



HISTORY OF WELD COUNTY TOWNS

GREEN CITY - FRAUD COLONY – 1871

Ghost Towns In Weld County

Late in 1870 gregarious Denver real estate promoter David S. Green inspired settlers to leave Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio to colonize along the South Platte River southeast of Greeley. The advertising declared there were steamships on the South Platte for transportation to the riverfront town delivering each colonist to a four room house on a city lot with irrigated farmland.

Green's colony was known by a variety of names, depending on when, where and by whom it was being referenced, including: Green City, Tennessee Colony, Southwestern Colony, Memphis Colony, Greensboro, Columbia, Corona, and the Fraud Colony. Beginning in 1870 it was known as Green City Colony, after initiator David, S. Green. Then when promoted to settlers from Tennessee –it was advertised as Tennessee Colony. As a group of settlers from Memphis, Tennessee gathered early in 1871 they called themselves Southwestern Colony and when they joined Green's colony the name became Memphis Colony.

In April of 1871 promoters claimed the colony had 50 settlers with plans to create Platte County out of southeastern Weld County with Greensboro as county seat. Colony memberships were advertised to Europeans for £100 and Americans for \$100. Colonists were to receive continental transportation for four adults, a town lot with a 4-room house, a \$500 life insurance policy and an option to settle on a quarter section (160 acres) of government land.

By 1872 colony residents had discerned that because the South Platte River was rarely deeper than three feet steam transportation would never happen. Their “four room house” had no floors or windows. The worst blow was that the colony's location was several miles from the river and neither water nor land rights had been filed for.

On January 14, 1874, attempting to remove the taint from their rough beginnings, residents began referring to their town as Columbia and removed Green from the colony board. In a final effort colony residents dug irrigation ditches from the South Platte River but, like their dreams, the sandy soil would not hold water.

Colorado newspapers began actively criticizing the Green City Colony dubbing it the Fraud Colony. On April 14, 1874, the Green City Post Office was discontinued. That same day mail was rerouted to a new post office nearby named Corona. By 1879 the townsite, whatever its name, was deserted. A Weld County voting precinct, the last remnant of Green City, was discontinued in 1908.

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.