

# 1885 – The Town of Oasis Palms is Established

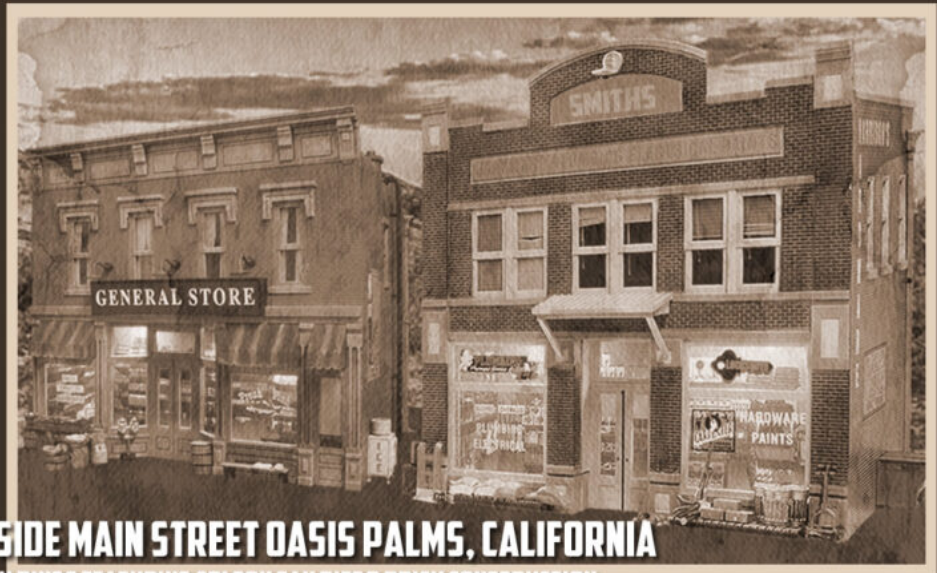
In 1885 the plateau of Barco was officially christened “Oasis Palms, California”. The town took its name from the thriving grove of mature [California Fan Palms \(\*Washingtonia filifera\*\)](#), some of which were estimated to already be over a century old at the time. These majestic California Fan Palms could reach towering heights of 100 feet and live for 250 years or more. The mature palms, along with their companions like the [Chuparosa](#), adorned with red tubular flowers that attracted hummingbirds during spring, transformed the oasis into a magical and enchanting destination.

During this era, the town continued to burgeon, and Smith invested heavily in its development, constructing various buildings, including a general store, hardware store, and café. Smith aimed to establish Oasis Palms as a town characterized by permanence, diverging from the typical wooden structures found in many of the nearby mining towns. Instead, he opted for brick, which not only provided stability but also enhanced the town’s aesthetic. Smith contracted [Philander Colton](#) of the Mormon Battalion in San Diego to supply the same type of brick used in the construction of the original courthouse in San Diego in 1847. The bricks were transported by rail from San Diego to Cadiz and then hauled up to the Barco plateau on oxen-drawn carts.



Philander Colton and the others of the Mormon Battalion began making bricks in March of 1847 in Old Town San Diego.

Colton supplied the bricks used to build the early town buildings in Oasis Palms, California



**WESTSIDE MAIN STREET OASIS PALMS, CALIFORNIA**  
BUILDINGS FEATURING COLTON SAN DIEGO BRICK CONSTRUCTION

Having achieved his lifelong aspiration of establishing Oasis Palms as a thriving and permanent town, Cameron Smith peacefully passed away in his sleep in the winter of 1885. He left behind his beloved wife, Angela, and two sons, Emmet (1844-1932) and Jackson (1846-1928). Angela, too, departed this world ten years later in 1895.