

Prescott Capitol

1864

The Public Buildings.-- As it is now known that the Governor will convene the Legislature at Prescott, much has been said about the erection of public buildings. The following is, we believe, a correct statement of the steps taken by Secretary McCormick, to whom the preparations for the accommodation of the Legislature are by law entrusted.

Finding by his instructions from Washington (there being yet no appropriation for public buildings,) that he was not authorized to expend more for rooms than would have been necessary for rent, had the capital been fixed at an old settlement, he sought to find and hire for the session, some suitable building among those in course of construction. This being impossible, he received proposals for building, but the lowest of these so much exceeded the amount which he felt authorized to spend, that he was in doubt as to what to do, when Van C. Smith, Esq., proposed to put up a structure, for business purposes, to be ready by or before the first of September, and to be temporarily fitted up for the use of both branches of the Legislature. The plan was approved by the Secretary, and the building will be hired. It is to be of hewn logs, carefully put up, and will be upon Gurley Street, on the north side of the plaza. The accommodations will be plain, but extensive and comfortable, and if the weather is as pleasant as at present our Legislators will be likely to have an agreeable session. We trust it will be a useful one.

----Arizona Miner (Prescott) July 20, 1864, 2:2

THE OLD CAPITOL BUILDING

PRESCOTT

STOVES--Our friends abroad may form some idea of our climate from the fact that it became positively necessary to place stoves in the Legislative Halls to prevent the honorable members from suffering with the cold. In the absence of such articles in this market, other than those for cooking purposes, the Secretary bought some sheet-iron from Mr. Hardy, and in less than 24 hours Runk and Skillicorn, the honest blacksmiths, made two huge stoves after the old New England school-house pattern. They work to a charm and are likely to prolong the session of the Legislature.

-----Arizona Miner, Oct. 26, 1864
3:1

Old Governor's House

Prescott

1864

The house erected by the Governor and Secretary, on their ranch opposite Prescott, (which they call Pinal ranch, owing to its being covered with a grove of pines) is nearly finished. It is fifty feet front by forty feet in depth, of hewn logs of large size. It has six rooms, besides a kitchen, upon the first floor, and a very large sleeping room up-stairs. It is handsomely located, and a building which may be made exceedingly comfortable. It has been a long time in course of construction, owing to difficulty in procuring certain necessary materials, hardware especially. The Governor and Secretary have occupied it since the first of August.

----Arizona Miner (Prescott) September 7, 1864, 3:2

Note This building is on the Sharlot Hall Museum grounds; has had several rooms added.

Legislative Halls

Prescott

1864

The building to be hired of Van C. Smith, for the Legislature, is well advanced. It is a sturdious and commodious structure.

----Arizona Miner (Prescott) September 7, 1864, 3:2

The building to be hired for the Legislature is nearly ready. It is large and comfortable, though plain in its appointments. It is a better house than in which the first Legislature of Colorado met, and under the circumstances all that could be asked for.

----Arizona Miner (Prescott) September 21, 1864, 3:1

Hon. Board of Supervisors,

Tombstone, Arizona.

Gentlemen:

I was the first sheriff of Arizona, appointed by Gov. Goodwin in 1864, and was elected by miners as first mining recorder on Hassayampa and Lynx Creek, built the legislative building at Prescott, renting same to Secretary McCormick....

Respectfully,
Van C. Smith.

Note: The above is part of a letter in Dept. of Library & Archives, files of Pioneers Home).

Van C. Smith, who, in connection with F. G. Christie, built the "Old Capitol," Prescott, is prospecting in New Mexico.

----Arizona Enterprise (Prescott) June 22, 1878, 1:5

Capitol Building

Prescott

The large building known as the capital building, and which has hitherto been hired for the meetings of the Legislature, was sold under foreclosure on the 20th, and is now owned by General L. (Levi) Bashford.

