

# **Utah's First Bankrupt Railroad**

## **By Carl Mellor**

Mining activity in American Fork Canyon was in full swing before the railroad was completed to American Fork. A railroad had been constructed from American Fork to Tibble Fork. A new steam engine had been purchased and arrived at the railroad terminal in Lehi in 1871, and no connecting rails to the completed lines from American Fork to A.F. Canyon.

From Lehi to American Fork, the new steam engine had been purchased and arrived at the railroad terminal in Lehi in 1871, and no connecting rails to the completed lines from American Fork to A.F. Canyon. From Lehi to American Fork the new steam engine was transported on temporary rails--a few tracks were laid in front, the engine would move forward and the rear rails would be taken up and placed in front. Arriving in American Fork, the engines was then on track all the way to Tibble Fork.

The railroad went bankrupt the first year of operation. The expensive engine was sold, and a gravity powered railroad operated for many years from Tibble Fork to American Fork. A brakeman would ride the ore cars all the way down the canyon controlling the speed of the downhill car. Getting the cars back to Tibble Fork required the use of mules. The mules were trained to climb on top of the loaded ore cars and lay down to the ore for a free ride all the way to American Fork.

The mining operations from Dutchman's Flat and Mineral Basin to Tibble Fork also operated on a gravity powered system.