

Pack horses keep the north country alive

Water trough c. late 19th century

This water trough is thought to have been used by horse teams during the Gippsland goldfields era.



Photo: Charles Collins and his pack horses on their way to diggings.

The pack horses needed to be steady and reliable. Some were taught from an early age to carry rocks in their packs so they learned not to bump other objects. They could accurately judge the space between trees on narrow trails.

The horses carried everything from food stuffs, breakables, machinery parts or even explosives. It is said that coffins were even packed with goods to save space and limit loads.