

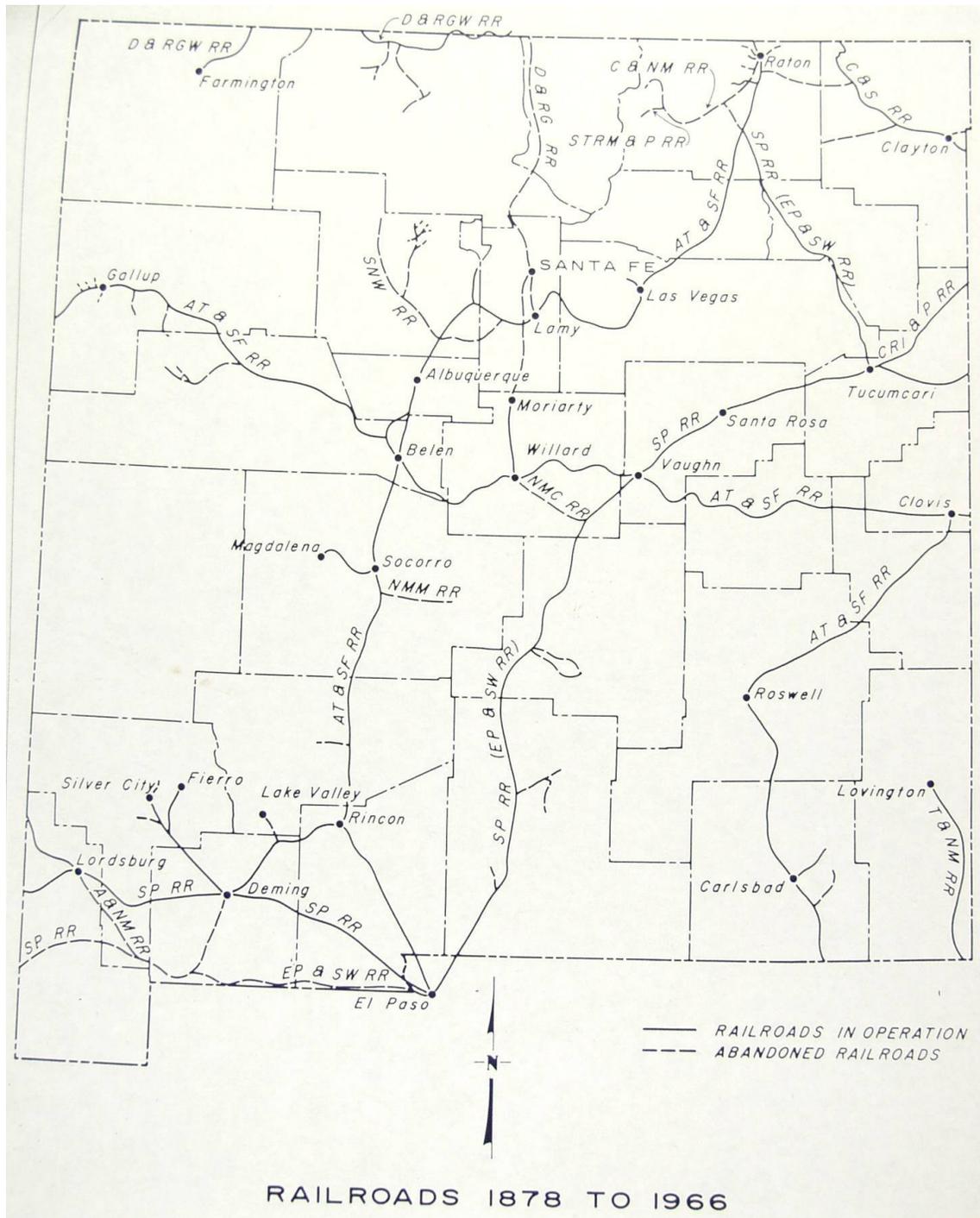
Railroads

The construction of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa, and the Southern Pacific, and the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroads in New Mexico greatly accelerated the settlement and development of New Mexico in the late 19th century. Of chief interest to Socorro County is the AT & SF line which was extended down the Rio Grande valley to Deming in 1881. It entered the state by a very steep climb over Raton Pass, therefore an easier route from Belen through Abo Pass to Clovis and thence to Amarillo was opened in 1906. Traffic is still very heavy today on both of these routes. Two important spur lines in Socorro County once connected the AT & SF to Magdalena and the ghost town of Carthage. The Carthage line gave access to the coal mines located about 30 miles east of Socorro. The Magdalena line imported general merchandise and exported cattle from the western driveway extending to Datil and Quemado and ore from the mines around Kelly. Much of the ore was delivered to the Billing Smelter in Park City, a former suburb of Socorro.

