



In 1895, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe-controlled Santa Fe, Prescott & Phoenix Railroad was completed from the AT&SF/A&P mainline at Ash Fork, Arizona, to Phoenix. The SFP&P was known as the "Peavine" railroad because of its winding route. The SFP&P built through this location near Drake, Arizona, in 1893. In this northeastward view, the SFP&P line is the line that runs from the foreground to the southbound BNSF consist in the left distance.

In November 1911, the Verde Valley Railway was chartered as a non-operating subsidiary of the AT&SF to support the copper mines at Jerome, Arizona. In February 1912, construction commenced from this location west of Drake on the SFP&P and was completed east to Clarkdale, near Jerome, in February 1913. The branch that goes to the right in this photo is one leg of the wye for the VV. The cars in the distance are on the other leg of the wye. In 1989, the AT&SF sold the 38-mile VV to David L. Durbano's The Western Group, and the line became two railroads: the Clarkdale Arizona Central Railroad for freight and the Verde Canyon Railroad for passenger service. Excursion passenger service on the Verde Canyon Railroad commenced in November 1990 and runs from Clarkdale 20 miles west to Perkinsville (18 miles east of the location). The route follows the Verde River, crossing bridges and trestles, and passes through a 680-foot-long curved tunnel. The railroad carries about 100,000 passengers per year and in 2005 celebrated its one-millionth passenger.



Same train and junction as previous; the train is southbound on the SFP&P and the track in the foreground is the south leg of the VV wye. Note, from l to r, the decorative sandstone ready for shipment, the steel water tower, and the sign of Drake.



Westward view of sidings along the VV. The eastern switch on the wye, where the two legs meet, is between the two groups of stored cars. Note the back side of the same steel water tower as previous photos. The siding in the foreground services the Drake Cement Plant.



Eastward view of the VV, a half mile east of previous location, where sidings start to converge and more cars are stored.



Eastward view of the VV, 500 feet east of previous location, where sidings finally converge to one track. Note bolted rails.



Eastward view of the VV, same location as previous, where sidings converge to one track. Note the relatively flat terrain in the distance, which made the first 5 miles of the VV grade fairly easy, but after that the grade winds its way down to then along the Verde River all the way to Clarkdale.