

There has been proposed that a span be erected and supported by arches of 400 ft span to be the support of several
of 400 ft span and to be the support of several arches of 400 ft span to be the support of several
may be generally known and appears to promise the prospect for the several parts of the work and to give his attendance to
superintend the erection of the bridge. He reports the merits to be put on the grounds of Congress as an evidence hereafter that
the new construction of bridges originated in America

his interest in
At this time he was drawn off by the French Revolution
"During my residence in France which was from 1792 to 1802
an iron bridge of 236 ft span and 34 ft rise was erected
over the river wear in Somersland County of Durham England
It was done chiefly at the expense of the two members
of parliament from that County, Milbank and Bowdler"
A friend of Paines wrote to Milbank supposing that the
construction of the Somersland bridge had made free with
Paines model which was ^{at} the iron works where the
Somersland bridge was cast. Milbank writes
"With respect to my bridge over the river wear at Somers-
land, it is certainly a work well deserving admiration
both for its structure and solidity and I have good grounds
for saying that the first idea was suggested by Mr Paines
bridge exhibited at Philadelphia. What difference there
may be in some part of the structure or in the proportions
of wrought and cast iron I cannot pretend to say
Bowdler being indebted to build the bridge + + +
With respect therefore to any gratuity to Mr Paine, though
ever so desirous of rewarding the labour of an ingenu-
ous man, I do not feel, now, under the circumstances
abovementioned I have it in my power, being willing
to do with the bridge after the payment of my subscription
Bank if you can point out any mode according to which
it should be in my power to be without in procuring
him any compensation for the advantage the public may have
derived from his ingenious model, from which certainly the
outline of the bridge at Somersland was taken, he allowed it
will afford me great satisfaction." Ra. Millbank