----Arizona Miner (Prescott) July 27, 1867, 3:1

The Legislature is to meet on the 4th of September, and it is now expected that there will be a full attendance. The George Soule building, on Montezuma street has been hired for the accommodation of both branches.

----Arizona Miner (Prescott) July 27, 1867, 3:1

George Soule has vacated his building, and it is being fitted up for the Legislature. He has opened a saloon next door on the south, in the building lately occupied by Frank Gross, the restaurant keeper, who has gone to La Paz to enter business there.

----Arizona Miner (Prescott) August 31, 1867, 3:1

First Capitol

Prescott

1864

Prescott, (A.T.) July 12, 1870.

Prescott is a neat village, located on a charming site on a gentle declivity westward to Granite Creek. The principal business houses are upon the streets fronting on a plaza of liberal area. The town is surrounded by majestic pines, dwarf oak and juniper, several of each variety yet standing on the plaza. The buildings are mostly of sawed lumber, but a few of the original log cabins are still standing and occupied.

The old Territorial Capitol building is in a good state of preservation on the north side, fronting on the plaza, and is now tenanted by a brewery and saloon, a store of general merchandise, and the post-office, with the inevitable stationery establishment. It was constructed of heavy hewed logs, with chinking, and daubing and unshaved shingles.

There were three sessions of the Legislature held therein, and the citizens feel that the fourth should have been, and that their town is the most suitable for all future ones to assemble in. By what I hear from various sources, I believe the Capitol was removed to Tucson in consequence of local wranglings and too intense selfishness. The only consolation in the premises is that there are similar precedents, and the lesson they teach may be of future service, though the loss may not be soon or ever recovered.--Correspondence of the San Francisco Weekly Bulletin.

----Weekly Arizona Miner (Prescott) October 8, 1870
1:2

Old Capitol Building

Prescott

Levi Bashford, proprietor of the huge log house known as the "Old Capitol Building," took it into his head, recently, to tear down the old roof, raise the walls a little, and put on a brand new roof. This suited his tenants, and he accordingly set men at work to carry out his ideas, and at this writing, the old building looks quite fresh, though it is not entirely covered. The "Capitol Building" is one of the largest in town, and has quite a history. It was erected in 1864, by F. G. Christie and Van C. Smith. In it were held the first, second and third sessions of the Legislature; and in it, too, Mr. McCormick delivered his lecture on "Bells," which was, as a literary effort, on a par with the first effort of the thick-headed "Solon," who had ever squeaked out "Mr. Speaker," or "Mr. President." The Recorder's office was, also, once located in this building, under the reign of Recorder Christie, when feet were feet, and rich croppings sold readily for cash. Alas, for those good old days. Within its walls, too, (upstairs) the Masons of Prescott and vicinity organized Aztlan Lodge, No. 177, of Free and Accepted Masons--which was the first lodge of its kind ever organized in the Territory, and is now the only one in existence (1870) in the Territory. The old building now contains the store of Edward Kerr, the Postoffice, and Arizona Brewery--three meritorious institutions.

----Weekly Arizona Miner (Prescott) November 26, 1870,
3:1

The old capitol building, north side of the plaza, has recently undergone repairs of a very beneficial nature, and which have made neat, cozy places of the Arizona Brewery Saloon, Melvin & McFoster's store and Mr. Kerr's store, all of which are in this building.

----Weekly Arizona Miner (Prescott) February 10, 1872, 3:2

Old Capitol Building

Prescott

The building which served as the capitol of Arizona, when Prescott was the Territory's legislative seat, is now being used as a high school building for the advanced learners of that city. From the Herald it is learned the trustees will immediately let a contract for the remodeling and repairing of the building, the work to commence soon.

The repairs will consist of almost an entire change in the plan of the structure, which was first erected for a city hall and for a meeting place for the legislature. The upper floor will be remodeled and made into a fine assembly room. Lavatories and closets will be put in. An addition will also be erected on the south side of the house, from which the stairway will lead to the upper rooms.

