



In 1911, the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad started constructing its St. Thomas Branch from Moapa, which lies on its mainline between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles (SPLA&SL [1905]). In March 1912, construction was completed to St. Thomas, a Mormon agricultural community established in the 1860's at the confluence of the Virgin and Muddy rivers. During the 1930's, following the construction of Hoover Dam (using the Los Angeles & Salt Lake Boulder City Branch [1931]; the SPLA&SL was shortened to LA&SL in 1916), the waters of Lake Mead rose and by the late 1930's St. Thomas was submerged. In 1938 and 1939, the track was removed from St. Thomas back to the agricultural community of Overton (this location), on the Muddy River, where the track currently ends at a silica sand plant.

Northwestward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912) at Overton, about a mile northwest of the end of track.



Southwestward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912), same location as previous. Note that the bracket connecting the rails is bent to accommodate rails of two different weights, the rail to the right being the lighter of the two rails.



Southeastward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912), same location as previous, on the relatively verdant floodplain of the Muddy River.



Southwestward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912), a few hundred feet southeast of previous location. A peacock is waiting for the next train!



Southward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912), about a mile southeast of previous location. The track curving to the right is the north branch of a wye serving the Simplot Silica Products Inc. mine and silica plant which, according to its web site, has produced "high-quality silica sand...since 1927 and has the proven reserves to continue supplying you well into the future." Note the rail cars in the left distance; the south branch of the wye comes in just in front of those cars and the track ends just beyond them.



Southward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912), 500 feet southeast of previous location. The rail cars in the left distance are the same as in the previous photo, and the south branch of the wye can be seen just in front of those cars but is otherwise obscured by a berm. The wye has the railroad name "Mead Lake," as opposed to the name of the lake that inundated St. Thomas in the 1930's, which is called "Lake Mead."



Northwestward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912) end of track in Overton. The rail cars are the same as in the previous photo.



Slightly different view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912) end of track.





Southward view of the SPLA&SL St. Thomas Branch (1912), same location as previous. In 1938 and 1939, the track was removed from here south to St. Thomas, which was being inundated by the rise Lake Mead behind Hoover Dam. I could not discern the grade south of Overton, either on the ground or in satellite imagery.