Many of the photos show the construction of the spur lines. Others show the locomotives and other equipment, depots, and the extensive shops in San Marcial that were destroyed by flooding of the Rio Grande in 1929. Also included are a train wreck, a social excursion, and a modern train.

The map below reveals the curious fact that the main line of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe does not pass through Santa Fe.

Photos of railroad construction which follow were taken on the spur lines from Socorro west to Magdalena and east to Carthage.





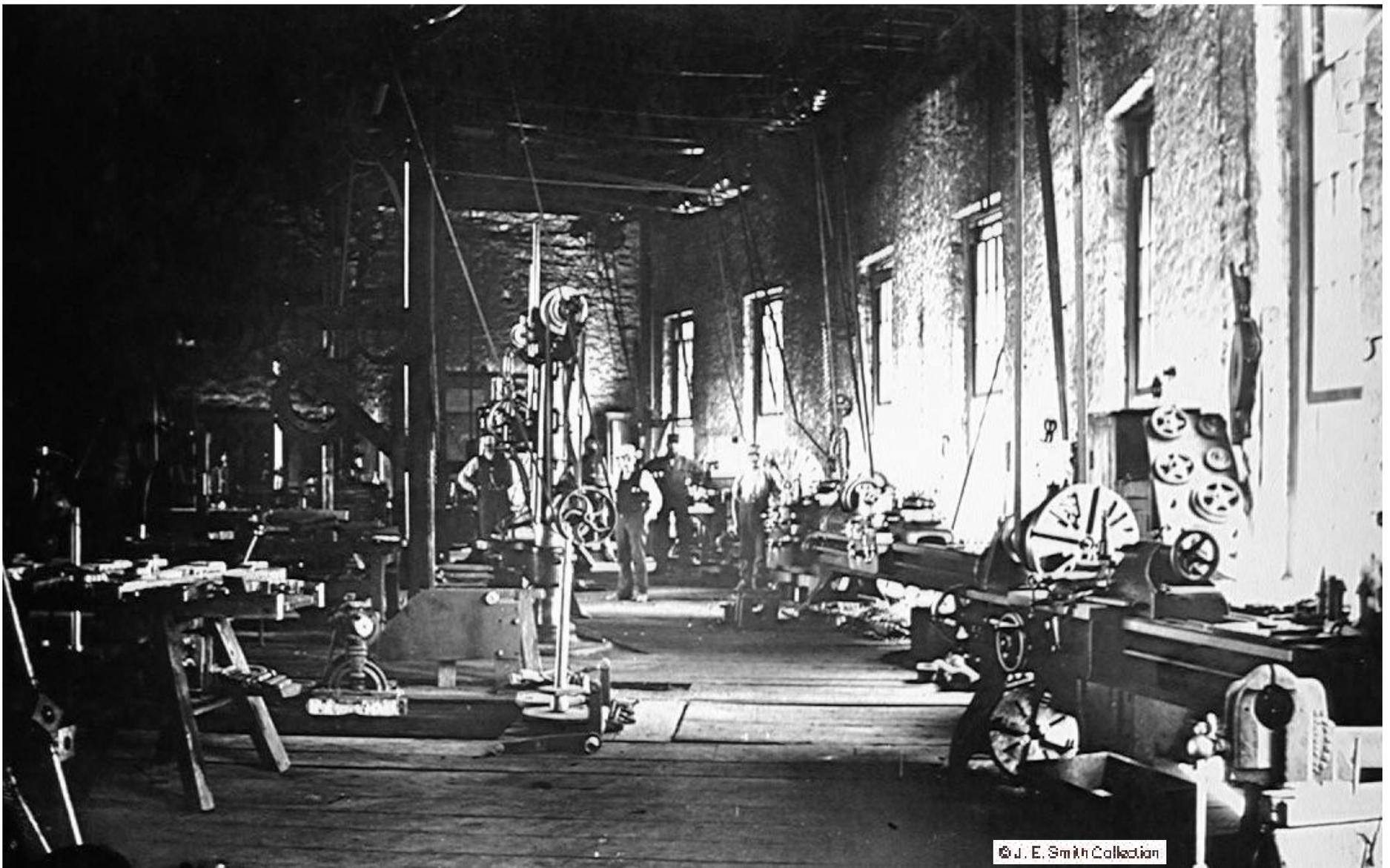
AT & SF Depot in Socorro, ca. 1900. The spur line to Magdalene connected here.



