

**Copper mining in the vicinity of Copper City and Pilot Knob, San Bernardino County During the late 1890s and early 1900s.**

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Thirty-seven year old Newton Morrow, was hired by Governor Waterman in 1885 to run the Waterman mill, located just west of present day Barstow. After the mill shut down in 1887 Newton and his sons discovered copper ore (or turquoise as his son "Penny" described it) some 35 miles north of Waterman and began small-scale mining. Eventually the Morrow Mining District was established.

The Morrow's dubbed their mine camp Copper City. The camp was located about 4 miles southeast of Pilot Knob.

Little is known about mining here until the late 1890s. In December 1898 mining periodicals reported that the United Copper Company, "a New York syndicate," had a large force of men employed at Copper City Camp.

In 1897 claims known as the Juanita Mines numbers one through ten were located by Thomas J. Baldwin, George L Branch and J. I Crowell. By 1899 the Juanita Mines were owned by the Feejic Mining Company organized under the laws of the State of Maine. In 1900 it was reported that the Juanita mine, owned by the Union Development Company of Boston, was developing the Juanita Group of claims. The Union Development Company had reportedly purchased 38 claims from the United Yucca and Feejic mining companies for \$5 million. In 1898 the main shaft had been sunk to 90 feet and by 1900 it had been deepened to 212 feet.

In an 1902 article about San Bernardino County's "booming" mining progress, Copper City is listed as one of "a large number of copper claims being developed.."

In 1903 a promotional pamphlet which extolled the Sta Bueno (or Santa Buena) Mining, Milling and Development Company, of Riverside County, mentions that its mines are "10 miles south of Pilot Knob near the foot of which Senator W. A. Clark, of Montana, owner of the famous United Verde copper mines of Arizona, has some fine copper claims. In this same vicinity also is the famous Copper City with its rich copper and gold mines which are so rich that they are being fought over in court." The Los Angeles Mining Review reported that, "the company is capitalized for \$1,000,000, in shares of \$1 each, of which 500,000 shares are in the treasury. A considerable quantity of ore has been taken from the claims, mostly copper ore, some of which are taken from a 12-inch vein 44 feet from the surface assayed 29.88 per cent copper. Some ore from the bottom of an 80-foot shaft showed a higher percentage in copper. There are eight claims in the group."

By 1907 the Juanita had been idle for a number of years.

### **Pilot Knob / Granite Wells**

Granite Wells, was sometimes facetiously referred to at Granite City, so named because of the ruins of two stone cabins that stood at the site (Redlands Citrograph 14 July 1894).

In December 1898 it was reported that "Topsy" Johnson sold a three-quarter interest in his copper mine at Pilot Knob and was in Kansas City closing the deal. Only a few months later, in March 1899 the Los Angeles Mining Review reported Johnson, owner of the Tiptop group of copper claims near Granite Wells, had sold half interest to C. A. Burcham of the Yellow Aster Mining Company. In 1907, the Granite Wells Mining Company of Los Angeles held a number of claims here, and claimed to have extracted 200 tons of rich copper ore that was waiting to be shipped. The Topsy Johnson mine by 1912 renamed the Homestake Copper, was owned by E. E. Teagle. He had extracted 15 tons of ore from the 140-foot level of the 240-foot deep shaft. This ore which was said to assay \$136 per ton was to be shipped to the Needles smelter in a few days.

In 1910 miner Joseph Foisee was mining a promising copper property south of Pilot Knob, and had made arrangements to haul twenty-five tons of ore for processing.

A footnote to keep in mind; this Copper City, should not be confused with the settlement with name the same located south of Cave Springs, now within Fort Irwin. This later Copper City was primarily active during 1907 to 1908.