If the money holds out after everything else has been done the sidewalk in front of the building, on Gurley street, will be repaired and a retaining wall put up to hold the embankment from crumbling. When the repairs are all finished Prescott will have an up-to-date high school building in place of the rattle trap now being utilized.

----Phoenix Enterprise, November 12, 1903, 3:2

Arizona Legislature

Tucson

1868

The Legislature of Arizona met on the 10th inst., in the rear of Thompson's saloon, at Tucson. The Secretary of the Treasury deserves credit for the judgement displayed by him in selecting a room for the assembling of that august body, where economy can be combined with usefulness and convenience.--Los Angeles News.

-----Weekly Arizona Miner (Prescott) December 19, 1868 ^{1:3}

Letter from Tucson.--....I send you the printed journals regularly and hope you receive and understand them. Of the latter, owing to the horrible manner in which they are printed, I have some doubt. It is the opinion of the members that the proof-reader, foreman and devil must be on a standing drunk, and it has been proposed to raise the whiskey tax so high that it will be impossible for them to obtain that luxury. The only objection seems to be that it might re-act on the members themselves.---J. T. Alsap.

-----Weekly Arizona Miner(Prescott)
December 19, 1868, 1:4

Sixth
Territorial Legislature
Tucson
1871

Secretary Bashford has decided to take the rooms situated opposite and a little eastward of the Sister's School rooms for use of the Legislature. They will be put in proper shape, and are centrally located. -----Arizona Citizen (Tucson) December 3, 1870, 3:2

The rooms (five in number) to be used by the Legislature, are on the corner of Camp and Convent streets, and are put in shape to the extent of a few hundred dollars; Sec'y Bashford has seen to the business, and that everything necessary has or will be done by the time the session begins--11th January.

-----Arizona Citizen (Tucson) December 31, 1870, 3:3

Secretary Bashford has made quite ample preparations for the accommodations of the Legislature. The tables, chairs, etc., are comfortably convenient, and the stationery is varied and of the very best quality made. In this respect, we have never seen equally good materials supplied a similar body, nor them in such completeness. The members can but be pleased with the Secretary's provisions for their convenience.

-----Arizona Citizen (Tucson) January 7, 1871, 3:2

Seventh
Territorial Legislature

Tucson

1873

Hon. Coles Bashford, Secretary of Arizona, has rented the north and south parts and one rear room of Hiram S. Steven's building, on Main street, opposite Tully, Ochoa & Co.'s store, for use of the ensuing Legislature. The intended Council and House rooms have excellent floors, high ceilings, ample windows, and are abundantly large, and will prove the most comfortable ever occupied by any previous legislative body in Arizona.

---Arizona Citizen (Tucson) November 9, 1872, 1:3

Governor Bashford has workmen busy putting the legislative halls and furniture in fine order. The ensuing body will have better and more pleasant accommodations than any of its predecessors.

---Arizona Citizen (Tucson) December 14, 1872
3:2

Fearing that at times the attaches of the coming Legislature could not have time to go to C. O. Brown's magnificent Congress Hall or George Foster's to moisten their diaphragms, H. B. Smith and Jerry Kinney have opened a snug little retreat for the purpose just to the rear of the halls of State.

---Arizona Citizen (Tucson) December 28, 1872
3:2

Arizona Legislature

Tucson

1877

Councilman Fred G. Hughes, surveying the elaborate fittings of the council chamber, fell into a mood reminiscent. "This isn't much like the hall we met in when I was a member of the Legislature of 1877," said he. "The capital was then at Tucson, and we met in an old adobe building owned by Don Ochoa and generally known as the government corral. All the rooms were small, dirty and dark, and it was perhaps on these accounts that the session agreed to move to Prescott. The president of the council that year was King S. Woolsey, of Phoenix, the speaker being M. H. Calderwood.--Arizona Gazette (Phoenix).

