

## **SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY INTERIOR**

**first floor interior** consisting of the Entrance Hall, the main corridor, the grand Stair Hall and staircase leading to the basement and to the second floor, the Veterans' Room, the Library, the Reception Room, the Board of Officers Room (Colonel Emmons Clark Memorial Room), the Colonel's Room, the Adjutant's Room, the Equipment Room, the Outer Committee Room, the Inner Committee Room, the Field and Staff Room, and the Drill Room (excluding the storage rooms beneath the gallery, but including the four corner stairs and the passageways to the Lexington Avenue and administration building entrances); the **second floor interior** consisting of the main corridor, the grand Stair Hall and staircase leading to the third floor, the staircases at the north and south ends of the main corridor leading to the third floor, the Company A (First Company) Room, the Company B (Second Company) Room, the Company C (Third Company) Room, the Company D (Fourth Company) Room, the Company E (Fifth Company) Room and western alcove, the Company F (Sixth Company) Room and western alcove, the Company G (Seventh Company) Room, the Company H (Eighth Company) Room, the Company I (Ninth Company) Room, the Company K (Tenth Company) Room, the Company L (Eleventh Company) Room, and the Company M (Twelfth Company) Room; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall, ceiling, and floor surfaces, woodwork, cabinets, fireplaces, doors and door hardware, chandeliers, light fixtures, stained-glass window screens, stair railings, radiators, affixed paintings, attached decorative elements, and Drill Room roof trusses; 643 Park Avenue, Manhattan. Built 1877-81; architect Charles W. Clinton; additions and alterations, Robinson & Knust, 1909-11.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1401, Lot 1.

On February 11, 1992, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as an Interior Landmark of the Seventh Regiment Armory, first floor interior, consisting of the entrance hall, the main corridor, the main stair hall and staircase leading to the second floor, the Veterans' Room, the Library [Music Room], the Ladies' Reception Room (Mary Divver Room), the Board of Officers Room (Colonel Emmons Clark Room), the Colonel's Reception Room, the Adjutant's Room (Gallery), the Equipment ("Saddle") Room (Superintendent's Room), the Outer Committee Room, the Inner Committee Room, the Field and Staff Reception Room, and the Drill Room; the second floor interior, consisting of the main corridor, the main stair hall and staircase leading to the third floor, the staircases at the north and south ends of the main corridor leading to the third floor, the First Company Parlor (Company A Room), the Second Company Parlor (Company B Room), the Third Company Parlor (Company C Room), the Fourth Company Parlor (Company D Room), the Fifth Company Parlor (Company E Room) and western alcove, the Sixth Company Parlor (Company F Room) and western alcove, the Seventh Company Parlor (Company G Room), the Eighth Company Parlor (Company H Room), the Ninth Company Parlor (Company I Room), the Tenth Company Parlor (Company K Room), the Eleventh Company Parlor (Company L Room), and the Twelfth Company Parlor (Company M Room); the fourth floor interior, consisting of the Appleton Mess Hall, the Bar, the Rumpus Room, and the north end stair hall landing (excluding the staircase); and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall, ceiling, and floor surfaces, woodwork, cabinets, fireplaces, doors, chandeliers, light fixtures, stair railings, attached decorative elements, and Drill Room roof trusses; and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Thirty-seven

witnesses spoke in favor of designation, including Col. John L. Jones, senior officer at the Seventh Regiment Armory; Brig. Gen. Charles E. Hangle, representing the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, the Seventh Regiment Fund, and Friends of the Seventh Regiment; Col. David J. Ramsay (retired), New York Chapter of the Association of the United States Army; Lt. Col. Arnold Albert, Veteran Corps of Artillery; Lisa Weilbacker, curator of the armory and executive director of the Board of Friends of the Seventh Regiment Armory; Nina Gray, former decorative arts curator at The New-York Historical Society; representatives of many organizations which regularly use the building; and representatives of the Society for Industrial Archaeology, the American Society of Interior Designers, the Junior League of the City of New York, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, and Municipal Art Society. Read into the record were several letters written in favor of designation, including statements by Dianne H. Pilgrim and David R. McFadden, director and curator of decorative arts (respectively) of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum; Kevin Stayton, curator of decorative art at the Brooklyn Museum; Catherine Hoover Voorsanger, assistant curator of American decorative arts at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Robert J. Kapsch, chief, Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record; the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America; and the New York Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians. No witnesses spoke in opposition to designation. One witness expressed concern over the impact of designation on future changes to the site. In addition, the Commission received numerous letters and other forms of correspondence in favor of designation, including a resolution by Community Board 8 and a letter from the New York Landmarks Conservancy.

## **DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS**

### Summary

The Seventh Regiment Armory, with its historically and architecturally significant interior spaces, was privately built in 1877-81 for the prestigious, elite Seventh Regiment, under the leadership of Col. Emmons Clark, to the designs of architect Charles W. Clinton, a veteran of Co. K of the regiment. A volunteer militia unit often referred to as the "Silk Stocking Regiment" due to its ties to socially prominent New York families, the Seventh Regiment had an illustrious military history dating from 1806 and was the first to adopt the term "national guard." The palatial Seventh Regiment Armory, one of the finest and most costly American armories of the nineteenth century, had national influence in establishing the armory as a distinct building type, in terms of both functional design and architectural imagery. Col. Clark credited architect Clinton for "the architectural beauty of the building, exterior and interior, and for the complete construction and finish of every part of the immense structure." In addition, to decorate and furnish the interiors in 1879-81, the regiment chose some of the most prominent American design and interior decoration firms of the day, including Associated Artists, Herter Brothers, Pottier & Stymus, Kimbel & Cabus, Alexander Roux & Co., and George C. Flint & Co., resulting in the creation of a series of lavish late-Victorian interiors. Aside from its military and police function, the Seventh Regiment

served largely as a social club for its members, and the interiors of the armory reflect this.

The regimental rooms on the first floor were utilized for officers and for formal public, ceremonial, and reception purposes. The Veterans' Room and Library, featuring a profusion of ornament and widely considered to be among the most significant and beautiful surviving interiors of the American Aesthetic Movement, were designed and decorated by Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.) with Stanford White. Herter Brothers decorated the Reception Room (with woodwork by Alexander Roux & Co.), the Board of Officers Room, and the Colonel's Room, executing the woodwork in the latter two; these rooms are very rare survivals among Herter Brothers interiors. The extant wall and ceiling decoration in the Board of Officers Room, mostly dating from its "restoration" in 1932 as a memorial to Col. Emmons Clark, is an early instance of the historic preservation of a significant nineteenth-century American interior. Pottier & Stymus was responsible for the decoration of the Field and Staff Room. The corridors, the Entrance Hall, and the grand central Stair Hall, were executed by the firm of George C. Flint & Co. The rooms on the second floor, for the individual companies of the regiment (with each responsible for fitting up its own room), were used as combination club/locker rooms. The design firms commissioned



by the companies in 1879-80 included three that worked on regimental rooms. Despite the commonalities of function and overall design scheme, each of the company rooms has a distinctive, individual decorative character. Herter Brothers designed those for Companies C and H; Pottier & Stymus was responsible for those for Companies D, E, G, and I; and architect Sidney V. Stratton, a company member, designed the Company K Room, which was executed by Kimbel & Cabus and is a rare surviving intact interior in the Queen Anne style. Of the three company rooms (Companies A, B and F) for which the decorating firms are unattributed, Flint & Co. and Roux & Co. were among the firms that decorated rooms on this floor, and it is known that architect Albert Wagner designed the Company B Room.

The Drill Room, at approximately 200 by 300 feet one of the largest unobstructed interiors in New York City upon its completion, is significant in the history of American engineering. It has the oldest extant "balloon shed" (a barrel vaulted roof supported on visible arch trusses or ribs) in America, and is considered one of the first buildings in the United States not associated with a railroad to incorporate this structural system, which was often used in railroad stations. The room features eleven elliptical wrought-iron arches, designed by consulting engineer Charles Macdonald (president of the Delaware Bridge Company, a subsidiary of the important iron-and-steel-producing Cooper, Hewitt & Co.); also collaborating with Charles Clinton on the design of the room was consulting architect Robert G. Hatfield. Built primarily for regimental maneuvers, the Drill Room also has accommodated numerous events and large gatherings throughout its history.

Throughout the period between 1896 and 1913, a number of substantial changes occurred in the armory, including its electrification, the installation of a new steam heating system, the addition of two floors and interior re-arrangement, and a new Drill Room gallery. New wrought-iron electric chandeliers and other fixtures by Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., of Philadelphia, were installed in the corridors, most regimental rooms, and many company rooms. Alterations were made to the regimental and company rooms, mainly the redesign of upper wall and ceiling surfaces; changes in taste

account for some of the changes, but undoubtedly others were the result of the physical disruptions of the original decor and the need for repair. Companies still vied with each other to have the most beautiful room, but certain companies (such as Co. K) maintained a strong tradition and sense of history by altering their rooms very little. Newly created and decorated rooms in 1909-13 included the Inner and Outer Committee, Adjutant's, and Equipment Rooms on the first floor, and the Company L and Company M Rooms on the second floor for two new federally-mandated units. The Company L Room was decorated in a neo-Classical style, while the Company M Room received a Tudor Revival treatment.

As an ensemble, the regimental and company rooms of the Seventh Regiment Armory are a nationally important collection of high-style interiors, designed to reflect the late-Victorian taste of the late 1870s and early 1880s, with decorative sensibilities of the Aesthetic Movement, and woodwork mostly in the Renaissance Revival style. The interiors of the Armory are on a scale with and display an elegance and quality usually found only in the interiors of private clubs and the most ornate residences, few of which survive in New York City from this period. These rooms contain an abundance of woodwork and cabinetry, particularly the company rooms, and as a whole they exhibit an unusual degree of intactness, despite their usage by the national guard and the exigencies for changes. The alterations to these rooms made during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exhibit either change in contemporary taste or the skillful adaptation to existing decor. These rooms, with the newly created rooms of 1909-13, the corridors, and the Stair Hall, also contain a large and important collection of both original gas and early electric chandeliers and other lighting fixtures. Together with the Drill Room, highly significant for its engineering in the creation of one of the largest unobstructed spaces in New York City in its day, the interiors of the Seventh Regiment Armory represent the height of American interior design within a single building, for a "single" (in this case military) client, during a period of fifty years. The interior is regularly accessible to the public through exhibitions and similar events held in the armory as well as on tours.

## The National Guard and Armories

The Seventh Regiment Armory was built in 1877-81 for the prestigious, elite Seventh Regiment, to the designs of architect Charles W. Clinton, a veteran of Co. K of the regiment. The first to adopt the term "national guard," the Regiment was a volunteer militia unit of the National Guard of the State of New York, long the largest and most active state militia in the country. The tradition of volunteer state militias remained strong in America from the Revolution through the nineteenth century; in 1792 Congress passed an act that established uniform standards for the various state militias. While the volunteer militia provided a large portion of the fighting forces in the nineteenth century, the readiness of the militia for warfare and its relationship to the standing army were called into question during the Civil War (at which time the name "national guard" came into more common usage). The New York Armory Law of 1862 attempted to address these issues by spurring the creation of regiments and armories, but met with little success in the aftermath of the war. With changes in American (and, in particular, New York) society in the second half of the nineteenth century -- increasing industrialization, urbanization, labor union activity, and immigration -- the role of the National Guard was affected, leading to its resurgence. In the midst of a severe economic depression that began in 1873, the first nationwide general strike over working conditions occurred after a railroad strike in 1877; the National Guard was called to support police and federal troops against strikers and their supporters in dozens of American cities. Although units had been called previously to quell civil unrest, after 1877 the role of the National Guard was largely to protect the property interests of the business class and to control urban workers in strikes and "riots," and a wave of armory building began nationally. The Seventh Regiment Armory was the vanguard of that wave.

The term "armory" refers to an American building type that developed in the nineteenth century to house volunteer state militias, providing space for drills, stables, storage, and administrative and social functions.<sup>1</sup> Aside from their military and police function, units of the National Guard were in large part social organizations; some, especially the Seventh Regiment, drew members from the social elite, while many others recruited primarily from local ethnic groups. The earliest quarters for New York militia units were often inadequate rented

spaces. The Seventh Regiment built the first regimental armory in New York City. The Italianate three-story, cast-iron-fronted Tompkins Market Armory (1855-60, James Bogardus and Col. Marshall Lefferts, Third Avenue and 6th Street, demolished),<sup>2</sup> was the result of a collaboration between the regiment and the local butchers, in which a drill hall and regimental and company rooms (many of which were fitted up after plans by Charles W. Clinton) were placed above a public market. The Seventh Regiment found this armory inadequate as early as 1866, and began to think about a location closer to its affluent members uptown and a design which featured a drill room on the ground floor; the Tompkins Market Armory was damaged by fire in 1874.

The new Seventh Regiment Armory, one of the finest and most costly American armories of the nineteenth century, had national influence in establishing the armory as a distinct building type, in terms of both functional design and architectural imagery. Modelled in plan after such nineteenth-century railroad stations as the first Grand Central Depot, the Seventh Regiment Armory features an administrative "headhouse" building (originally three stories) facing Park Avenue, connected to a drill shed (occupying the rest of the block to Lexington Avenue) which utilizes iron trusses to span a large space. The "medieval" appearance of the administration building, reminiscent of a fortress or castle with a central tower, helped to signify the armory as a distinct building type, connoted its military function as well as the concepts of power and control, and assisted functionally in the military defense of the building if necessary. Most armories would adopt such fortress features as turrets, towers, crenellated parapets, slit windows, impenetrable doors, window grilles, etc., which could be used by troops with guns or to thwart uninvited entry. The Seventh Regiment Armory stimulated units in New York and elsewhere to build their own armories. In 1884 the New York State Legislature created an Armory Board in New York City, which was charged with making the arrangements to condemn land, to allocate funds, and to authorize and oversee the construction, furnishing, and maintenance of armories for National Guard units in the city. The luxurious, clublike atmosphere of the Seventh Regiment Armory was the architectural aspiration (usually unobtainable) of many a guard unit that had constant trouble recruiting and retaining members.

## The Seventh Regiment

The Seventh Regiment, often referred to as the "Silk Stocking Regiment" due to its ties to socially prominent New York families, had an illustrious military history and was considered to be the most prestigious American military group of the nineteenth century. The regiment traces its lineage to four companies organized in 1806 by New York merchants in response to the British practice of boarding American ships to search for British sailors. Attached to the artillery Eleventh Regiment as the Second Battalion in 1812, it was the first in the New York State Militia to volunteer for service in the War of 1812. The Second Battalion, acting upon its desire to become an infantry unit, formed a separate organization in 1824 and adopted the name "National Guards" after members of one of its companies served as honor guard for the Marquis de Lafayette (*Garde Nationale* commander) on his visit to New York that year. The national guard designation was used exclusively by this unit (the final "s" was dropped in 1832) until New York State adopted it for the entire state militia in 1862; it was not used nationally until later. The National Guards expanded to six companies in 1825 and to ten in 1826, when it reached regiment status and became the Twenty-seventh Regiment, Artillery; it was re-designated the Seventh Regiment in 1847. After its service in quelling civil disturbances from the Election Riot (1834) through the Astor Place Riot (1849), as well as in firefighting, the regiment achieved national renown and was esteemed enough by conservative politicians and city fathers for it to be the recipient of the city's first regimental armory, the Tompkins Market Armory (previously each company had separate quarters and the regiment assembled outdoors or at the Arsenal). After President Lincoln's call for volunteers on April 15, 1861, the regiment, under the command of Col. Marshall Lefferts, responded that same day and was one of the first units to reach Washington and enter Union service (many of its merchant and business leader members suffered great financial loss in absents themselves from New York). The regiment served several times during the war, and some 500 members served individually; in addition, the Seventh was called back to New York in 1863 to assist in suppressing the Draft Riots.

In June 1864, Col. Emmons Clark became commander of the Seventh Regiment, serving in that capacity until 1889. Clark (1827-1905) was also the Secretary of the New York Board of Health from

1866 to 1901. It was largely due to his efforts that the new Seventh Regiment Armory became an actuality. The regiment, after abandoning an effort to obtain Reservoir Square on West 42nd Street, negotiated the lease in 1874 for a city-owned full-block site, formerly Hamilton Square, at Fourth (Park) Avenue and East 66th Street. In May 1874, a committee was set up to acquire "plans and estimates from the best architects of this City";<sup>3</sup> by October, veteran Charles Clinton had prepared a set of plans. He later executed preliminary designs [not built] for a two-story administration building (with a mansarded partial third story) and large drill room, and was officially retained as architect in August 1875. The Common Council had just authorized a \$350,000 appropriation for construction of the armory, but never set a tax levy to raise the money, and there was opposition on the Board of Estimate and elsewhere. Moreover, New York City in the 1870s was both in the midst of a severe economic depression and recovering from the recent construction scandals of the "Boss" William M. Tweed ring, and the regiment was finally hesitant, as an elite body in this political climate, to insist that the city construct its building (only fifteen years after the Tompkins Market Armory). In January 1876, after recognizing the city's financial plight and the "general depression in business," and stating that it would be "inexpedient and injudicious"<sup>4</sup> to use city funds, the Officers resolved to raise the money by private subscription; the Seventh Regiment Armory was the only armory thus privately constructed and owned. Many of the wealthiest and most prominent New Yorkers (as well as businesses, regiment members and veterans) responded with contributions to the "New Armory Fund," and by 1881 over \$237,000 was raised in this manner, quite an impressive feat for the time. The regiment, in its lavish, palatial new armory of 1877-81, reached the pinnacle of prestige, and was constantly in demand for its services, both military and police as well as ceremonial.

Emmons Clark was succeeded by Col. Daniel Appleton, another long-term commander, from 1889 to 1916; Appleton (1852-1929), a partner in the publishing firm of D. Appleton & Co. and a former captain of Co. F, oversaw the regiment's expansion to twelve companies, substantive military organizational and equipment changes, and the first major building systems changes, additions and alterations of the Seventh Regiment Armory in 1896-

1913, as well as the end of its era of riot duty (the last was the Croton Dam Riot of 1900). The Seventh was re-designated the Seventh Infantry Regiment in 1899, was called into federal service in 1917, ending the regiment's autonomy, and during World War I served as the 107th Infantry, U.S. Army, assigned to the 27th Division; some 2000 members and veterans of the regiment were commissioned officers and 580 members lost their lives. A Depot Battalion, assigned to the armory during the war, was merged with the overseas veterans upon their return in 1919; the regiment was entirely federalized in 1922, and began to lose its elite composition. The 107th Infantry became the 207th Coast Artillery in 1940,

which during World War II served with four separate units; after the war, it was again reorganized as the 107th Infantry, and was assigned to the 42nd Division in 1957. In 1952 the property of the regiment was transferred to the Seventh Regiment Fund. After a reorganization of National Guard units in 1968, the regiment became the First Battalion, 42nd Infantry Division, New York National Guard; it is currently designated the Department of Army Headquarters 107th Support Group, New York Army National Guard. Veterans of these successor units are still known as "Veterans of the Seventh Regiment" and maintain headquarters at the armory.

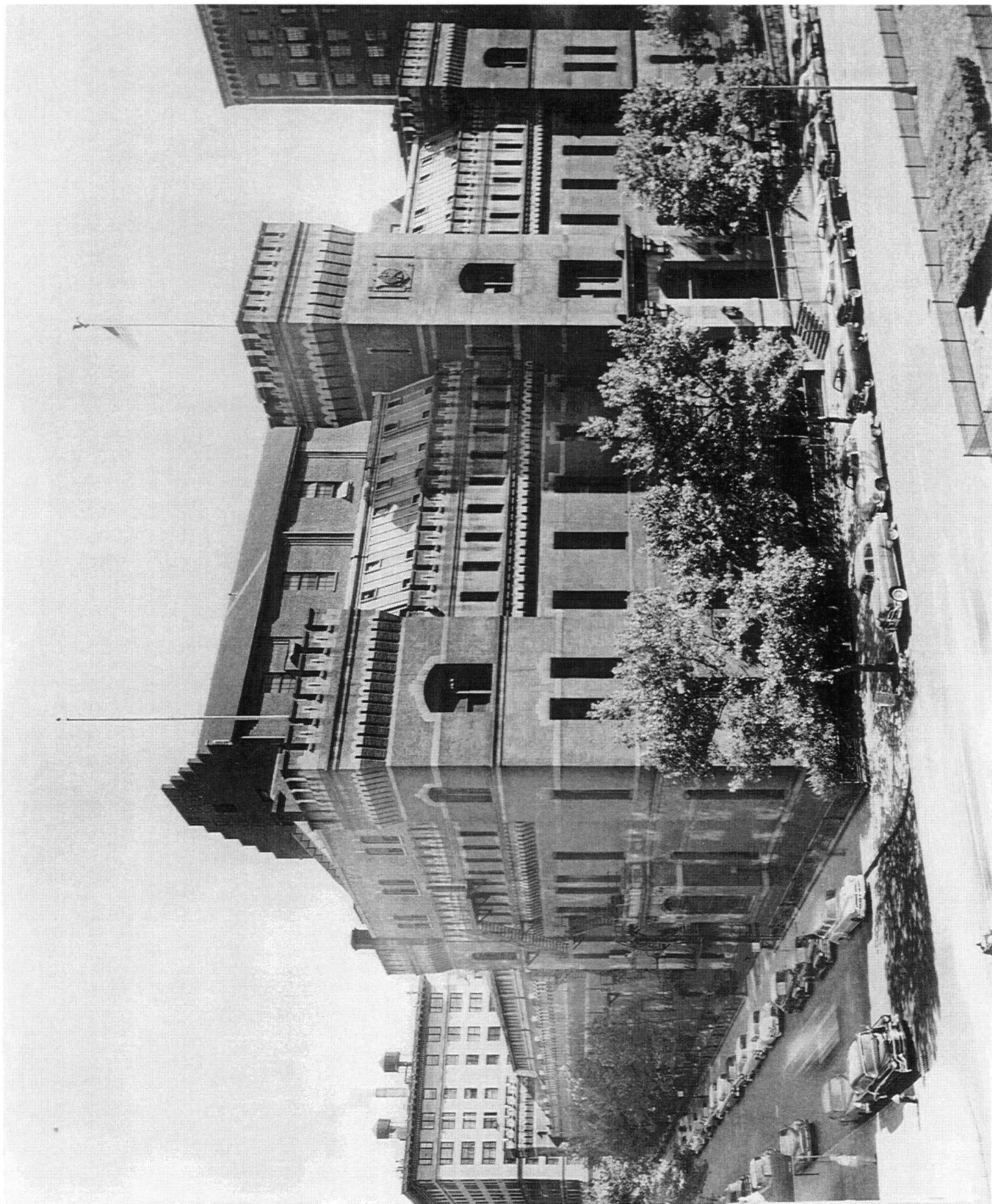
### The Seventh Regiment Armory

The revised plans and specifications for the new armory, as prepared by Charles Clinton (with general planning input from Col. Emmons Clark) by January 1876, were approved by the Board of Officers in May; the regiment was in the midst of the subscription drive for funds, which had slowed down drastically by the end of the year. Clinton had reduced the amount of granite proposed for the exterior to trim only, greatly decreasing the cost. A Building Committee was organized in June, and contracts were let for excavation and foundation work by April 1877; the first payments were made in July 1877, the same month as the start of the Railroad Strike. Although New York escaped the turmoil seen in other cities, the regiment's role in keeping order spurred another influx of money to the New Armory Fund, and cornerstone laying ceremonies were held in October 1877, with a keynote speech by Secretary of State William E. Evarts. As the administration building and Drill Room were under construction and funds were running out, the regiment petitioned the Legislature for a loan in January 1879, which was authorized and issued in March-April in the form of \$150,000 in bonds assigned against the site and building as security; the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund extended the lease of the site in perpetuity for as long as the regiment "shall exist and act as a military organization"<sup>5</sup> and the Legislature authorized an appropriation, in lieu of rental, in which the regiment received \$15,000 a year (in order to redeem the bonds and interest by 1894). By the fall of 1879 the building was entirely enclosed, heated, and lit by gas, the floors were laid and the main staircase was constructed, and virtually everything but decor was under contract. In order to

raise further monies to complete construction and for the decoration and furnishing of the interiors, the regiment decided to hold a fair.

The three-week New Armory Fair, opened by President Rutherford B. Hayes on November 17, 1879, was a phenomenal success, attended by thousands who took the opportunity to view the incomplete administration building and nearly completed Drill Room, and raised a clear \$140,550. After construction was mostly completed and the furnishing was well under way, the Seventh Regiment ceremonially marched from the old Tompkins Market Armory, up Fifth Avenue, to the Seventh Regiment Armory on April 26, 1880, to take possession of its building. The total cost of the armory in 1881 (including furniture and fixtures) was about \$605,000, of which \$589,440 was provided by the New Armory Fund.<sup>6</sup> To questions about the extravagance of the furnishing of the armory, Col. Clark replied, as reported in the *New York Tribune* (Sept. 25, 1880), that the regiment had raised more than expected at the Fair and "it was thought that nothing better could be done with it than to accomplish the perfection of the armory." Two of the first large events scheduled to show off the building and to thank the patrons of the regiment were Subscribers' Day of September 1880 (attended by some 40,000, including an estimated 25,000 inside at 9:00 p.m., the peak time) and the New Armory Inauguration Ball of December 1880, one of the most fashionable social events of the era. The first drills were held in the Drill Room in October 1880.





