

Armory considered one of best in the state

The National Guard Armory standing at 87 Montowese Street is the third building used as an armory in Branford.

Before World War I the Branford Battery A was an active military group with over 100 men, horses and artillery. A bill introduced by Sidney V. Osborn of Branford was passed by the state legislators for funds to build for \$40,000. The architect was Charles S. Palmer (Palmer & Townsend) of Meriden who had designed the Old Short Beach School in 1908. The builder was Lewis A. Miller & Company of Meriden, who had also built Atlantic Wire. Much of the stone from the old Averill house was used in the foundation of the Armory.



PICTURES OF THE PAST

Jane Bouley

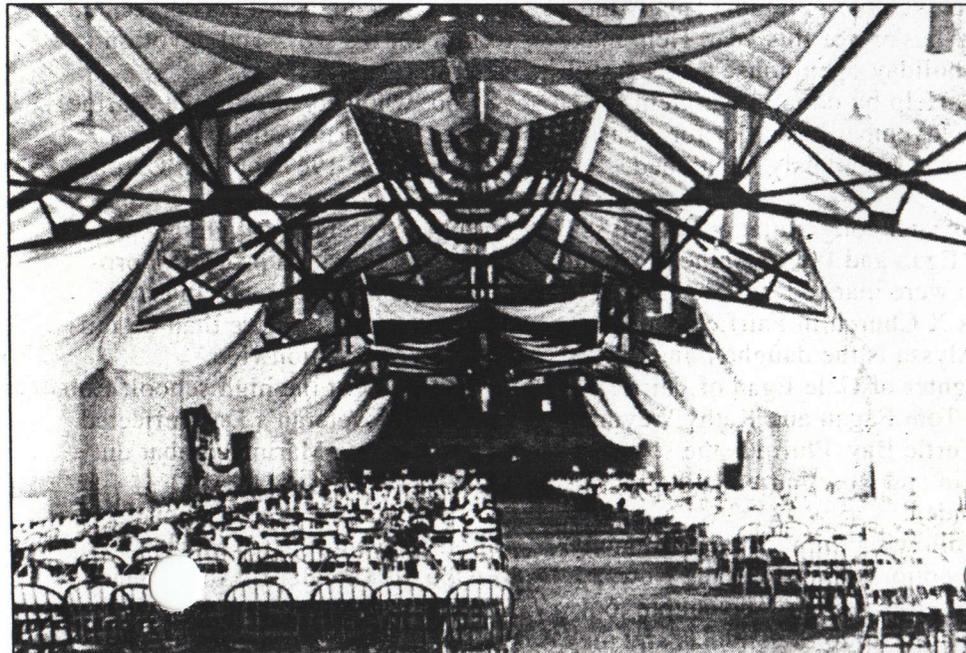
The new Armory was dedicated March 26, 1913 in a celebration attended by Governor Simeon E. Baldwin. The first floor consisted of the large drill room, gun room and gallery. The second floor was designated as a meeting room for the Spanish American War veterans from the old Branford Battery A. On the eastside of the second floor was an apartment for chief

armoror George H. Baisley and his family. In the basement was a large kitchen, dining hall and duckpin bowling lanes. The builder considered the armory the finest in the state.

As part of Battery E, Connecticut National Guard, 10th Field Artillery under command of General Pershing, the Branford Company was sent to



The Armory in Branford, designed by Charles Palmer of Meriden, was built in 1913 on the site of the Daniel Averill House.



Mexico to capture Pancho Villa in 1917.

Soon after, the guard served in World War I taking part in five major engagements in France. During World War II the men of the Branford National Guard, as part of Battery H, served in the Pacific theater for three years. They saw action in Papua, New Guinea and the Phillipines.

In 1946 the National Guard was

reorganized. The Heavy Tank Co. 102 Infantry, 43rd Division located at the Branford Armory was called for service in 1950 during the Korean War. The Heavy Tank Co. has a reunion every year in Branford.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jane Peterson Bouley is the historian for the Town of Branford.