1859 — The U.S. Land Patent is Issued

Cameron's Rancho Barco claim faced uncertainty following the Mexican—American War in 1848, when most of the areas previously constituting Alta California were ceded to the United States. The California Land Act of 1851, enacted following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and California's admission as a state in 1850, further jeopardized Smith's Rancho Barco holdings. Although the treaty concluded the Mexican—American War, obligating the United States to respect Mexican land grants, Smith found himself compelled to reapply to the U.S. government, substantiating his previous grant. To strengthen his case, Smith argued that a Mexican clerk had inaccurately transcribed his surname during the initial filing, hence filing this grant application under his true English name.

During this period, Smith exercised great caution to keep his small gold mining operation clandestine, avoiding a similiar fate of John Sutter, who had famously met misfortune in Sacramento to the north. In 1839, Sutter persuaded the Mexican governor to grant him lands on the Sacramento River, where he built a thriving community until the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill brought calamity. While constructing a water-powered sawmill, a carpenter who worked for Sutter named James W. Marshall uncovered gold flakes in a streambed in January 1848. Despite their efforts to keep the discovery secret, word spread rapidly. In 1849 gold seekers and squatters flooded Sutter's land, pilfering and destroying his possessions and livestock. Finally, the U.S. courts denied Sutter title to his Mexican grants, leading to his financial ruin by 1852.

	THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, To all to whom these presents shall come, greeting: CERTIFICATE A. 165 88 3 3 Wighters, Harry June of the Wift STATES OF AMERICA, Whereby according it appears that reak rarraws has been made by the said Charry June whereby according it appears that reak rarraws has been made by the said Charry June whereby according its appears that reak rarraws has been made by the said Charry June whereby according to the previous of the 34th of April, 1820, entitled "An set making further provisions for the public hash," for the Smallh back quarter of the Said quarter of Section toghten, and the Joseph Meet quarter of the Morth East quarter of Section Shirtly, in Trunchip fercusty, Sorth of Mannya Accounter Meet, in the distance of famile formerly	
	according to the Ornotal Plat of the Survey of the said lands, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyer General, which said trust has been purchased by the said Charten State of Congruen in such case made and provided Hays Gives and Garages, and the said Charten State of Congruen in such case made and provided Hays Gives and Garages, and the said Charten State of Congruen in such case made and provided Hays Gives and Garages, and the Said Charten State of Congruen in such case made and the said Charten State of Congruen in such case made and provided Hays Gives and Garages of Whatcover nature, and to the leits and adjust freeze. In instimum better, 3. Same Butchares President of the United States of America, have cannot these letters to be made Faters, and the Said of the GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.	
Signed by President James Buchanan October 1859, the parcel that conta the Ship Mountains in the Mojave Des was granted to Captain Cameron Smit	ert Dames A Buchanan	

Cameron Smith knew he faced a similar threat, but after a protracted and costly legal battle spanning over eight years, he ultimately received a U.S. government patent for his land. Perceived as a desolate wasteland with little inherent value, Smith's land grant was officially endorsed by President Buchanan in October 1859.