Seventh Regiment Armory Built 1877-81; architect Charles W. Clinton; additions 1909-11, 1928-29  
Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

## The Interiors of the Seventh Regiment Armory

Col. Emmons Clark credited architect Charles Clinton's "genius and admirable artistic taste" as responsible for "the architectural beauty of the building, exterior and interior, and for the complete construction and finish of every part of the immense structure."<sup>7</sup> For the woodwork, decoration, and furnishing of its rooms in 1879-81, the regiment chose some of the most prominent American design and interior decoration firms of the day to create a series of lavish late-Victorian interiors, most with Aesthetic Movement decoration and Renaissance Revival style woodwork. The regimental rooms on the first floor were largely for officers and for formal public, ceremonial, and reception purposes, while those on the second floor were for the individual companies of the regiment and were used as combination club/locker rooms. Aside from its military function, the Seventh Regiment, as an elite volunteer militia, served largely as a social club for its members, and the interiors of the armory reflect this. As noted by a member, writing to the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* in February 1890:

*it is as much to its social attractions as to its military renown that the regiment owes its popularity among a class of young men who are desirable as recruits. ...the regiment, the veterans and the generous citizens who subscribed the vast amount required to build the Armory, did so with the idea it was to be a club house as well as an Armory.*<sup>8</sup>

The Seventh Regiment provided its members with a vast social and cultural network, which in the armory alone included such activities as drills, shooting, swimming, dining, balls, theatrical and other entertainments, and galas. The armory was only in use, however, during the drill season which lasted from October to April; in summer there were regimental encampments outside New York. The facilities and activities were considered essential to the prestige and traditions of the Seventh Regiment, particularly considering the social element from which it drew its volunteers, and these helped attract and retain those recruits.

The interior decoration and furnishing of the armory were widely covered by the general daily newspapers, as well as more specialized journals, such as *The Decorator and Furnisher*. Typical were comments such as those by the *New York Times* in April 1880 that

*the painting and frescoing is being done in a style only to be seen in the most luxurious private residences of the City; in fact this remark applies to all the appointments of these rooms so far as they now appear.*<sup>9</sup>

### **Regimental Rooms, Stair Hall and Corridors**

In August 1879, the Building Committee in charge of construction of the armory expressed reservations about its authority to fit up the regimental rooms (Library, and Reception, Board of Officers, Colonel's, and Field and Staff Rooms on the first floor, and Adjutant's and Non-commissioned Staff Rooms on the second floor), so the Board of Officers set up a new Committee on Interior Work under Maj. George Moore Smith (which included Col. Clark and Capt. Appleton), with power to procure designs and contract for furniture, fixtures, and decoration [apparently there was already a sub-committee in place, as indicated in a letter earlier in August from Col. Clark, in which he requested that Building Committee members stop at the office of Edward Kemp to "examine the plans which have been offered to the Committee by several of the leading houses of this city"].<sup>10</sup> At its meeting in October, the Board heard a report of the new committee, examined plans for the rooms, and after "considerable discussion"<sup>11</sup> adopted recommendations on the choice of woods for each room; Smith "presented plans from the Architect [Clinton] for the several rooms"<sup>12</sup> (except the Library) in November, which were approved, and the committee was directed to secure completed plans and estimates. At the Board's January 1880 meeting, the committee reported a delay in the estimates due to Clinton's ill health, so the committee was authorized to "let the contracts for fitting up and furnishing said rooms"<sup>13</sup> at an amount not to exceed that in the New Armory and Regimental Funds. Regimental records are sketchy about the contracting of the Library, but it seems to have been handled along with the adjacent Veterans' Room (although paid through separate accounts), which was under the control of the Veterans' Association and paid for with \$20,000 from the New Armory Fund.

Some of the most prominent American design and interior decoration firms of the day, all located in New York City, were hired. The corridors, which have extensive wainscot and large wooden surrounds and doors, as well as the grand central Stair Hall, were executed by the firm of George C. Flint & Co.,

with gas lighting fixtures, originally bronzed brass, by Mitchell, Vance & Co. (in 1897 these spaces received elaborate new wrought-iron electric chandeliers and wall bracket fixtures by Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co.). The Veterans' Room and Library, featuring a profusion of stenciling, ironwork, woodwork, and other decoration, and widely considered to be among the most significant and beautiful surviving interiors of the American Aesthetic Movement, were designed and decorated by Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.) with architect Stanford White. Herter Brothers decorated the Reception Room (the woodwork was executed by Alexander Roux & Co.), the Board of Officers Room, and the Colonel's Room, executing the woodwork in the latter two; these rooms are very rare survivals among Herter Brothers interiors. The extant wall and ceiling decoration in the Board of Officers Room mostly dates from a re-painting in 1932. Pottier & Stymus was responsible for the decoration of the Field and Staff Room. Other than the extensive Aesthetic Movement stenciled decoration found originally on the ceiling and wall surfaces, these regimental rooms are largely intact (most of them also received elaborate electric chandeliers and lighting fixtures in 1897), and display extensive woodwork, all in woods which vary from room to room, including wainscot, some cabinetry, prominent mantels and overmantels over decorative fireplaces, and massive window and door surrounds the latter with double sliding doors. Stenciled decoration survives only in the Veterans' and Board of Officers Rooms (though it has been re-painted); in the Library the patterned plaster ceiling decoration survives. In addition, the Stair Hall and Board of Officers and Colonel's Rooms have affixed portraits painted on canvas by noted artists.

### Company Rooms

Each of the ten original companies of the regiment was responsible for fitting up its own room on the second floor of the Armory. The Board of Officers in March 1879 requested that each company set up a committee to deal with interior decoration and furnishing, that also would dispose of the furniture and fixtures of the Tompkins Market Armory; Col. Clark cautioned against haste and for "mature consideration" as it was "desirable that each company room should be entirely satisfactory to those who occupy it."<sup>14</sup> Each company was also requested to inform Clark if its ceiling was not to be plastered by the armory's general plasterer, and he further suggested that each company select a plan, write detailed specifications, invite estimates from

several firms, and make a selection based on the lowest bid (around \$5000) to avoid "extravagance."<sup>15</sup> In June, after realizing that Co. K had already contracted for its room, the board requested that no room be fully fitted up prior to the New Armory Fair in November (and thus jeopardize donations). Clark wrote to each company captain in August that all rooms would receive uniform locks and doorknobs by Yale Lock Mfg. Co. and that

*under the contract for gas fittings and fixtures a chandelier and the necessary side brackets will be furnished to each company room and will be in position by the 1st of November. When the New Armory is permanently occupied by the Regiment the gas fixtures in the company rooms can be arranged by the several companies to suit the taste and wishes of their members.*<sup>16</sup>

In 1879-80 all of the companies commissioned leading New York design firms, including three of the same ones that worked on regimental rooms. As summarized by Col. Clark:

*The companies had special committees in charge of the work upon their respective rooms, and there was considerable quiet rivalry to secure the most artistic designs and the best mechanical execution. As the appropriation to each company for this purpose from the receipts of the fair and from the regimental fund was six thousand dollars, the means were not wanting to complete the company rooms in the most satisfactory manner.*<sup>17</sup>

The companies altogether spent in excess of an additional \$12,000 on room decoration, bringing the total for the ten company rooms to around \$72,000.<sup>18</sup> The company rooms, like most of the regimental rooms, were decorated with woodwork in the Renaissance Revival style (as characterized by Clark, "the spirit of all the company rooms [A to I]... is more or less of the Italian Renaissance"),<sup>19</sup> some with neo-Grec detailing, and all had Aesthetic Movement ceiling and/or wall decoration. Despite the commonalities of function and overall design scheme, each of the company rooms has a distinctive, individual decorative character.

Research to date has identified the interior decoration firms that executed seven of the ten rooms: Herter Brothers decorated those for Companies C and H; Pottier & Stymus was



responsible for those for Companies D, E, G, and I (Company E also consulted with architect George W. DaCunha); and architect Sidney V. Stratton, a company member, designed the Company K Room which was executed by Kimbel & Cabus and is a rare surviving intact interior in the Queen Anne style. Of the three company rooms (Companies A, B and F) for which the decorating firms are unattributed, the *New York Times* in 1880 cited George C. Flint & Co. and Alexander Roux & Co. among the firms that decorated rooms on this floor,<sup>20</sup> and it is known that German-American architect Albert Wagner designed the Company B Room.<sup>21</sup> The company rooms feature extensive, largely original, woodwork, executed in different varieties of wood, including much locker cabinetry, mantels and overmantels, and some original paneled ceilings. The design of the room usually balanced a fireplace on one side with a piano alcove (with surround similar to the overmantel) on the opposite side. The rooms are further embellished by many other features, dating largely from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as fireplaces (the *New York Herald* in September 1880 remarked that "the fireplaces in most of them are marvels of ingenious design and faultless execution"),<sup>22</sup> mirrors, ornate gas and electric chandeliers and wall bracket fixtures, ironwork, cast-iron radiators, frosted- or stained-glass window screens and transoms, decorative upper wall and ceiling treatments in a variety of materials, ornamental panels, commemorative memorial tablets, clocks, shields, cartouches, armor, decorative hardware, and parquet floors.

#### Later Alterations and New Rooms

By 1886 the Seventh Regiment realized the burden of maintaining such an expensive property and applied to the city's Department of Public Works for appropriations for repairs and improvements. After a court decision mandated that the city was liable for repairs, the Legislature amended the law of 1879 in 1893, providing that, after the armory bonds were redeemed in 1894, the regiment was to receive an annual appropriation of \$8000, and the lease and property were re-assigned to the Field Officers of the Seventh Regiment. Of those improvements made with such funds, the armory's Trustees, in a communication with the Board of Estimate in January 1896, stated that

*it has been the aim of the Trustees in making improvements, to have the work well*

#### **Drill Room**

The Drill Room, at approximately 200 by 300 feet one of the largest unobstructed interiors in New York City upon its completion, is significant in the history of American engineering. It is considered to have the oldest extant "balloon shed" (a barrel vaulted roof supported on visible arch trusses or ribs) in America, and is also thought to have been one of the first buildings in the United States not associated with a railroad to incorporate this structural system, which was often used in railroad stations, particularly after its first major American usage in the first Grand Central Depot (1869-71). The room features eleven elliptical wrought-iron arches, each spanning over 187 feet, which support the wood plank roof and an upper roof extension (which is supported on additional trusses and has clerestory windows). The Drill Room was the collaboration of Charles Clinton, with consulting architect Robert G. Hatfield and consulting engineer Charles Macdonald. Macdonald, the president of the Delaware Bridge Company, a subsidiary of the important iron-and-steel-producing Cooper, Hewitt & Co., designed the iron trusswork. The ironwork was supplied by Passaic Rolling Mill Co., with Alfred R. Whitney as contractor. Artist Jasper F. Cropsey was consultant for the initial effulgent painted decoration of this room (although his work has since been covered over). Built primarily for regimental maneuvers, the large Drill Room has also accommodated numerous events and large gatherings throughout its history.

*performed and in harmony with the character of other work in the armory, always observing that the designs will not call for expenditures unnecessarily extravagant.*<sup>23</sup>

For the first major expenditure since the armory's construction, the regiment applied to the New York Armory Board in April 1896 for "wiring, furnishing fixtures and connections for lighting the armory by electricity"<sup>24</sup> (a contract was awarded to general contractor J.F. Buchanan & Co., of Philadelphia, in April 1897) and contacted the Edison Electrical Illuminating Co. about connecting the armory with its system. New wrought-iron electric chandeliers and other fixtures by Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., of Philadelphia, were installed in the corridors,



most regimental rooms and many company rooms for about \$25,000. The massive task of the electrification of the armory, one of the largest such jobs ever seen in New York City, caused quite a bit of disruption throughout the armory in 1897. The Trustees expressed worries in July that the armory's "several parts are being seriously injured";<sup>25</sup> a Co. C member remarked in August that the armory was "in a most dilapidated condition, owing to the work . . . now in progress . . . the floors and wainscoting are torn out . . . the Veterans' room presents a most forlorn appearance . . .,"<sup>26</sup> and Col. Daniel Appleton fretted in September that "I am very much concerned about the work now going on at the Armory, and as usual with city contractors, they have been very unaccommodating. . . ."<sup>27</sup> In January 1898, a member commented that

*the entire armory is once again freed for a little while, in any event, from the incubus of dirt and inconvenience that recent alterations have entailed. Whatever the future may have in store in way of further improvement... we take heart in believing the siege will be no worse than the one just terminated. That the armory is better for the new method of lighting, we think will be generally conceded.... it is creditable to Mr. Brady's skill as a designer and draughtsman that his work has given such general satisfaction.*<sup>28</sup>

And Co. A revelled in the fact that they now had "light, and good light . . . and with a minimum heat, instead of the fiery furnace of old. . . ."<sup>29</sup>

The peace did not last for long at the armory, however. In January 1901, the Trustees reported that the steam pipe heating system (buried in the walls) was in "deplorable condition"<sup>30</sup> and was leaking. The recommendation was made to abandon the old system for the installation of a new exposed pipe system, even if that meant that pipes would pass through all of the rooms and that some lockers might be sacrificed in company rooms. The Armory Board awarded a \$10,500 contract to James Curran Mfg. Co. in August 1902 for the steam heating. The *Seventh Regiment Gazette* applauded the forthcoming improvement, as the old system "is not only out of date, but is totally inadequate to the needs of such a big building."<sup>31</sup> Further heating alterations were made by Baker, Smith & Co. according to a \$4546 contract awarded by the Armory Board in June 1909. Cast-iron radiators still exist in the armory from both the Curran and Baker, Smith installations.

After federal legislation mandated that all National Guard units consist of twelve companies, the Seventh Regiment applied to the Armory Board in April 1909 for a \$200,000 appropriation for the first major alteration and expansion of the armory; a nearly \$172,000 contract was awarded to contractors Kelly & Kelly in June for the majority of the work. Plans were devised by architects [Floyd L.] Robinson & [Leo F.] Knust, and it was Knust, a sergeant of Co. E, who was credited with having "planned and urged the importance of the work that is now being done, and who also was largely responsible for securing the necessary appropriation from the city,"<sup>32</sup> according to the *Seventh Regiment Gazette*. The interior changes of 1909-11, which roughly doubled the amount of working floor space, included the insertion of mezzanine levels on the eastern side of the first and second floors (without "disturbance" of "the decoration and fittings of the more important rooms"),<sup>33</sup> the raising of the third floor to a full story and the addition of a fourth floor, and installation of new stairs at both ends of the second-story corridors; newly created and decorated rooms included the Inner and Outer Committee, Adjutant's, and Equipment Rooms on the first floor, and the Company L and Company M Rooms on the second floor for the two additional units. The Company L Room was decorated in a neo-Classical style, while the Company M Room received a Tudor Revival treatment. On the exterior of the armory's administration building, the upper portion of the central tower was removed, crenellation was added, and certain features were remodeled "to harmonize with the new work in an effort to give each facade an appearance of greater strength and the building as a whole the appearance of greater bulk."<sup>34</sup> Floyd L. Robinson filed plans in October 1911 for further alterations, which entailed a new continuous gallery for increased seating in the Drill Room, and certain corresponding alterations of the exterior Lexington Avenue and side facades, and the installation of a new high-pressure water system; a \$236,000 contract was awarded by the Armory Board for this work to contractor Charles Meads & Co., and the work was performed in 1912-13.

Throughout this period of substantial changes in the armory (1896-1913), alterations were made to the regimental and company rooms, mainly the redesign of upper wall and ceiling surfaces, as well as the change to electric fixtures. Changes in taste account for some of the changes, but undoubtedly others were the result of the physical disruptions of the original decor and the need for repair. Companies still vied with each other to have the most beautiful room, but

certain companies (such as Co. K) maintained a strong tradition and sense of history by altering their rooms very little. Co. C expressed its sentiments about its Herter Brothers room in 1894:

*whatever remedial change is necessary in the Company quarters it must be of such a nature as will not materially interfere with the present plan, scope and decoration of the room. The salient points in each of the particulars have been maintained with but little alteration since the Company took possession. Whatever change has been made in the original design, has been in the line of improvement and only after careful consultation with men of recognized skill and ability.*<sup>35</sup>

Information is scarce on which firms performed the alteration work in the company rooms, and accounts are often vague about the exact nature of the "redecorating" or "remodelling" that occurred -- whether it entailed furniture and more ephemeral material only, or whether it constituted more substantial changes to the attached decor, such as woodwork and ceilings. Examples of documented company room alterations include the coffered ceiling in the Company A Room (c. 1897); the revisions in decor of the Company B Room by Tiffany Studios (1906); the Adamesque ornament of the Company D Room (1894-95); the Tudor Revival ceiling of the Company E Room (1892); the Colonial Revival upper wall treatment of the Company G Room by Charles A. Hutchings (1894); extensive woodwork alterations in the Company H Room (c. 1887-1904);

and the balcony with Art Nouveau ironwork in the Company I Room (1890). After World War I, many of the companies installed memorials to their fallen comrades.

In 1928-29, the addition of a fifth floor to the armory for a new gymnasium freed the fourth floor for the creation of new dining and social spaces [not part of this designation], which included the Daniel Appleton Memorial Mess Hall, intended as the Seventh Regiment's memorial to its late, beloved long-time commander, decorated in 1930-31 by Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport, the successor to two very important Boston design firms. The armory received monies for construction and rehabilitation from the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport was retained throughout the 1930s and '40s for numerous projects in the armory, including the alterations of the Colonel's Room (1932-47) and probably the Field and Staff Room (1933). The firm was responsible for the restoration of the Herter Brothers' Board of Officers Room in 1932, in an early instance of the historic preservation of a significant nineteenth-century American interior, when the regiment dedicated it as a memorial to Col. Emmons Clark, the instigator of the building of the armory.

Since federalization of the National Guard, the company rooms and some of the regimental rooms have been used as offices. Aside from the armory's accessibility to the public through its fourth-floor restaurant and many events in the Drill Room (such as antiques shows), the interiors are open to the public through scheduled and reserved tours.

### Significance of the Seventh Regiment Interiors

The Seventh Regiment Armory interiors were initially executed during the period of the rise of the "interior decorator" as a distinct profession in the late 1870s. New York City had become the American center of "fine cabinetmaking" during the 1850s, and the larger furniture manufacturers and dealers began to expand their activities to include woodwork, upholstery, decorations, fabrics, and accessories, in order to provide coordinated "artistic" interiors. Consequently, New York City developed the most highly regarded American interior decoration firms of the day. These firms worked at times directly to the design of the architect of a project, and in many buildings of the period several firms collaborated, or different firms worked on separate rooms, particularly in the mansions of the very wealthy.

The "Aesthetic Movement" of the 1870s-80s, popularized in the United States by the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, stressed the "aesthetic" or artistic in the applied arts, and reached its culmination in the design of interior decoration. The preface to *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement* gives an indication of the general interior design intent, characterized by a visual complexity and profusion of "surface ornament":

*The layering and juxtaposition of many different patterns and the use of a subtle palette of colors closely related in value, hue, and tone demonstrated a heightened artistic consciousness on the part of the*

*decorator and at the same time demanded a refined sensibility on the part of the visitor. Each object or detail deserved close attention, yet, like a mosaic, the whole became unified when seen from a distance.*<sup>36</sup>

The Aesthetic Movement embraced many different historic styles, such as the Queen Anne, "Modern Gothic," neo-Classical, Colonial Revival, and Renaissance Revival, as well as the Japanesque, Moorish and other exotic motifs.

As an ensemble, the regimental and company rooms of the Seventh Regiment Armory are a nationally important collection of high-style interiors, designed to reflect the late-Victorian taste of the late 1870s and early 1880s, with decorative sensibilities of the Aesthetic Movement, and woodwork mostly in the Renaissance Revival style. Designed and executed by some of America's (and New York's) most important design and interior decoration firms, the interiors of the Armory are on a scale with and display an elegance and quality usually found only in the interiors of private clubs and the most ornate residences, few of which survive in New York City from this period. These rooms contain an abundance of woodwork and cabinetry, particularly the company rooms, and as a whole they exhibit an unusual degree of intactness, despite their usage by the national guard and the exigencies for changes. The alterations to these rooms made during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exhibit either change in contemporary taste or the skillful adaptation to existing decor. These rooms with the corridors and Stair Hall also contain a large and important collection of both original gas and early electric chandeliers and other lighting fixtures. Together with the Drill Room, highly significant for its engineering, the interiors of the Seventh Regiment Armory represent the height of American interior design within a single building, for a "single" (in this case military) client, during a period of fifty years.

The serious study and appreciation of American late nineteenth-century decorative arts is a relatively recent development. The Seventh Regiment Armory interiors, other than the Veterans' Room and Library, are not widely known. Nonetheless, a number of scholars and experts in the fields of American architectural history and decorative arts have assigned a signal role to these surviving interiors. In 1983, Richard H. Howland, then Special Assistant to the Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, and President of the Victorian Society in America, stated that

*the majestic hallways and the . . . grand rooms facing Park Avenue on the two principal floors of the Armory constitute the most significant group of authentic 1882/3 [sic] interiors in America today.*<sup>37</sup>

The Landmarks Preservation Commission received testimony on the Armory's interiors from a number of specialists in 1992. Catherine Hoover Voorsanger, Assistant Curator, American Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, said that the interiors

*are now rare examples--even in their less than complete state--of the work of the best cabinetmakers and designers of the late nineteenth century: Associated Artists, Herter Brothers, Alexander Roux, and Pottier and Stymus, just to name a few. We have so little left of our rich nineteenth-century architectural and decorative arts heritage.*

Marilynn Johnson, former Associate Curator, American Wing, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, remarked that "the Seventh Regiment Armory contains the most important 1870s and 1880s interiors remaining in New York City." Kevin Stayton, Curator, Department of Decorative Art, The Brooklyn Museum, stated

*Representing as they do a cross section of the work of the most important design firms of the late nineteenth century, the rooms are the single most important collection of nineteenth-century interiors to survive intact in one building. The rooms include several that have long been recognized as aesthetic masterworks, unsurpassed by other surviving examples, and as an ensemble, they provide a resource that is a treasure trove yet to be fully explored. . . . The rooms already form a large and critical part of the foundation of our understanding of the art of this era.*

Dianne H. Pilgrim, Director, and David R. McFadden, Curator of Decorative Arts, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, wrote that

*The significance of these interiors cannot be underestimated. The roster of artists, designers, and firms that contributed to the interior embellishment of these spaces reads like a textbook of the history of design in*

*America between 1880 and 1930. . . . It is important that the entire sequence of rooms, from the earliest revival style interiors to those of the [1930s], be preserved for future study.*

Robert J. Kapsch, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, cited the interiors as

*An important aspect of the national significance of the building. . . which the National Historic Landmark nomination terms 'the most significant group of 1880s high-style interiors and furniture outside of a museum.' The Drill Room is spectacular. . . . The finish details of the administration building rooms are likewise breathtaking . .*

Mosette G. Broderick, Adjunct Assistant Professor/Assistant Chair, Department of Fine Arts, New York University, called the armory rooms

*the finest and only set of rooms by the major decorative arts specialists of the 1880's to survive in New York City . . . [and the] only remaining example of the cooperative and rival efforts of the best decorators of this period working together in one complex. . . . a showcase of the aesthetics and workmanship of the first major period of independent interior design in America.*

Frank G. Matero, Associate Professor and Director, Architectural Conservation Laboratory, University of Pennsylvania, wrote that

*the tremendous significance of the Armory's interiors comes from their largely unchanged decorative finishes: the painting, carved and milled woodwork, mosaics, ornamental metalwork and plasterwork, and stained glass. Few, if any, late nineteenth century interiors possess the quantity or caliber of*

*the Armory's spaces and none display the same degree of survival.*

And Nina Gray, former Decorative Arts Curator, The New-York Historical Society, said

*This amazing group of talent came together to decorate the various rooms of the Armory, each one interpreting the Renaissance Revival style in a different yet harmonious manner. The rooms at the Armory represent the only surviving public interiors in New York from this extraordinarily creative period in interior decoration. The palatial dimensions and grandeur of the public rooms are complemented by the more intimate scale of the company rooms, each one decorated for the pleasure and pride of a different company.*

**Report prepared by**  
**Jay Shockley,**  
Deputy Director of Research

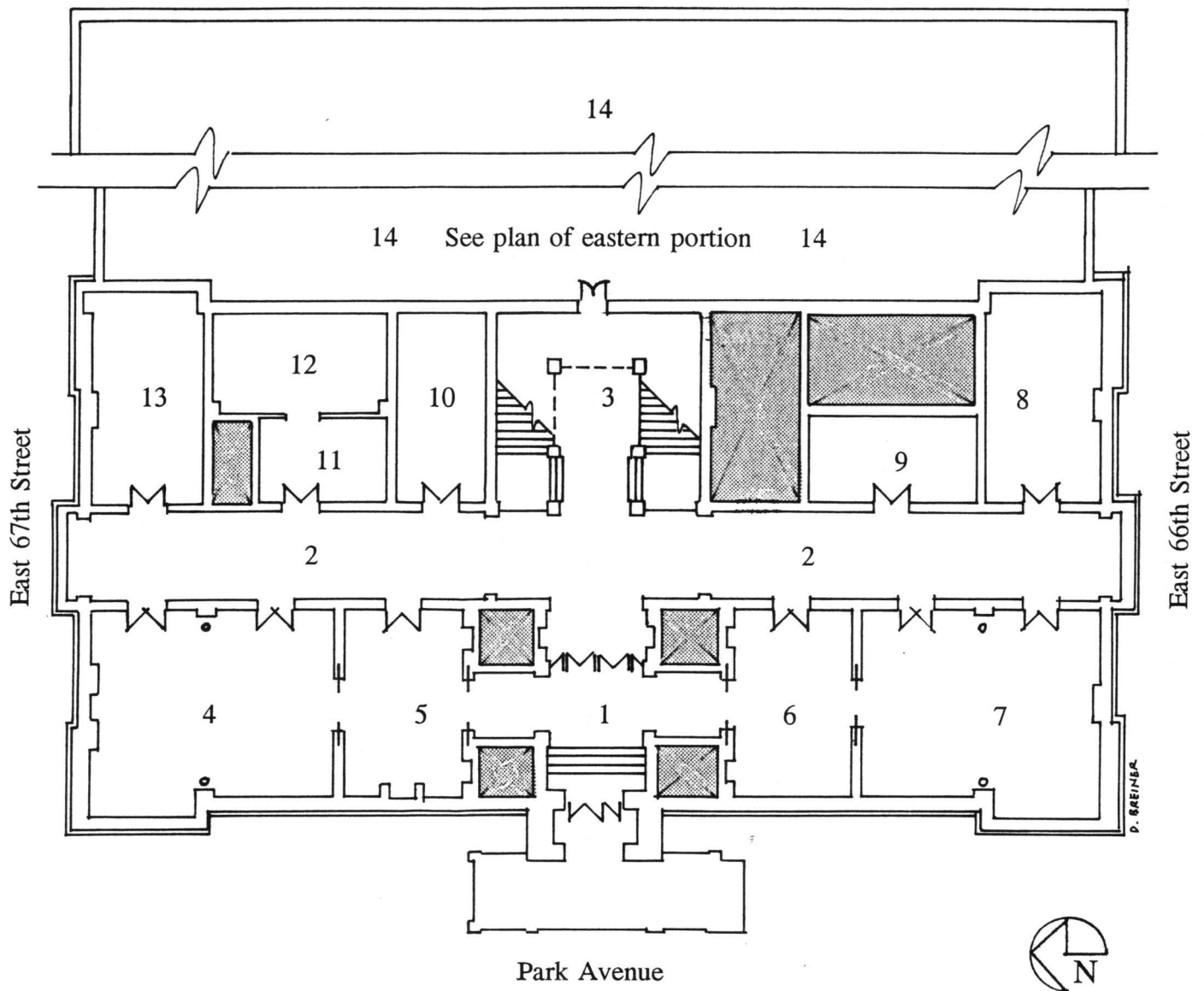
**Acknowledgements:** The Commission wishes to thank the following people for their research assistance to the staff of the Commission: Lisa Weilbacker, Curator of the Seventh Regiment Armory, for providing continual access to the Regiment's records and the armory interiors; May Stone, Librarian, and Jim Francis, Coordinator of Rights and Reproductions, at The New-York Historical Society, for locating Regiment records in its collection and providing copies of historic photographs; and Catherine Hoover Voorsanger, Assistant Curator, American Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for providing research material from *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*.



