



## HISTORY OF WELD COUNTY TOWNS

### **DEARFIELD – 1910**

*Unincorporated Communities and Populated Place in Current Weld County*

In 1910, O. T. Jackson filed a Desert Claim to “...establish a municipality owned and controlled by colored people...” The name of “Dearfield” was selected because the land would be very dear to the colonists.

Dearfield’s residents thrived between 1915 and 1918 because nature provided plenty of moisture and World War I increased crop prices.

By 1921, there were about 70 people who were living independently in Dearfield without having to work elsewhere to support their farms. O. T. Jackson spent most of his time working in Denver and his wife Minerva ran their gas station, lunch room and grocery in Dearfield. Dearfield, located midway between Greeley and Fort Morgan on the newly completed (1931) U.S. Highway 34, attracted many travelers who stopped at its gas station and lunch room .

The Great Depression worsened and ten years of drought devastated Dearfield. By 1940, only 12 people lived there. O. T. Jackson offered Dearfield as an internment camp for Japanese prisoners of war during World War II, but was denied. His niece, Jenny Jackson, cared for him and ran the Dearfield Lunch Room until 1946. After O. T.’s death in 1948, Jenny stayed in the area, living in Dearfield until 1953 when she moved to Greeley.

*“Dearfield offers opportunities to the young colored men and women... who are earnest and industrious.” Weld County News, 1921.*

*The above information is gleaned from the upcoming book, Weld County Towns: The First 150 Years, researched by the City of Greeley Museums staff, Nancy Lourine Lynch head writer.*