



In 1905-1907, the Pacific Coast Borax Company constructed the Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad to transport borax from Death Valley, California, to coastal markets, and to reach the booming gold fields around Tonopah, Nevada. The T&T was constructed northward from the (SP-built) AT&SF mainline at Ludlow, California, to the town of Gold Center, Nevada, where it connected with the Bullfrog Goldfield Railroad (1907). The T&T accessed Death Valley borax via a 7-mile branch, called the Ryan Branch, also built in 1907, which ran from the T&T mainline at Death Valley Junction west to the Lila C Mine with the station named "Ryan." The T&T reached neither Tonopah nor ocean "tidewater."

In 1914, the Death Valley Railroad built a narrow gauge line from a junction with the standard-gauge T&T Ryan Branch (1907) at a location called Horton, 4 miles southwest of Death Valley Junction, westward about 17 miles through this location 4 rail miles west of Horton to the borax mine at Devar (an acronym for DEath VALley Railroad), later renamed "Ryan" (the second "Ryan"). The narrow gauge track and equipment used in building the DV (1914n) was salvaged from the then-recently-abandoned Borate & Daggett Railroad (1897n). The 4 miles of the T&T Ryan Branch (1907) from Death Valley Junction to Horton had dual gauge tracks (three rails) so DV narrow gauge trains could run all the way to Death Valley Junction. One narrow gauge train per day brought food and water to the workers at (the second) Ryan and brought ore back late in the afternoon.

In 1927, after better deposits of borax were discovered at Boron in southern California, the DV tried tourist operations by bringing in a Brill railcar to transport tourists to the old mines. That didn't work; the DV (1914n) was abandoned in 1931 (including this location) and the equipment, track, and rolling stock were used to construct the United States Potash Railroad near Loving, New Mexico (east of map area). After a flood in 1933, Ludlow was abandoned and T&T operations ran north from Crucero, where the T&T crossed the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad (1905) (by then the LA&SL). By 1940 the entire line was out of service and the T&T was torn up in 1942.

Southeastward view of the grade of the DV (1914n), 4 rail miles west of its starting point on the T&T Ryan Branch (1907) at Horton and 8 rail miles west of Death Valley Junction on the T&T (1907) mainline. Note the breach in this fill grade in the middle distance.



Northwestward view of the grade of the DV (1914n) at the same location as previous. Note the breach in this fill grade in the middle distance and the curve to the right beyond the breach.