

MIDLAND 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

The Midland railroad served the U.S. Gypsum Brown Mine from the Arizona and California (A&C) Midland siding (Sampson and Tucker, 1945:128).

The mine is in the southeast part of the Little Maria Mountains. A railroad was built from Blythe Junction to the Palo Verde Valley in 1915-1916. A narrow-gauge line was built to the mine site in 1925. The Arizona and California Railroad (A&C) supplied water to the town and mine. The Midland plant was expanded, and another underground gypsum mining venture added in 1936 at the Victor Mine.

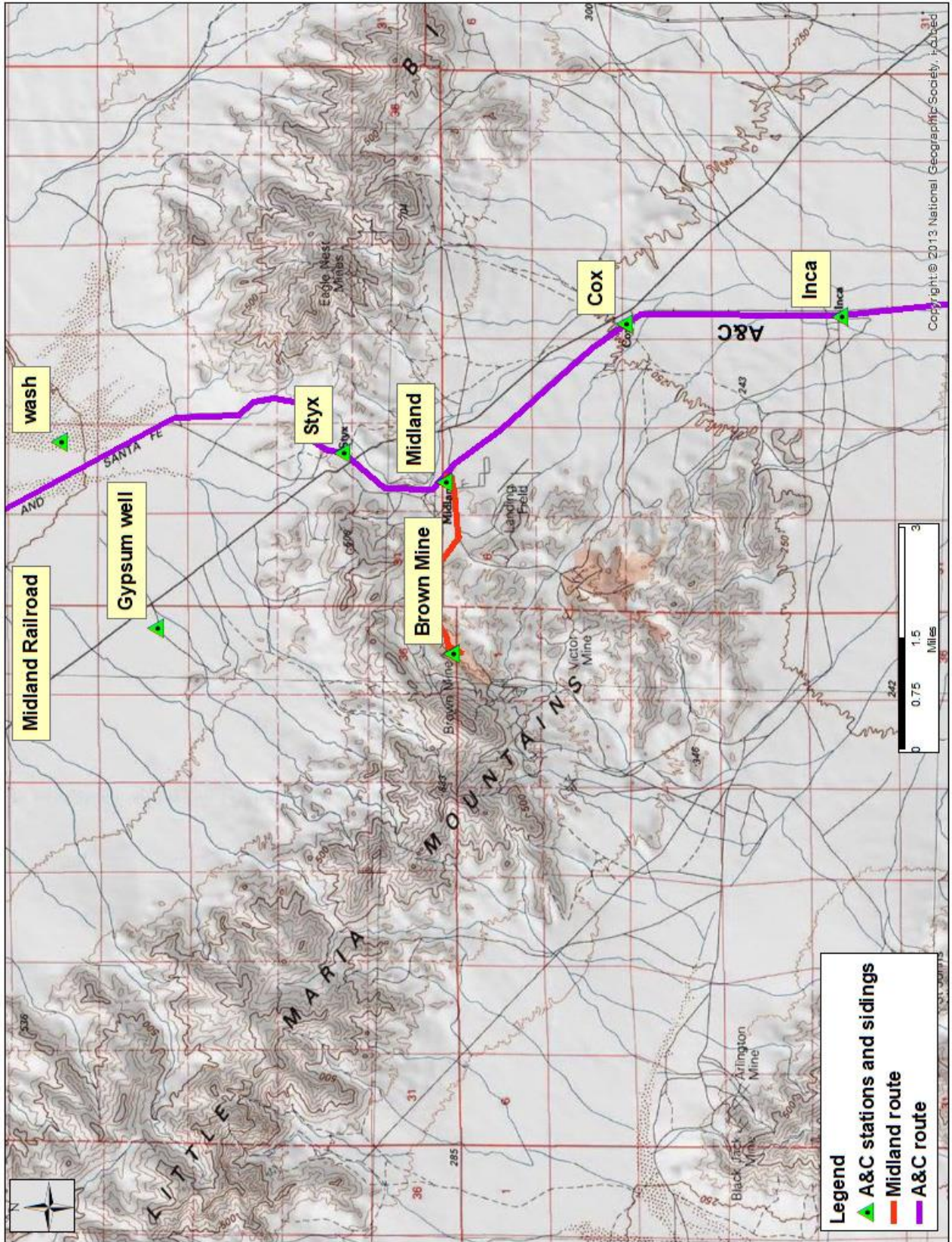
Originally discovered as a gold-silver and base metal mine, the area was later developed as a gypsum mine. Open pit mining commenced in 1946. The Midland plant and its railroad closed in 1966 (Vredenburgh, 2024a, Myrick, 1963:840).

