

CHINA RANCH NITRAT RAILROAD, INYO 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 of southeastern California and southwestern Nevada. t

The collection can be accessed at
<http://www.greggwilkerson.com/railroads.html>

Italics indicate quotations.

HISTORY

China Ranch is in the north-central part of the Sperry Hills about halfway between Tecopa and the Western Talc Mine. It connected to the Tonopah and Tidewater (T&T) railroad.

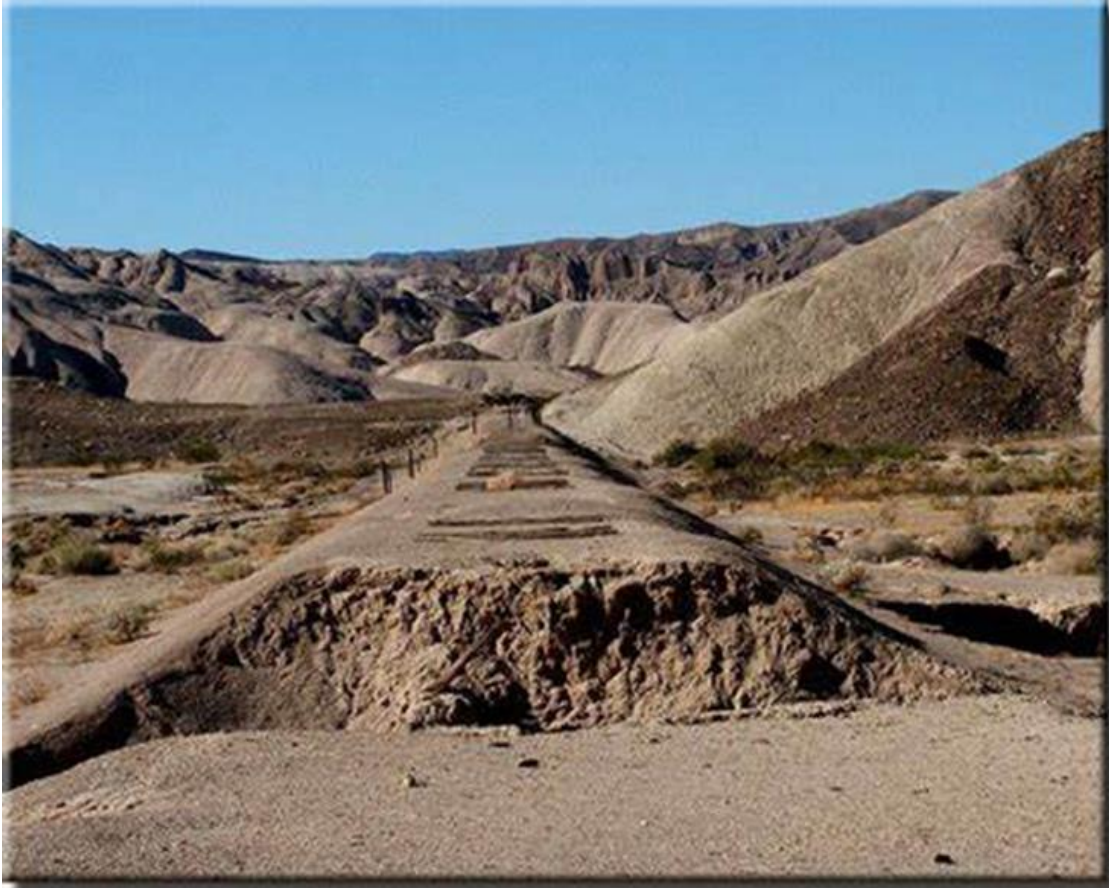
In the 1890's a Chinese man named Ah Foo came to this canyon from the Borax Works in Death Valley. He developed a successful ranch, raising livestock, hay, fruits and vegetables to help feed the local silver miners and their draft animals. The "China Man's Ranch" became a favorite resting spot, with its cool running stream and beautiful trees (HMdb, 2023).

In 1900 Ah Foo disappeared somewhat mysteriously, though the name has stuck. After many changes of owners and financially unsuccessful ranching attempts over the next 90 years, the current owners began planting young date palms in 1990, and opened China Ranch to the public in 1996.

The China ranch line was a spur to the Tonopah and Tidewater railroad. The line was built in 1914 (Myrick, 1963, 586). It accessed the China Ranch from the Acme siding. It also was near Upper Canyon Nitrate Mine which was owned by the Pacific Nitrate Company. Another nitrate occurrence in the area of Shoshone was the Ratcliff mine (Waring and Huguenin, 1917; Nobel, 1931. Norman and Stewart, 1951).



Caption: China Ranch Date Farm; From <https://kensphotogallery.blogspot.com/2018/03/china-ranch-date-farm-trip-notes-for.html> accessed Nov. 11, 2023.



Caption: China Ranch railroad grade. From chinaranch.com accessed Jan. 15, 2024.

REFERENCES

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