

CALICO AND ODESSA RAILROAD AND ASSOCIATED MINING AREAS, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION

This report is part of a research project that describes the relationships between mines and railroads in the Mojave Desert and southwestern Great Basin. The collection can be accessed at <http://www.greggwilkerson.com/railroads.html>

Italics indicate quotations.

HISTORY

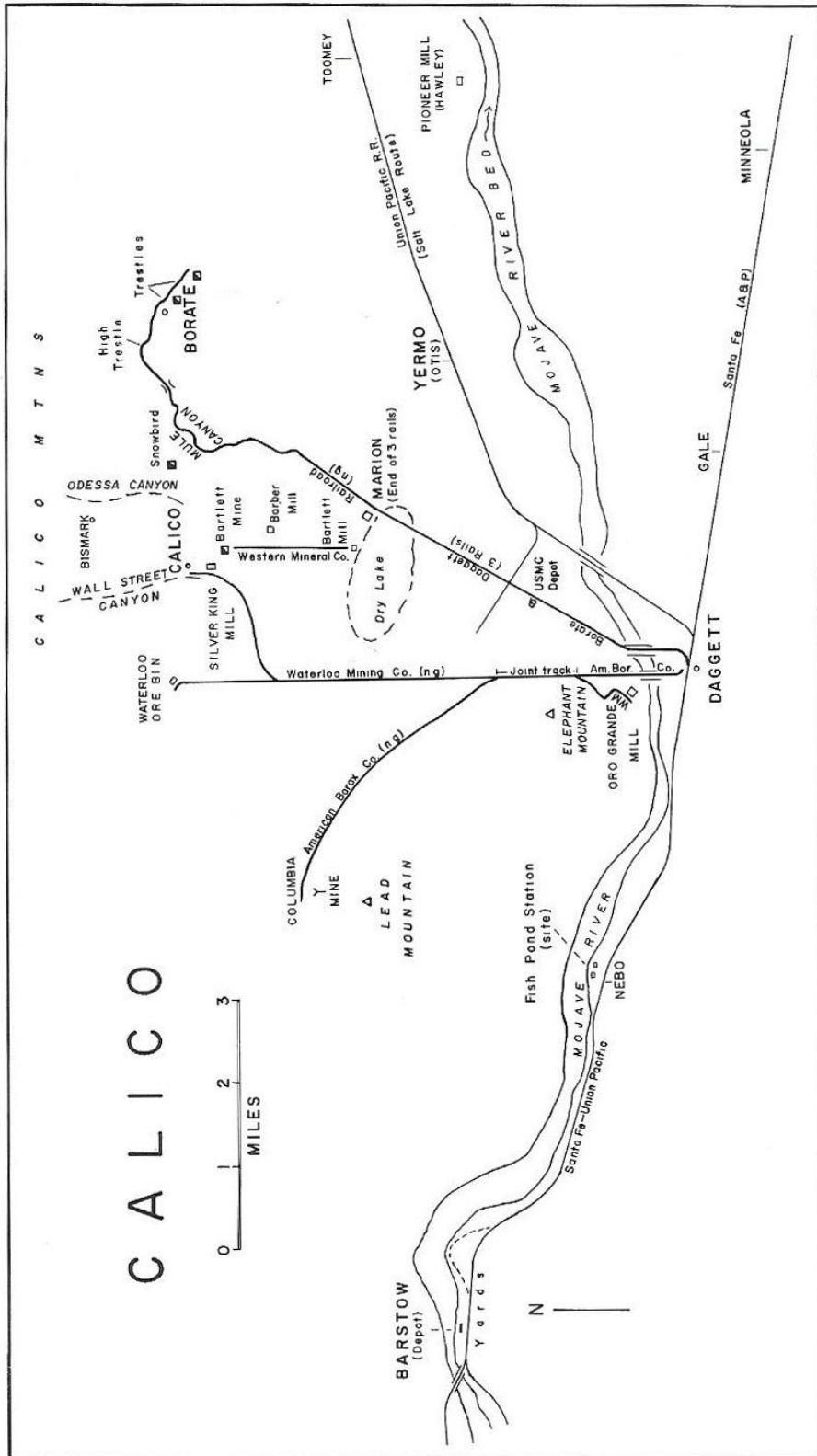
The Calico and Odessa (C&O) Railroad connected to the Atlantic and Pacific (A&P) railroad and serviced silver and borate mines in the Calico and other mountains east of Barstow, California.