---Graham County Bulletin (Solomonville) Jan. 29, 1897, 2:3

Mr. Miller, who has the contract for moving the property pertaining to the Capital of the Territory was notified, a few days ago, to send teams for same, and had made arrangements to do so, but yesterday, received a letter from the Secretary asking him to withhold teams, as he was expecting an injunction restraining him from allowing said property to be removed from Tucson. The law changing the location from Tucson to Prescott made the first day of May as the last day upon which it could be kept at Tucson; and if any proceedings are resorted to which will delay the removal they are certainly wrong, and in direct violation of the law, and an insult to the honest members who passed the bill removing the Capital to Prescott. According to population and centrality we are entitled to it; Yavapai county contains more white American citizens than all other counties of the Territory combined, and our business men should see that we have our rights. There is nothing too low for a certain class of Tucsonites to stoop to, and they should be shown up. They misrepresent Indian affairs, military matters,

Indian agents, and in fact nearly everything they have a say in.

----Arizona Weekly Miner (Prescott) April 13, 1877, 2:1

Let us make some move in the right direction compelling the person in charge of the records of the Capital at Tucson to forward them to Prescott, where they rightfully belong. We only wish we had our way and we would have the thing fixed up as it should be and would learn those trixters at Tucson a little game worth knowing.

----Arizona Weekly Miner (Prescott) April 27, 1877, 1:3

The train of Messrs. Tully & Ochoa, which brought the Capital property to Prescott from Tucson, a few days since, loaded with lumber and started for the southern portion of the Territory this morning.

----Arizona Weekly Miner (Prescott) July 6, 1877, 3:1

Note: Tucson claimed the Legislature was an illegally constituted body and therefore the law to move the Capital was not enforceable. It was the judgement of the Court, however, that such was not the case, and the injunction was quashed. The Secretary was Hoyt, who became Governor April 5, 1877. The Judge was Mr. French.

Territorial Capitol

Prescott

1879

The property appertaining to the Capital arrived in our village yesterday, after a somewhat extended time on the road, and was unloaded at the school house. This property should have left Tucson about the 1st of May, and would, had it not been for the low cunning of some few mercenary beings who always want something that does not belong to them.

----Arizona Weekly Miner (Prescott) July 6, 1877, 4:2

Territorial Legislature

Prescott

1881

We learn that arrangements have been made by Secretary Gosper, and that the Legislature will not meet in the Howey Building, as we were informed and so stated, some time ago. Today we learn that the City Hall has been secured for that purpose, and the Eleventh Legislative Assembly will meet in the structure. It is the intention to build a partition across the center of the Hall, thus providing accommodations for the Council and the House. The partition will be about ten inches through, the interior filled with sawdust, so that the eloquent remarks of the member from Apache Flat, in the Council, will not interrupt the equally eloquent and able effort of the gentleman from Squash Hollow, Wild Cat Gulch, in the House. It is claimed that with the addition of this sawdust dividing line, the acoustic properties of the building will be perfect; besides, the material is not an inappropriate one to use in a Legislative Hall.--Arizona Democrat (Prescott) December 17, 1880, 3:2

Twelfth
Territorial Assembly
Prescott
1883

The Twelfth Legislative Assembly of Arizona will assemble in City Hall, Prescott, Monday, January 8, 1883, and the members will be "sworn in," as the saying goes, by His Honor, C. G. W. French, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

City Hall, the place of meeting, is a large frame building, owned by G. W. Curtis. It is on the west side of Granite creek, surrounded by handsome dwellings, almost in the pine forest which surrounds Prescott. Granite creek is crossed, at City Hall, by a safe foot bridge.