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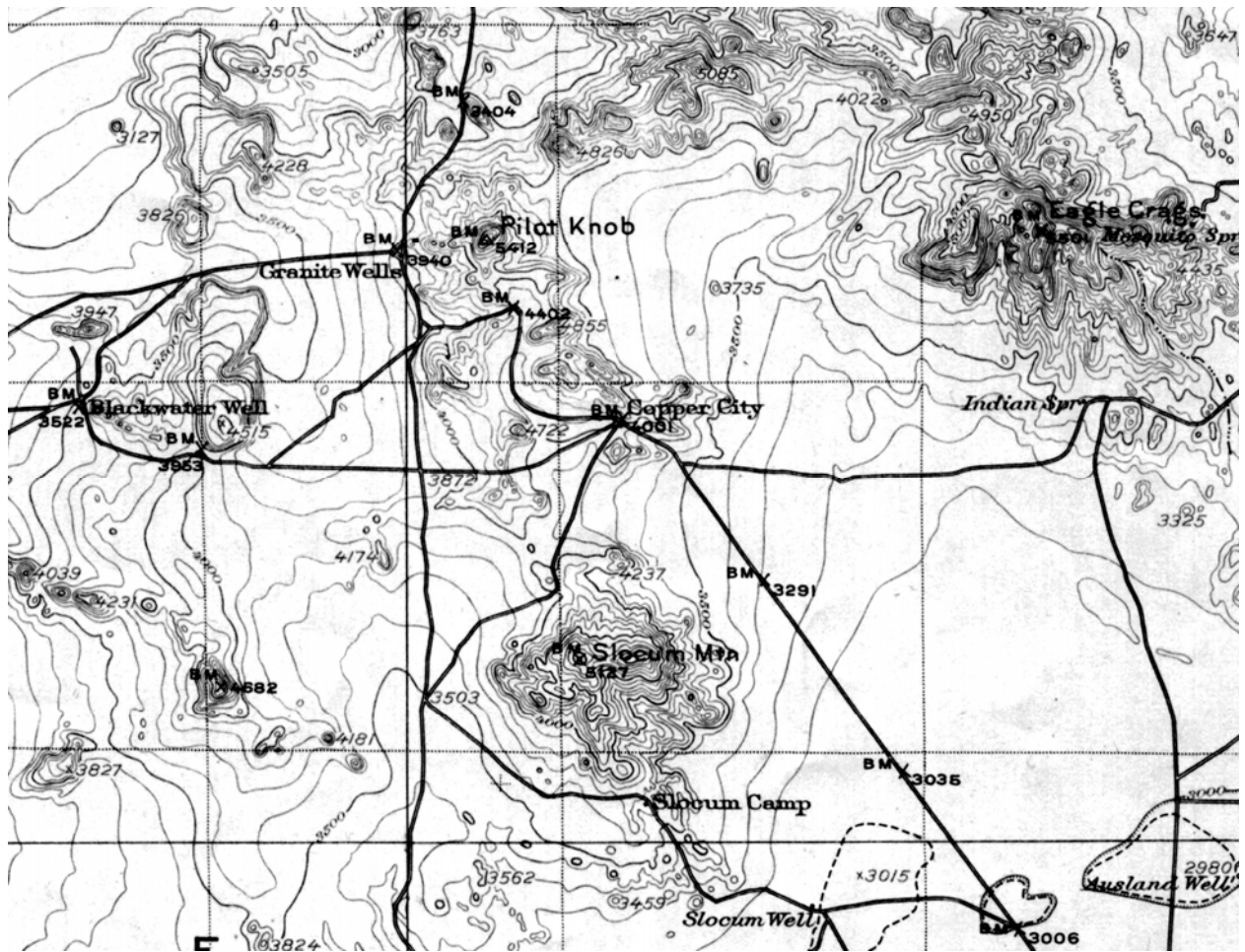
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The Morrow family working their Ramon Mine, Copper City. Taken by J. Irving Cronwell, Jim Morrow in center with arms crossed. Mittie on the far right was born in 1877.



1915 Topo Map showing the location of Pilot Knob and Copper City.



Outline of the Morrow Mining District.  
From A. Russell Crowell's, 1903 Miners Map