## NOTES

1. An earlier use of the term was sometimes interchangeable with "arsenal," a building in which arms are manufactured or stored. The Arsenal in Central Park (1847-51), built by New York State, is a designated New York City Landmark.
2. *Report to Council of Officers - Seventh Regiment, National Guard* (NY: Edward O. Jenkins, 1858), 12 (Aug. 10, 1855).
3. *Minutes, Council of Officers* (May 1, 1874).
4. *Ibid.*, Jan. 15, 1876.
5. Cited in: Charles E. Lydecker, "The Armory Building," *SRG* (Jan. 1911), 64.
6. Financial figures were obtained from *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements* and Clark, p. 301.
7. Clark, p. 299.
8. "The Armory as a Club House," *SRG* (Feb. 1890), 43.
9. "The Seventh's New Home," *NYT*, Apr. 10, 1880.
10. Col. Emmons Clark, *Letterbook 1875-80*, (Aug. 28, 1879).
11. *Minutes, Council of Officers* (Oct. 4, 1879).
12. *Ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1879.
13. *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 1880.
14. Clark, *Letterbook*, Mar. 19, 1879.
15. *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, 1879.
16. *Ibid.*, Aug. 25, 1879.
17. Clark, p. 285.
18. Clark, p. 301.
19. Clark, p. 297.
20. "The Seventh's New Home."
21. "A Gorgeous Armory," *Boston Press*, Nov. 11, 1880.
22. "Pro Patria et Gloria," *NY Herald*, Sept. 25, 1880.
23. *Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building 1893-1909* (Jan. 4, 1896).
24. *The Armory Board 1884-1911*, p. 15.
25. *Minutes, Trustees*, July 19, 1897.
26. *SRG* (Aug. 1897), 196.
27. Col. Daniel Appleton, *Letterbook 1897-98* (Sept. 18, 1897).
28. *SRG* (Jan. 1898), 42.
29. *SRG* (Nov. 1897), 237.
30. *Minutes, Trustees*, Jan. 2, 1901.
31. "New System for Heating Armory," *SRG* (Nov. 1902), 24.
32. "The 'New' Armory," *SRG* (Dec. 1909), 58.
33. "The Seventh's 'New' Home," *SRG* (Dec. 1909), 43.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *SRG* (Nov. 1894), 183.
36. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement*, p. 19.
37. American Society of Interior Designers, *Great New York Interiors: Seventh Regiment Armory* (1983), 5.

Lexington Avenue



# FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR (western portion)

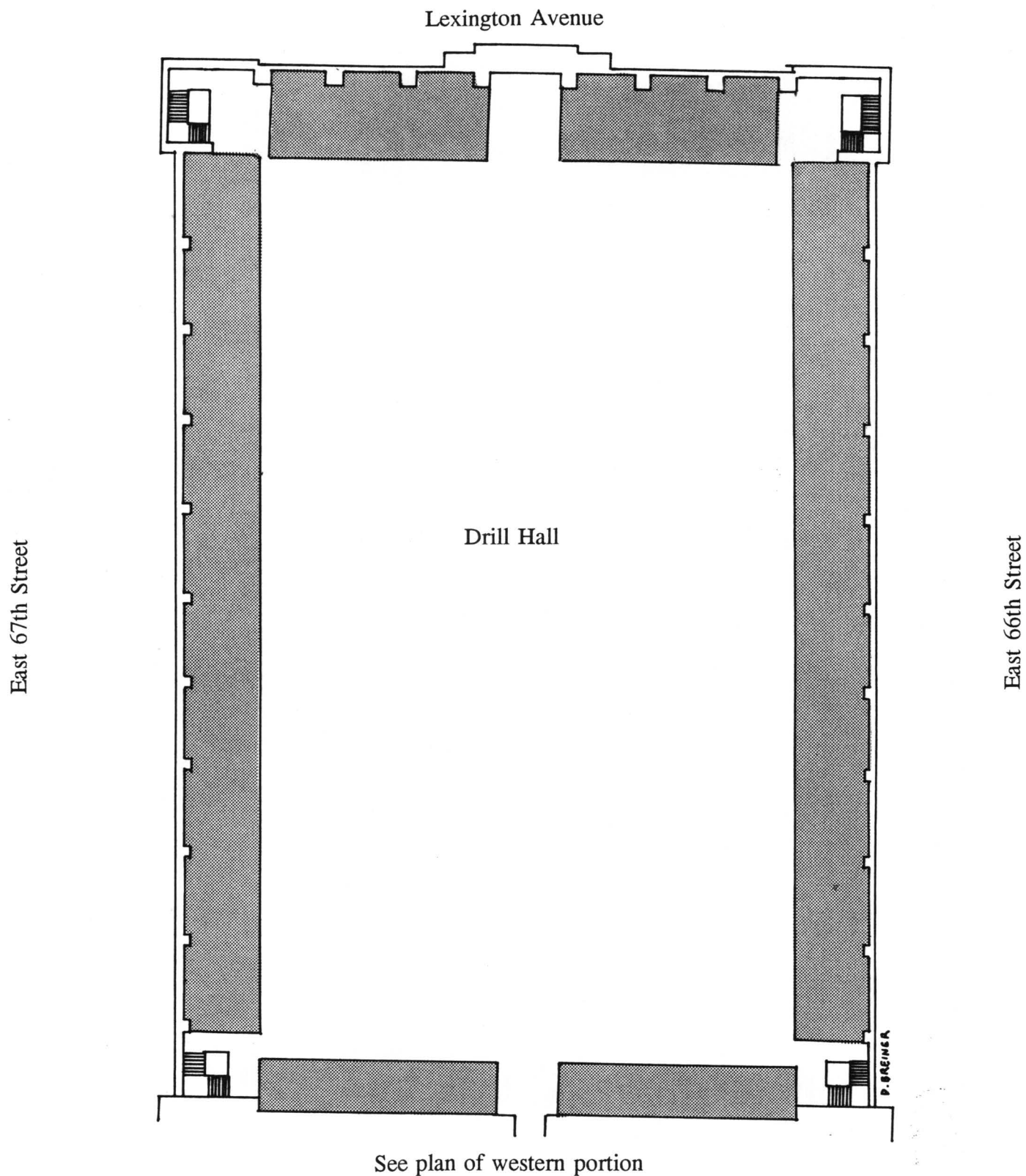
- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Entrance Hall          | 8 Colonel's Room        |
| 2 Main Corridor          | 9 Adjutant's Room       |
| 3 Stair Hall & Staircase | 10 Equipment Room       |
| 4 Veterans' Room         | 11 Outer Committee Room |
| 5 Library                | 12 Inner Committee Room |
| 6 Reception Room         | 13 Field & Staff Room   |
| 7 Board of Officers Room | 14 Drill Room           |

 Interior spaces not designated

## SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY INTERIOR

Designated July 19, 1994

Landmarks Preservation Commission

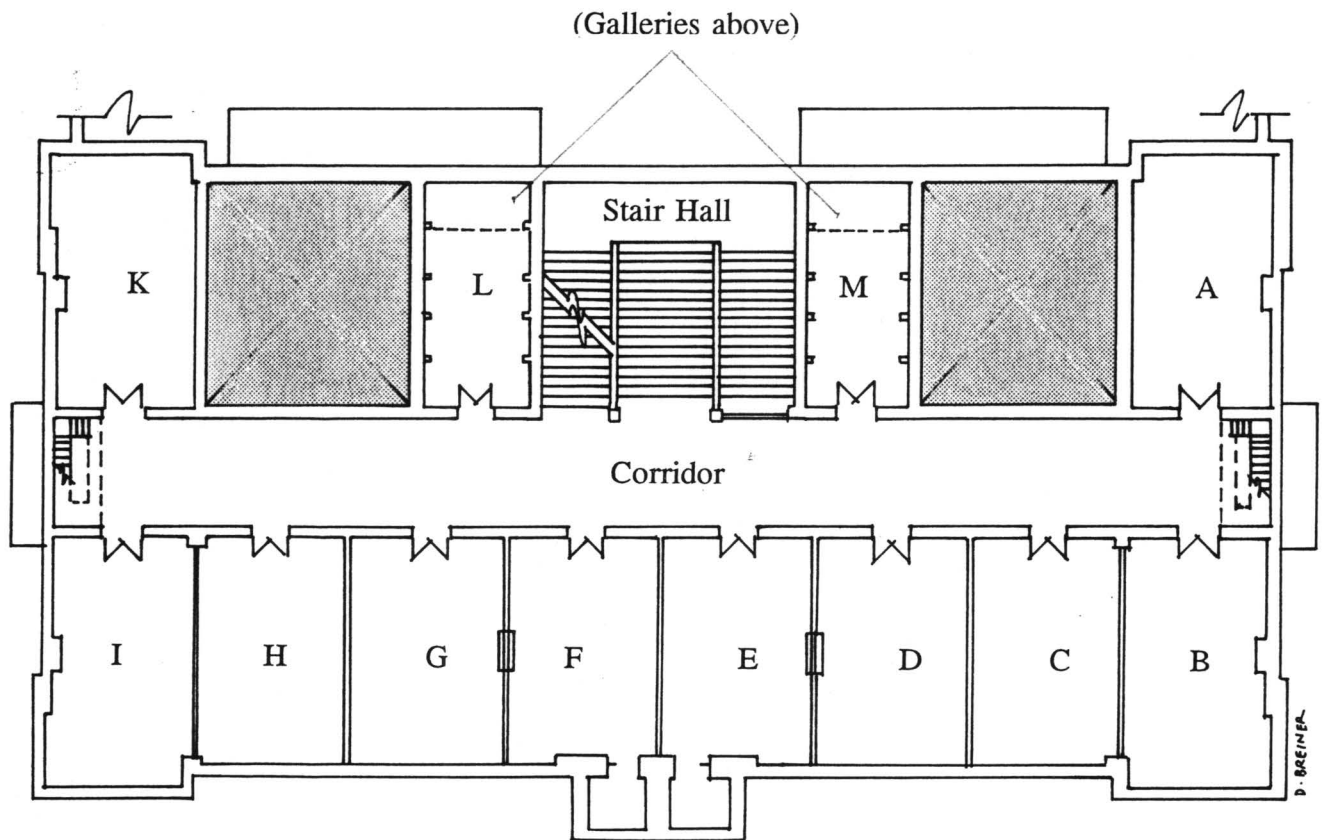


FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR (eastern portion)

# SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY INTERIOR


Designated July 19, 1994

Landmarks Preservation Commission



## SECOND FLOOR INTERIOR

A = Company A (First Company) Room  
 B = Company B (Second Company) Room, etc.

 Interior spaces not designated

## SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY INTERIOR

Designated July 19, 1994

Landmarks Preservation Commission



### 1-3. ENTRANCE HALL, STAIR HALL, and FIRST and SECOND FLOOR CORRIDORS

Architect: Charles W. Clinton, 1879

Interior Decoration Firm: George C. Flint & Co., 1879-80

Lighting Fixtures: Mitchell, Vance & Co., 1879-81 (newel torchieres only); Frank S. Brady / J.L. Gaumer & Co., Phila., 1897

Style: Renaissance Revival

Contracts for the completion of the general interior fittings of the armory, including the massive entrance hall, corridors, and main staircase, were let in August 1879; according to the records of disbursements of the New Armory Fund, payments on woodwork continued through August 1880, and on gas fixtures through the following March. George C. Flint & Co. was responsible for the oak woodwork (a \$19,780 contract), including the doors and the casing of the iron staircase (H.C. Glinsmann was in charge of the work, as cited in the *New York Times*, April 1880), while Mitchell, Vance & Co. provided the gas lighting fixtures (which were brass with a bronze tone, and only two of which are extant in these spaces) for \$8822. Col. Emmons Clark commented that "the grand stairway is the feature of the interior... the woodwork of the halls is massive oak, and the design is dignified and severe, corresponding with the external features of the building." Flanking the entrance are bronze tablets (1880, Mitchell, Vance & Co.) commemorating the construction of the armory; over the years other memorials have been placed in the halls. During the electrification of the armory in 1897 the gas fixtures here were replaced (except for the staircase newel torchieres, which received "a new dress of real bronze"). The armory's new fixtures, constituting "one of the largest individual jobs ever given out in the city" (120 chandeliers and 230 wall bracket fixtures, for about \$25,000) according to the *Seventh Regiment Gazette*, were designed by Frank S. Brady, who acted as general superintendent of the work and supervised their manufacture by J.L. Gaumer & Co., of Philadelphia. Reminiscent of the work of the Associated Artists in the Veterans' Room and Library, the corridor chandeliers and wall bracket fixtures are of wrought-iron "finished dead black"; these fixtures represent a major and extraordinary component within the armory's fine collection. As part of the additions and alterations made to the armory in 1909-11, staircases were built at either end of the second floor corridor, and a set of glass doors was installed in the entrance hall (later moved). In 1913 the first floor corridor received a pressed metal ceiling.

#### Descriptive List of Significant Features

##### ENTRANCE HALL

oak woodwork, including:

high triple entrance doors (with transom)

door surrounds with double sliding doors (with transoms) to Library and Reception Room

window surrounds (with frosted glass) of 4 small rooms

wainscot

floor

stairs with wrought-iron and brass railings

2 bronze tablets (1880, Mitchell, Vance & Co.) by entrance (south: lists architect, consulting architect and engineer, and building committee; north: states building erected 1877-80 under Col. Emmons Clark)

1 wrought-iron chandelier and 6 wrought-iron wall bracket light fixtures (1897)

metal and glass doors with large transom (1909; moved post-1955 from head of entrance stairs)

pressed metal ceiling (1913)

- 2 wood and perforated metal radiator cabinets (c. 1931)
- 4 hanging light fixtures (c. 1942)
- 3 memorial tablets (Brig. Gen. Louis Fitzgerald (d. 1908); Conversion of 107th Infantry (Rifle) NYNG to 207th Coast Artillery (AA) Mobile, 1940; and Simon Bolivar (1939)).

### FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR

oak woodwork, including:

wainscot

door surrounds with double sliding doors (and transoms) (surmounted by wood flag holders and, on the east wall, oculi (1909-11)) leading to regimental rooms

2 door surrounds to small rooms east of Entrance Hall

2 window surrounds each end

floor

3 wrought-iron folding gates [1896]

5 wrought-iron chandeliers and 9 wrought-iron wall bracket light fixtures (1897)

2 cast-iron radiators with marble tops (Baker, Smith & Co., 1909)

pressed metal ceiling with cove (1913)

elevator door and bronze sign [c. 1928-29]

north end leaded stained-glass window screen (memorial to Medal of Honor winners, 1969)

south end platform

5 tablets (Knickerbocker Greys WWI and WWII, Tennis Club, Maj. Richard Irwin (d. 1973), and National Historic Landmark), and small misc. memorial and flag plaques on surrounds and wainscot

### STAIR HALL

stairs (from basement to third floor) encased in oak paneling with pendants, wainscot, and balustrade (treads replaced 1953)

### First Floor

2 colossal columns and corner piers (originally painted like woodwork) and 2 smaller columns before entry to Drill Room

large double doors and transom [now covered] leading to Drill Room

2 windows each on north and south walls (covered, with sculpture shelves at bases, post-1955)

2 bronzed brass newel torchieres (1880, Mitchell, Vance & Co., with later globes)

miniature *U.S.S. New York* bell and scroll metalwork screen (1895, Clinton & Russell)

wrought-iron gates at bottom of stairs [1896]

2 wrought-iron wall bracket light fixtures and 1 bronze ball-and-chain chandelier (1897)

1 south wall door surround (1909-11)

2 cast-iron radiators with marble tops (Baker, Smith & Co., 1909; north one moved, 1942)

3 north wall memorial tablets (Co. C Civil War, marble; Civil War, marble [1911]; Master Sgt. Max Welker (d. 1954), bronze)

3 south wall memorial tablets (Co. H Civil War, marble; Mexican Border 1916, marble and bronze; Lt. Col. Nicholas Engel, 1938, marble and bronze)

telephone booths and wainscot of north stairs to basement (1942)

### First Mezzanine Landing

2 large columns

door surround with double sliding doors (and transom) to Drill Room gallery

2 wall light fixtures of shield design (1897)

north and south door surrounds with double doors (1909-11)  
marble Civil War memorial tablet on south wall

### Second Floor

2 colossal columns and corner piers  
2 small window surrounds south and 1 north

### Second Mezzanine Landing

door surround with double sliding doors (and transom) to Drill Room gallery  
2 wall light fixtures of shield design (1897)  
colossal, affixed Col. Daniel Appleton equestrian portrait (1905, Richard Creifelds) north wall

### Third Floor

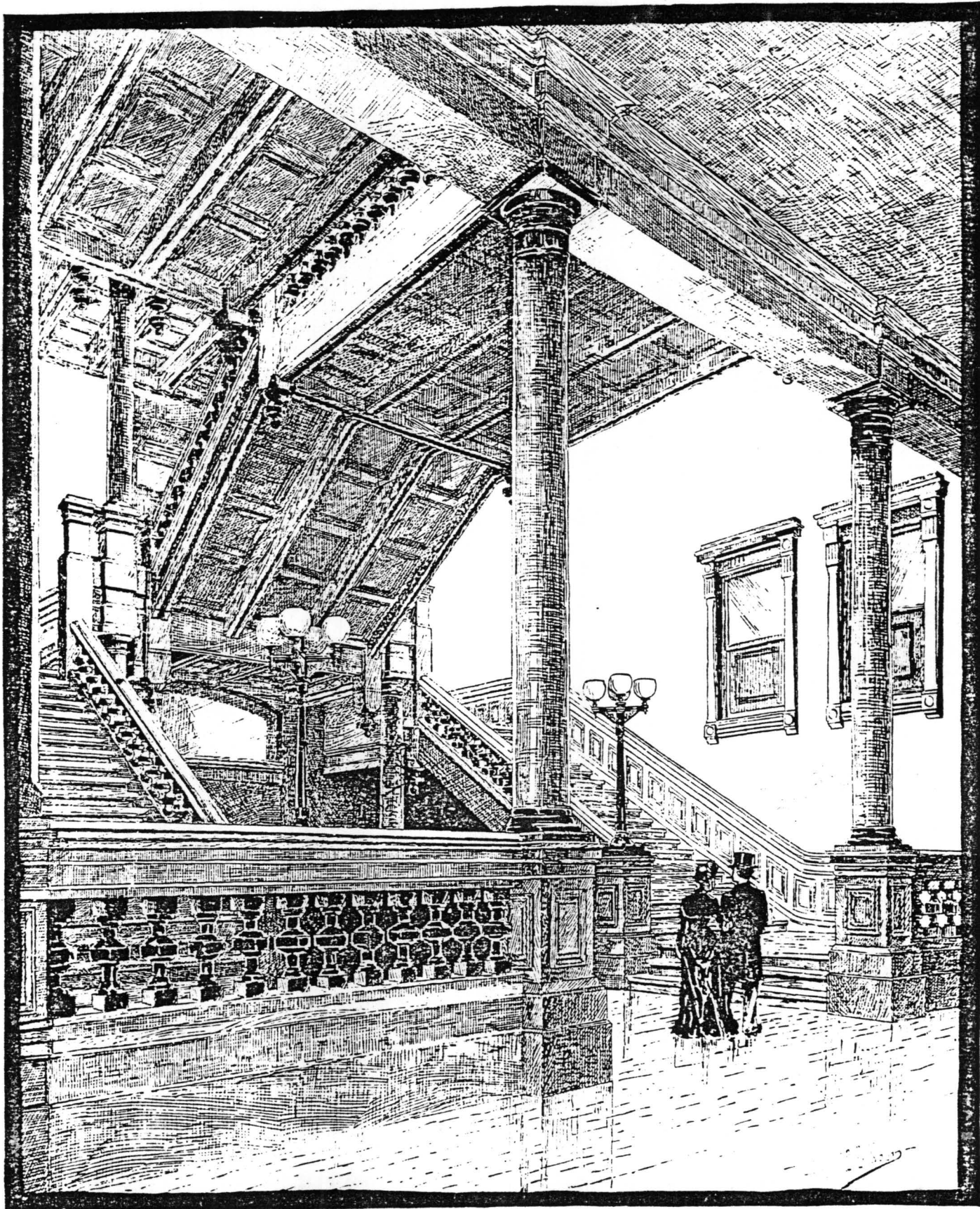
beamed ceiling  
chandelier [1897?]  
balustrade  
[a recent partition wall and door close off the Stair Hall, behind the balustrade]

### SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR

oak woodwork, including:  
wainscot  
door surrounds with double doors (and transoms) (surmounted by flag holders, and oculi (1909-11)  
in each center room on the east side of the hall) leading to Company Rooms  
2 large window surrounds each end, and smaller upper window surrounds  
display cabinet with glass doors  
  
plaster ceiling with molded cornice  
3 wrought-iron chandeliers and 7 wrought-iron wall bracket light fixtures (1897)  
iron stairways, with mezzanine levels, to third floor, at north and south ends (1909-11)  
elevator door and bronze sign [c. 1928-29]  
oak floor (c. 1931)  
wood and metal radiator bench at north end  
telephone booths nwc and swc (c. 1942)

### References

Clark; NYT (Apr. 10, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book; Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (1895-1909); SRG (Dec., 1897; 1895-13); *Treasurer's Report* (1942, 1953); Albert Waks photographs; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); *Armory Committee Report* (1925-43); *The Decorator and Furnisher; Minutes, Council of Officers* (Aug., 1879)



Stair Hall

*The Decorator and Furnisher* (1885)





Stair Hall

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)





Entrance Hall

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)





First Floor Corridor

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

#### 4. VETERANS' ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.) with Stanford White, architect, 1880-81 [Louis C. Tiffany, overall decorative scheme and stained glass; Stanford White, architectural details (woodwork, balcony, fireplace, etc.); Francis D. Millet and George H. Yewell, painted frieze; Samuel Colman, decorative stenciling and color scheme; and Candace Wheeler, embroideries [not extant]; [Lockwood de Forest, carving]?]

Style: Aesthetic Movement

The Veterans' Room, the most famous room in the armory, was designed and decorated by Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.) with architect Stanford White (of the recently formed McKim, Mead & White) in 1880-81. This room and the Library were one of the first major commissions of this short-lived (1879-83) but prestigious decorating firm. Widely considered to be among the most significant and beautiful surviving interiors of the American Aesthetic Movement, they are also two of the very few surviving Tiffany interiors anywhere and are among the most intact of the nineteenth-century rooms in the armory. The large Veterans' Room is extraordinary in its level of craftsmanship, attention to detail, and lavish, exotic ornamentation. This is due not only to the skill of Associated Artists but also to the amount of money the regiment and the Veterans devoted to the room – the total cost is not officially known, but the Veterans received \$20,000 from the New Armory Fund in January 1880 (and the *New York Sun* in May 1888 reported its cost as \$25,000). In June 1879 the Board of Officers designated this room for the use and control of the Veterans Association, which had been founded in 1859 as a social organization of former Seventh Regiment members with an interest in assisting the active regiment. Associated Artists undoubtedly received the commission due to the presence of Edward Kemp on the veterans' committee for fitting up the room; Kemp's brother George, a pharmaceutical merchant, hired the firm in 1879 to decorate his Fifth Avenue mansion. During the Inauguration Ball of December 1880, a member of Co. D remarked that "the Veterans' room, although still incomplete, was a marvel to many, an attraction to all." The decor was later critiqued by W.C. Brownell in *Scribner's Monthly* (July 1881).