Dropping into the building yesterday afternoon, we saw Mr. Joe Curtis and other mechanics fixing the place. The walls of both houses display new paper; the "house" is not quite so large as it was two years ago. The lobby of the council is just as it was during the last session. A new committee room has been made on the north side of it. The aisles, or walks, of both houses will be covered with carpets, so as to deaden sound; stoves and lamps are already in place; a huge pile of wood is in attendance and, so soon as Mr. George S. Porter has desks etc., completed, Secretary Van Arman's boys will decorate them with "Compiled Laws," Acts, Journals, paper, ink and other articles required in the business of legislating.---Prescott Courier.

-----Arizona Sentinel (Yuma) January 6, 1883, 1:2

Arizona Capital

Prescott

1885

Prescott has done herself proud in the erection of a new city hall., with capitol hall on the second floor. The building is at the top of Nob Hill and cost \$15,500. Not only have the solons been provided with comfortable quarters for holding the Legislature, but some of Prescott's hospitable citizens have leased and furnished in gorgeous style, a cottage of six rooms, formerly occupied by Governor Fremont, as a club room, and each member is presented with a visitor's card, and extended the privileges of the club. Here also the members of the club, press and other invited guests assemble, talk, play cards, enjoy music and other amusements as may suit their tastes.

The capital of course is quite lively under the strain of excitement which has arisen, and it is said an unusually rich and gay social season will follow with the session. As to the personnel of the Legislature, old-timers say that a better appearing, well conducted and more reliable body of men never assembled to make laws for the people of Arizona. Much intelligence and wealth is certainly represented by the members, while there is a total absence of that class of political adventurers who too often assume important functions in the affairs of a new country. For these reasons much good is expected as the result of the deliberations of the thirteenth legislative assembly. Mc.

----Arizona Gazette (Phoenix) January 15, 1885, 3:2

Capital Removal

Prescott to Phoenix

1889

Prescott, January 24.--The bill for the removal of the capital to Phoenix has passed both houses and will be in the Governor's hands for approval tomorrow morning.

----Phoenix Herald, January 25, 1889, 2:2

Prescott, January 26, 10 a.m.--Governor C. Meyer Zulick has signed the bill for the removal of the Capital to Phoenix and it is now a law and Phoenix the Capital city. The Governor and staff will reach Phoenix next Tuesday. The Legislature will adjourn to meet in Phoenix on Monday, February 4th.

----Phoenix Herald, January 26, 1889, 2:2

Prescott, January 24.--The bill for the removal of the capital to Phoenix was approved this morning. The entire party will leave here on Tuesday for Phoenix, via Los Angeles. They will remain in Los Angeles one or two days and will be in Phoenix in time to open the Legislature on February 7th. Some of the disgruntled members are kicking, but the majority of them take their medicine all right.

----Phoenix Herald, January 26, 1899, 2:2

COMING IN STYLE.--Prescott, January 26.--The bill to remove the Territorial Capital of Arizona, has passed both houses, and was signed and reported to the Legislature this morning. A concurrent resolution passed both houses to adjourn at noon on Monday, January 28th, to meet in Phoenix, the future capital, on Tuesday, February 7th. It is understood that a fund has been raised by the citizens of Phoenix to pay all the expenses of the removal, and two Pullman cars have been ordered to transport the members to Phoenix, who will leave here on Tuesday, January 29th.----Phoenix Herald, January 26, 1889, 2:2

Legislative Halls

Phoenix

1889

The legislative halls are now almost completed, and the finishing touches will be applied in time for the opening session on Thursday. The entire east hall will be reserved for the assembly, with a sufficient space for a lobby. It is a large and airy room, and has been elegantly furnished. The speaker's stand, the clerk's quarters and the space for press representatives are all well arranged, and six magnificent chandeliers will illuminate the room.

A portion of the council room, which is on the west side of the building, has been cut off for the territorial library, and the necessary shelving for the books will be in position in time for their arrival. Both rooms are sufficiently commodious for all present needs, and will be provided with everything necessary for the comfort and convenience of the members.

