

## The Ashcroft Manor

SITE # 010102

GC1TWW6

Written & Researched by Dominique Robillard

### SITE IDENTIFICATION

Nearest Community: Ashcroft, V0K 1A0  
 Location: N 50°43.124'  
 W 121°19.718'  
 Geocache Location: N 50°43.118'  
 W 121°19.770'  
 Parking Coordinates: N 50°43.122'  
 W 121°19.736'  
 Accuracy: 4 meters  
 Letterboxing Clues: Refer to letterboxing clues page  
 UTM: East 0617923;  
 North 5619867 10U  
 Geocache altitude: 499 m./1,636 ft.  
 Overall difficulty: 1  
 Terrain difficulty: 1.5  
 (1=easiest; 5=hardest)  
 Date Established: 1862  
 Ownership: Private Property  
 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](mailto:info@exploregoldcountry.com)

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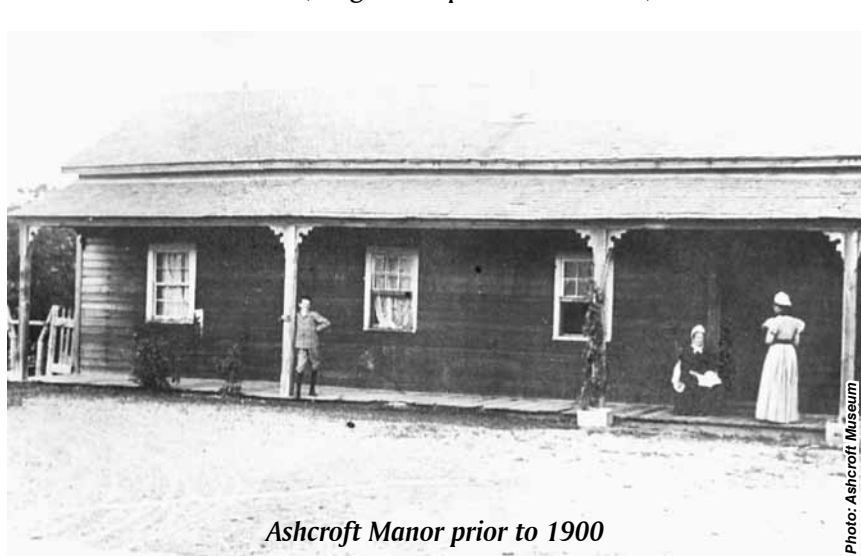
The allure of the Cariboo gold rush proved to be irresistible for two English aristocrat brothers, Clement Francis and Henry Pennant Cornwall. Struck with gold fever, the two brothers arrived in British Columbia in 1859 to pursue their fortunes. But after learning that very few claims were available, they opted to explore the grazing lands of the Thompson River Valley. There they built the Ashcroft Manor in 1862 and developed a 6,452 acre ranch.

The Manor was originally named "Ashcroft," after the family residence in Gloucestershire, England.

It was later renamed "Ashcroft Manor," after the Canadian Pacific Railway named their local railway station "Ashcroft."

Soon, the Cariboo Road was built, passing through the middle of the ranch, adjacent to the roadhouse.

The Manor provided many services to the gold miners and freighters of the Cariboo. The roadhouse was the district's first courthouse, where the cellar served as the jail. There was also a store and a post office that remained in business until 1972. The Manor's sawmill provided lumber, and the flour



Ashcroft Manor prior to 1900

Photo: Ashcroft Museum



*Flour & Saw Mill*

mill, whose millstones are the oldest in British Columbia, supplied flour.

The manor became a roadhouse of excellent repute, offering a comfortable and quiet roadside stop, where fabulous meals and relaxation were available to weary travelers.

The original Manor was a 20' x 40' single storey, built of logs and whip sawn lumber. A second storey was added in the early 1900s to accommodate Caroline Barclay (Cornwall) and her family. This addition almost doubled the Manor's capacity.

Rattlesnakes were a common sight at the Manor. Ranch hands quickly learned to exercise caution when dealing with hay, for snakes could be found hiding in, under or around the hay bales. Caroline Barclay unfortunately died of a rattlesnake bite.

In 1865 Cornwall Flats was developed as a horse race track and in 1868 became the site of the Cornwall's annual "coyote" hunt. It later became the first landing strip in the Interior of B.C.

In the 1940s, Allan Parker (Henry Cornwall's grandson-in-law) built a gas station topped with a cupola for viewing incoming airplanes. His pickup truck was equipped to refuel the planes.

During WWII, the Department of Transport built a radio range station with four towers and a control building on top of coyote hill. The main office housed a bomb shelter and was situated near the row of houses that accommodated the station operators and their families. After the war, the radio range station became a weather station and was later sold privately.

Vashti and Travis Fisk, with their four children, were the last of the Cornwall family to reside at the Manor. They left in 1981 when the roadhouse was sold to Madeleine and Eric Saunders, who built the teahouse and restored the Manor, operating it as a museum, gift shop and art gallery until the mid 1990s. The two 100+ year old elm trees in front of the Manor were imported from England as seedlings.

**Detailed access information:**

- From Ashcroft take Cornwall Rd. 5 km to Hwy #1. Turn south on Hwy #1.
- Park in the lot on the west side of Hwy #1, across from the Manor.
- Please refrain from entering the Manor property outside business hours.

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES**

Belton, B. second edition revised by Helen Forster (2002). *Bittersweet Oasis, a History of Ashcroft and District 1988-2002*, Ashcroft, BC: Village of Ashcroft.

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