The room is divided (as is the Board of Officers Room) by a broad structural beam (covered in bronze plates) supported by two columns (with wound rusted chains on the lower portions and with stenciling on the upper). The main focus is the north wall with its elaborate (turquoise/blue glass tile, marble and brick) inglenook fireplace, carved wood mantel with columns, and painted plaster overmantel panel (depicting an eagle and sea dragon) set within an embossed iron frame, flanked by leaded (abstract geometric opalescent) stained-glass window screens. The coffered timber ceiling and the canvas frieze are extensively stenciled with arabesques in silver and other metallic hues (there has been re-painting), and the latter also has shields and scenes of the history of warfare. Oak woodwork includes wainscot (with inset rusted iron panels and silvered bolts) with a carved top border, a balustraded balcony with stairs and lattice screens, affixed benches and window seats, and three sets of double sliding doors. Walls were originally painted a blue-gray metallic tone on rough paper, and stenciled in silver and copper to resemble chainmail (to match the upper columns). Lighting is provided by two enormous "yoke" chandeliers of exuberant wrought-ironwork (by Mitchell, Vance & Co.), two wrought-iron fireplace candelabra (all of which were electrified in 1897), and two fixtures set on the columns in 1897 and "artificially 'rusted' to correspond with the old work." *The Decorator and Furnisher* commented in 1885 that "the preponderating styles appear to be the Greek, Moresque, and Celtic, with a dash of the Egyptian, the Persian and the Japanese in the appropriate places."

A conflict, broadened into a lawsuit, developed between the veterans and the regiment over the issue of veterans wearing uniforms and having various ranks, thus being mistaken for active members. As a result, in 1886 the Board of Officers revoked the veterans' exclusive use and control of the room. In 1889 the room was set aside for use as a reading and socializing room, with



additional (apparently moveable) lighting. The *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1890) remarked on its new appeal:

*never in the old days, when during nine tenths of the year, it was shrouded in darkness, did it possess the attractiveness now lent it by many colored lamps, comfortable seats and the presence of groups of readers and gossiping comrades. It was either dark, gloomy and majestic or too dazzling to be homelike and pleasant, before. Now... it has the inviting air of a drawing room. No club in New York has such magnificent quarters as the Seventh Regiment possesses...*

Once the dispute was resolved the veterans continued to use the room, and it remained a reading, meeting, and smoking room, as well as being used for company dances. Sometime between 1917 and 1955, the alcove under the balcony (having a window and window seat) was filled with a display case with glass doors. Treasurer's Reports of 1951 and 1954 indicated that the room was "redecorated" and painted in this period; in 1966 stretched velvet fabric was applied to the walls by Charles L. Hesselbach.

#### Descriptive List of Significant Features

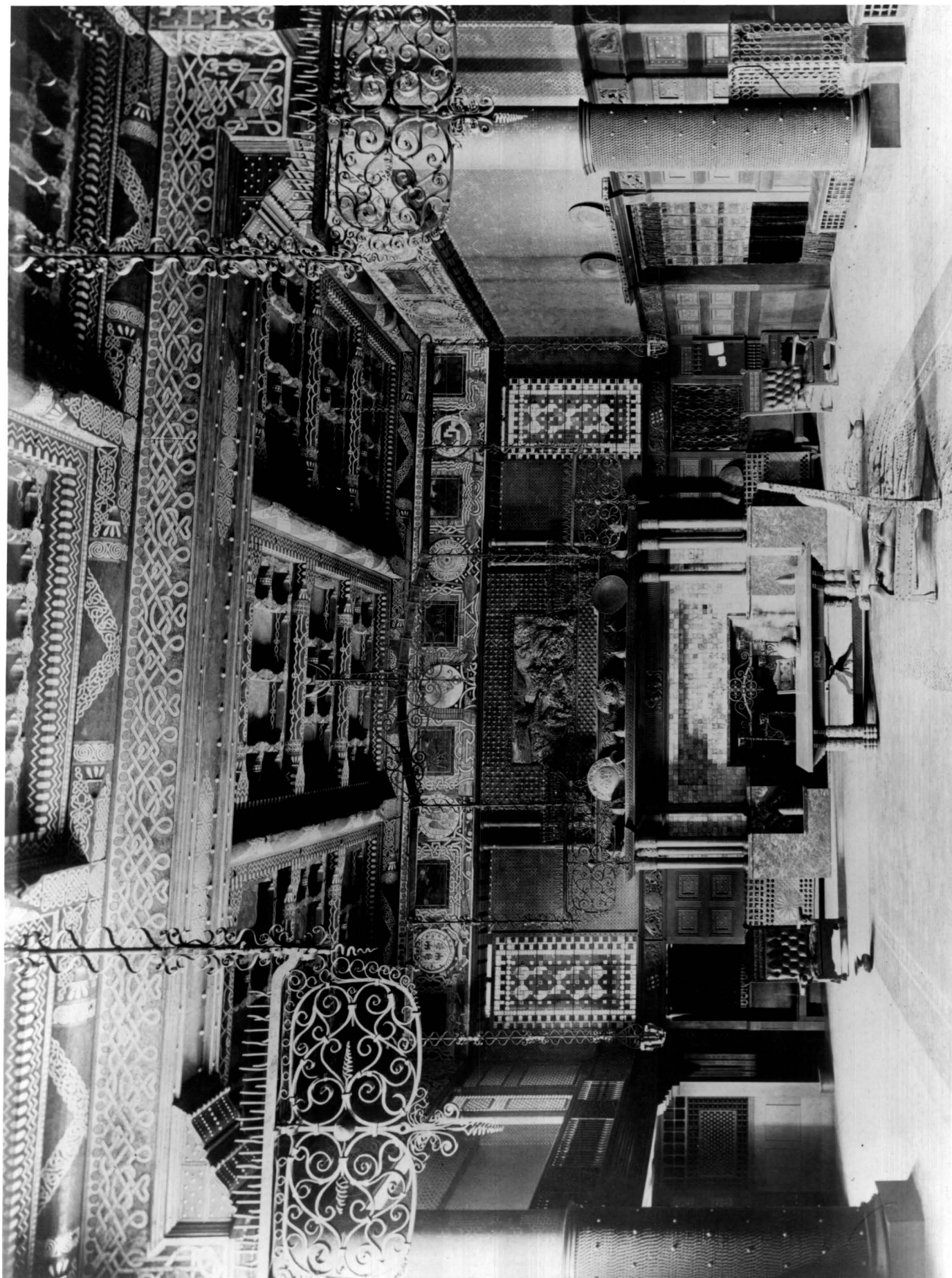
oak woodwork, including:

wainscot (with inset rusted iron panels and silvered bolts) with a carved top border  
balustraded balcony (with vaulted ceiling), stairs, lattice screens, and lattice window screen (with colored glass, set on rollers)  
5 affixed benches and 4 affixed window seats  
3 door surrounds with double sliding doors  
carved wood mantel with columns  
parquet floor

central beam (stenciled [re-painted?] and covered in bronze plates) supported by two columns (wound with rusted chains on the lower portions; upper portion stenciling has been re-painted)  
stenciled, coffered timber ceiling (re-painted)  
stenciled and painted canvas frieze [re-painted?]  
blue glass tile, marble and brick inglenook fireplace (with plaque commemorating the transfer of regiment's property to the Veterans in 1917)  
painted plaster overmantel panel set within an embossed iron frame 4 windows with multi-pane sash and leaded stained-glass window screens  
2 wrought-ironwork "yoke" chandeliers (Mitchell, Vance & Co.)  
2 wrought-iron fireplace candelabra  
3 original metal radiator covers (2 with a web and perforated screen pattern/1 with rings and chainmail; 1 cover of latter design removed from behind east column, pre-1955)  
2 light fixtures set on the columns (1897, probably Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co.)  
display case with glass doors (c. 1917-55)  
bronze memorial tablet commemorating 100 years of the Veterans' Association (1959) on south wall

#### References

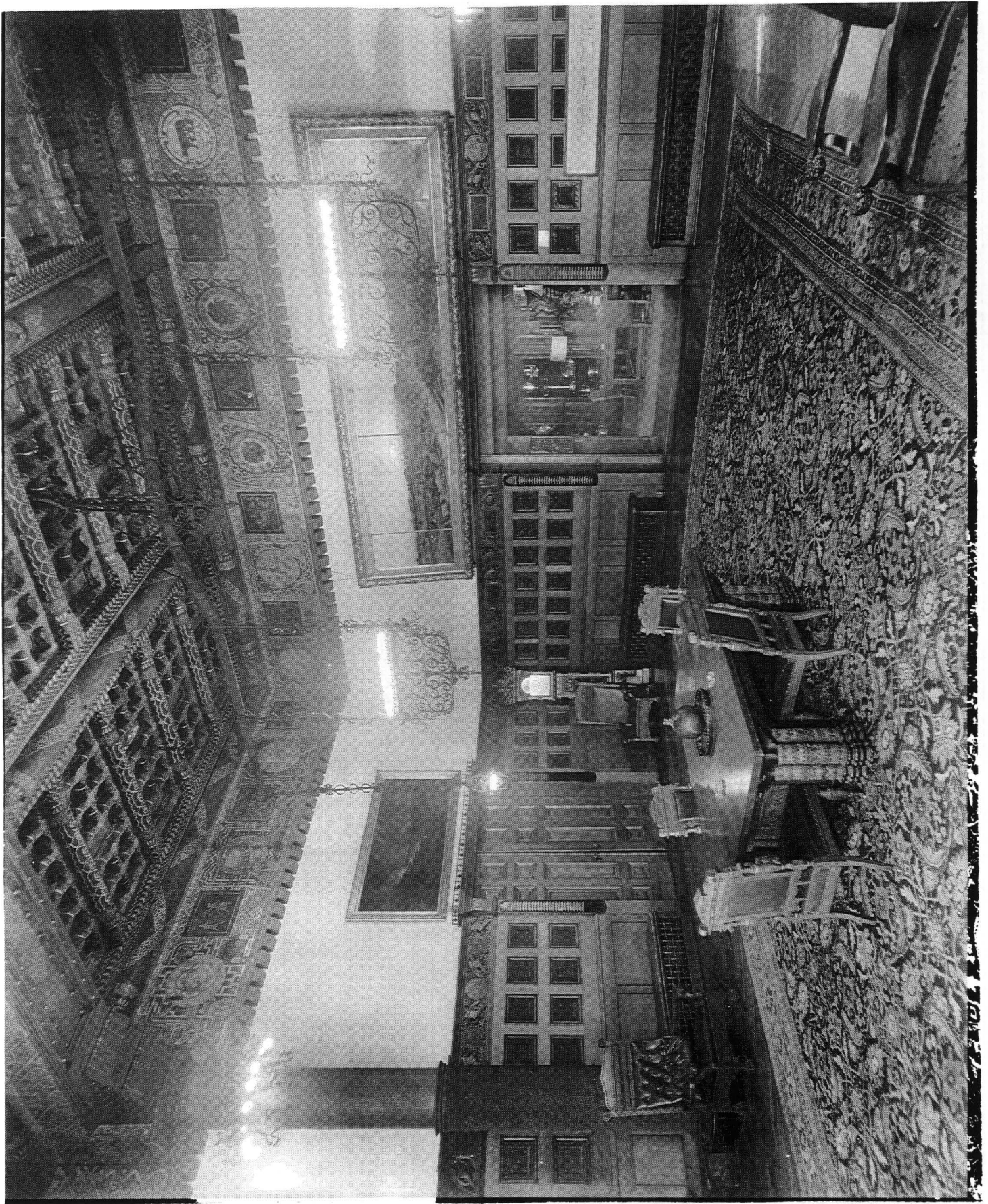
Brownell; *The Veterans Room Seventh Regiment N.G.S.N.Y. Armory*; Clark; *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements*; SRG (1889-1913); *Treasurer's Report* (1951, 1954); Pach Bros. photograph; Albert Waks photograph; International Appraising Co.; *Minutes, Board of Officers* (June 1879; Aug. 1886; Oct. 1889); *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Aufaure; Hesselbach; *Fourth Company Records* (Dec. 1880); *NY Sun* (May 10, 1888)



Veterans' Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1881), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Veterans' Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

## 5. LIBRARY

Interior Decoration Firm: Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.) with Stanford White, architect, 1880-81

Alterations: c.1911-14; 1937

Style: Aesthetic Movement

The Library is one of the two most famous rooms in the armory the other being the Veterans' Room, both of which were designed and decorated by Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.) with architect Stanford White (of the recently formed McKim, Mead & White) in 1880-81. These rooms were the one of the first major commissions of this short-lived (1879-83) but prestigious decorating firm. Widely considered to be among the most significant and beautiful surviving interiors of the American Aesthetic Movement, they are also two of the very few surviving Tiffany interiors anywhere and are among the most intact of the nineteenth-century rooms in the armory. The records of disbursements of the New Armory Fund indicate that Louis C. Tiffany & Co. and "McKim, Mead & White" were paid \$9000 for "cabinet work," decorations and bookcases in August-September 1880, and Tiffany was paid \$1200 for a table, chairs and chandelier in January 1881, and \$300 for curtains and fixtures in April. Additional payments were made to George C. Flint & Co. (\$291 for furniture [table]) in July, and John J. Bowes & Bro. (\$280 for four pairs of iron gates) and Mitchell, Vance & Co. (\$518 for "chandeliers drop baskets, etc.") in September, bringing the total expenditures for the room to about \$11,590. The interior features a barrel vaulted ceiling ornamented with a basketweave and disk pattern (originally a salmon color with silvered disks), a continuous gallery with an iron railing (in a web pattern), an inglenook fireplace and two large round-arched windows (with Tiffany stained-glass upper sash and multi-pane lower sash) on the west wall, a large wrought-iron and chainlink chandelier and four hanging basket wall fixtures, and extensive mahogany woodwork, including sets of double sliding doors, and (originally) bookcases on three walls. The paneled east and west walls originally had stenciled upper walls (a 1917 inventory indicates stenciling was still there); the lower level bookcases originally were enclosed by iron gates and link portieres (the upper bookcases with curtains); and there were originally two stairs (with iron gates and wood lattice screens) to the gallery (the stairs, screen and gate in the northwest corner are extant). Already by 1883 the Board of Officers authorized additional shelving [possibly the gallery shelves on the east wall], as the regiment's library collection grew rapidly; shelving was discussed again in 1889-90, but deferred due to the cost. There was the additional concern that "the armory being then lighted by gas... the books were being seriously damaged by exposure to the air and dust." The situation was resolved when the regiment hired Herter Brothers to redesign the Memorial Room on the third floor for use as a new library in 1895-96. When the armory was electrified in 1897, the original Library fixtures were retained and wired. The question of a new use for the room was raised, and by 1900 suggestions were made for a memorial room or portrait gallery, but in 1904 it was adapted for use by the quartermaster. Around 1911-14 the room was set up as a regimental museum, under the direction of (then) Adjutant DeWitt Clinton Falls, who contributed his collection to the museum. The lower, and most of the gallery, bookcases became exhibition cases for the display of trophies, uniforms, silver, etc., and received new glass doors (the iron gates were removed). The regiment acknowledged Falls' assistance in the "rehabilitation" of the museum in 1931, and in 1938 the room was dedicated as the Gen. DeWitt Clinton Falls Memorial Museum. In 1937 "John Wanamaker" was hired to remove the northeast corner stairs and install another display case. A 1945 Armory Committee report indicated that this was the "only public room that has not been renovated in recent years."



### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

3 sets of double sliding doors (north set has inset iron armor panels)

bookcases on lower and gallery levels (lower cases and most of gallery cases fitted with glass doors, and lower iron gates removed, c. 1911-14; 2 small west wall cases (above radiators) apparently created from areas of lower windows (with multi-pane sash), c. 1911-14; northeast stairs removed and another case installed, 1937)

northwest corner stairs with lattice screen (and iron gate)

panel strips on east and west walls

1 door to small office

2 doors to gallery storage rooms (1909-11)

2 round-arched windows (with stained-glass upper sash and multi-pane lower sash)

barrel vaulted ceiling ornamented with a basketweave and disk pattern

continuous gallery with a web pattern iron railing

inglenook fireplace faced with tile, incorporating Gen. D.C. Falls plaque (1938)

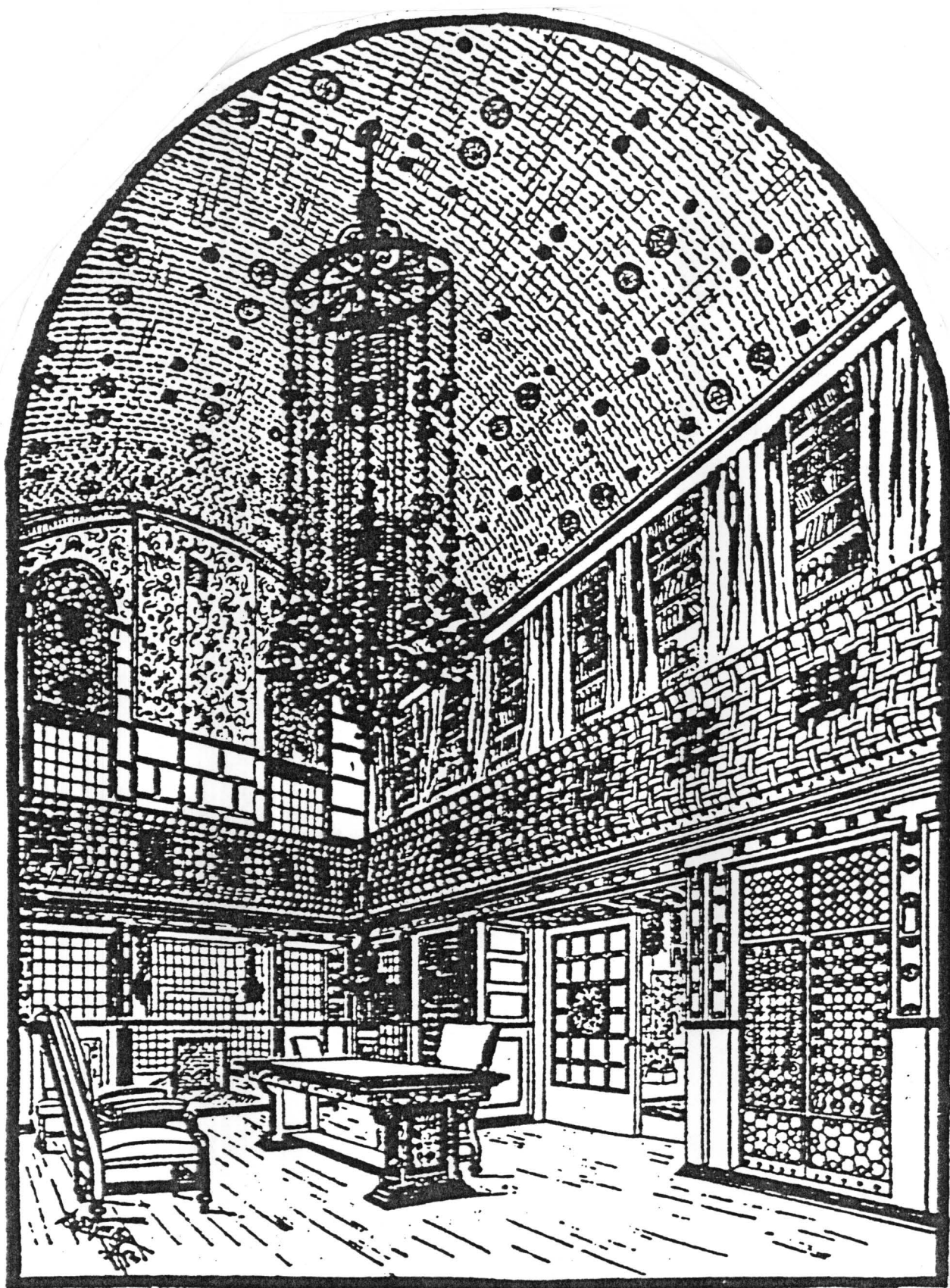
1 large wrought-iron chandelier (Tiffany & Co.) and 4 hanging basket wall fixtures (Mitchell, Vance & Co.)

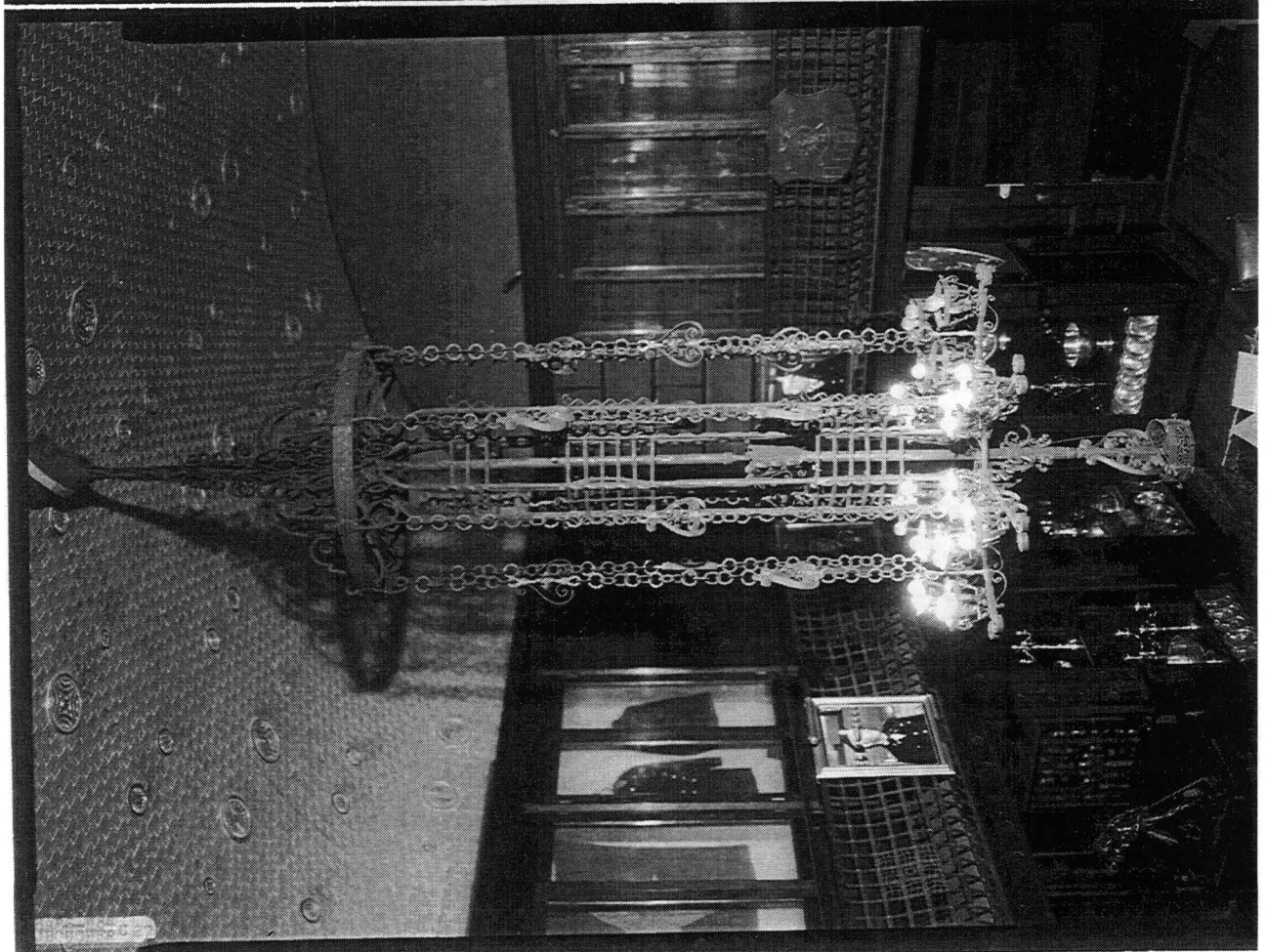
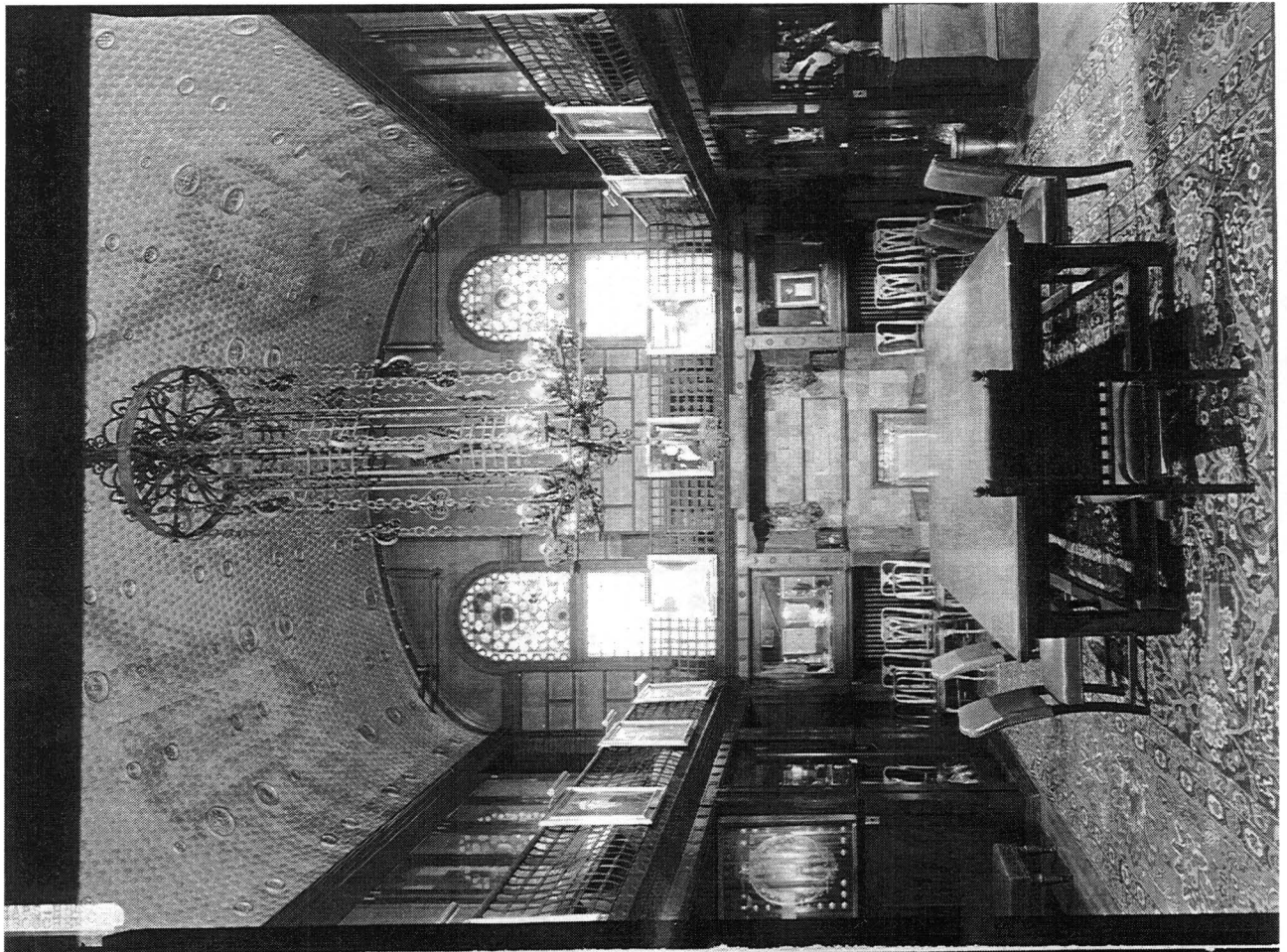
2 cast-iron radiators (Baker, Smith & Co., 1909) (iron ring-and-chainmail radiator covers removed post-1955)

oak floor

### References

Brownell; Clark; *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book*; *SRG* (1895-1913); *Treasurer's Report* (1938); Albert Waks photograph; *The Armory Board* (1914); International Appraising Co.; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); Falls; *Armory Committee Report* (1931, 1938, 1942, 1945); *Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (Apr. 1904); *Minutes, Board of Officers* (Nov. 1883; Dec. 1889; Jan. 1890); *Secretary's Report, Board of Officers* (Jan. 1932)