Convenient apartments have also been reserved for the governor and staff in the rooms below, and also committee rooms for both branches of the legislature.

----Phoenix Herald, February 7, 1889, 3:4

Note: The City Hall was not completed and only sparsely furnished when the Legislature moved down from Prescott in 1889, therefore the make-shift arrangements.

Legislative Halls

Phoenix

1891

Acting Governor and actual Secretary Murphy can rise above party prejudice. He has fitted up just as pleasant and comfortable quarters for the approaching legislature as though the members comprised a two-third Republican, instead of Democratic majority.

When the statesmen are called to order, in the upper story of the City Hall, next Monday, they will find at their disposal polished oak desks with capacious drawers and keys to lock them, and revolving chairs that move noiselessly on porcelain rollers. In their desks all needed stationery can be found, carefully stored away. On the desks will smile, in warm Bismark colored calfskin, that triumph of statutory wisdom called the "Kode," which has been taught to chatter parrot-like: "Butcher me, if you must; better me, if you can."

The president and speaker have rather more ambitious circulatory seats, as benefits their more august persons. The clerks of each House are provided with special desks, nine feet long, furnished with drawers, closets, and pigeon holes complete.

Cocoa matting covers the stairway, upper hall and that portion of the chamber devoted to the members. Around the presiding officers' desks bright Brussels carpets have been laid. Ten large tables, covered with green baize, are intended for reporters' and committee use. New shades have been hung, and two dozen grained and medium backed benches placed at the disposal of spectators.

The northern half of the upper hall has been partitioned off into a cloak and private conference room. The Council this year will meet in the east room and the Assembly on the west side, thus reversing arrangement of 1889.

Gentlemen who have visited Washington state that the present desks and fittings closely resemble those provided in Congress, for Senators and Representatives.

Messrs. Heyman & Schoenfield secured the contract for this work, and it is only just to state that they have faithfully carried it out. Good taste is shown everywhere and an air of substantiality prevades Arizona's present law-making quarters.

The old, pine traps that the Prescott Legislatures used were hauled to Phoenix at a cost of \$2,000. Last fall the whole lot sold for \$35. The present elegant furniture, and all the appointments for this Legislative session, will fall in price considerably below \$2,000.

Let the Legislature itself achieve correspondingly gratifying reform.

----Phoenix Herald, January 17, 1891, 3:3

Legislative Halls

Phoenix

1891---1893

The proposed lease of the City Hall second story to the U. S. Government for Legislative purposes, runs from January 19, 1891 to January 19, 1893, at an annual rent of \$475 payable March 31st, 1891 and 1892. When the Legislature is not in session, the U. S. has the use of one room and the City Council of Phoenix the other. If any violation of the lease occurs, the general government may be turned out, body and breeches, upon some public land not filed on, or the nearest Indian reservation.

---Phoenix Herald, February 5, 1891, 3:2

Territorial Legislature

Phoenix

1897

By direction of Mr. Bruce, secretary of the territory, the city hall is being thoroughly overhauled in order that the quarters of the legislators soon to assemble, will be both comfortable and becoming to the dignity of such a body in session assembled. A handsome portion of the appropriation made for the incidental expenses of the hall will be expended in order that it may be as comfortable as possible.

The halls are to be carpeted with linoleum, and the rooms with Brussels carpet. The walls and entire woodwork downstairs are being painted, and walls upstairs papered and decorated. The canopy over the speaker's chair, and the draperies of the assembly room are to be of maroon colored cloth. The old chandeliers will be taken out and replaced by a combination of gas and electric chandeliers of beautiful pattern. In each hall, in addition to the chandeliers, will be a large arc light. All the old furniture is to be re-upholstered and a quantity of new added. The exterior of the hall will also be re-painted and a new flag will be raised.--Arizona Republican (Phoenix).

-----Graham County Bulletin (Solomonville)
Nov. 5, 1896, 4:1

Compiled by Department of Library and Archives