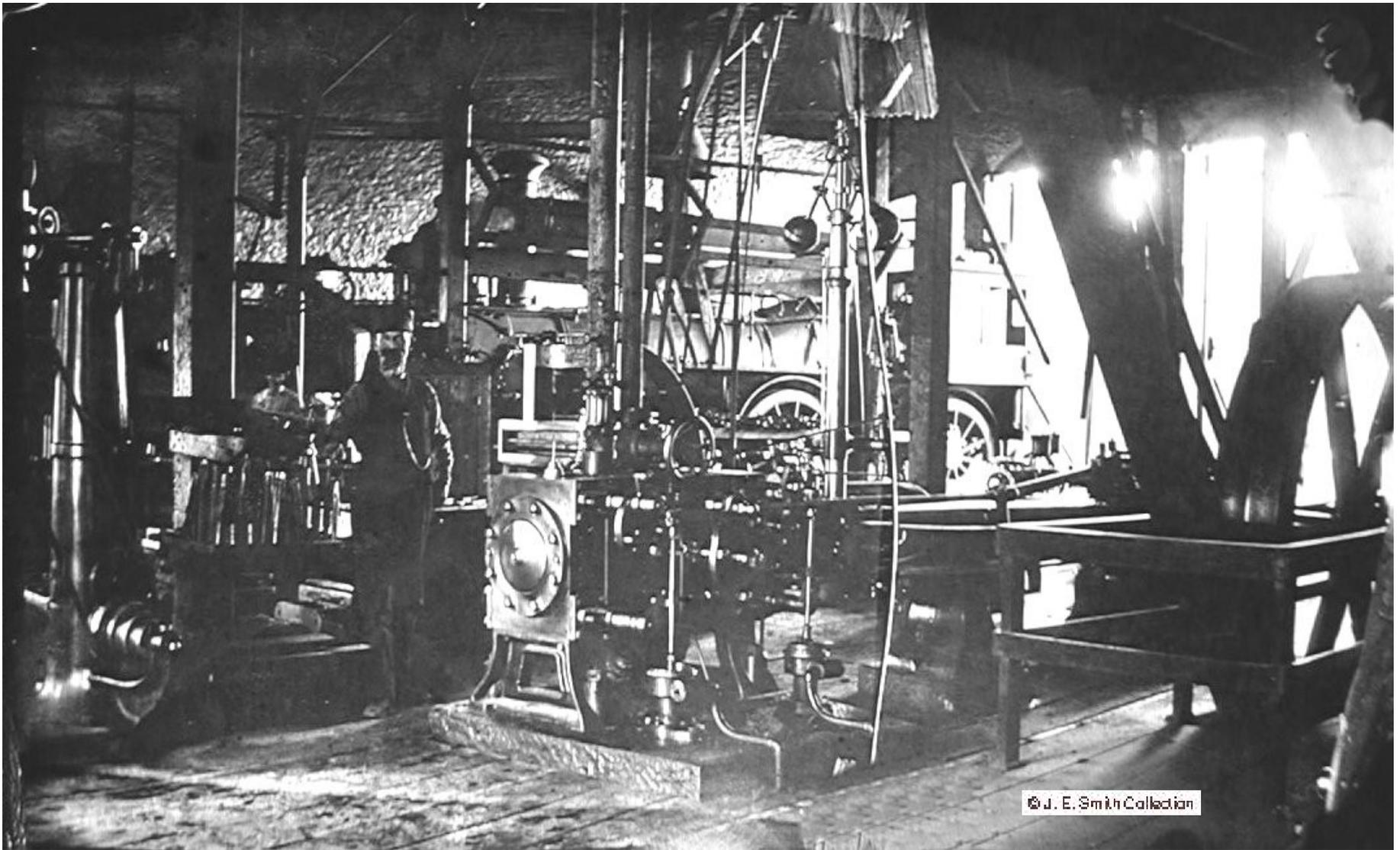
The AT & SF Depot at San Antonio, 10 miles south of Socorro. San Antonio is the birthplace of Conrad Hilton.
The New Mexico Midland spur to Carthage connected here.