Library

Photos: Jack Boucher, HABS



## 6. RECEPTION ROOM

Interior Decoration Firms: Herter Brothers, 1880; Alexander Roux & Co., woodwork, 1880

Lighting Fixtures: Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., Phila., 1897

Style: Renaissance Revival

The Reception Room, one of three regimental rooms on the first floor of the armory decorated by Herter Brothers in 1880, is the only one of the three for which Herter Brothers did not supply the woodwork. The records of disbursements of the New Armory Fund indicate that Herter Brothers was paid for "decorations" of the room in June 1880 (as part of a \$10,236 contract for five rooms) and for curtains in October; Alexander Roux & Co. executed the woodwork and furniture, for which they were paid \$5597 in July. The predominant aspect of the room is the maple woodwork: on three walls are high and wide door surrounds with double sliding doors, while on the fourth side a mantel and overmantel is flanked by window surrounds, all linked by paneled wainscot. The extensive Herter stenciled decoration (no longer extant) included the ceiling in a sunflower pattern in red and gold, a basketweave pattern frieze (probably painted on canvas), walls of olive with a gold diaper pattern, and red and gold border and cove; stenciling existed according to a 1917 inventory, but the room may have been painted in the 1920s and was definitely painted in 1954. Most of the regimental rooms received new lighting fixtures during the electrification of the armory in 1897 (which replaced the original gas fixtures by Mitchell, Vance & Co.); the Reception Room has an impressive polished steel chandelier and four wall bracket fixtures. The room apparently had a long association with women visitors, in its uses as a reception and coat room; adjacent washrooms were installed in the twentieth century, and the room was familiarly named after Mary Divver, an orphan "adopted" by the regiment in the 1850s.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

maple woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot

3 door surrounds with double sliding doors (and transoms (leaded stained glass on hallway))

mantel (with art tiles around fireplace and hearth) and overmantel (with mirror)

2 window surrounds and 2 small surrounds (with mirrors) on west wall

2 small doorways on north wall [doors, 1909]

molded, coved ceiling

1 chandelier and 4 wall bracket light fixtures (1897)

parquet floor

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; NYT (Apr. 10, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book*; Haydon; *SRG* (Dec., 1897); *Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (1893-1909); Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.; *Treasurer's Report* (1926; 1954); Pach Bros. photograph; Albert Waks photograph





Reception Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society



Reception Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

## 7. BOARD OF OFFICERS ROOM (Col. Emmons Clark Memorial Room)

Interior Decoration Firm: Herter Brothers, 1880

Lighting Fixtures: Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., Phila., 1897

Restoration: Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport, 1932

Style: Renaissance Revival/Aesthetic Movement

The Board of Officers Room was one of three regimental rooms on the first floor of the armory decorated by Herter Brothers in 1880, and it was also one of two for which Herter Brothers supplied the woodwork. The records of disbursements of the New Armory Fund indicate that Herter Brothers was paid for "cabinet work and decorations" of the room in June 1880 (as part of a \$10,236 contract for five rooms) and for curtains in October; L. Marcotte & Co. manufactured the furniture [not included in this designation], for which they were paid in August. The *London Times* in 1882 stated that the room cost around \$8000. Along with the Veterans' Room, one of the two largest formal rooms in the administration building portion of the armory, the Board of Officers Room is of supreme importance as one of the very few surviving interiors designed by Herter Brothers in the United States; although there has been re-painting of the original wall and ceiling decoration, it is similar to its original design intent. The main focus of the room is the south wall, which is dominated by a prominent central mantel and overmantel (with an affixed painting), flanked by two more large affixed paintings and two window surrounds; the woodwork, which includes three wide door surrounds with double sliding doors, three additional window surrounds, and paneled wainscot, is of dark mahogany. The room is divided (as is the Veterans' Room) by a broad structural beam supported by two columns. All of the wall and ceiling surfaces are stenciled in various floral motifs, the ceiling in panels with borders, and the walls (originally with a blue main field, according to the *The Decorator and Furnisher*) with a frieze. Most of the regimental rooms received new lighting fixtures during the electrification of the armory in 1897 (which replaced the original gas fixtures by Mitchell, Vance & Co.); the Board of Officers Room received two chandeliers, two fixtures set on the columns, and four wall bracket fixtures, which are, according to the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1897), "forged iron, plated in silver and worked down to an antique finish-- a fine and very difficult piece of work."

In an interesting (and early) instance of the historic preservation of a nineteenth-century American interior, the decision was made in 1932 to dedicate the room as a memorial to Col. Emmons Clark, the commander of the regiment from 1864 to 1889, who was largely responsible for the construction of the armory. It was felt that "while the Armory itself might be classified as a memorial to this great Colonel, it has been felt for a long time that some specific memorial should be erected in his honor..." and that "it was felt eminently fitting to select this room as a memorial to the builder of the Armory and that its restoration to original condition was in keeping with the sentiment involved." Largely funded through the generosity of the Seventh Regiment Tennis Club (founded in 1881), the "restoration" was performed that year by Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport for around \$4000, and included the re-painting of the original stenciling. At that time, the three affixed paintings were changed: originally the central one was George Washington (by Rembrandt Peale) flanked by Clark and Col. Washington Vermilye, both by Thomas Hicks; the Peale was moved into the Colonel's Room, Clark moved to the center, and a portrait of Col. Willard Fisk (by Richard Creifelds) was moved into its place.



### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot

3 door surrounds with double sliding doors (and transoms)

5 window surrounds

mantel (with slate and marble fireplace, with Emmons Clark plaque) and overmantel (with affixed framed Col. Emmons Clark portrait (1879, Thomas Hicks) and panel which formerly held memorial tablet)

affixed framed portraits of Col. Washington Vermilye (1880, Thomas Hicks) and Col. Willard Fisk (by Richard Creifelds)

beamed ceiling with cornice, central beam carried on 2 columns

stenciled decoration on walls and ceiling (mostly re-painted in 1932, including a new frieze on canvas) [water damage has occurred c. 1992-94]

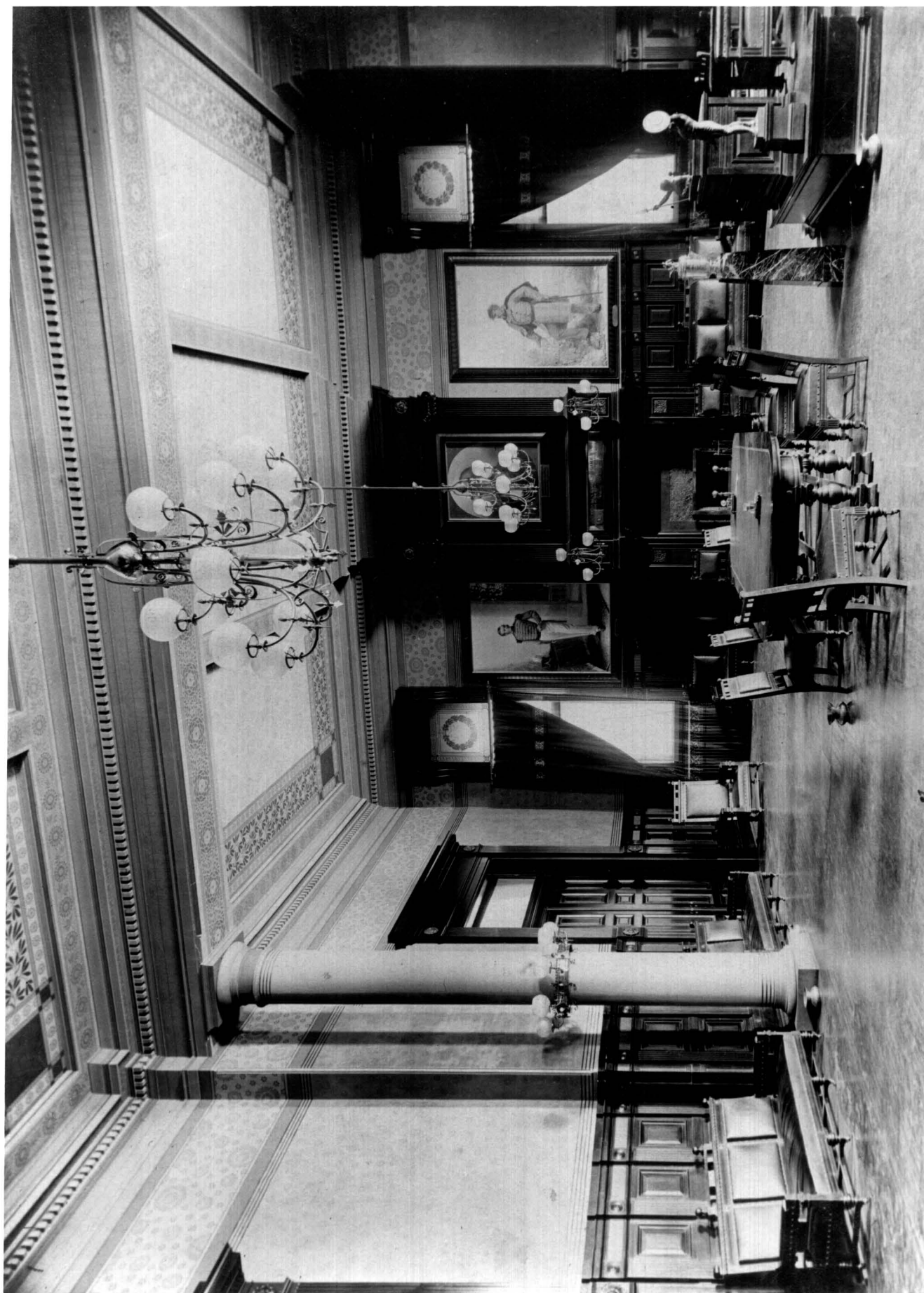
2 chandeliers, 2 lighting fixtures set on the columns, and 4 wall bracket light fixtures (1897)

parquet floor (1951)

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; NYT (Apr. 10, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book*; *Boston Press* (Nov. 11, 1880); *London Times* (June 28, 1882); *Armory Committee Report* (1932); *SRG* (Dec. 1897; June and Oct. 1932); *Treasurer's Report* (1951); Pach Bros. photograph; Albert Waks photograph





Board of Officers Room  
Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society



Board of Officers Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## 8. COLONEL'S ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Herter Brothers, 1880

Lighting Fixtures: Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., Phila., 1897

Alterations: Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport, 1932-47

Style: Renaissance Revival; Colonial Revival

The Colonel's Room was one of three regimental rooms on the first floor of the armory decorated by Herter Brothers in 1880, and it was also one of two for which Herter Brothers supplied the woodwork. The records of disbursements of the New Armory Fund indicate that Herter Brothers was paid for "cabinet work and decorations" of the room in June 1880 (as part of a \$10,236 contract for five rooms) and for curtains and a clock case in October; L. Marcotte & Co. manufactured the furniture [not included in this designation], for which they were paid in August. The *New York Times* in April 1880, in noting Herter Brothers' fitting up of the room, declared that "what they have already done shows what a gem it will be when finished"; *The Decorator and Furnisher* in 1885 described the walls as Pompeian red with stenciling and a frieze, while the ceiling was in light blue with stenciled ornament, including a geometric border and floral motifs (no longer extant). The room, with woodwork of French black walnut, originally featured a central mantel and overmantel on the south wall across from a wardrobe with plate glass, and an east wall window flanked by cabinets, as well as the wainscot, door surround and two other window surrounds. Most of the regimental rooms received new lighting fixtures during the electrification of the armory in 1897 (which replaced the original gas fixtures by Mitchell, Vance & Co.); the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1897) described the new chandelier as "the only new brass in the building. The design is light and airy, and rather Oriental. This fixture is all wrought iron, brass finished, antique." Between 1932 and 1947, the firm of Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport made a number of alterations to the room: the current painted stencil below the frieze; the addition of the upper portion of the wainscot; the alteration of the north wall wardrobe and south wall overmantel for the installation of the paintings of George Washington (by Rembrandt Peale, formerly in the Board of Officers Room) and Marquis de Lafayette (a copy of a Versailles portrait by Court, presented by the government of France in 1934), with the addition of broken pediments with shields; and the elimination of the east wall window and reduction of the surround to frame panels with shields.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

French black walnut woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot (a shelf was removed from the north wall; door created within wainscot (1909-11); upper portion added, 1947)

1 door surround with double sliding doors (and transom)

2 window surrounds on south wall

2 east wall cabinets flanking a surround containing panels with shields (originally a high window surround; altered in 1947) north wall central surround (originally a wardrobe with plate glass and flanked by rounded shelves; reduced in depth to frame Lafayette portrait (copy of a Court), shield and tablet panels added, 1934; broken pediment with shield added, 1939)

south wall mantel with shelf (fireplace has art tile (surround of bird design and hearth of floral design) and metal surround and metal fireback) (overmantel shelf and mirror removed [c. 1941?] for installation of Washington portrait (Rembrandt Peale, 1849, after his 1795 portrait) and tablet panel; broken pediment with shield added c. 1947)

plaster ceiling with molded cornice and frieze (stencil pattern below frieze, c. 1932-47)

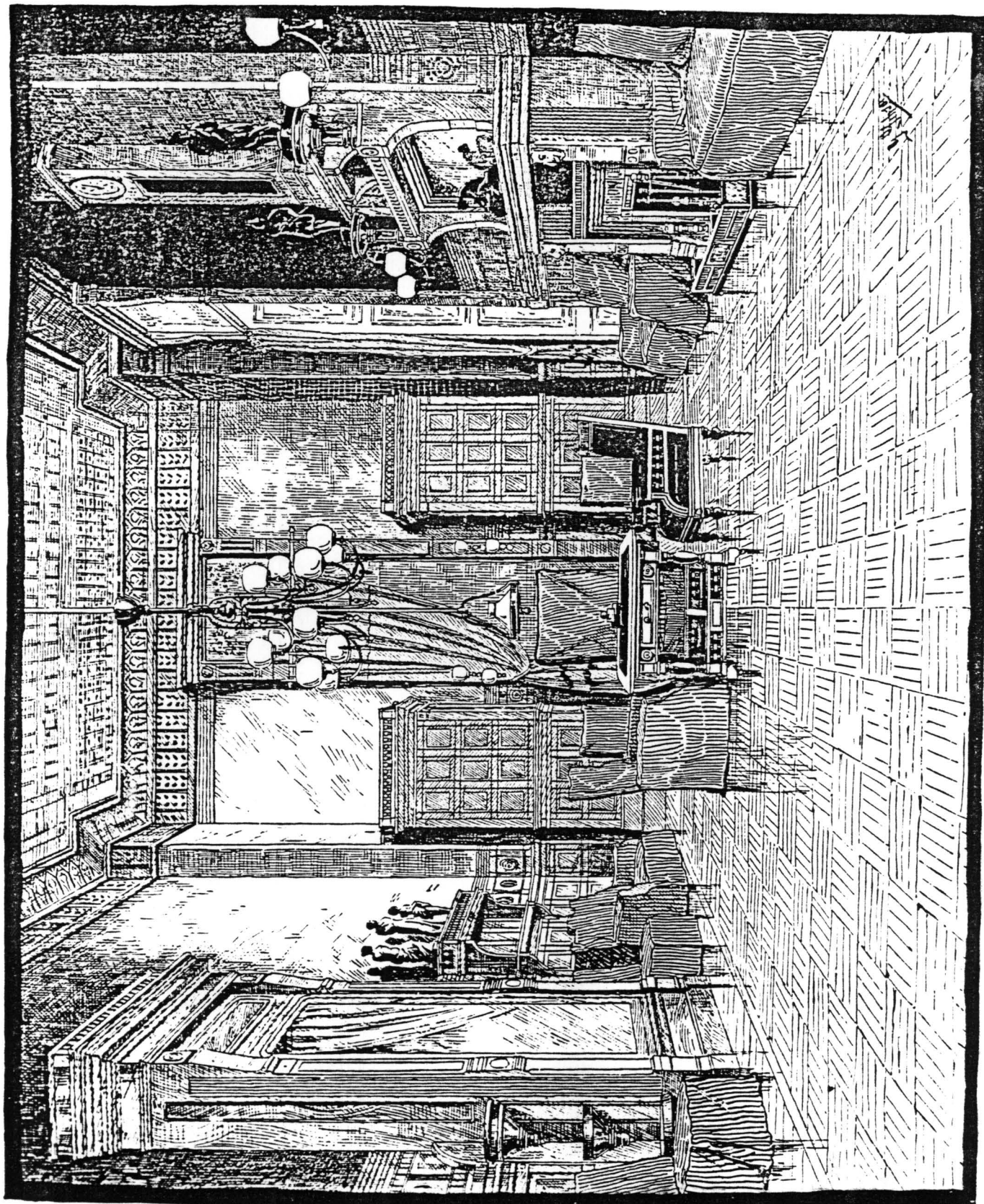
1 chandelier (1897)



2 walnut and brass radiator cabinets  
wood English crest affixed above George VI portrait [1939, not affixed] on north wall  
gold framed portrait of Gustave III of Sweden set into wainscot on west wall (c. 1940)  
parquet floor

#### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; NYT (Apr. 10, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book*; *Secretary's Report, Board of Officers* (Jan., 1947); *SRG* (Dec., 1897; Apr., 1935); *Treasurer's Report* (1932, 1936, 1952); Albert Waks photograph; Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport, Colonel's Reception Room plans (Dec. 1947)



COLONELS' ROOM.



Colonel's Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## 9. ADJUTANT'S ROOM (Originally part of the South Squad Drill Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11; cabinetry, 1880

Style: Renaissance Revival

The Adjutant's Room on the first floor was created from the western section of the South Squad Drill Room (fitted in pine) during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11; the Adjutant was formerly located in a room on the second floor (which became the Company M Room) that was originally decorated by Pottier & Stymus in 1880 in the Queen Anne style. Plans by Robinson & Knust indicate the installation of the east wall and doors (to Adjutant's and Colonel's offices), oak parquet floor, and two "old locker[s] reset." It is not currently known if the triple-section cabinet and smaller cabinet in this room were original to the second floor Adjutant's Room (and thus a Pottier & Stymus feature), or were moved here from elsewhere in the armory at that time; the new door surrounds and wainscot were designed to match these.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

- 1 door surround with double sliding doors (1880)
- 1 triple-section cabinet and 1 smaller cabinet (1880)
- ash paneled wainscot
- 2 door surrounds (doors leading to small offices) with transoms
- plaster ceiling with molded cornice
- oak parquet floor
- wood and perforated metal radiator cabinet on south wall
- 6 hanging light fixtures (1942)

### References

Clark; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.; *Armory Committee Report* (1942)



Adjutant's Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

## 10. EQUIPMENT ROOM (Originally Quartermaster's Room)

Architects: Clinton & Russell, 1895; Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Style: neo-Classical

The Equipment Room was originally the Quartermaster's Room, fitted in pine in 1880. The Trustees authorized the re-fitting of the room in 1895, with new cabinetwork and hardwood floor designed by architects Clinton & Russell and executed by Dey & Somerville; Herter Brothers was paid for wall and ceiling decoration, including "plaster beams and 18 large plaster rosettes," completed around July 1896. Plans for the "Horse Equipment" Room by Robinson & Knust, during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11, indicate the installation of a new ceiling and lockers "as are" in the room.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

- 1 door surround with double sliding doors and transom (1880)  
oak paneled wainscot (probably 1895)
- 1 window and 1 doorway/window (with double-hung sash) to Drill Room (1909-11; latter has lower sash pushed up and new door inserted)
- 2 "hammered bronze effect wrought-iron chain chandeliers" (1909-11) [now above dropped ceiling, 1994]
- [partitions walls inserted into room, 1994]

### References

Clark; *SRG* (1895-96); *Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (1895-96); Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.; *Minutes, Board of Officers* (Nov. 1895)



## 11. OUTER COMMITTEE ROOM (Originally part of North Squad Drill Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Style: neo-Classical

The Outer Committee Room was created from the western section of the North Squad Drill Room (fitted in pine) during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11. Plans by Robinson & Knust indicate the installation of new wainscot, oak parquet floor, and a plaster cornice in the "Line Officers" Room, while the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1909) stated that the room was to be "finished in mahogany with wall decorations in golds." It has a heavy brass ring chandelier and four wall bracket fixtures from this period.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot

2 door surrounds with double doors (those on the hallway are sliding)

1 small door to stairs on north wall

1 lacquered brass octagonal ring and chain chandelier

4 lacquered brass wall bracket light fixtures

plaster ceiling with molded cornice

oak parquet floor

[a partition currently divides the room]

### References

Clark; *SRG* (Dec. 1909); Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.



Outer Committee Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

## 12. INNER COMMITTEE ROOM (Originally part of North Squad Drill Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Style: neo-Classical

The Inner Committee Room was created from the eastern section of the North Squad Drill Room (fitted in pine) during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11. Plans by Robinson & Knust indicate the installation of new wainscot, oak parquet floor, and a plaster cornice for the "Field Officers/Staff Officers" Room, while the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1909) stated that the room was to be "finished in mahogany with wall decorations in golds." It has a heavy brass ring chandelier and six wall bracket fixtures from this period.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot

1 door surround with double doors

2 window surrounds (which flank raised central portion of east wall)

1 lacquered brass ring chandelier

6 lacquered brass wall bracket light fixtures

plaster ceiling with molded cornice

oak parquet floor

1 cast-iron radiator with marble top (Baker, Smith & Co., 1909)

[a partition currently divides the room]

### References

Clark; *SRG* (Dec. 1909); Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.





Inner Committee Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

### 13. FIELD AND STAFF ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co., 1880

Alterations: James B. Christopher, carpenter, 1895, 1898  
[Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport], 1933

Style: Renaissance Revival

The Field and Staff Room was the only regimental room on the first floor of the armory decorated in 1880 by Pottier & Stymus, the firm most popular among the companies for the decoration of their rooms. The records of disbursements of the New Armory Fund indicate that Pottier & Stymus was paid for "cabinet work" for the room in June 1880 (as part of a \$6941 contract for three rooms), and for furniture, curtains, "panel work," and a mirror in October, when the room was completed. Col. Emmons Clark commented that "large ornamental lockers for the accommodation of the officers are a pronounced feature of the room, and it is handsomely and elaborately decorated." The room was extensively stenciled on the ceiling, the broad frieze, and the walls; the *Boston Press* noted that the "richest of bands wrought into passion flowers and scrolls runs round the wall." The amount of dark mahogany cabinetwork and wainscot originally was sparser; in 1895 and 1898 the Board of Trustees authorized James B. Christopher, carpenter, to build additional lockers (in 1909-11 one section on the north wall was removed) and extend the wainscot. Most of the regimental rooms received new lighting fixtures during the electrification of the armory in 1897 (which replaced the original gas fixtures by Mitchell, Vance & Co.); the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1897) described the new fixtures in this room as "black wrought iron; design is massive, and withal unique." [Minutes of the Trustees indicate that the fixtures were refinished in 1907, and a 1917 inventory lists one "41 light" chandelier; apparently the existing wall bracket fixtures date from 1897 and the two chandeliers are later.] The inventory also mentioned that the walls at that time were decorated with "Lincrusta Walton." The Armory Committee reported in 1933 that the room had been "completely redecorated and partly refurnished," apparently by the firm of Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport, which was doing work in the room at the time. Additional changes include the two chandeliers and two plaster diamonds on the ceiling, and the elimination of the east wall window [part of the surround may exist under a large painting]. In recent years a bar counter has been installed at the east end of the room.

#### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot (upper portion 1898)

lockers (including additions, 1895-98) [north section removed 1909-11]

1 door surround with double sliding doors (and transom)

2 window surrounds [Drill Room window surround, currently obscured by a large painting, may survive in part]

south wall central console (with mirror) flanked by quarter-round end cabinets

north wall mantel (with a fireplace having a metal fireback and decorative art tile surround and hearth) and overmantel (with mirror)

plaster ceiling with molded cove and frieze (and 2 diamonds around chandeliers, c. 1933)

4 wall bracket light fixtures (1897)

2 chandeliers [c. 1933]

parquet floor (vinyl tile recently placed around bar counter)

### References

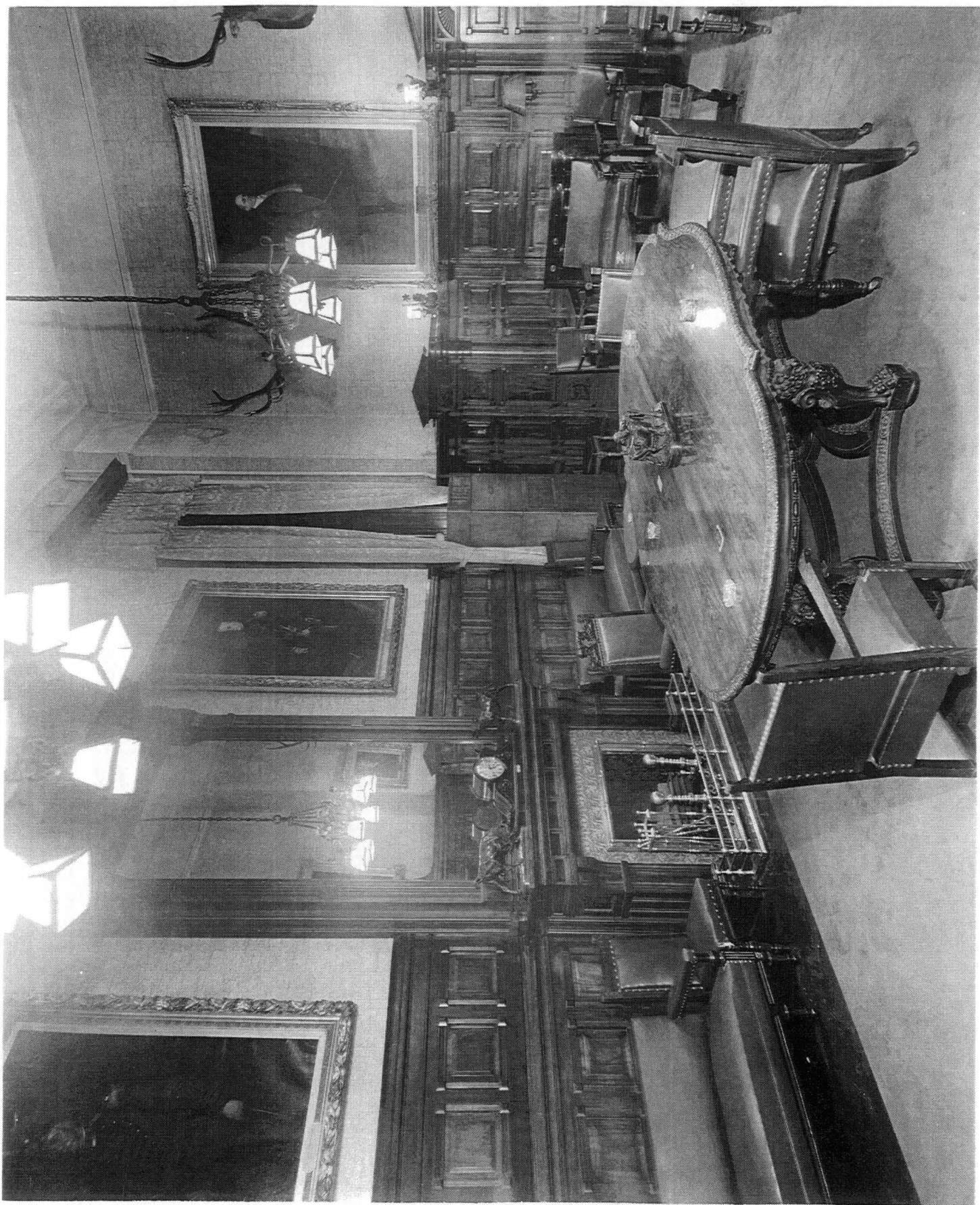
Clark; *NYT* (Apr. 10, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book; Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (1895-1909); *SRG* (Dec., 1897); *Treasurer's Report* (1932, 1934, 1951); Pach Bros. photograph; Albert Waks photograph; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.; *Letterbook, Board of Officers* (Oct. 1880); *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *Armory Committee Report* (1933); *Trow's NYC Directory* (1895)





Field and Staff Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society



Field and Staff Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## 14. DRILL ROOM

Built: 1878-79

Architects: Charles W. Clinton; Robert G. Hatfield, consulting architect

Consulting Engineer: Charles Macdonald, Delaware Bridge Co.

Ironwork: Passaic Rolling Mill Co., Paterson, N.J.

Alfred R. Whitney, contractor

Alterations: Floyd L. Robinson (Robinson & Knust), architect, 1911-13;

Charles Meads & Co., contractor

The vast Drill Room, approximately 200 by 300 feet and 100 feet high, was one of the largest unobstructed interiors in New York City upon the completion of construction in 1879. While Charles W. Clinton was the overall architect of the armory, he employed two specialists for this important project: Robert G. Hatfield, consulting architect, an expert in the use of structural iron who was involved in the design of the iron trusses of the shed of the first Grand Central Depot (1869-71, John B. Snook and Isaac C. Buckhout), and Charles Macdonald, consulting engineer, a roof and bridge engineer and president of the Delaware Bridge Company, a subsidiary of the important iron-and-steel producing Cooper, Hewitt & Company. Col. Emmons Clark credited Macdonald with "the designs and plans for the large iron trusses and other iron-work" and Hatfield with "the study of the working plans as drawn with reference to the strength of materials and of the construction of the building in its various parts." Passaic Rolling Mill Company supplied 1,150,000 pounds of iron for the armory in 1878, and Alfred R. Whitney was contractor for the Drill Room ironwork (and apparently an agent for Passaic). The Drill Room is significant in the history of American engineering because it is considered to have the oldest extant "balloon shed" (a barrel vaulted roof supported on visible arch trusses or ribs, the trusses also acting as lateral braces) and is also thought to have been one of the first buildings in the United States not associated with a railroad to incorporate this structural system. The balloon shed was often used in railroad stations (though very few sheds are still extant in the United States), particularly after its first major American usage in the Grand Central Depot. The shed of the armory was structurally more advanced than Grand Central's -- while the latter's trusses had a uniform distance between top and bottom chords, the armory's elliptical trusses have an intrados and extrados springing from a different center so that the haunches widen for additional strength. Demonstrating the difficult nature of this engineering project is a letter from Col. Clark to Alfred Whitney in September 1878:

*The party you have employed to erect iron work for roof of 7 Reg New Armory has been engaged for more than two weeks in a serio-comic attempt to raise one of the trusses. ...the partially erected truss came tumbling down, injuring your iron work and one building to the amount of several hundred dollars.... I would ask and demand that this iron work shall be erected in a manner and by a method which will be approved by engineers generally and which is in accordance with common sense and that the appliances for such erection shall be safe, suitable and sufficient.*

The eleven arch trusses, each spanning over 187 feet (and originally entirely visible almost to the floor level), support an upper roof extension (which is supported on additional trusses), two levels of clerestory windows (originally arched), and the pine plank roof. There were originally almost 1100 seats on all four sides, including two levels of galleries on the west and one on the east (supported by large iron brackets), hanging gas lights (ignited by electricity) with porcelain reflectors, walnut wainscot, and walnut gun cabinets lining the west wall. One of the most noted aspects of the Drill Room was its painted decoration, supervised by artist Jasper F. Cropsey; every



newspaper account of the building noted the "brilliant colors" (red, white and blue) of the room, including ornamental painting of the trusses and galleries, broad borders on the wall, the national emblem on buttresses, and stars and other emblems on the ceiling (taste changed -- by 1897 Col. Daniel Appleton expressed his displeasure with the "'lager beer saloon' effect"). A large coat of arms (by Sgt. Asher Taylor) was painted at the top of the west wall, while a large Tiffany & Co. clock (1880) still exists on the east wall.

The Drill Room, besides serving a critical and functional role as the site of military drills after October 1880, was also of enormous importance in the social and cultural life of the regiment over the years. This has been the site of the New Armory Fair in November-December 1879 (attended by thousands); the New Armory Inauguration Ball of December 1880 (which attracted nearly 7000 people, and prompted the *New York World* to call it the largest and "finest dancing hall in the country"); concerts, after the Music Festival of May 1881 (directed by Walter Damrosch, with 10,000 spectators); annual regimental athletic games, beginning in March 1882; a huge reception in March 1894 to celebrate the complete liquidation of the armory debt; and a Reconstruction Celebration in January 1911. The Knickerbocker Greys, a drill class for boys, and the Seventh Regiment Tennis Club, the oldest continuously operating American indoor tennis club, were both founded in 1881 and have continued to use the room. Between 1900 and 1940, and as recently as 1963, the National Indoor Tennis Championship had been held here. The space was so popular that at various points in the armory's history the regiment made the decision to prohibit non-regimental or non-military usage.

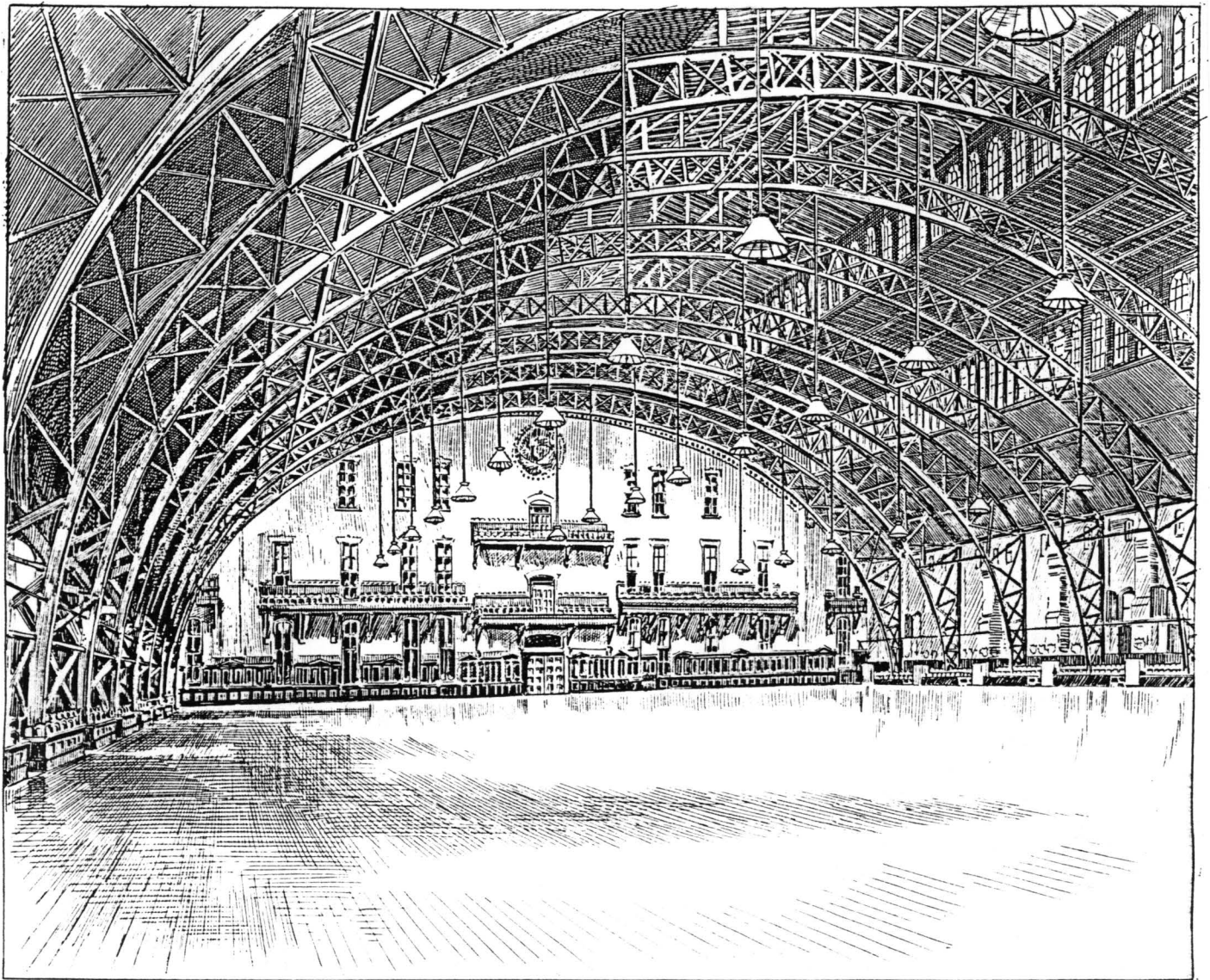
Col. Daniel Appleton initiated actions as early as 1897 to increase the seating capacity of the Drill Room, noting that only Madison Square Garden handled larger New York crowds. After the completion of additions and alterations to the administration building of the armory in 1909-11, the regiment turned its attention to the Drill Room. In order to increase the seating capacity to about 3000, numerous changes were made. Architect Floyd L. Robinson of Robinson & Knust (which was responsible for the work of 1909-11) filed plans in October 1911. The construction contract (for \$218,000, which also included a new high-pressure water system), not let until after June 1912, went to Charles Meads & Co.; the work was completed around September 1913. Among the alterations were: the elimination of the galleries (except for one on the second mezzanine level on the west wall) for the construction of one large continuous gallery, with steelplate fascia and bronze handrails; the insertion of steel columns next to the arch trusses (with both encased in concrete, capped by skewbacks) to support the gallery; four corner steel stairways; the roof and trusses were painted a light gray-green color, and the rest gray; a new system of lights; bricking in the large windows on the north and south walls, and installing new rectangular clerestory windows (with grilles on the upper ones); the north and south wall buttresses were removed, while the east wall buttresses were built up to meet a new "cornice" (with a matching one on the east); and the center window was enlarged on the east wall and (in concert with exterior alterations) doorways were changed. The area under the gallery [not included in this designation, except for the corner stairs and passageways to the entrances] was devoted to additional seating and storage cabinets, with metal wainscot (after 1952 this area was further converted to storage by the installation of cinderblock walls on the north and south and partition walls on the east and west). Although it was intended that the original Georgia pine Drill Room floor was to be taken out, "it was found impossible to obtain lumber of even approximately as good quality as the old floor," so it was relaid, using boards from along the sides as replacements where necessary. In 1955 a rolldown Lexington Avenue door was installed in an enlarged opening (with some adjacent gallery changes). Most of the gallery seating has been removed.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

Georgia yellow pine, thin plank floor (painted) (1878-79)  
eleven iron arch trusses, and upper roof extension supported on additional trusses (1878-79)  
pine plank ceiling (1878-79)  
second-mezzanine-level bracketed gallery with balustrade (1878-79) on west wall  
Tiffany & Co. clock (1880) on east wall  
doorways with double doors and transoms on the first floor and first and second mezzanine levels of west wall (1878-79)  
second- and third-floor windows on west wall (1878-79)  
gallery, with steelplate fascia and bronze railing, and four corner steel stairways (1911-13)  
clerestory windows (1911-13)  
system of hanging lights (1911-13/c. 1921/later)

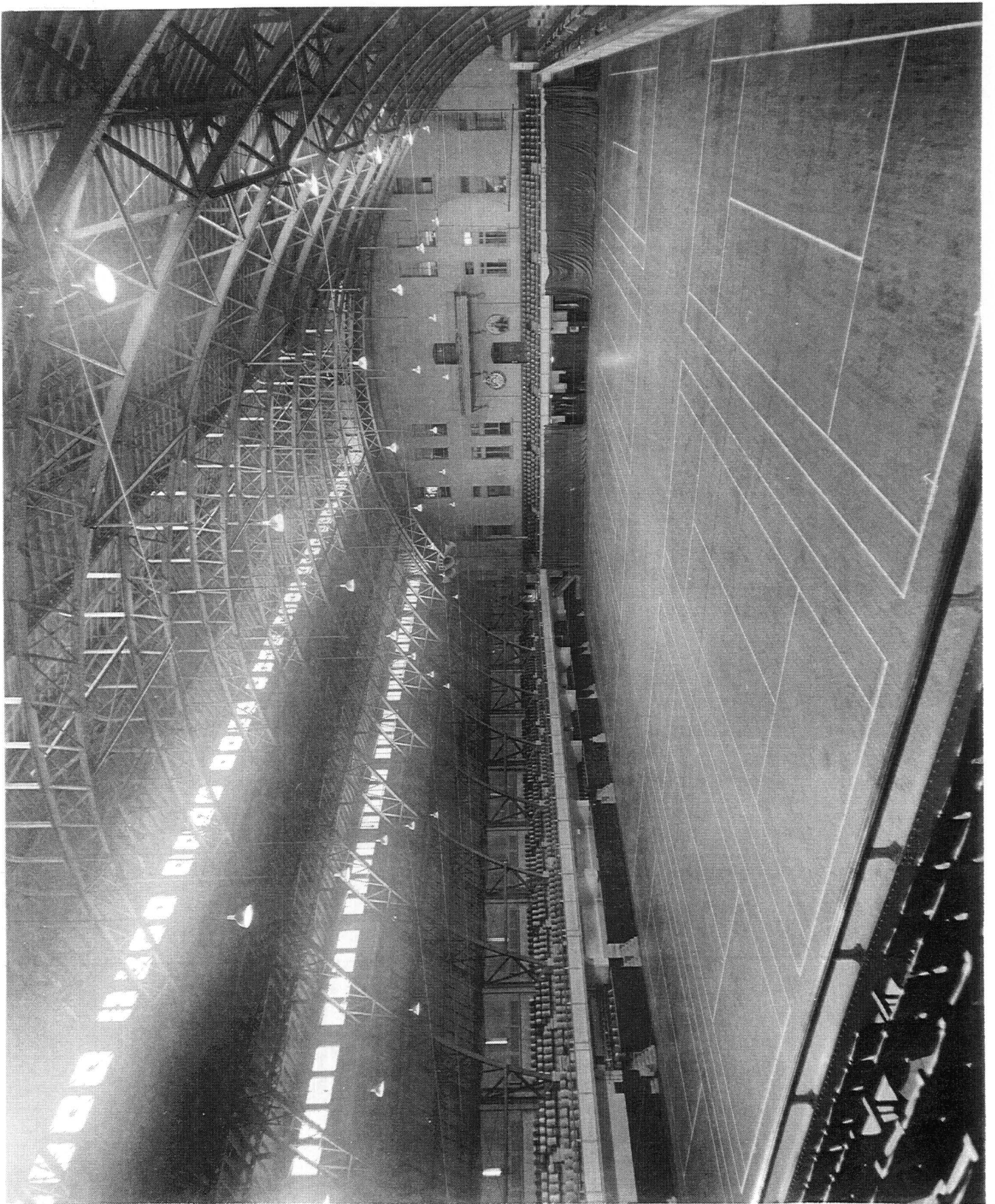
### References

Clark; Clark, *Letterbook* (Sept. 10, 1878); *NYT* (Nov. 14, 1879); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements* and *Cash Book*; *SRG* (1911-13; 1921); *Treasurer's Report* (1951-52; 1955); Pach Bros. photographs; Albert Waks photograph; Shriner; *NY Herald* (Nov. 14, 1879; Sept. 25, 1880); *NY World* (Apr. 5 and Dec. 16, 1880); *NY Evening Telegram* (Apr. 24, 1880); *NY Tribune* (Sept. 25, 1880); *Fourth Company Records* (Sept. 1880); *Scribner's Monthly* (May 1880); Appleton, *Letterbook* (Sept. 1897); Harper and Weldon; Friedman; Condit; *The Armory Board* (1884-1911; 1912-13)



Drill Room





Drill Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



Company A Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company A Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## COMPANY A ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: "a prominent New York firm" [George C. Flint & Co. or Alexander Roux & Co.]?, 1880

Redecoration: 1897; 1907; 1924-25

Style: Renaissance Revival

Company A Room was initially decorated in 1880 at a cost of \$7791, by "a prominent New York firm" according to *The Decorator and Furnisher* in 1885. This is one of only three company rooms at the armory for which the interior decoration firms are unattributed; the *New York Times* in 1880 cited Flint & Co. and Roux & Co. among the firms that decorated rooms on this floor, so either of these is a possibility (as well as Pottier & Stymus or Herter Brothers, who decorated nearly all other company spaces, or Kimbel & Cabus). It is also intriguing to note that architect William H. Hume, a veteran of the company, had designed the Company A Room at the Tompkins Market Armory. The dark mahogany woodwork (which is still in place) contrasted with the elaborate stenciling on the coved, pale blue ceiling and the pale green walls with "the effect of embossed leather" and a gold frieze; a gilt bronze gas chandelier hung from the ceiling. As early as 1892 the company considered redecoration; the first documented changes occurred in 1897 at the time of electrification, probably including a new ceiling which "cost several thousand dollars." Later redecoration took place in 1924, new lighting fixtures were donated in 1925, the WWI memorial received a new setting in 1936, and Warner Brothers donated a new fireplace in 1937.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

San Domingo mahogany woodwork, including:

lockers (terminations/wood pedestals for gas fixtures removed (1897?))

1 door surround with double doors (and leaded stained-glass transom, 1907)

3 window surrounds

north wall surround (originally having a piano alcove and mirror; altered for bronze WWI memorial tablet and paneling, 1936) south wall mantel (original nickelplated fireplace replaced by marble one, 1937) and overmantel (with mirror)

elaborately molded, rectangular-coffered ceiling (probably 1897)

4 chandeliers (1925)

2 wood and perforated metal radiator cabinets

parquet floor

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *NYT* (Apr. 10, 1880); *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *SRG* (1892-1937); Albert Waks photograph

## COMPANY B ROOM

Architect: Albert Wagner, 1880

Interior Decoration Firm: unknown [George C. Flint & Co. or Alexander Roux & Co.]?, 1880

Redecoration: 1896; Tiffany Studios, 1906

Style: Renaissance Revival

Company B Room was initially designed in 1880 by architect Albert Wagner, according to the *Boston Press* of that year. Wagner (d. 1898) was born in Germany, came to the United States in 1871, initially worked for both Alfred B. Mullett, Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury, and Leopold Eidlitz, and was listed in directories from 1880 to his death; his most notable design was the Puck Building (1885-86; 1892-93, a designated New York City Landmark) at 295-309 Lafayette Street. This is one of only three company rooms at the armory for which the interior decoration firms are unattributed; the *New York Times* in 1880 cited Flint & Co. and Roux & Co. as among the firms that decorated rooms on this floor, so that either of these is a possibility (as well as Pottier & Stymus or Herter Brothers, who decorated nearly all other company spaces, or Kimbel & Cabus). The dark mahogany woodwork dominates the room, which was originally embellished by a stencilled frieze and walls in dark blue and gold, and a prominent central gas chandelier; the *Press* stated that "the ceiling is done in wood with fine bold mouldings and circles of ebony inlaid with white wood." In 1895 the company considered the question of redecoration, which first occurred in 1896 and included papered walls. After Tiffany Studios was hired in 1906 for remodelling, the men thought that "language fails to express the beauty of our remodelled Company Room"; changes at that time included the installation of the three electric chandeliers, probably the application of copper leaf to the ceiling, and possibly the removal of the spindle railing on top of the lockers. The WWI memorial was dedicated in 1924, causing the change in location of the original Civil War memorial. By 1933 the company claimed to have spent "in the amount of over fifty thousand dollars" on decorations for the room.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

lockers (spindle railing removed, probably 1906)

1 door surround with double doors (with mirrors and leaded stained- glass transom, c.1906?)

4 window surrounds (3 with leaded stained-glass screens in the upper portions, c. 1906?)

original paneled ceiling and cornice (with molded frieze; applied copper leaf/acanthus leaves removed, probably 1906)

south wall mantel (with later marble fireplace surround and hearth, and metal fireback) and overmantel (with mirror)

north wall surround (originally an alcove for a cabinet and Civil War memorial tablet-- altered for piano alcove, bronze Stephen Merritt (d. 1891) memorial tablet, and bronze WWI memorial tablet (1924, Arthur Ware))

bronze and marble Civil War memorial tablet (placed on west wall between windows, 1924)

2 cast-iron radiators (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

3 chandeliers (1906, Tiffany & Co.)

