

Boston Flats

SITE #020104

GC1V3XC

Written & Researched by Maggie Meekis

SITE IDENTIFICATION

Nearest Community: Cache Creek, V0K 1H0

Location: N 50°46.158'

W 121°18.359'

Geocache Location: N 50°46.364'

W 121°18.652'

Accuracy: 4 meters

Letterboxing Clues: Refer to letterboxing clues page

UTM: East 0619100;

North 5625913 10U

Geocache altitude: 489 m./1,603 ft.

Overall difficulty: 1

Terrain difficulty: 1.5

(1=easiest; 5=hardest)

Date Established: 1860

Ownership: Ministry of

Transportation

Access: • Highway

• Year-round

• Vehicle accessible

• High visibility area, use stealth.

• *Detailed access information on next page.*

For more information or to report a problem with this site please contact:

Gold Country Communities Society
P.O. Box 933 Cache Creek, B.C. V0K 1H0
Tel: 1-877-453-9467

email: info@exploregoldcountry.com

For more site pages go to:

www.goldtrail.com or
www.GeoTourismCanada.com

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Here



In the early days, when Europeans were first exploring the rugged bits of the country, the first white men the natives saw were either Hudson's Bay Company men from England or Americans. The Hudson's Bay Company men differentiated themselves from the Americans by calling themselves "King George Men." The men from the States came to be known as "Boston Men."

Wilson Henry Sanford has been credited as the first white man to settle in the Cache Creek area in the early 1860s, and was the first white man many of the natives had ever seen, so he was the first "Boston Man" and the nickname stuck with him. He did not seem to have minded, notwithstanding his claim to being from eastern Canada and not actually from the States.

In an area as dry as the Ashcroft Cache Creek region, irrigation is a necessary requirement to farming. "Boston" Sanford began digging the big ditch in the Bonaparte valley near Cache Creek, called Boston ditch, in the summer of

1871 to irrigate the section now known as Boston Flats. The ditch began about six miles north of Cache Creek and ran about 10 miles.

After having the length of the irrigation line surveyed, "Boston" then contracted out two-mile-long sections. One wonders if this was the smartest thing, a group of men from below the border were on their way to make their fortune in gold and were hired by "Boston" for one section. They decided to adjust the survey pegs around a point known as Rattlesnake Hill, turning a difficult job into one considerably easier.



A nearby mobile home park still bears the name 'Boston Flats.'



***Boston Flats and Elephant Mountain, c 1950.
Elephant Mountain was named for its
resemblance to an elephant laying down.***

They were paid for their work and by the time the entire irrigation line was finished and turned on, they were already long gone, and out of earshot, when the water failed to make it to its planned destination.

Despite this rather major setback, water was eventually brought to the Boston Flats region and the potatoes produced there developed a good reputation. As one traveler wrote, “*the celebrated ‘Boston’ Ranch...is one of the finest farms in the colony. The proprietor keeps a hotel which receives an excellent name from those who have stopped at it.*”

When the road between Spence’s Bridge and Clinton was finally completed, Cache Creek became a stopping place for the prospectors heading north and east, and Charles Semlin (who later became the first Premier of

British Columbia) and Philip Parke took a hotel built by James Orr and moved it to Cache Creek proper and renamed it Bonaparte House after the Bonaparte River. In 1868, Parke sold his half to Sanford and the hotel, also known as Cache Creek House, was run by Semlin and Sanford.

“Boston” was an integral member of the community of Cache Creek and, as well as having run a ranch and a hotel, was a trustee at the local boarding school in Cache Creek.

Wilson Henry “Boston” Sanford gave his nickname to the flats upon which he built his ranch.



Tomatoes growing at Boston Flats.

Detailed access information:

- At the junction of Hwy #97C & Trans Canada Hwy #1, use frontage rd. access.
- Parking available at the Route Information signage.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Ashcroft Museum & Archives. Many thanks to Kathy Paulos and the museum for access to archives.
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 Patenaude, B. (1998). *Golden Nuggets: Roadhouse Portraits along the Cariboo’s goldrush trail*. Surrey, BC: Heritage House Publishing Company Ltd.
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 Wade, M.S. (1921, January 29). Tales of the Cariboo Road (second series) No.2: Blazing a Trail. *The Daily Province*.