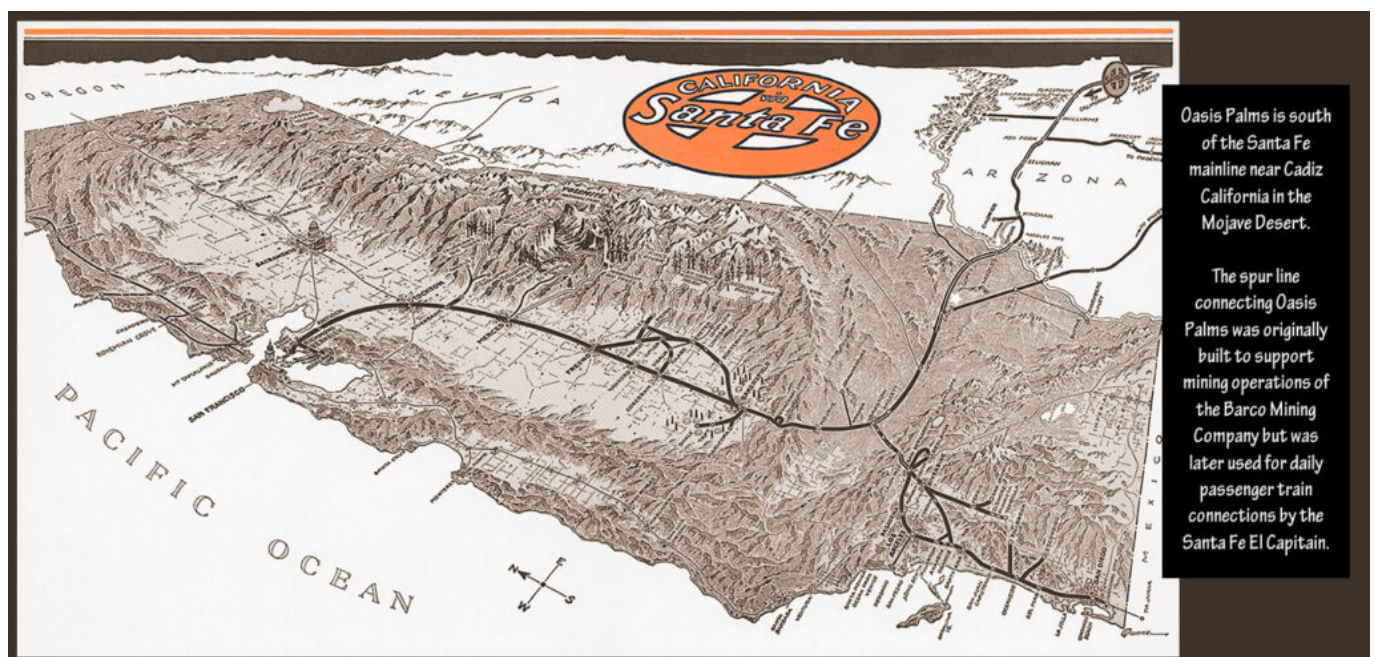


1883 – The Railroad & Gold Mining arrive in the Mojave Desert

In 1883, the [Southern Pacific Railroad](#) laid its tracks through the Cadiz Valley, a mere ten miles north of the Ship Mountains. This railway line represented a crucial link in American history, connecting the commerce centers of the Atlantic seaboard to the cities on the Pacific coast, and it presented an opportunity for Smith to transport his gold from Cadiz directly to the [San Francisco mint](#) via rail.

Simultaneously, gold mining activity in the [Dale Mining district](#) to the south intensified, as prospectors discovered gold in the nearby Pinto Mountains, east of Twentynine Palms. The Southern California gold rush was in full swing, attracting over 3,000 prospectors to the nearby mountains within just five years. Like Oasis Palms, New Dale emerged as one of the bustling mining towns, but it eventually became another ghost town in the Mojave after 1917, as gold reserves dwindled, and residents departed.



Oasis Palms is south of the Santa Fe mainline near Cadiz California in the Mojave Desert.

The spur line connecting Oasis Palms was originally built to support mining operations of the Barco Mining Company but was later used for daily passenger train connections by the Santa Fe El Capitan.

In 1884, Cameron Smith proposed to Southern Pacific Railway the construction of a spur line connecting the Ship Mountains to the Santa Fe main line, situated just east of Cadiz and west of Danby. Smith intended to use this spur to transport even larger quantities of gold ore to the stamp mill in San Bernardino. He petitioned Collis P. Huntington but regrettably, Huntington remained unmoved by Smith's entreaties.