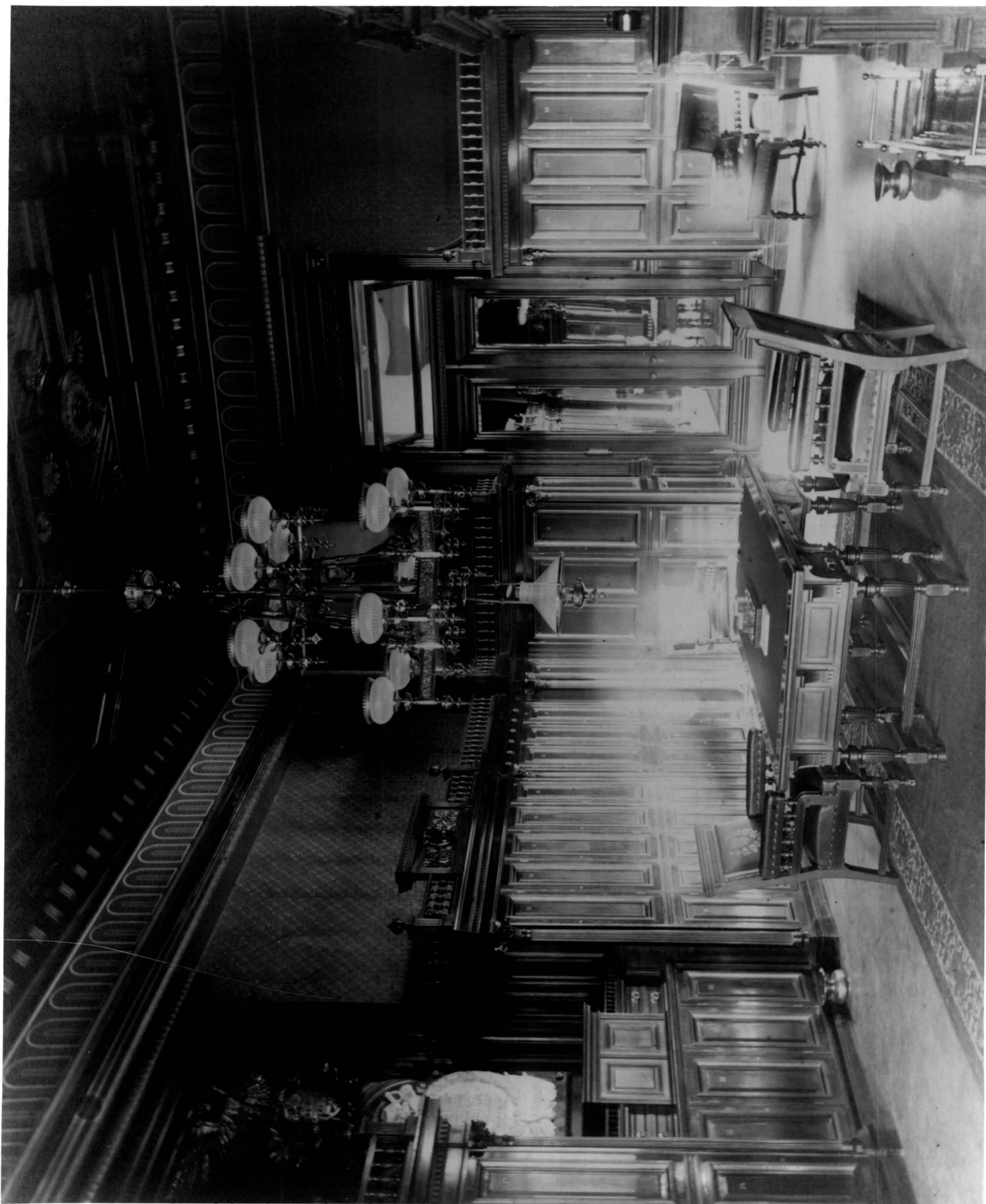
2 attached desks below west wall windows

wallpaper (post-1955)

parquet floor

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *NYT* (Apr. 10, 1880); *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *SRG* (1895-1933); Albert Waks photograph; LPC, *Puck Building Designation Report*



Company B Room

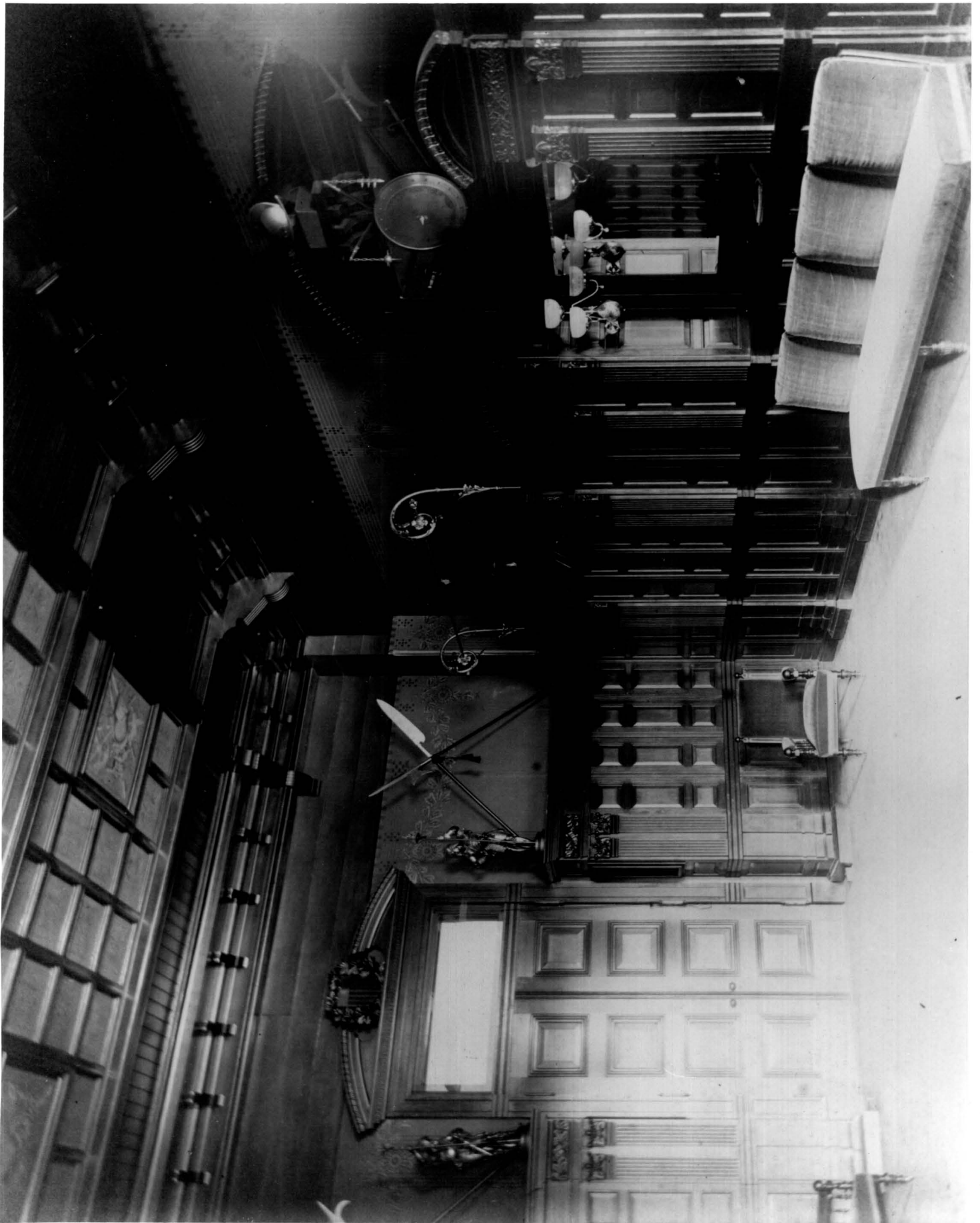
Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company B Room

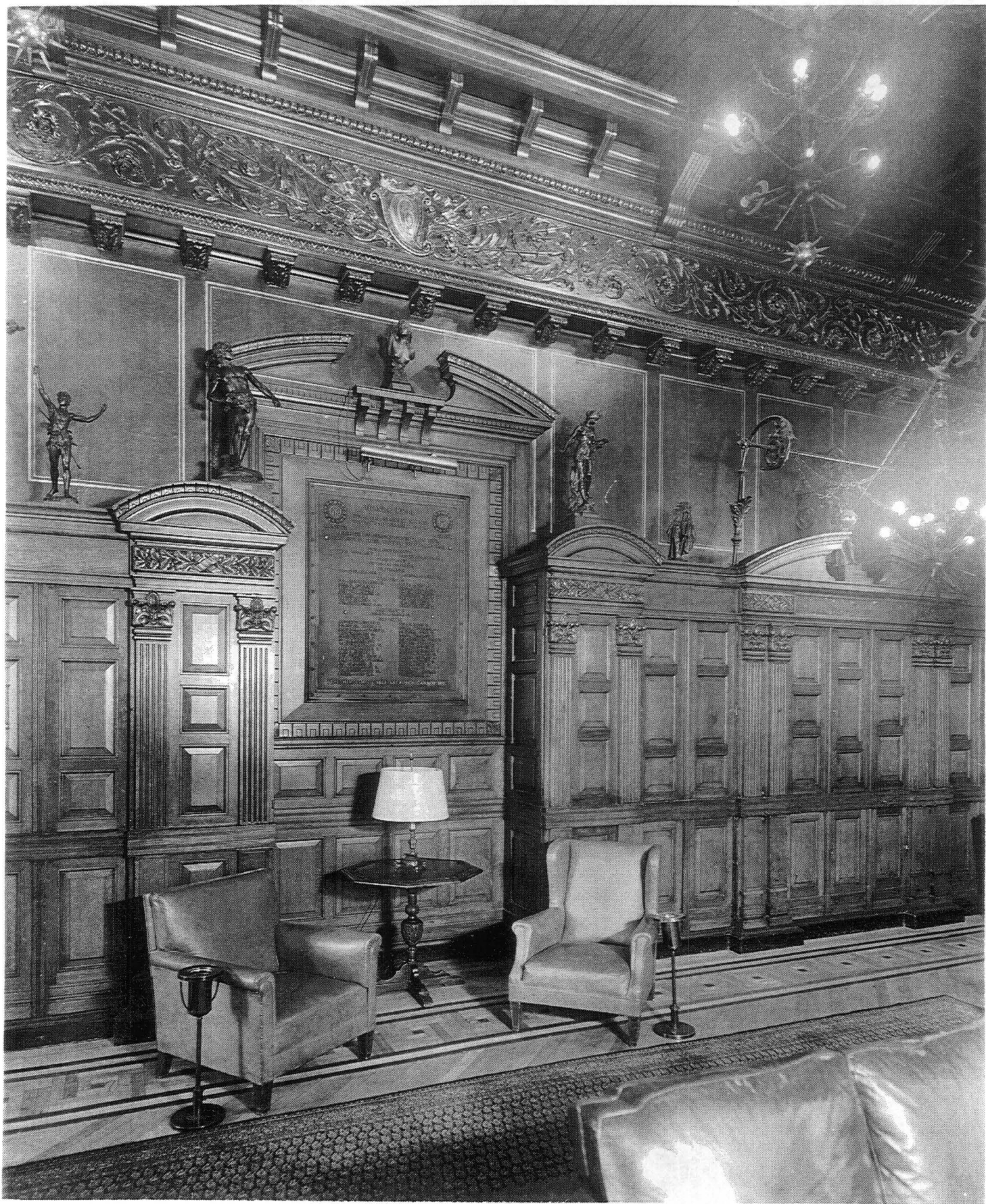
Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



Company C Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company C Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## COMPANY C ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Herter Brothers, 1880

Redecoration: c. 1895-97

Lighting Fixtures: original gas fixtures, Mitchell, Vance & Co., 1880; electric fixtures, probably Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., 1897

Style: Renaissance Revival

Company C Room was decorated by Herter Brothers in 1880, according to the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Jan. 1911), "and represents an outlay of nearly \$15,000." The walls [accounts differ as to whether they were red or blue] were stenciled, in geometric and oak leaf garland patterns, while the dark oak paneled ceiling (which survives intact) was decorated with oak leaves and armorial motifs. This is one of the few rooms in the armory containing original gas light fixtures, here two wall brackets and four nickel-plated gas jet brackets (all by Mitchell, Vance & Co.), and electrified (and the latter added to) in 1897, when four chandeliers were installed; the newer, hanging fixtures have unusual mace-like spiky orbs. The photograph of the room taken in 1880 by the Pach Brothers shows a plain frieze, while the room now has an elaborately foliated frieze and subcornice; these were either added shortly after the photograph was taken, or possibly in connection with changes to the room discussed in late 1894. A WWI memorial was added in 1921.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

English oak woodwork, including:  
lockers

1 door surround with double doors (with mirrors and transom)

2 window surrounds

paneled ceiling (with original painted decoration of oak leaves, and central and corner armorial motifs) and bracketed cornice mantel (with marble and metal fireplace) and overmantel between west windows

south wall surround with cabinet (and mirror)

north surround (originally a piano alcove-- altered for bronze WWI memorial tablet, 1921)

decorative frieze and subcornice (post-1880 or c. 1895-97?)

4 original nickel-plated brackets for gas jets, and 2 original wall bracket gas light fixtures (Mitchell, Vance & Co.; electrified 1897)

4 chandeliers and 4 hanging light fixtures added to gas brackets (probably Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., 1897)

2 cast-iron radiators (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

painted "paneled" walls (pre-1933)

parquet floor

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *SRG* (1894-1921); Albert Waks photograph

## COMPANY D ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co., 1880

Redecoration: 1888-90; 1894-95; 1915-16; 1927; 1931-33

Style: Renaissance Revival; Adamesque

As indicated in its detailed records, Company D began the discussion of funding the decoration for its new company room as early as January of 1878. In January 1880, a committee on decoration showed company members plans by Pottier & Stymus, which were adopted (the cost was not to exceed \$6900) along with the choice of the woodwork. The furnishing was finished by September of that year, at a total cost of \$8127 (the company still owed Pottier & Stymus on that bill in 1887). The room features a profusion of carving on the mahogany woodwork, including a large clock with lions. The ceiling, frieze, and walls were originally extensively stenciled; the walls were a terra-cotta color with some borders in a dark blue, and the ceiling had a panel showing a blue sky. Redecoration occurred several times over the years, the only major ones being the addition of Adamesque ornament to the paneled ceiling, frieze and walls, and the removal of the fireplace in 1894-95. The "colonial" chandeliers and light fixtures may date from the early 1930s.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

lockers with top spindle railing and carved panels

1 door surround with double doors (with mirrors and transom)

2 window surrounds (with leaded stained-glass screens in the upper portions)

ceiling panel strips (with Adamesque ornament in the panels, 1894-95)

south wall central locker cabinet (altered for piano alcove) surmounted by elaborate clock with carved lions

north wall mantel (fireplace removed and desk with cabinet doors installed 1894-95) and overmantel surmounted by carving (the mirror was replaced by a framed painting [currently removed] and bronze WWI memorial tablet)

ceiling cove and frieze (Adamesque ornament, 1894-95)

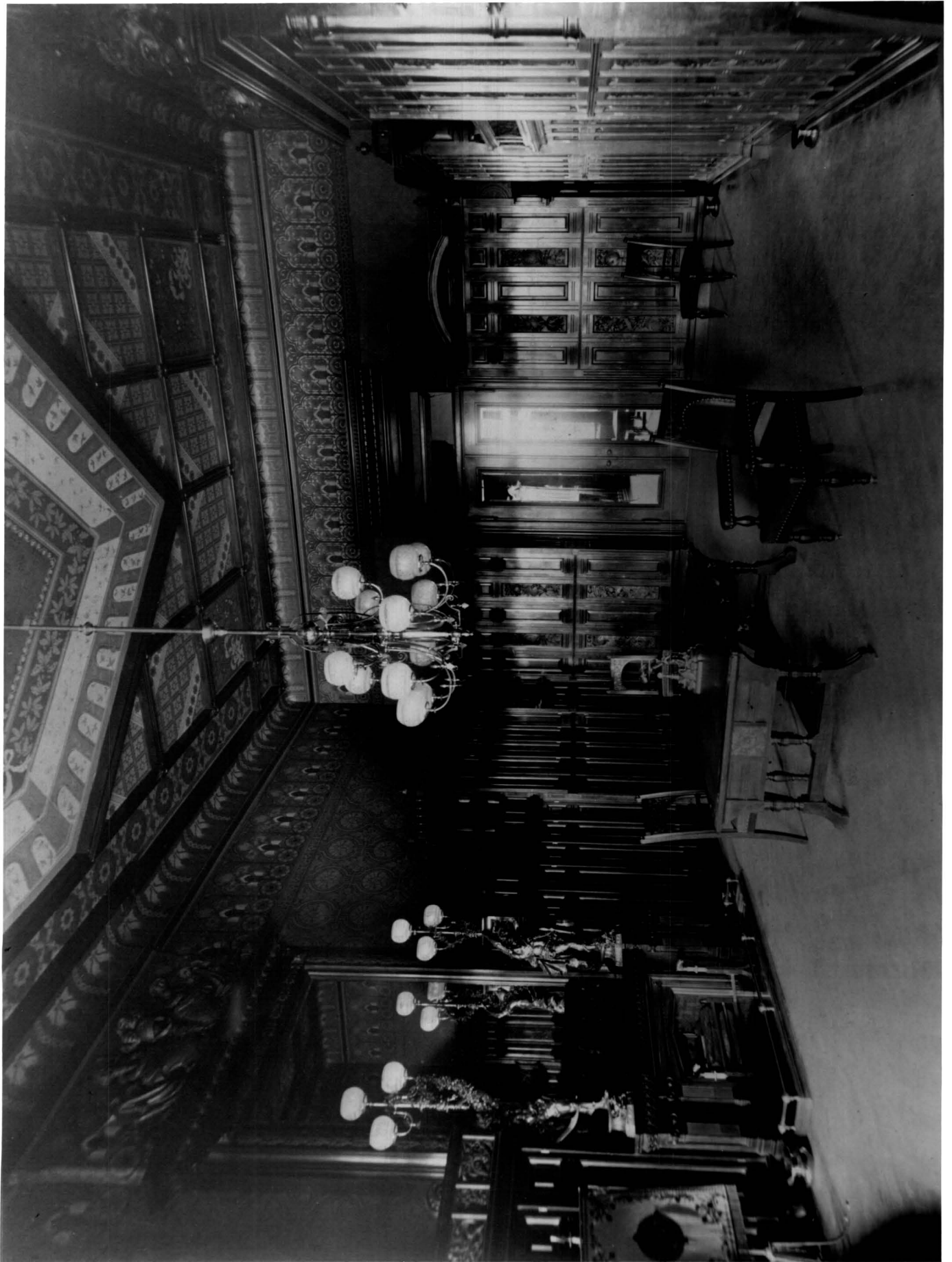
2 cast-iron radiators (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

"colonial" chandelier and 4 bracket light fixtures atop lockers (c. 1931-33?)

parquet floor

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *Fourth Company Records* (1875-87); *SRG* (1888-1933); Albert Waks photograph



Company D Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company D Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



Company E Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company E Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## COMPANY E ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co., 1879-80  
(George W. DaCunha, architect, consultant)

Redecoration: 1887; 1892; 1903

Style: Renaissance Revival; Tudor Revival

In March of 1879, Company E set up a committee to be in charge of "fitting up" the company room, which received plans from nine different "leading cabinet makers of the city" and submitted three of these (all costing within \$400 of each other) with woodwork samples, to company members in August. Pottier & Stymus was chosen "on the grounds of elegance of finish, symmetry of structure and very largely on the ground of economy," at a cost not to exceed \$6000, "to fit up room, draperies, furniture, safe and all necessary articles." In October the committee boasted that, upon letting the contract (for an eventual \$5861), "large concessions [additional 'frescoing' and other details] have been secured and the work is to be performed for much less than their original bid." A separate contract was signed with Mitchell, Vance & Co. for "special" gas fixtures at \$378. When the room was completed in August 1880, the committee expressed its "obligations to Geo W. DaCunha Esq Architect for valuable suggestions." DaCunha (1838-1917) was a carpenter-builder until the late 1880s and was active as an architect until at least 1892; he became a Company E member in 1884. The walls in red, and paneled ceiling in terra cotta with gilt and blue, were stenciled. Between 1887 and 1903 the room was redecorated and "a large amount of money has at different times been expended upon its furnishings." In 1892 the ceiling was replaced with one of Tudor Revival strapwork design, which was thought by the members to be "a work of art such as only the nineteenth century can produce"; imported Japanese wallpaper was applied, and "handsome side brackets, which entirely illuminate the carved figures over the mantel and the lieutenants' lockers" [probably the extant ones] replaced the central chandelier.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

oak woodwork, including:

lockers (with carved top panels of a different wood)

1 door surround with double doors (with mirrors and transom)

1 window surround, and 1 matching surround with a panel and doorway to small tower room (which has a cabinet and closet)

west wall locker surmounted by large carved trophy

south wall mantel (with later metal fireplace) and overmantel with carved wreath (and mirror)

north wall central cabinet with piano alcove

4 wrought-iron lighting fixtures set on lockers (probably 1892, or 1897)

Tudor Revival strapwork ceiling and modillioned cornice (1892, has been gold since at least 1911)

1 cast-iron radiator (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

wall fabric (pre-1933)

oak parquet floor

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *Minutes Fifth Company* (1876-89); SRG (1887-1911); Albert Waks photograph; LPC, DaCunha files

## COMPANY F ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: unknown [George C. Flint & Co. or Alexander Roux & Co.]?, 1880

Redecoration: 1888; 1897; 1920

Style: Renaissance Revival/neo-Grec

Company F Room is one of only three company rooms at the armory for which the interior decoration firms are unattributed; the *New York Times* in 1880 cited Flint & Co. and Roux & Co. as among the firms that decorated rooms on this floor, so that either of these is a possibility (as well as Pottier & Stymus or Herter Brothers, who decorated nearly all other interior spaces, or Kimbel & Cabus). The lack of information is particularly frustrating given the presence of three prominent men associated with the company: Edward and George Kemp were company veterans who were probably responsible for Associated Artists receiving the commission for the Veterans' Room and Library (Edward also headed armory fund subscriptions and was on the Building Committee of the armory), while Co. F Capt. Daniel Appleton (later commander of the regiment) was on the Committee on Interior Work of the armory. The original "Pompeian red" walls had a simplified geometric stencil, contrasting with the florid "Renaissance scroll" frieze. The surviving oak woodwork, executed in a manner different from the other rooms in the armory, combines elements of the Renaissance Revival and neo-Grec styles and features elaborate carved surrounds on the north, south, and west walls; the original paneled ceiling is also intact, as are the memorial tablet and mahogany window screen commemorating Company F members who died in the Civil War. During the armory's electrification in 1897, the room received its circular iron chandelier. In 1911 the company reported that the original room was "substantially as it is today... such comfortable and luxurious quarters [were provided] that there was nothing left for which to wish." In 1923 a WWI memorial was placed in the overmantel.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

oak woodwork, including:

lockers (surmounted by 4 bands of ornamental ironwork, c. 1888-97) with continuous attached benches on 3 sides

1 door surround with double doors (with mirrors and transom)

west wall surround (with mirror)

1 window surround (with original large carved mahogany screen in the upper portion), and a matching surround (with a bronze Civil War memorial tablet) and doorway to small tower room (which has a wood ceiling, wainscot and cabinets)

south wall surround (with piano alcove and Col. [former Co. F Capt.] Daniel Appleton portrait ([not affixed], 1892, James Carroll Beckwith) which replaced a mirror)

north wall mantel (with later glazed terra-cotta fireplace having basketweave pattern fireback) and overmantel with carved clock (bronze WWI memorial tablet (1923, Gorham Co.) replaced mirror)

original paneled ceiling

plain (painted) molded frieze

circular wrought-iron chandelier (probably Frank S. Brady/J.L. Gaumer & Co., 1897)

1 cast-iron radiator (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

parquet floor

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *NYT* Apr. 10, 1880; *NY Herald* (Sept. 25, 1880); *Boston Press* Nov. 1, 1880; *SRG* (1888-1923); Albert Waks photograph



Company F Room

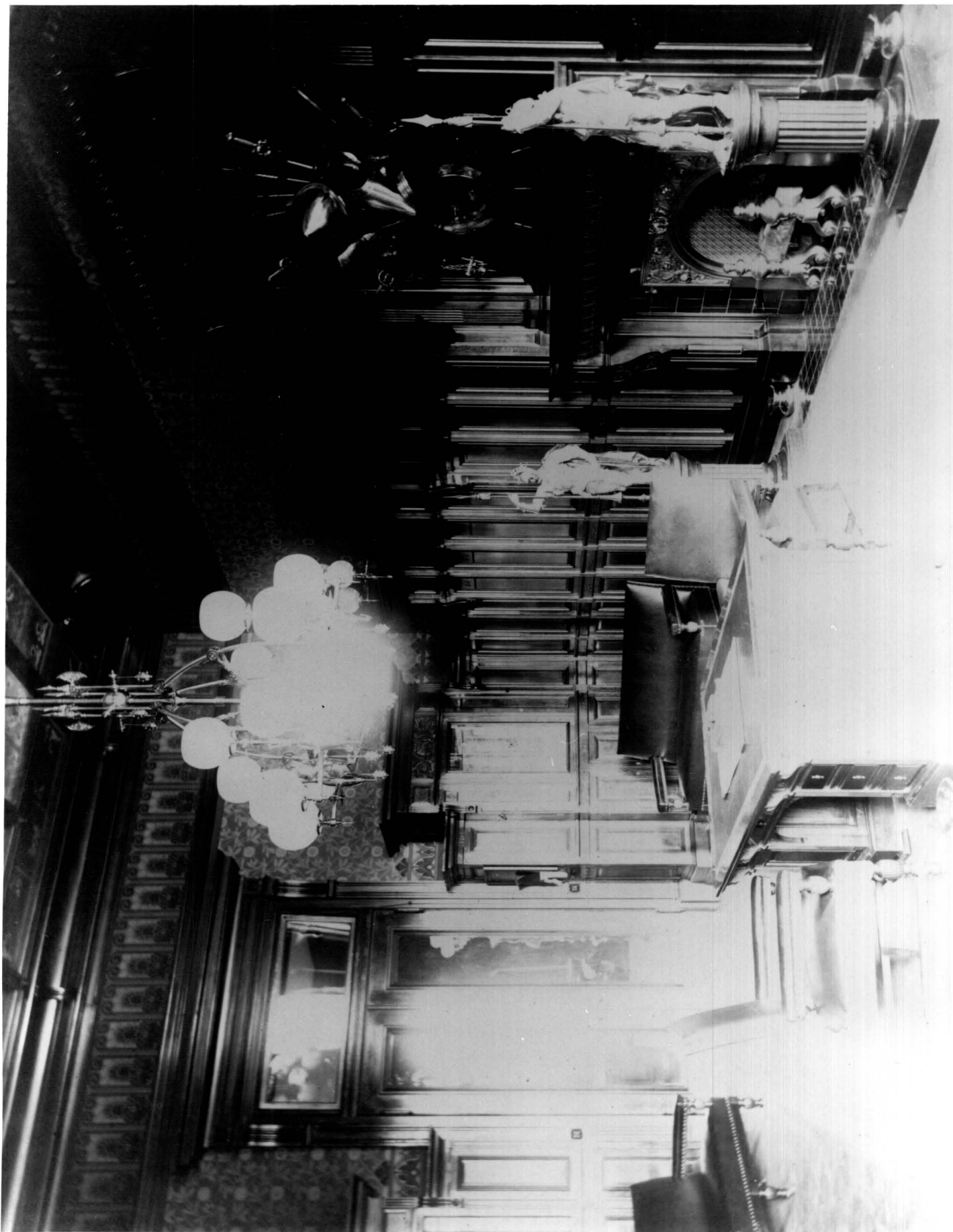
Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company F Room

