



The Randsburg Railway was a 28.5-mile branch line that originated at the main line of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad (originally the Southern Pacific Needles Branch) at Kramer Junction, California, and terminated at Johannesburg, California. The line was completed in 1898 and was acquired by the AT&SF in 1903. The RR served local mining operations and provided passenger service. Johannesburg was founded to support mining operation at nearby Randsburg, which was too high on the mountain for direct rail access. During the first half of the 20th Century, the Rand Mining District was the principal gold producing region of California. Activity centered around the Yellow Aster Mine, discovered in 1894. In 1919, the Rand Silver Mine was discovered nearby and produced more silver than any other mine in California. Johannesburg was named by miners who had previously worked in the gold-producing Witwatersrand region of South Africa, frequently referred to as "the Rand" (hence "Randsburg"), where Johannesburg is a principal city. The RR ceased operations in 1933 and the rails were removed the following year.

This northward view of the RR grade at the old mining center of Atolia, 5 miles south of the end of the line at Johannesburg. Note the mining tailings piles and abandoned mining facilities.



Northward view of the RR grade one mile south of the end of the line at Johannesburg.



Another view of the RR grade, same location as previous.