

Cache Creek Tower Top



Photo: Kurt Evans

Site Identification

Nearest Community:

Cache Creek, B.C.

Geocache Location:

N 50°48.434'

W 121°19.194'

Altitude:

547m/1794ft

Ownership:

First part of driveway, Private Property
Cache site, Crown Land

Accuracy:

1 meter

Overall Difficulty: 2

Overall Terrain: 3.5

Access Information and

Restrictions:

Heading on Hwy 1 towards Kamloops
turn right on Collins Road in Cache
Creek. The Cariboo Road is visible from
this site location as are the sites for the
former Bonaparte House.

Parking Advice:

Do not block driveway or closed gate.
Park on side of the street.

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

Gold Country Communities Society
PO. Box 933
Cache Creek, BC.,
VOK 1H0

Tel: 1-877-453-9467
email: info@exploregoldcountry.com

For more site pages go to:
www.goldtrail.com

Apply Sticker Here

By 1895 there was a steady stream of freight leaving Ashcroft for the Cariboo. Tail to tail, up the dusty road the teamsters went providing goods to the north.

It was the pack trains that first travelled the early trails. A large pack train consisted of about 45 mules or horses and called for services of four men, and a cook who rode the bell mare. Pack trains would average about 16 miles a day.

Freight wagons could travel about 12-14 miles a day and were pulled by teams made up of six, eight and ten horses, mules or oxen, pulling two and sometimes three wagons in tandem. There were no luxurious seats in those days, teamsters walked, rode the high wheel or the spring board at the side. The bull puncher walked in the dust all day beside his team. He never used a jerk-line or any other means of guidance except maybe a stick or snap of a bull whip to encourage his team along.

The “swamper” was an apprentice, usually a young fellow. His job would be to accompany the freighter, harness and unharness the mules or horses, lead them to water, and bunch grass. He would then round them up at 4 am, cook breakfast, and assist in general duties.

The “jerk-line” was used with a long string of mules or horses when it was impossible to use reins. The teamster walked alongside or sat on a board at the side and “telegraphed directions”. The line was connected to the leaders and directions to stop or go and which way to turn according to the number of jerks of the line. 47

Pack trains and oxen team were turned out at night to graze on the bunch grass. Water could be found in the creeks or streams; when water sources were miles apart, shallow wells would be dug. It was the roadhouses that took care of the horse teams and stage coaches; here they would be fed grain. It was found that horses fed on grain had more endurance and the daily relays could be extended a number of miles.

Road side houses could be found every few miles. The mileage of the roadhouses can be a little confusing. Lillooet was originally Mile 0 and the earliest roadhouses took their mileage from Lillooet. When the Yale wagon road was built new roadhouses took their mileage from Yale. Once the CPR was completed the mileage was taken from Ashcroft. Roadhouses that had good reputations chose to keep their original mileage designations.

The construction of the Pacific Grand Eastern railway began in 1912 and was completed by 1921. Its route took it from Squamish to Quesnel. The PGE provided a more economical way of shipping goods to the north. Freight teams that had once graced the Cariboo road were no longer needed. It was the end of an era.

Written and Researched by Kathy Paulos

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

April 9, 1975 "Freighting on the Cariboo Road." (*Ashcroft Journal* Files)

Wickstrom, Dawn. (1981) "The Building of a railway as seen by a surveyor." *Ashcroft Journal*

Letterboxing Clues:

From water tower hike up the road and keep to the left. Right side driveway is private. Pass the rock at top of the hill. Located under sage brush.