



Photo courtesy of Branford Historical Society

**BRANFORD BATTERY A** conducted maneuvers at Pawson Park in 1898.

### Pictures of the Past

## Battery A organized in 1868

Following the Civil War, the formation of what would become the United States National Guard was initiated. In 1868 many men in town organized Branford Battery A which was part of the First Light Artillery of the Connecticut Volunteer Infantry.

Battery A conducted weekend drills, week-long camps and marched in all the local parades. They went by boat to Boston where troops from all of New England held war maneuvers. The battery used a barn at the rear of a house on Montowese Street to store its cannons and practice marching and drills. Horses were rented for weekend maneuvers from First Selectman M. P. Rice who also owned a livery business. This armory was abandoned in 1898. It was turned around, moved back 15 feet and made into a two-family dwelling by contractor

Richard Bradley in 1903. This building still stands at 6 Bradley Ave.

Pythian Hall on South Main Street, later known as the Community House, was built by Benjamin Hosley in 1896 and used by Battery A as its new armory. For many years Battery A conducted drills at Pawson Park and could be seen in the fields with its horses and cannons. A new armory on Montowese Street was built in 1913 and Battery A at that time had 133 men and 100 horses and was the only artillery company in the Connecticut National Guard.

Branford Battery A was called to duty during the Spanish American War in 1898 and later as part of the Connecticut National Guard system served its country during the two world wars.

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