



## HISTORY OF WELD COUNTY TOWNS

### **PURCELL – 1910**

*Unincorporated Community and Populated Place in Current Weld County*

A plan was initiated in 1908 to divert Laramie River water into the Cache La Poudre River. The plan, called Greeley-Poudre Irrigation Project, Greeley-Poudre Irrigation District, and eventually the Laramie-Poudre Irrigation Company included an elaborate system of ditches and reservoirs for irrigating up to 125,000 acres northeast of Greeley.

Formerly known as Hungerford, the town of Purcell was settled by those who backed the irrigation plan. Lawrence Purcell was the land owner and filed his town's plat in 1910 at the terminus of the Pleasant Valley branch line of the Union Pacific Railroad, where a wye allowed trains to turn around. In 1911, Hubert D. Waldo purchased most of the Purcell property and operated several businesses.

Wyoming residents aggressively fought the Greeley-Poudre Irrigation Project's diversion and irrigation plan all the way to the Supreme Court, and it was ultimately abandoned. Purcell and neighboring communities could not survive without irrigation. The railroad was finally removed in 1943, and the Purcell Post Office closed in 1951.

*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.*