The Calico silver district was discovered in 1881. The Calico District figured prominently in Shumway, Vredenburg and Lane’s classic book *Desert Fever* (Shumway and others, 1980; Vredenburg and others, 1981). There were no less than 46 mines of note near Calico with the most important being the Waterloo, Bismarck, Oriental, Garfield, Silver King and Burning Moscow. The Calico and Odessa Railroad was built in 1912-1913. The mines were all closed by 1915. Exploration programs for gold and silver are currently being implemented at Calico (Vredenburg, 1985; Vredenburg and others, 1980, Vredenburg, 2013; Myrick, 1963: 823-827; Wilkerson, 2017d, Wilkerson 2022a).

In 1888 a railroad was commissioned to connect the ore bins of the Waterloo Mine to the Waterloo Mill on the east flank of Elephant Hill at Daggett near the Mojave River. It was known as the Calico and Odessa Railroad (C&O). In 1889 a branch of the C&O was built to the ore bins of the Silver King mine at the mouth of Wall Street Canyon. The portions of the C&O serving the Waterloo and Silver King mines were dismantled in 1906 due to low silver prices (Myrick, 1963:822).



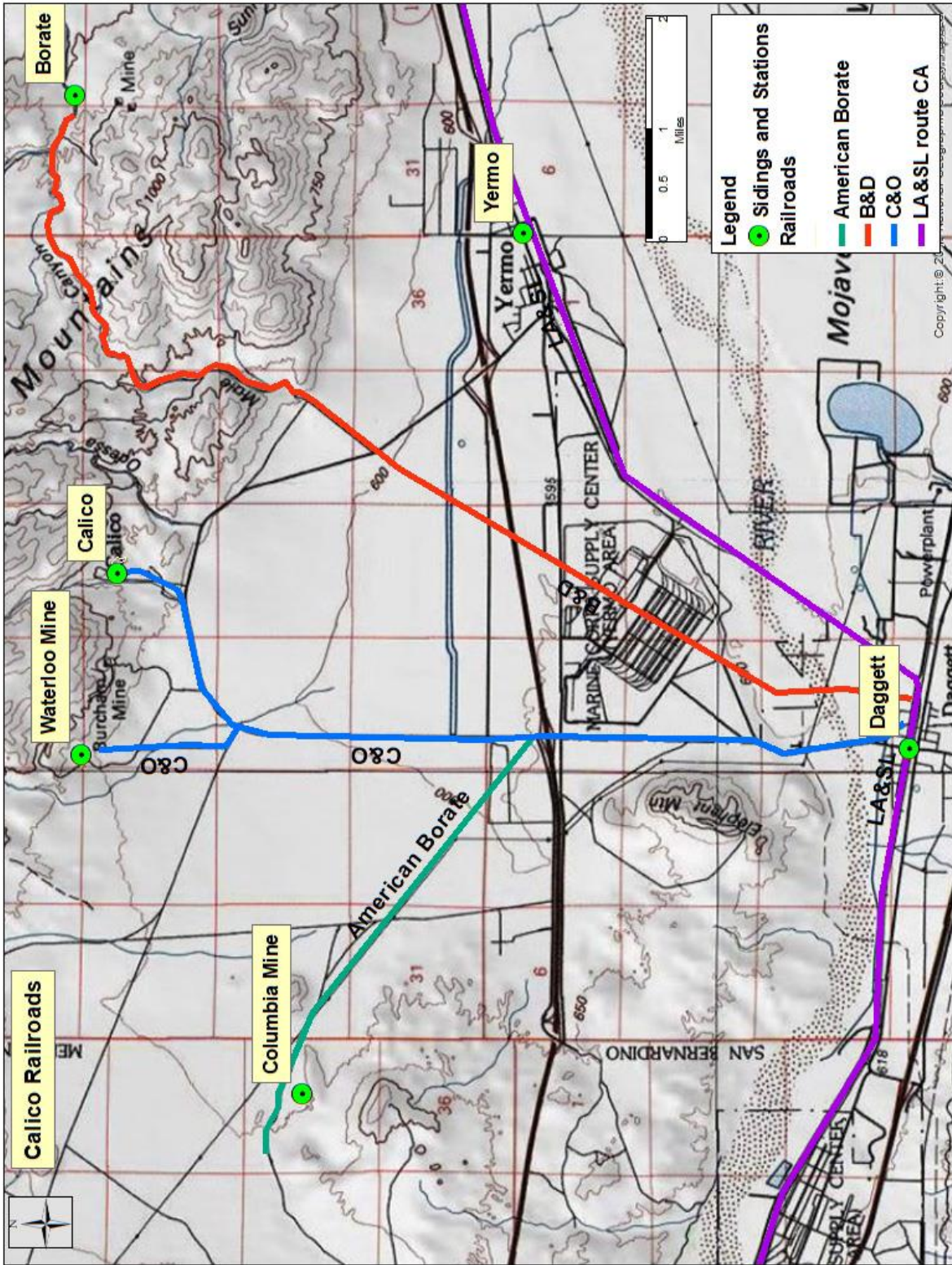
Caption: Calico amusement park. From <https://westernmininghistory.com/towns/california/calico/> Nov. 14, 2023.



