

The small log building in Bancroft Park, on West Colorado Avenue and erroneously referred to as the first state capitol building, was in reality the first drug store in Colorado City, according to Miss Dorothy E. Smith of the El Paso County Pioneers Association.

"The building also contained the offices of Dr. James P. Garvin, the first physician of the town," she said. "In 1869 it was used by Irving Howbert, county clerk, and then became a washee-washee-house, in other words, a Chinese laundry. The building was owned by M. S. Beach, one of the founders of Colorado City, and was located at about 2608 West Colorado Avenue."

The first seed was planted August 11, 1859, after M. S. Beach and a companion rode from Denver and erected a sign claiming a tract of land along the Fountain Creek, two miles long and one mile wide. A narrow strip along Fountain Creek was founded as Eldorado City in the early spring of 1859 by a party of gold seekers, among whom was Anthony Bott, who later became a prominent citizen of Colorado City.

Mr. Beach organized the Town Company which did much for the city's promotion. By 1861 there were more than 300 cabins in the town and the population numbered 300 men and only eight women. The majority of the first settlers were of average intelligence, only a few being of the shiftless class. Most came because of the gold and some for the beauty of the country and the productive soil.

Great confusion was among the settlers as to what territory and county they lived in. Colorado City was part of the Territory of Kansas and then became Jefferson Territory until 1861. The Colorado Territory was formed February 26, 1861. The first legislature in Denver decided on Colorado City as capitol of the territory. The second legislature was held in 1862 and lasted only four days when it adjourned to Denver because sleeping accommodations were unbearable.

After Colorado Springs was settled, construction began on the Denver and Rio Grande

Railroad to Manitou with a stop at Colorado City. With this, the number of saloons increased. Eighteen of the saloons lined the south side of the street, keeping company with a bakery shop and a pawn shop. No respectable woman would be seen on the street in the evening. No liquor was sold in Colorado Springs so those who wanted to drink had to go to Colorado City.

The first newspaper was established in Colorado City in 1861 and was called the Colorado City Journal. It was a weekly printed in Denver.

The Colorado Midland Railroad gave the city its first boost as it pushed westward in 1888. The round house and shop employed about 500 men. In 1896 the Colorado Philadelphia Chlorination Mill opened and in 1912 was torn down and replaced by the Golden Cycle Cyanide Mill.

Colorado City, in 1872 won the election for the County Seat to remain in Colorado City and the Court House to be built on the site of Bancroft Park. This was never accomplished. In 1873, Colorado Springs won the election for establishing a new County Seat and the County Court House was built on the northwest corner of Tejon and Kiowa Streets.

Monument Creek flowing through Colorado Springs from north to south separated the newer section of the city on the east from the older sections on the west, formerly the independent community of Colorado City, now known as West Colorado Springs.

As you travel through the streets of West Colorado Springs, you will see buildings restored and renovated as closely as possible to the way they were originally.

Remember that the Old Town has had to fight for her existence.