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### **The Winner/Rocket**

Speed had been a large consideration for the Directors of the L&MR, and Rocket proved that this could be achieved, combined with the ability to haul a worthwhile load and operate reliably. The results of the Trials exceeded expectations. Within a few months passengers were being conveyed over L&MR at over 35 miles an hour.

However, immediately after the trials it was widely reported in the newspapers and technical journals that Novelty had not had been given more of an opportunity to prove itself.

The Liverpool Mercury explained: “The course is thus left clear for Mr Stephenson; and we congratulate him, with much sincerity, on the probability of his being about to receive the reward of £500.

“This is due to him for the perfection to which he has brought the old-fashioned locomotive engine; but the grand prize of public opinion is the one which has been gained by Messrs Braithwaite and Ericsson, for their decided improvement in the arrangement, the safety, simplicity, and the smoothness and steadiness of a locomotive engine.”

### **Suspicious**

Following the trials it was discovered that there was some bad feeling from Hackworth’s supporters – indeed, a cracked cylinder casting had been identified as a reason for a loss in power on Sans Pareil.

The cylinders had been cast at Robert Stephenson & Co.'s works. These accusations were found to be unsubstantiated and the Liverpool and Manchester Railway bought Sans Pareil for £350 and it ran as a locomotive until 1844.

On 26 October the Liverpool and Manchester's directors ordered four more locomotives based on Rocket's design from Robert Stephenson & Co, later ordering another four.

### **Rocket - An important place in history**

Before 1829, and the Trials, steam locomotives were only used for slow transportation and as an alternative to horses. The concept of speed and transportation using steam power was unheard of. Puffing Billy, the closest comparable engine, was crude and inefficient in comparison.

The multi-tube boiler with a water-jacket firebox evaporated the water much more efficiently than a single large flue. The blast-pipe exhaust induced a draught through the fire and made the engine self-regulating. The pistons were directly coupled to the wheels by cranks set at right-angles to each other, giving a certain start and smooth drive.

These features became part of virtually every steam locomotive built throughout the reign of steam on the world's railways for the next 130 years.

The genius of Rocket's design was the catalyst for the development of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. It linked two great commercial towns with a regular service of fast passenger trains – the first intercity train service.

Travel, commuting and freight transportation all became easier – the money men of the day saw the potential of the railways and began to invest and create the railway networks we have today.

Have you watched? Check out the section in the Virtual Museum on Stephenson's Rocket.