

# Clinton Pioneer Cemetery

SITE #030401

GC1VA5K

Written & Researched by Angela Wynton

## SITE IDENTIFICATION

Nearest Community: Clinton, V0K 1K0  
 Geocache Location: N 51°05.595'  
 W 121°34.686'  
 Accuracy: 5 meters  
 Letterboxing Clues: Refer to letterboxing clues page  
 UTM: East 0599572;  
 North 5661157 10U  
 Geocache altitude: 885 m./2,904 ft.  
 Overall difficulty: 1  
 Terrain difficulty: 1  
 (1=easiest; 5=hardest)  
 Date Established: 1861  
 Ownership: Village of Clinton  
 Access:
 

- Public Road
- Year-round
- Vehicle accessible
- Located within the Village of Clinton.
- High visibility area, use stealth.



As the Gold Rush of 1858 grew, it became apparent there was a need to manage the gold, as well as the rowdiness of some gold seekers. James Douglas, Governor of the Colony of British Columbia, would establish Gold Commissioners, assigning ten commissioners and a Chief Justice to be agents throughout the corridor as the Gold Rush moved northward along the Cariboo Wagon Road. The first agent assigned in Clinton arrived in 1872. Frederick Soues was later

appointed in 1877 and remained the Gold Commissioner until his retirement in 1911.

Gold seekers traveled with horses, mules and camels, but not all gold seekers passed through Clinton on to Barkerville. Many decided to stay and build businesses and services in the town. In 1862, John Pollard of Cornwall tired of the gold searching and pre-empted a number of lots with three others. He soon bought them out and acquired all 640 acres. The Pollard

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)

For more site pages go to:  
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The Clinton Hotel



*The resting place of William Saul, David Pratt and other Clinton Pioneers.*

Cornish Guest Ranch and Roadhouse was established and still exists today. Others, like the Saul brothers, also stayed becoming part of the growing Clinton community. William Saul was elected as a Member of Parliament of the new colony.

The Watson brothers began building the Clinton Hotel. At the completion of the hotel in 1863, Joseph Smith, along with his wife Mary, and Tom Marshall, bought the hotel. It soon became the centre point for travelers and locals following their dreams. Unfortunately, the hotel burned down in May 1958. The Clinton Ball, which began as an annual event at the hotel in 1867, continues to this day.

The town was growing, some stayed, some left and some succumbed to the hardships and diseases of the time. In 1861 Joseph Smith, the soon-to-be proprietor of the Clinton Hotel, donated several acres of land

alongside the Cariboo Wagon Road to provide a cemetery for those who did not survive the challenges of the Gold Rush community. And thus, the Clinton Pioneer Cemetery was established.

Many who forged the history of British Columbia during the adventures and hardships of the Cariboo Gold Rush lay below the golden meadows overlooking the Clinton valley. The original wooden tombstones have disintegrated but the stone markers have survived. While there is no record of any Gold Rush camels being buried at the site, there are many graves of others who weathered the Cariboo over the past 150 years.

Much of the history of the Cariboo Gold Rush lays silent beneath the weathered tombstones. There are many pioneers and many untold stories lying under the warm winds and light snows of the historical Clinton Valley Pioneer Cemetery.

John Pollard and his descendents have gravesites in the Clinton Valley and their history continues at the Pollard Ranch. Frederick Soues contributed to the mining industry as we know it today. Members of his family remained in the area and are buried alongside Soues. William Saul was a part of the first parliament representing the Colony of British Columbia. His brothers, wife and son are also interred nearby. Joseph Smith, proprietor of the social hub during the gold days, lies under the golden valley amidst many of those who frequented his establishment and reveled in the Cariboo Gold Rush.

The Clinton Pioneer Cemetery is rich with the told and untold stories of the Gold Country of British Columbia.

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#### BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

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