



In 1908, the Southern Pacific Railroad began construction of its Arizona & Colorado Railroad to access the copper mines in and around Courtland, Arizona, which competitor El Paso & Southwestern reached in the same year with its Mexico & Colorado Railroad (1908), and to reach Mexico (this was 2 years before the SP built its Tucson & Nogales [1910] line to Mexico). Construction on the A&C started at Cochise (this location), on the SP's Sunset Route (1881), and headed south 25 miles to a crossing with the EP&SW's M&C (1908) at Kelton, 4 miles east of Courtland. Instead of building into Courtland, which the EP&SW's M&C had already accomplished, the A&C built to Gleeson, another mining center, via an 8-mile line from Kelton (not shown separately on the Southwest Railroad History Map). A&C construction continued southward in 1909, but before reaching Mexico, the president of the SP, E. H. Harriman, died. Progress on the line came to a halt a mere one mile shy of the Mexican border. In 1910, the A&C became part of the SP subsidiary Arizona Eastern Railroad. While the northern half of the line between Cochise (this location) and Gleeson was profitable, the southern half of the line, between Kelton and its abrupt ending in the middle of nowhere, never saw a train. The active northern part of the former A&C became the SP the Gleeson Branch. Production of copper began declining in the 1920's and A&C (1909) and M&C (1908) were abandoned in the 1930's.

Southwestward view of the double-tracked SP Sunset Route (1881) 900 feet north of the town of Cochise. The siding in the foreground splits off the south track; this is the only siding in or near Cochise and thus could be the siding for the connection to the A&C (1909); alternatively, the siding for the connection to the A&C (1909) may have been abandoned along with the rest of the line.



Southwestward view 150 feet northeast of the previous location, showing the same siding and the double-tracked SP (now UP) mainline, but with a derail switch. This appears not to be the siding for the A&C (1909); a 1922 topo map shows the connection right in the middle of the town of Cochise, 1,000 feet southwest of this location. The 1922 map also shows the A&C (1909) alignment approaching town from the south and then making a left (westward) turn to approach the SP mainline at almost a right angle. Additionally, behind the viewer, there is an identical derail switch facing the other way. Therefore, this siding appears to be a newer siding to support current operations and is unrelated to the connection to the A&C (1909), which has apparently been completely obliterated. Note the red light warning trains not to enter the derail switch.



Northeastward view at the same location as previous with the same derail switch in the foreground. The red light at the far end of the siding is an identical derail switch facing the other way.