

An Inventory of the O. T. Jackson Collection—Dearfield, Colorado

Repository: University of Northern Colorado, James A. Michener Library, Archival Services

Collection number: SC 57

Title: An Inventory of the O. T. Jackson Collection—Dearfield, Colorado

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on 2009 January 06 and revised on 2009 October 8.

Dates: 1914-2008, 1930s (bulk of primary documents)

Creator or Collector: Jackson, O. T. (Oliver Toussaint), 1862-1948 (creator); Hart, LeRoy (Collector)

Size: 5 inches

Abstract:

This collection consists primarily of correspondence and publications from 1933.

Scope and Content Note:

3" of O. T. Jackson papers contain carbon copies of original correspondence typed by O. T. Jackson, a few publications, and some correspondence from companies with whom Jackson did business. Most documents are dated 1933. Some of the folders contain only one or two sheets. Additional materials were added at a later date.

Researchers may want to consult the following materials and collections:

- *The Weld County News*. Nov. 1921, p.60. (F782.W4 W43 Nov. 1921).
- *Carlson, Eileen. A View of Orchard: Roots and All*, pp.7-12. [Denver, CO]: Johnson Pub., 1994. (F782 .M9 C37 1994).
- *Norris, Melvin Edward Dearfield, Colorado--The Evolution of a Rural Black Settlement: An Historical Geography of Black Colonization on the Great Plains. Thesis (Ph. D.). Boulder, CO: University of Colorado at Boulder, 1980.* (F784 .D3 N6 1980a).
- "Historical Education for K-12 Students: Using Dearfield as a Pedagogical Resource." *McNair Research Journal*, vol. 6, Summer 2001, pp. 69-78. (RG9 S14 F2).
- *Dearfield, the Road Less Traveled* [video]. [Colorado?]: Homefolks Creative Works, c1995. (F784.D34 D34 1995).
- *The Need, the Dream, the Reality* [video]: Colorado Black Settlements. Denver, CO: General Electric Broadcasting Co., [198-?]. (IVC 1443)
- [Hazel E. Johnson Research Center](#) at the [Greeley History Museum](#)
- Dearfield project sponsored by the [Weld County Genealogical Society](#)

Biography of Oliver Toussaint Jackson:

Oliver Toussaint Jackson was born in Oxford, Ohio, April 6, 1862. He and his wife Minerva arrived in Colorado from Cleveland on April 4, 1887. Until 1894, they lived in Denver where they had a catering business. O. T. was also employed by the State of Colorado as a messenger for several of the early governors.

Jackson was active and well connected in Colorado politics. Throughout his life he was a Democrat and encouraged voters to elect Democratic candidates. In a letter written in 1942 (UNC Archives RG SC57), he lists ex-Governors William H. Adams (1927-33), William E. Sweet (1923-25), and Teller Ammons (1937-39) among the prominent Coloradoans who could speak for his character.

From 1894-1910, the Jacksons farmed east of Boulder. They enthusiastically supported Booker T. Washington's philosophy as expressed in his autobiography, *Up from Slavery*. This led them to undertake the founding of an agricultural colony where self governing and hard working Negroes could share in the prosperity resulting from their own efforts.

In 1910, Jackson homesteaded land 30 miles east of Greeley in Weld County and began efforts to recruit colonists. Land transactions involving sales by Jackson to colonists are entered in the Weld County Deed Books. These sales are listed in the Historic Survey of the Townsite of Dearfield, Colorado, 1985 (Greeley Municipal Museum).

After World War I and during the dust bowl and Depression, Jackson and the other colonists struggled to thrive in dry land agriculture. They advertised their community facilities and attractions which included a lunch room, a gas station, and a barn pavilion that hosted good music and dancing. They proclaimed Dearfield to be "a valley resort." In spite of their efforts, the population of the community continued to decline.

In 1942, at age 80 and in poor health, O. T. Jackson offered Dearfield to Colorado Governor Ralph Carr as an internment camp for Japanese prisoners of war. He noted the community was sparsely settled and the region thinly populated. This proposal came to nothing.

Minerva Jackson died December 9, 1942. After her death, O. T. advertised the Dearfield townsite for sale, but there was no buyer. O. T. Jackson died on Wednesday, February 18, 1948. News of his death was published in the *Greeley Daily Tribune* 2/19/1948 p.12. He is buried beside his wife in [Linn Grove Cemetery, Block H-L, Greeley, Colorado](#). The Jacksons had no children.