A double ended locomotive at the Socorro Depot being delivered to Mexico



Railroad shop in the roundhouse at San Marcial



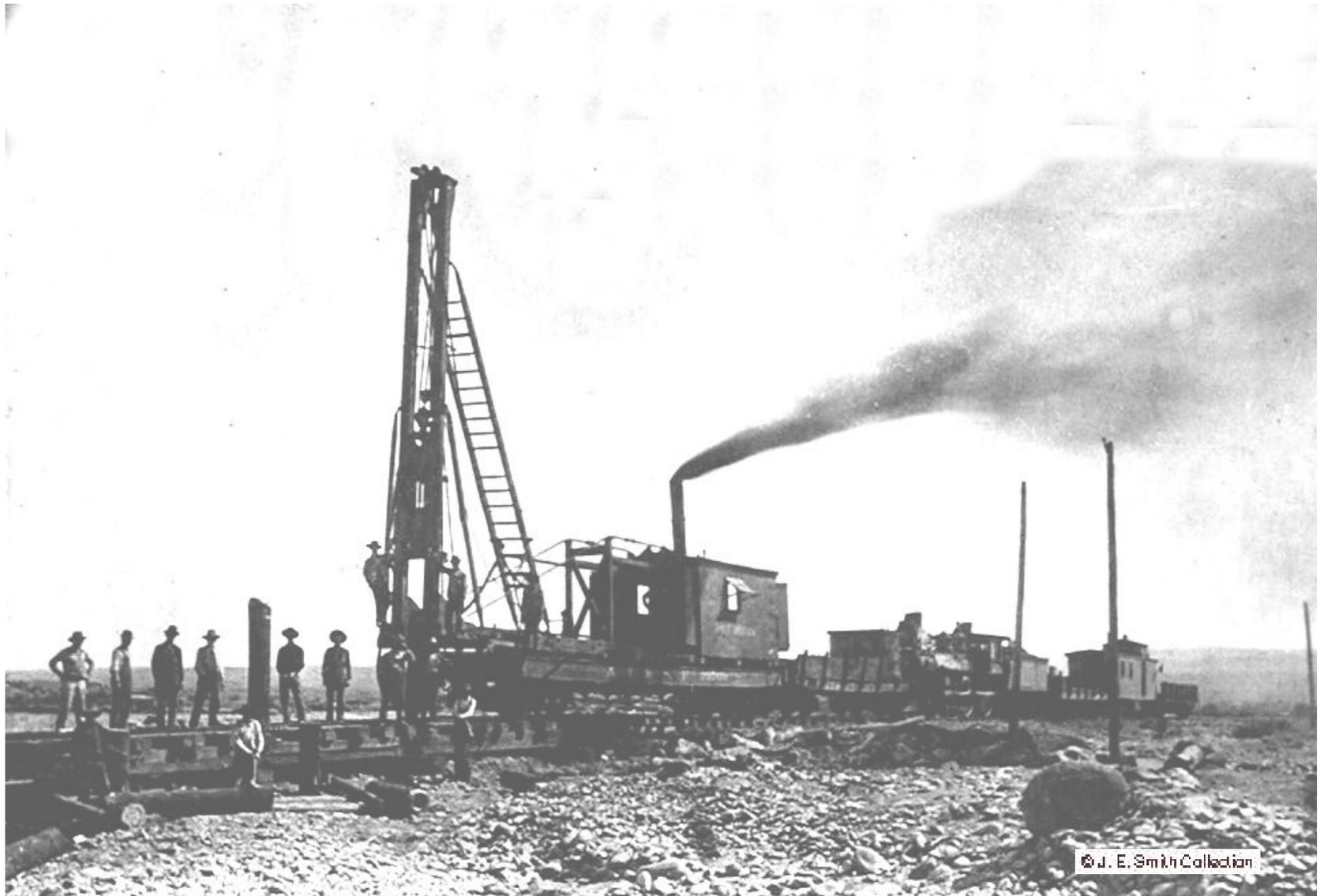
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Railroad shop in the roundhouse at San Marcial



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Rock quarry for ballast used during railroad construction



Pile driver used for railroad construction on the Magdalena spur line.