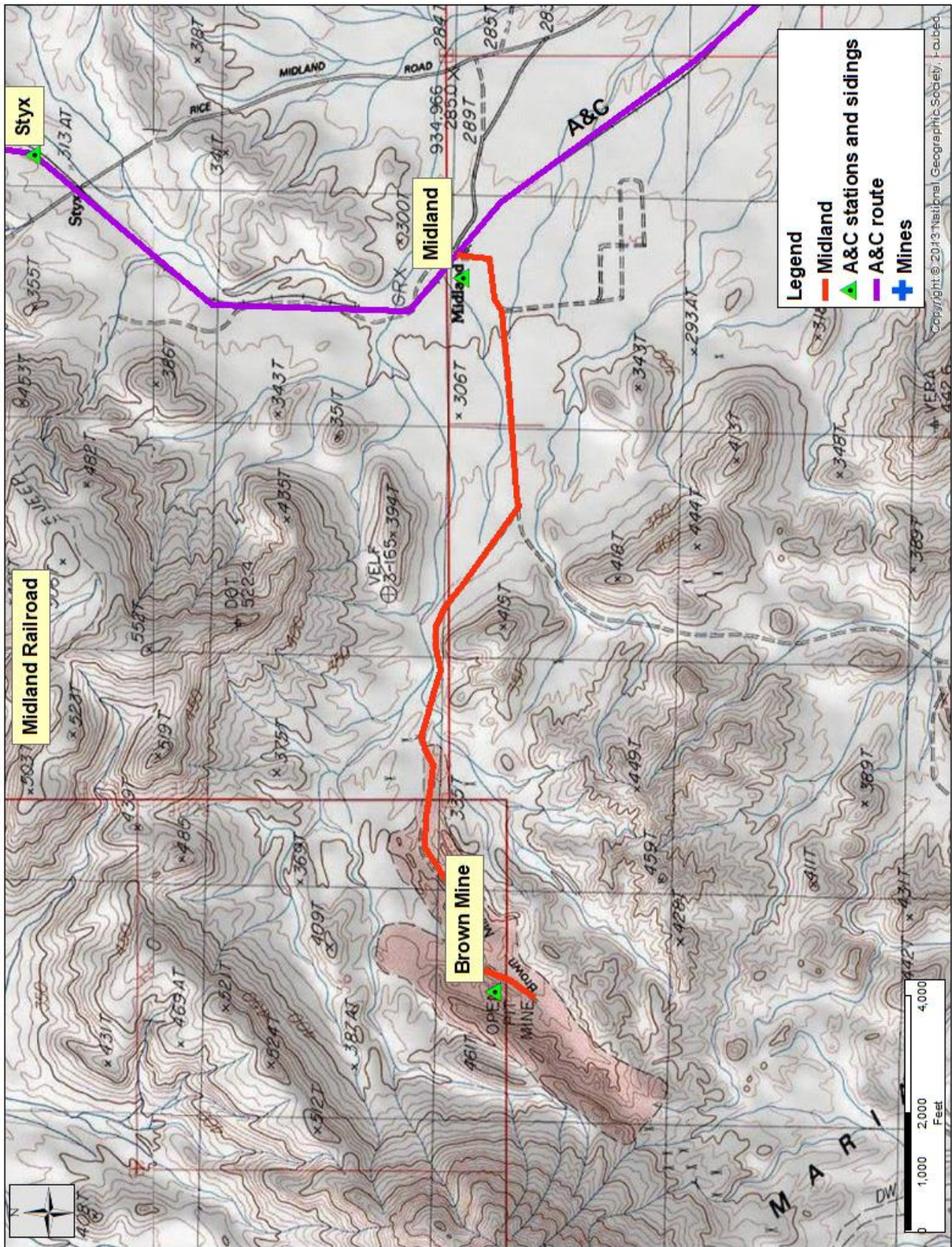


Caption: Brown Gypsum Mine plant foundations. Photo by Bill Cook. From <https://ghosttowns.com/states/ca/midland.html> accessed Jan. 14, 2024.



Caption: Foundations and scattered debris indicate the site of a major gypsum plant and community of 1,000, once located in this remote region 20 miles from the nearest settlement. U.S. Gypsum established the town and plant to process gypsum extracted from nearby mines in 1925, responding to a demand for a new product: drywall. After the mine shut down in 1966, the town was intentionally burned to the ground. U.S. Gypsum still manufactures over half of the nation's plaster products, and operates a major plant in Plaster City, California. From <https://clui.org/ludb/site/midland> accessed Jan. 15, 2023.







REFERENCES

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