

**Macclesfield Canal Engineer's Report by William Crosley made to the Chairman and Committee – dated July 1828**

The Bosley locks and lower level of the canal which was Let out in three lots in December 1827 included: -

“The first Lot, including the locks, and extending into Mr Pearson's land at Buglawton, being about three miles in length was taken by Messrs Nowell & Sons. In this Lot several culverts have been completed. No part of the locks has yet been commenced as the contractors have been much occupied in opening a quarry at Cloud End, and making a railway from it to the line of the canal. But as these necessary preparations are now completed the execution of this Lot shall proceed with vigour.”

The opening of the quarry is upon the Cloud. The sandstone was used for the building of the locks.

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“The distance of four and a half miles from Foden Bank to the head of the locks at North Rode is capable of being filled with water subject only to the removal of about 5000 yards of earth and the lining of about 200 yards in length with a small quantity of side puddling in Gawsorth. The fencing and towing path are in a forward state. The locks being nearly three miles in length is now proceeding with very great activity. All the culverts and seven of the bridges are finished, two bridges are in progress. The masonry of two locks is completed and two others are in progress.

The large aqueduct over the River Dane is included in this division. In consequence of the foundations proving very unsound it was thought advisable to consult Mr Telford as to the propriety and the deviation from the original plan. Mr Telford being of opinion after considering the circumstances that the sort of aqueduct originally intended to be adopted could not be relied upon and having suggested various alterations the work is now proceeding according to the plan drawn out by him by which all doubts on the safety of the aqueduct are now removed. By the terms of the contracts for the execution of the lower line of the canal were to be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> January 1831 but in consequence of the unavoidable delay occasioned by the deficiencies in the foundations for the aqueduct over the Dane and the necessity of making some alterations, the time for completing this aqueduct has been extended to the 1<sup>st</sup> May following and I feel quite satisfied that every part of the works will be completed within the periods that have been fixed upon.

The locks are executing or being executed by Messrs Nowell & Sons the contractors in a very superior manner and with respect to the whole line with the exceptions which have been pointed out, the whole work is going on without accident and the different contractors are executing their respective portions in a manner perfectly satisfactory.

The reservoir at Bosley is proceeding rapidly; the pipes are laid for taking water through the embankment and the masonry at the end of 13<sup>th</sup> April finding a good foundation for the puddle in the centre of the embankment. I have concluded to have

a lining puddle under its seat and along the bottom of the reservoir till it can be tied into the firm and watertight ground.

The forming of the feeders has been commenced. The reservoir together with the feeders will be completed by the time they are required for use of the canal. Ending on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1833 there had been ninety eight thousand two hundred and one and a half tons producing a receipt of £6.116.19s4d.”

<b>The Species of Lading</b>	<b>Rates</b>
Limestone	$\frac{1}{4}$ d per ton per mile
Lime, Lime ashes & Road stone	$\frac{1}{2}$ d per ton per mile
Coals for burning Lime	$\frac{1}{2}$ d per ton per mile
Coals except for burning Lime & Coke	$\frac{3}{4}$ d per ton per mile
Malt	$\frac{3}{4}$ d per ton per mile
All goods, wares, merchandise and other articles, matters or things not mentioned above	1d per ton

### **The Nowells, Contractors, Railway Builders and Toolmakers, Dewsbury, Manchester**

Joseph Nowell & Sons constructed the aqueduct over the River Dane and the chain of fourteen locks on the Macclesfield & Marple Canal which lifts the canal 114 feet from the plains of Cheshire to the spurrings of the Derbyshire Hills and renders unnecessary any other Lock.

This is considered to be one of Thomas Telford's engineering masterpieces. The Resident Engineer was William Crosley and the Inspector of Works, James Briggs.

John, James & Isaac Briggs, the sons of the Inspector of Works, were engaged on these works in various capacities. Isaac, who at this time was about 13 years of age was in the service of the firm for many years and became their agent for railway works.

William, Joseph & Isaac Shaw were employed as masons on these works.

The locks were built of a gritstone obtained from the escarpment at the summit of a hill nearby called "The Cloud". To convey the blocks of stone from the top of The Cloud to the locks, rail tracks were laid so that when the laden wagons were set in motion at the quarry they would pull up the empty wagons from the locks by means of a chain passed around a drum or gin fixed at the top of the hill. A travelling crane called a "Goliath" was first used to lift and place the blocks of stone in position. Near the uppermost lock a building was used to store the cement and mills were used to grind the mortar worked by horsepower. The building was afterwards converted into

a comfortable dwelling and the inhabitants still call it "Mortar Mill House" which is on the opposite side of the canal to the Wheatsheaf.

About a mile from the locks a reservoir was constructed to collect and store water for the supply of the canal and a waterway called "The Feeder" was made from the reservoir to the canal to convey the water. In addition the feeder passed under the roads along the meadows and in front of the house at Kiln Hill, Bosley, the home of Nathan and Ann Percival, the parents of ten daughters and one son. The second daughter Sarah born in 1808 married John Willans Nowell and the fourth daughter Ann born in 1813 married Samuel Bullock.