



In 1879, the Utah & Pleasant Valley Railway completed a narrow gauge line from the Union Pacific-controlled, standard gauge Utah Southern Railroad at Provo, Utah, to the coal fields around Pleasant Valley (present-day Scofield). The U&PV was built with rails and other hardware from the short-lived American Fork Railroad, which was abandoned in 1878. In 1882, the western part of the U&PV line was acquired and used by the narrow gauge Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, which was completed to Grand Junction, Colorado, the following year and was upgraded to standard gauge around 1890. In this northward view at Springville, Utah, 5 miles south of Provo, the welded (no bolts or brackets) center track is the 1879 U&PV grade, which became part of the D&RGW in 1882 and was standard gauged around 1890. The mountains to the east (right) are the Wasatch Range.

The Tintic mining district in the Tintic Range, located 30 miles southwest of Springville, was served by the UP-controlled Salt Lake & Western Railroad beginning in 1882. In 1891, the Rio Grande Western (successor to the D&RGW) planned a railroad to compete with UP's SL&W line and in 1892 completed the 39-mile Tintic Range Railway from the D&RGW mainline at Springville to Eureka, the primary town in the Tintic mining district. A notable feature of the Tintic Range Railway was a loop on the climb up into the Tintic Range from the east. The branch line of bolted track in the left foreground is the Tintic Railway, with its junction with the D&RGW mainline in the distance.

In 1912, a group of coal shippers organized the Utah Railway to build a railroad over the Wasatch Range to alleviate the poor service and high rates of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RGW/RGW successor). About ten miles of alignment were graded for the Utah Railway before the D&RG worked out an agreement; between 1913 and 1917, the Utah Railway constructed a line parallel to the D&RG line from Provo to Thistle (about midway between Soldier Summit and Provo) and the D&RG double-tracked the rest of the segment between Thistle and the 1917 Utah Railway Junction in the coalfields east of Soldier Summit. This arrangement continues today, as UP (U&PV/D&RGW/RGW/D&RG successor) and the Utah Railway continue to share the double track. The welded (no bolts or brackets) track on the far right of this photo is the Utah Railway, which together with D&RGW track in the center, are operated as a double track up the western approach to Soldier Summit.



Northward view a few hundred feet south of the previous photo in Springville, Utah. The center track is the 1879 U&PV grade, which became part of the D&RGW in 1882 and was standard gauged around 1890. The track to the left is the 1892 Tintic Range Railway branch line. The track on the far right and starting to climb and curve to the right is the 1913-1917 Utah Railway. The shadow is the overpass for Utah Highway 77.



Southward view at Springville; the shadow is the same overpass for Utah Highway 77 as in the previous photo. The center track is the 1879 U&PV grade, which became part of the D&RGW in 1882 and was standard gauged around 1890; it is curving left (southeast) in the distance to head up to Soldier Summit. The track to the right is the 1892 Tintic Range Railway. The track on the far left and curving to the left is the 1913-1917 Utah Railway, which parallels the D&RGW.



Closer view southward of the Tintic Range Railway and some sidings at Springville, a few steps south of the previous photo. The steep escarpment of the Wasatch Range is a normal fault along which the east (far) side rose about 2 miles relative to the valley floor.