Sources:

"O. T. Jackson Papers." University of Northern Colorado Libraries, Special Collections

"Weld County's Negro Colony." *Weld County News*. Nov., 1921. p.60

Greeley Municipal Museum

Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):

This collection is organized into the following series:

Series 1: O. T. Jackson Papers

Series 2: Dearfield clippings, photographs, photocopies of articles, miscellaneous

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Use: User is responsible for copyright compliance.

Preferred Citation: [Description of Item], University Manuscripts, O. T. Jackson Collection—Dearfield, Colorado (SC 57), Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Acquisition Information (if applicable):

Gift of LeRoy Hart in 1998. Photographs were given to the Black American West Museum in Denver, Colorado.

Items on Dearfield from the Greeley-Weld County Miscellaneous Collection (C9 S4 Folder: Dearfield) were transferred to this collection on 2007 May 16. An undated and handwritten note found in the file folder indicated that the transfer occurred at an earlier unspecified time.

Documentation relating to the acquisition is on file in Archives, RG 13 S1 F1.

Subjects:

Jackson, O. T. (Oliver Tousaint), 1862-1948.
 Jackson, Minerva J.(Minerva Jane), 1873-1942.
 Hart, LeRoy.
 African American women -- Colorado -- Dearfield.
 African Americans -- Colorado -- Dearfield.
 African Americans -- Colorado -- History.
 Agriculture -- Colorado -- Dearfield -- History.
 Agriculture History. Colorado -- Dearfield.
 Dearfield (Colo.) -- 1914.
 Dearfield (Colo.) -- 1920.
 Dearfield (Colo.) -- Archival resources.
 Dearfield (Colo.) -- History.
 Land settlement -- Colorado -- Dearfield.
 Harsha, Wm. J. (William Justin), b. 1853.

Inventory:

Collection	MSS #	Series	Box	Folder	Title
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57		Box 1	Folder 0	Finding Aid
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 1	African Methodist Episcopal Church
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 2	Banking--loans
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 3	Banking--statements
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 4	Baseball 1934
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 5	Christmas correspondence --1936-37
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 6	Colorado--Governor's letterhead
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 7	Colorado--politics
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 8	Colorado--State employment 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 9	Crop sales 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 10	Dearfield history. 1942
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 11	Dearfield lunch room 1929-34
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 12	Dearfield map. #1
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 13	Dearfield map. 1914 amended
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 14	Franklin Paint Company

Collection	MSS #	Series	Box	Folder	Title
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 15	Houston, J. J.
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 16	Hunting/fishing licenses 1934
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 17	Jones, W. H. 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 18	Kansas Farmer. 8/27/1938
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 19	Land transfers 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 20	Legal problems, misc. 1935
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 21	Life insurance 1933-34
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 22	Marcus Motor Co. 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 23	McCutchen Ranch 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 24	Oil rights 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 25	Parker Company 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 26	Poster (oversized) Transferred to: Box 2, Folder 34 – Poster (oversized)
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 27	Recruitment materials--Dearfield
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 28	Sanitarium for colored people 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 29	Service station 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 30	Service station--Garnsey & Wheeler 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 31	Taxes 1933-34
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 32	YMCA 1933
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 1	Folder 33	O. T. Jackson stamp
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 1	Box 2	Folder 34	Poster (oversized)
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 35	Clippings (oversized)
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 36	Dearfield clippings

Collection	MSS #	Series	Box	Folder	Title
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 37	Dearfield Photographs taken by Eve Measner (11). 6/25/89
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 38	Internet printouts
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 39	Ephemera
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 40	1920 Census schedule Dearfield-1920 (photocopies)
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 41	Purchase contract 1917 (photocopy)
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 42	Correspondence 1918
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 43	Clippings (photocopies)
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 44	Handwritten notes from an unidentified individual. ca. 1917. 2 pages.
O. T. Jackson Collection	SC 57	Series 2	Box 2	Folder 45	Amended Map of Dearfield Townsite and Settlement [8/06/1914]. 9/9/09. JKA. "Amended Map of Dearfield Townsite and Settlement [8/06/1914]. Retracement Survey of that part located in the N.W. ¼, Section 30, T.4.N., R.61 W., 6 th P.M., Weld County, Colorado." LaSalle, CO: Alles and Associates, 2009. Transferred to: Map case, Archival Stacks