



Camden Water Ditch Trail



Take a step back in time across the Toll Bridge. Today's footbridge rests on the same stone piers as Charles Camden's second bridge.

TRAILHEAD DIRECTIONS

Starting at the Whiskeytown Visitor Center, drive west on Highway 299 to the Tower House Historic District parking lot, approximately 8.0 miles. At the end of the parking lot, follow the paved trail over the Clear Creek footbridge and then turn left. Walk along the white fence and cross over the next bridge. Turn right at the trailhead sign.

This historic photo shows the apple orchard before 1900. Several of the trees from that period in time are still alive and can be found near the Levi Tower gravesite.



FEATURES

Difficulty Level: Easy

Length: 1.1 mile loop

Elevation: 1,300 feet, relatively flat

This trail connects to the Mill Creek and Clear Creek Vista Trails.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The trail follows a wide, sandy path along Willow Creek. The historic Camden House, built in 1852, can be seen across the creek. Continue to the gravesite of Levi Tower who was once the owner of the popular hotel named the Tower House.

The path forks at the gravesite. The right fork ends a short distance away at the remnants of the Camden Water Ditch diversion dam.

Take the left fork and follow the old Camden Water Ditch. Now a path, this irrigation ditch watered the gardens and orchards that once thrived here. Walking along, notice the old fruit trees and imagine the setting 150 years ago - the meadow with an orchard and gardens.

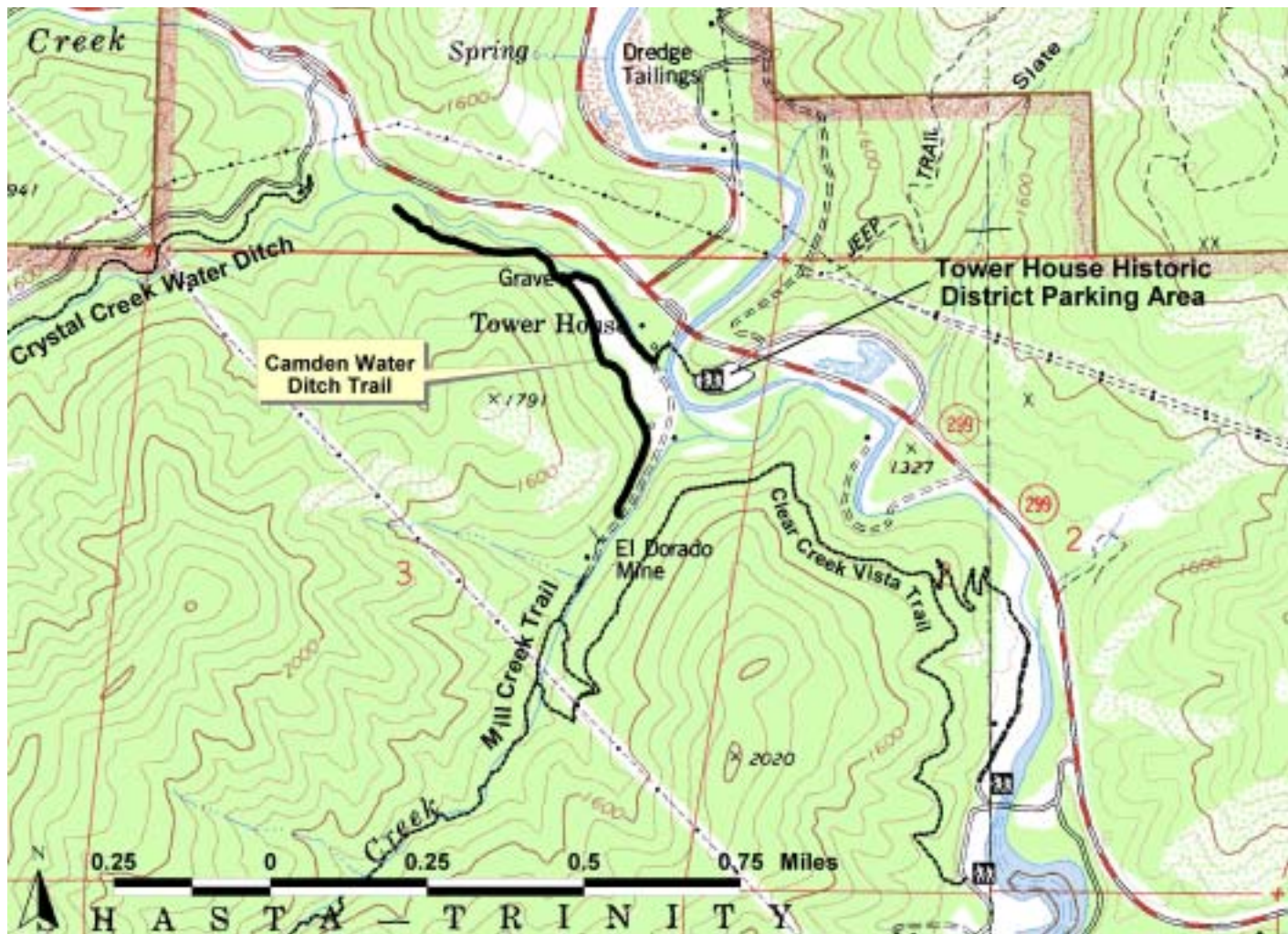
Continue along the path under a canopy of oak and pines. An old barn will come into view and then the Tenant Farmhouse. This house was built in 1913 to accommodate a caretaker who became necessary as the Camden family was



On this portion of the trail just past Levi Tower's grave, look for some of the old fruit trees.

spending less time on their land. Today this house has been restored and serves as quarters for a National Park Service employee who watches over the area.

Around the bend, the rushing waters of Mill Creek can be heard. The path ends at the Mill Creek Trail. Turn left and head back to the parking lot; or turn right and continue for a short distance to visit the site of the El Dorado Mine. See the Mill Creek Trail Guide for more information.



Camden House in spring



Barn across from the Tenant Farmhouse



Clear Creek near picnic area

Tower House Historic District

The story of the Tower House Historic District begins during the California Gold Rush of the early 1850s. It is best told through the lives of two men, Charles Camden and Levi Tower, who were friends, partners and then brothers by marriage. It is a story of perseverance and success for one, of dreams and loss for the other. Learn more by reading the five informational panels placed throughout the district.

Early Residents

For centuries before the 49ers found their way to the banks of Clear Creek, the Wintu Indians enjoyed the good life here at the confluence of Willow, Crystal, Mill and Clear Creeks. The abundant wildlife, plant life and natural materials allowed the Wintu to prosper. Although the Gold Rush Era nearly destroyed the Wintu, their heritage still lives today.