That the latter is not at all likely, may be presumed from the fact, that under Mr. Atkinson and former teachers the school was well attended and prospered—sometimes *eighty*, and scarcely ever less than *fifty* pupils—the children of the most respectable inhabitants of the town. Alas! that it should come to this. That one of the best schools of the county should dwindle down to the beggarly number of *three little boys*!—Where are your Feildens, your Hornbys, Turners, Carrs, Cardwells, Hargreaves, Whittakers, and a host of others,—whose names are registered in the books of the school? *All gone!* and left *three* little urchins—like gloomy spectres to pace the empty aisles—and occupy in melancholy solitude the deserted forms. If Blackburn does not bestir itself in this,—in an affair of such mighty importance,—the sooner the barren walls of the school crumble down to their native oblivion, and the better. But we hope for better things. The annual meeting of the governors takes place, or ought to do, on St Thomas's day; let every gentleman be present,—and do his duty.—I remain, your's faithfully,
XENOPHON.

Blackburn, Dec. 10th.

The effect of the above was, that a Meeting of the Governors was held, & strong resolutions were posted censuring the conduct of Mr. Bennett. - Whether with permanent utility remains yet to be seen.³

³ Rev. J. B. Bennett was headmaster from 1845 to 1855. Bennett refused to change from an education system based on Latin to one that included commercially useful subjects, such as arithmetic and bookkeeping, that were in demand. As a result, by 1850, the only pupils at the school were Bennett's two children (G. F. Eastwood, "*Queen Elizabeth's*" *A New History of the Ancient Grammar School of Blackburn* (Blackburn, 1867), pp. 71-74).