

# LUDLOW AND SOUTHERN RAILROAD, 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 of southeastern California and southwestern Nevada. t

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

Italics indicate quotations.

## HISTORY

Copper and gold mineralization in the area of the Bagdad-Chase and Roosevelt mines was discovered most likely around the early to late 1880's by John Suter, roadmaster for the Atlantic and Pacific subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railway. Discovery dates, which have been reported or which can be inferred from various sources, range from 1880 to 1903 (Mansfield, 2005). Construction began in 1902 and 1903 the 7.8-mile-long railroad had been built with spurs going to Stedman and Bagdad-Chase mills (Myrick, 1963:827-835, Ross, 2009). The Bagdad-Chase served the mines of the northern Bullion Mountains. These included the Ragtown, Old Pete, Bagdad, Ambush, Buckey-Stedman, Dull Pick, Gold Standard, Markerson and Bullion Range mines and the mills at Stedman and Bagdad (Wilkerson, 2020d, 2020e; Ross, 2009, Bonas and Anderson, 2023).



Caption: Bagdad-Chase railroad at Stedman. From the Larry Vredenburg Collection.



Caption: Town of Stedman in Stedman-Bagdad mining district with railroad. From the Larry Vredenburgh Collection.

The Bagdad Chase was one of only four gold mines in California to be authorized to remain in production during World War II; the ore's silica content made it useful as a flux in smelting. Although not very profitable after WWII, the mine operated continuously from 1940 to 1954. The railroad fell into disuse in 1916 with the arrival of diesel-powered trucks for ore haulage. The railroad was dismantled in 1935 (Minedat, 2020c; Myrick, 1963:827-835; Ross, 2009).

From Ludlow, the L&S went south up a pediment of the northern Bullion mountains and through some inslebergs to a present pipeline service road near the Old Pete mine and then south into the northern end of Bristol Lake Valley to **Ragtown**. The L&S continued south to the Stedman and **Bagdad Chase** mines north-northwest of Pacific Mesa.

## REFERENCES

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