Caption: Map of the Calico and Odessa Railroad. From Myrick, 1963.

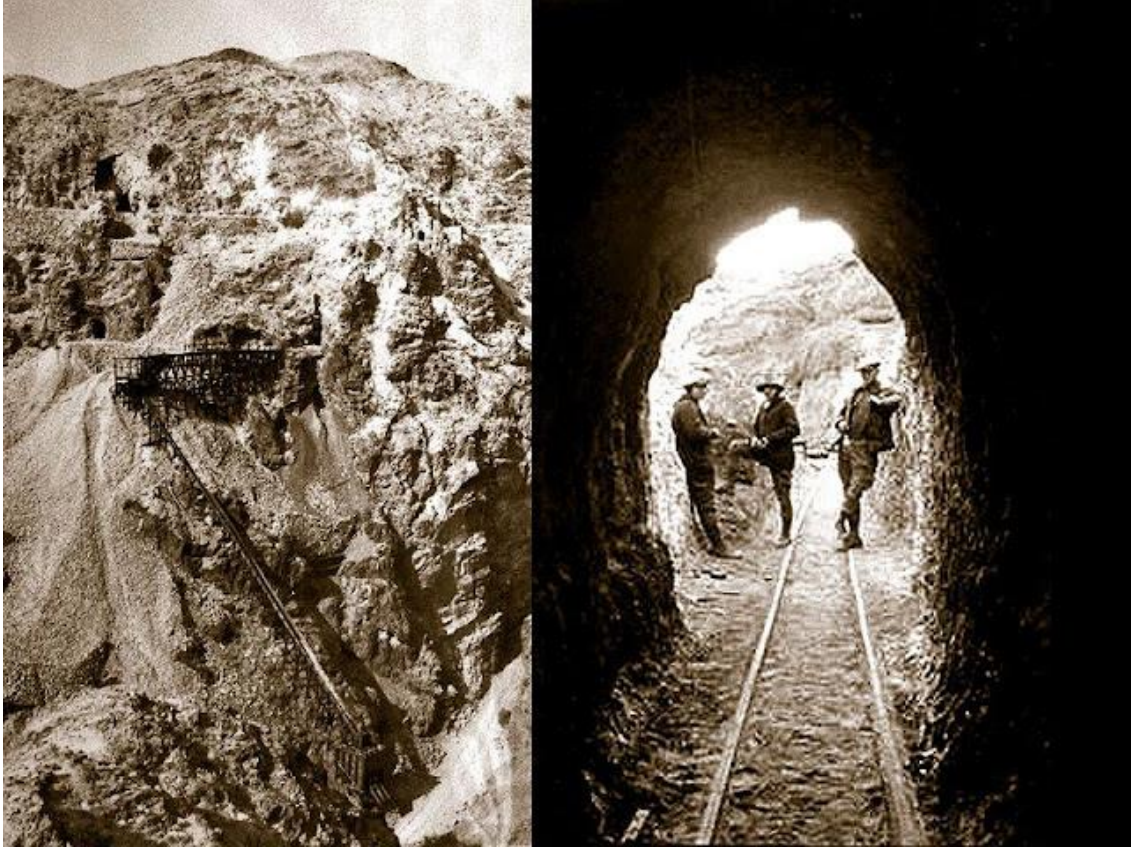


Caption: Main Street Calico Park. From <https://schrammjourney.blogspot.com/2012/02/calico-ghost-mining-town.html> accessed Nov. 14, 2023.





Caption: Calico railway. From <https://westernmininghistory.com/gallery-image/6263/> accessed Nov. 14, 2023.



Caption: Calico mines, surface and underground. From www.secretmines.com accessed Nov. 14, 2023.



Caption: Panorama of Calico illustrating rock alteration. From <https://westernmininghistory.com/gallery-image/6271/> accessed Nov. 14, 2023.



The Silver King Mine, the richest mine of the Calico silver mines. It was Walter Knott's uncle, John King who grubstaked the two men who found this rich vein, so they named it after him.

Caption: Silver King mine portal. From <https://www.klaxo.net/hofc/other/calico.htm> accessed Nov. 14, 2023.

REFERENCES

All references in this report are listed at <http://www.greggwilkerson.com/iv-references.html>