Railroad construction, realignment of track after flooding

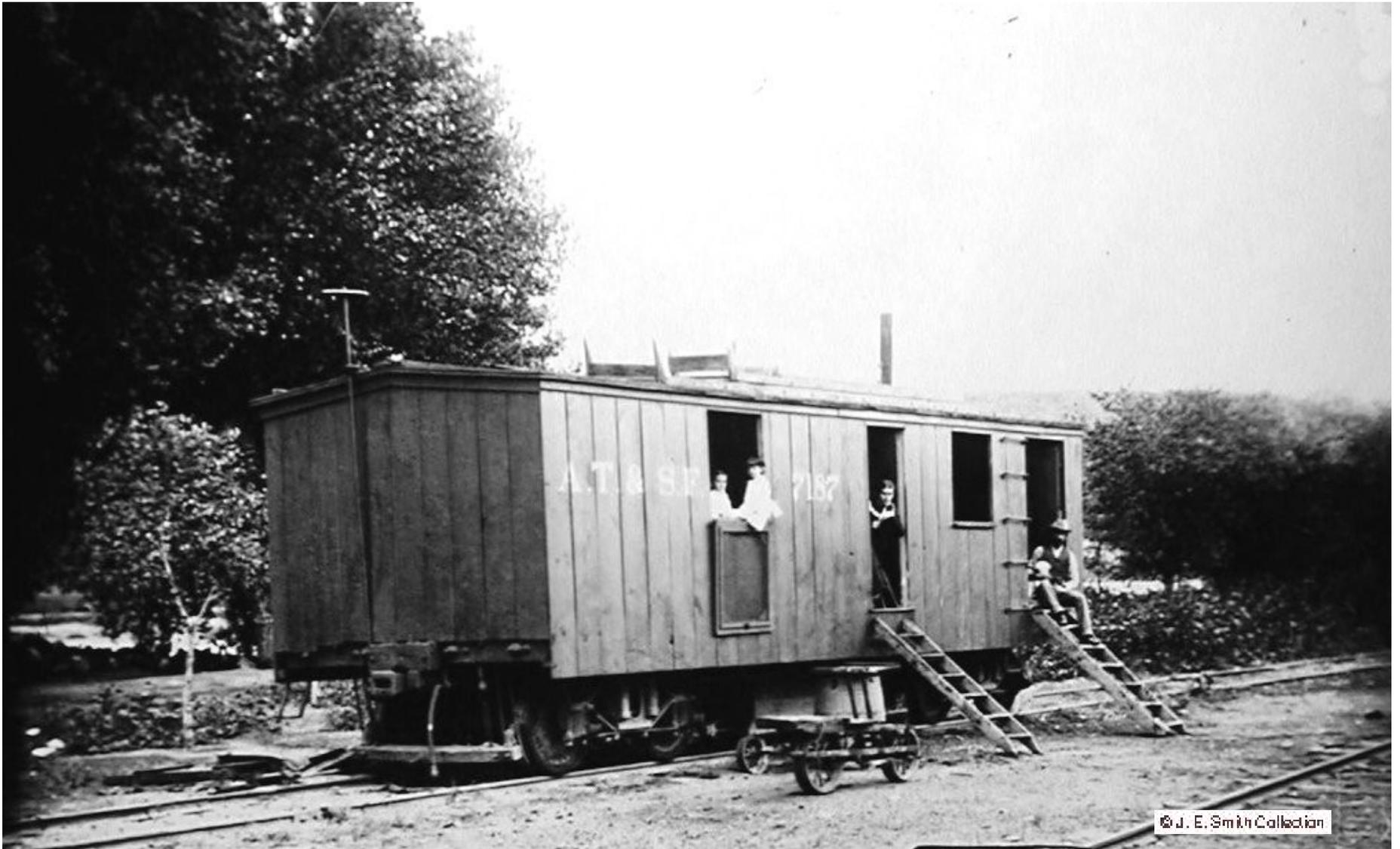


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Railroad construction, Magdalena spur line



Rio Grande Bridge on Midland spur line



Railroad construction, family living quarters



Many railroad working men were Chinese. They were found to be well suited to the requirements during construction of the transcontinental railroad. Most were single men. This studio portrait by J. E. Smith shows an unusual example of a couple photographed together. Several laundries and restaurants were established in Socorro by Chinese during the era of railroad building.



Train wreck probably on Magdalene spur line



Wrecked Locomotive



An Oddfellows Lodge excursion in San Marcial



Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Smith on the platform



Unusual Group Portrait at Clovis, NM



A modern train entering Socorro from the perlite mine situated three miles to the southwest
The line is now called the Burlington, Northern, and Santa Fe.



El Capitan, the Bullet Train of the 1940's