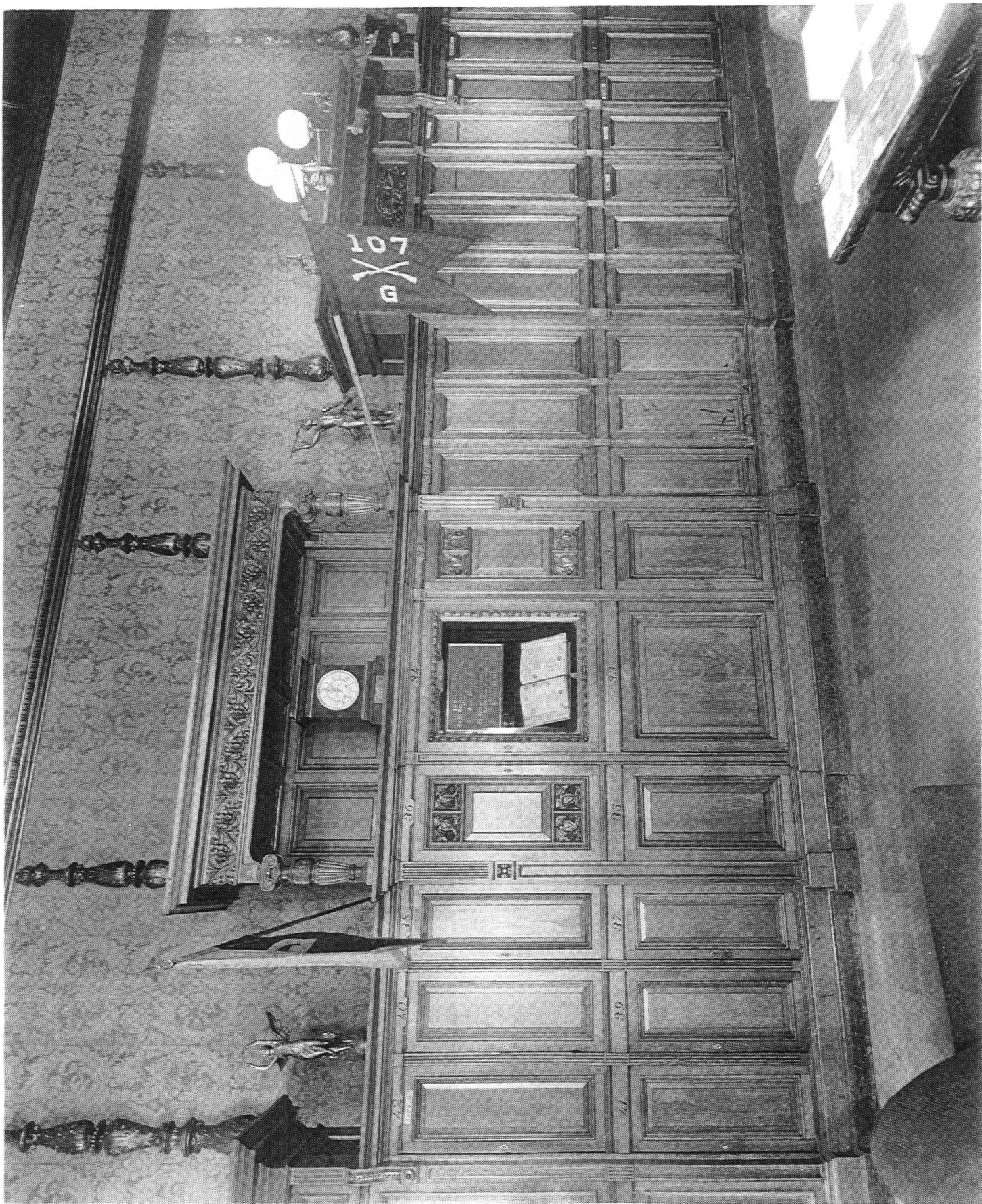
Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



Company G Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company G Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## COMPANY G ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co., 1879-80

Redecoration: 1890; Charles A. Hutchings, 1894

Gas Lighting Fixtures: Mitchell, Vance & Co., 1880

Style: Renaissance Revival; Colonial Revival

Company G's committee on fitting up the company room reported that plans by Pottier & Stymus had been accepted in September of 1879, at a cost not to exceed \$5500. This room (along with that of Co. I) was the one of the first two essentially completed by April 1880. The *New York Evening Telegram* credited much of the "taste" of the room to Sgt. Arthur Timson. The paneled ceiling (extant, but repainted in 1894) had delicate floral stenciling on a cream background, while the "dull blue" walls had stenciled "running vine over it in more or less natural colors" and a wide frieze. The oak woodwork has panels of carving and two prominent shelves supported on columns. This is the only room in the armory which still has all of its original (polished steel) gas light fixtures by Mitchell, Vance & Co. (which were electrified in 1897), in this case a central chandelier and four side bracket fixtures mounted on the lockers. An 1894 "Colonial Revival" redecoration of the ceiling and walls, by Charles A. Hutchings, listed as a "decorator" in the N.Y.C. directory, featured "decorations in dull reds, greens and russets on a foundation of metallic leaf, and all lacquered to a rich tone," as well as plaster relief "torches" and medallions on the walls (the latter removed between 1911 and 1933). In 1911 the company estimated that it had thus far spent \$10,000 on furnishings and decoration.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

black oak woodwork, including:

lockers (with roster boards on east wall)

1 door surround with double doors (with mirrors and transom)

2 window surrounds

west wall captain's locker with upper shelf supported by columns

south wall mantel (with tile and steel fireplace) and overmantel with affixed ancient armor trophy

north wall cabinet with upper shelf supported by columns (with inset WWI memorial behind glass)

original oak coved, paneled ceiling (with painted floral decoration, 1894)

1 polished steel gas chandelier and 4 bracket gas light fixtures set on lockers (1880, Mitchell, Vance & Co./electrified 1897)

plaster relief "torches" (1894; accompanying medallions removed between 1911 and 1933)

wallpaper (pre-1933)

2 wood and perforated metal radiator cabinets

parquet floor (c. 1935-37)

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *NYT* (Apr. 4, 1880); *NY Evening Telegram* (Apr. 24, 1880); *Seventh Company Records* (1876-92); *SRG* (1890-1935); *Treasurer's Report* (1938); Albert Waks photograph; *Trow's N.Y.C. Directory* (1895)

## COMPANY H ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Herter Brothers, 1880-81

Redecoration: 1887-88; 1890; "Mr. Brown, the architect," 1894; 1904

Style: Renaissance Revival

Company H Room was first decorated by Herter Brothers, according to the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (January 1911); the firm was hired in January 1880 and paid \$6735 in May 1881. The room originally featured oak woodwork which combined details of the Renaissance Revival and neo-Grec styles; later changes made the room more classical in style. The walls were initially covered in a Japanese wallpaper in a "chocolate color with leaves in gold," the oak ceiling (extant but altered in 1904) displayed panels of different wood patterns, and the woodwork was ornamented by rows of brassheaded nails. The original ceiling cove, embellished by shields and leaves highlighted in gold, survives. "Changes of considerable extent... in decoration and arrangement" occurred several times between 1887 and 1904: the brass nails were replaced by bay leaf garland moldings, garlands were added to pediments, and cylindrical columns were replaced by composite ones; four broken pediments with pedestals were added atop corner lockers; the ceiling received tacked painted canvas panels and the bracketed cornice was replaced by a modillioned one (1904); the fireplace was removed and a triple arcade screen wall with wrought-iron transoms (also found on the hallway door surround) was installed; the wallpaper was replaced (first in 1888 and then in 1904); and four Art Nouveau wrought-iron chandeliers and 8 bracket light fixtures atop the lockers replaced the four original square corner gas chandeliers (1894). At that time the decoration, in a red and gold scheme, was under the supervision of "Mr. Brown, the architect." It was reported that \$2000 was spent in 1904 alone. In 1922 the WWI memorial was dedicated.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

oak woodwork (alterations include the replacement of original brass nail studded moldings with bay leaf garland moldings, c. 1887-1904/woodwork trim was originally dark but was lightened, 1904), including:

lockers (4 broken pediments with pedestals were added atop corner lockers, c. 1887-1904)

1 door surround with double doors (with added mirrors, and transom with a wrought-iron screen, c. 1887-1904)

paneled ceiling (with tacked, painted canvas panels, 1904)

west wall officers' lockers (with mirrors, replaced the original fireplace c. 1887-1904) and triple arcade screen wall (with wrought-iron-and-opalescent-glass transom screens), c. 1887-1904

north and south wall central surrounds (originally had portraits which were later removed; garlands were added to pediment shields and original cylindrical columns were replaced by composite columns, c. 1887-1904). North surround has bronze Shumway/Smith memorial tablet (c. 1880), bronze WWI memorial tablet, and clock [recently replaced]; it had trophy case (1909) [now removed], and lower panels added in 1935 [now removed] to conceal c. 1890 desk. South surround had a later portrait and piano [both removed].

original ceiling cove (with military shield and leaf ornament in gold), and modillioned cornice (which replaced the original bracketed wood one, 1904)

4 Art Nouveau wrought-iron chandeliers and 8 bracket light fixtures atop lockers (1894)

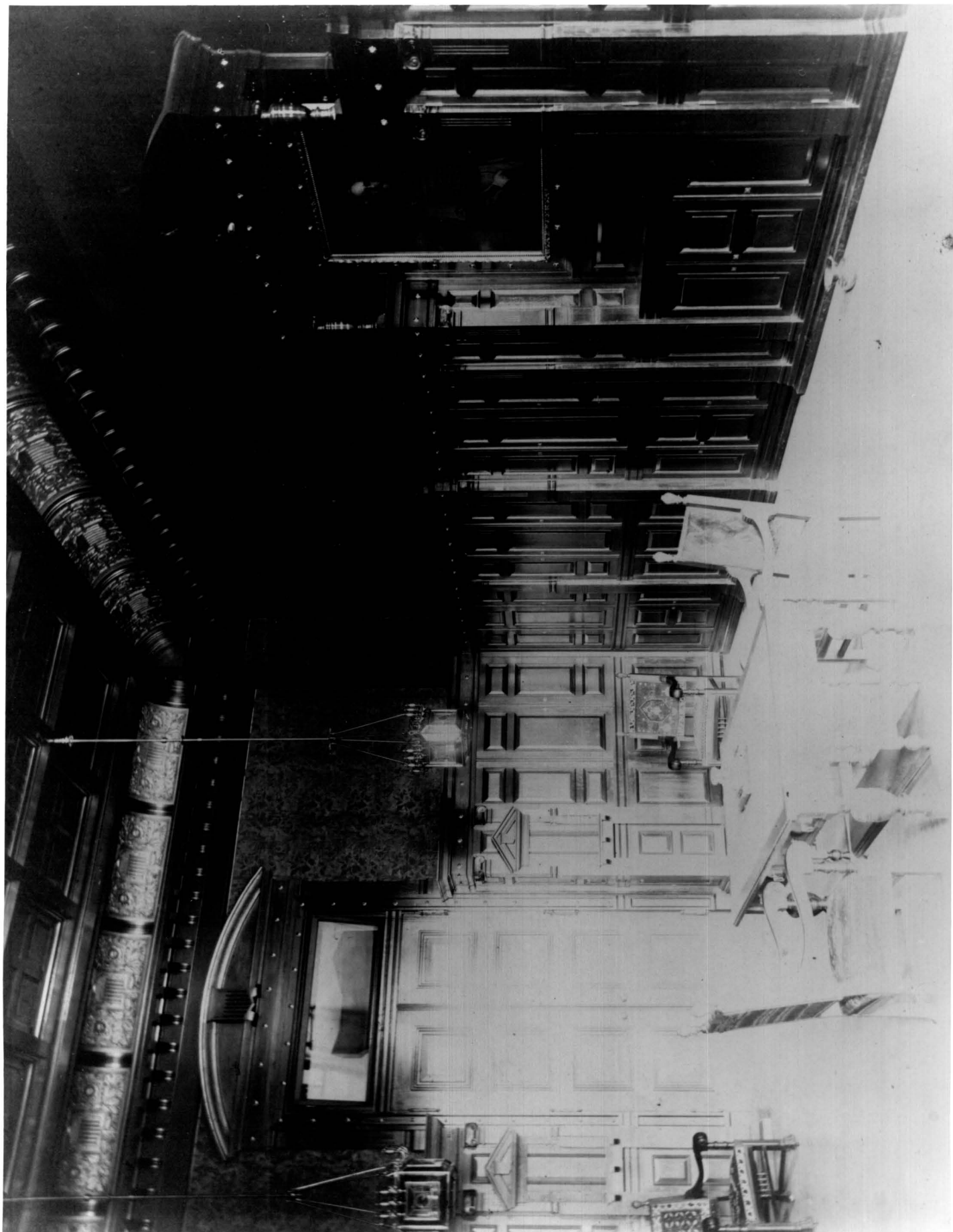
2 cast-iron radiators (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

canvas or fabric wall covering (c. 1904-1933)

[floor currently obscured by wall-to-wall carpet]

### References

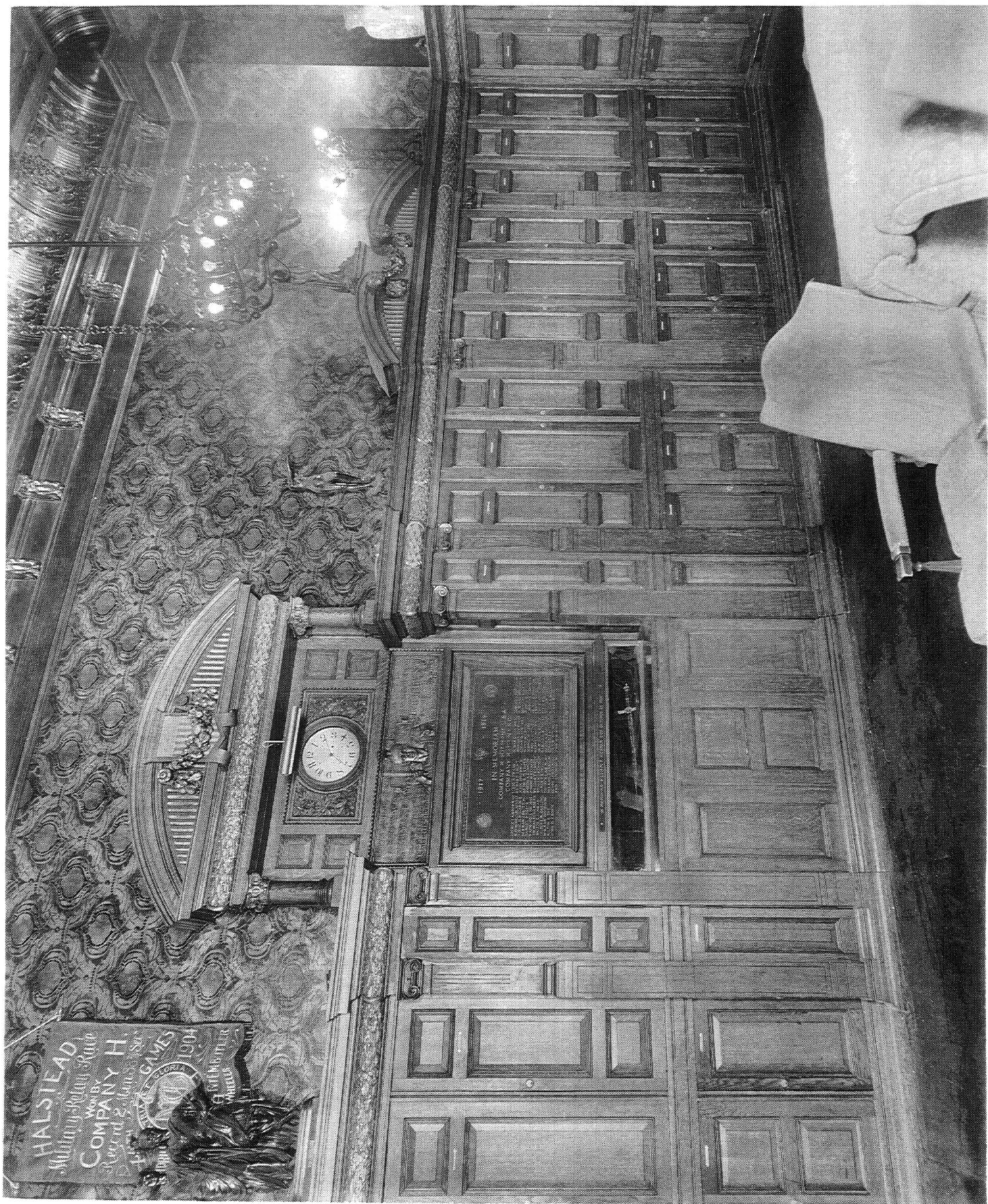
Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *SRG* (1887-1935); *Treasurer's Report* (1935); Albert Waks photograph



Company H Room

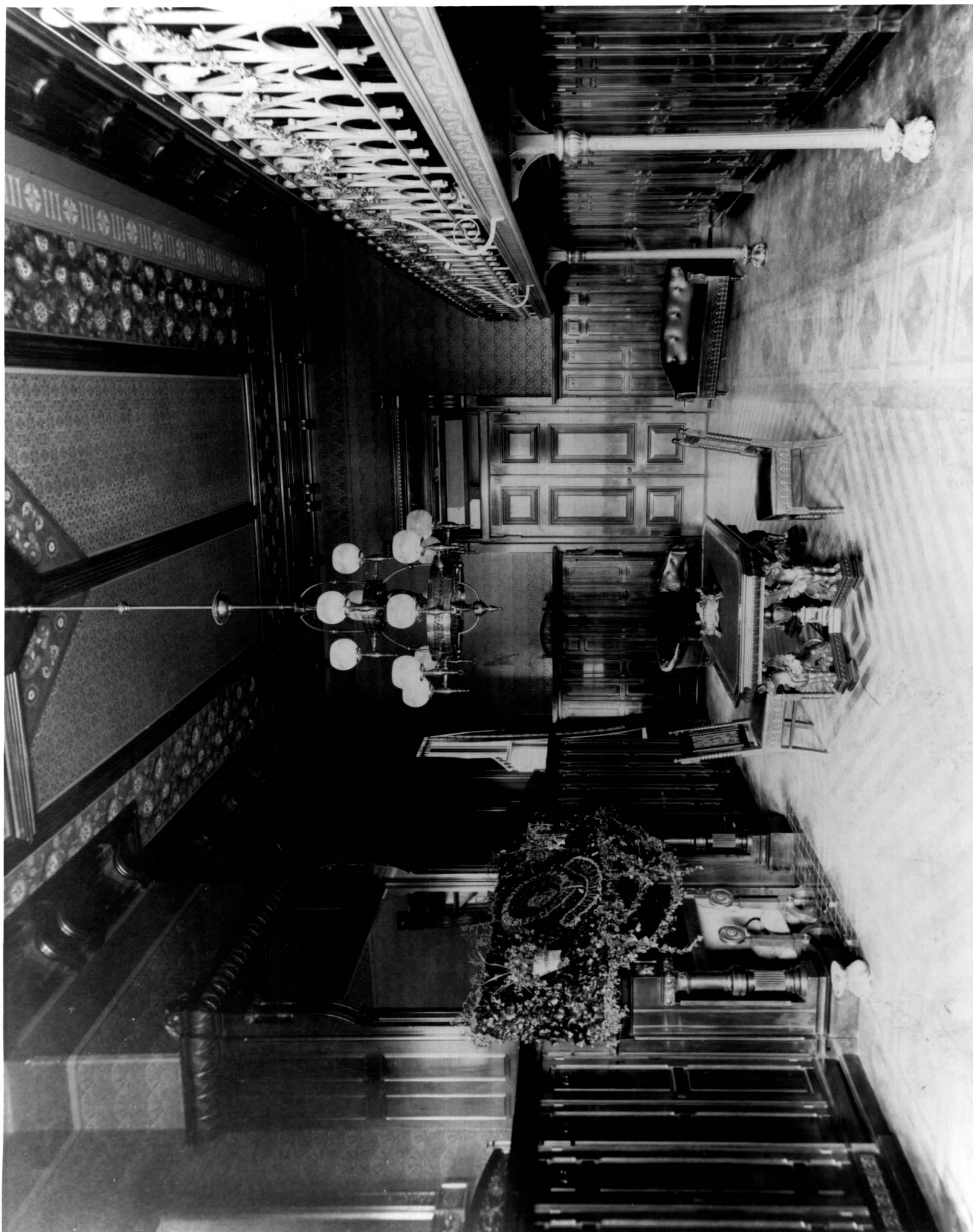
Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company H Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



Company I Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company I Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



## COMPANY I ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co., 1880

Redecoration: 1890; 1900

Style: Renaissance Revival; Art Nouveau

Company I Room was originally decorated by Pottier & Stymus, as documented in the company minutes when it was recorded in November 1880 that \$7340 had been spent and that Pottier & Stymus would be retained to keep the furniture in repair. This room (along with that of Co. G) was the one of the first two essentially completed by April 1880. Unlike any other original company room in the armory, the Company I Room had a balcony (for additional lockers) with a wrought-iron railing. The room was initially decorated with a paneled ceiling and walls that were stenciled; a central brass chandelier hung from the ceiling. The company considered redecoration as early as 1888, but no action was taken until 1890, when \$3252 was spent. Several significant changes happened in the room during the period between 1890 and 1900 (by 1911 the company estimated that it had spent around \$12,000 on decoration): the original balcony (considered an "eye-sore") was replaced by one with a railing of delicate Art Nouveau wrought-iron design, with a newel torchiere (1890); the chandelier was replaced by two large semi-circular ironwork chandeliers; the overmantel was removed and the walls were covered in a "hessian" (burlap) with gold leaf; the paneled ceiling was replaced by bracketed wood beams and painted canvas panels; and the original carved pediments of the lockers were removed. The company's WWI memorial in 1920 included a new fireplace and bronze tablet for Lt. Percy Hall, as well as small plaques on the locker doors.

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany and Brazilian rosewood woodwork, including:  
lockers (the original carved segmental pediments were removed; small metal memorial plaques, 1920)  
1 door surround with double doors (with added mirrors, and frosted glass transom (Pvt. Charles Schober, 1911))  
4 window surrounds  
roster board and bookshelf at west end of stairs  
north wall mantel (overmantel removed c. 1890-1900, original fireplace replaced and bronze Lt. Percy Hall memorial tablet (1920, Julio Kilneyi/Gorham Co.) installed)  
south wall balcony with Art Nouveau wrought-iron railing and newel torchiere (replaced original Renaissance Revival iron railing, 1890)  
  
wall covering of "hessian" (burlap) with griffins, eagles & gold leaf design (c. 1890-1900)  
2 large semi-circular wrought-ironwork chandeliers (c. 1890-1900)  
wood beamed ceiling with ramshead brackets and 33 painted canvas panels with heralds and central sunburst design [most panels are currently removed] (which replaced the original wood paneled and stenciled ceiling and bracketed wood cornice, c.1900-1902?)  
2 cast-iron radiators (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)  
parquet floor (1936)

### References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photographs; *NY Evening Telegram* (Apr. 24, 1880); *Company I Minutes* (1879-1917); *SRG* (1889-1933); Albert Waks photograph; Degnan, Kalina and Yus; Works Progress Administration, job specification (1936)

## COMPANY K ROOM

Architect: Sidney V. Stratton, 1879-80

Interior Decoration Firm: Kimbel & Cabus, 1879-80

Style: Queen Anne

Company K Room, a rare surviving New York City interior of 1879-80 designed in the Queen Anne style, is also one of the least altered rooms in the armory. It was designed by Sidney V. Stratton, who was "a member of the company and of the firm of McKim, Mead & White," according to *The Decorator and Furnisher* (May 1885). Stratton, best known as the architect of one of the earliest Queen Anne buildings in New York in 1878, the New York House and School of Industry (120 West 16th Street, a designated New York City Landmark), was also one of the first American architects trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he was a fellow student of Charles Follen McKim. After his return to America in 1870, Stratton entered the office of architect Richard Morris Hunt, and later opened his own office in 1877, but continued to work in a loose partnership with McKim, Mead & White until about 1886. Most of his known commissions were for country houses in New Jersey and Maine, and he closed his New York office in 1895.

The room's decoration was executed by Kimbel & Cabus, and according to the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Jan. 1911) the company spent around \$5000. This was apparently the first company room to be contracted, for the *Minutes* of the Board of Officers in June 1879 indicated such, and prompted the Board to pass a resolution requesting that companies not fit up their rooms until after the New Armory Fair in November. The room is notable for its oak and mahogany woodwork, which features large decorative panels, lockers with a top spindle railing and an affixed clock, a high door surround with a multi-pane transom, arcaded cabinetry on the east wall, and a paneled ceiling. The only significant changes in the room were the covering of the original stenciled frieze, the replacement of the fireplace surround and mirror for an elaborate bronze WWI memorial tablet (1922), and the replacement of the original gas chandelier (the current "colonial" chandelier probably dates from 1921 or 1932-33).

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

oak and mahogany woodwork, including:

lockers, with top spindle railing and affixed clock

high door surround with double doors and multi-pane transom

3 window surrounds (Drill Room window has multi-pane upper sash; both sash are currently pushed up with a new door inserted into the lower portion)

large north wall overmantel panel with side niches (the original yellow brick fireplace (the decorative metal and brick fireback survives) and overmantel mirror were replaced by a marble fireplace surround/hearth and bronze WWI memorial tablet (1922, designed by ex-Capt. Leslie Oliver/cast by Black Starr & Frost))

east wall/cabinetry with a lower arcade (the northeast corner is an open cupboard) surmounted by large panels (the angled inner ones slide upward)

paneled ceiling, with east wall frieze having 2 oval panels

marble Civil War memorial tablet on north wall

2 cast-iron radiators (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

2 "colonial" chandeliers (c. 1921 or 1932-33?)

[floor is currently covered with wall-to-wall carpet]

### References

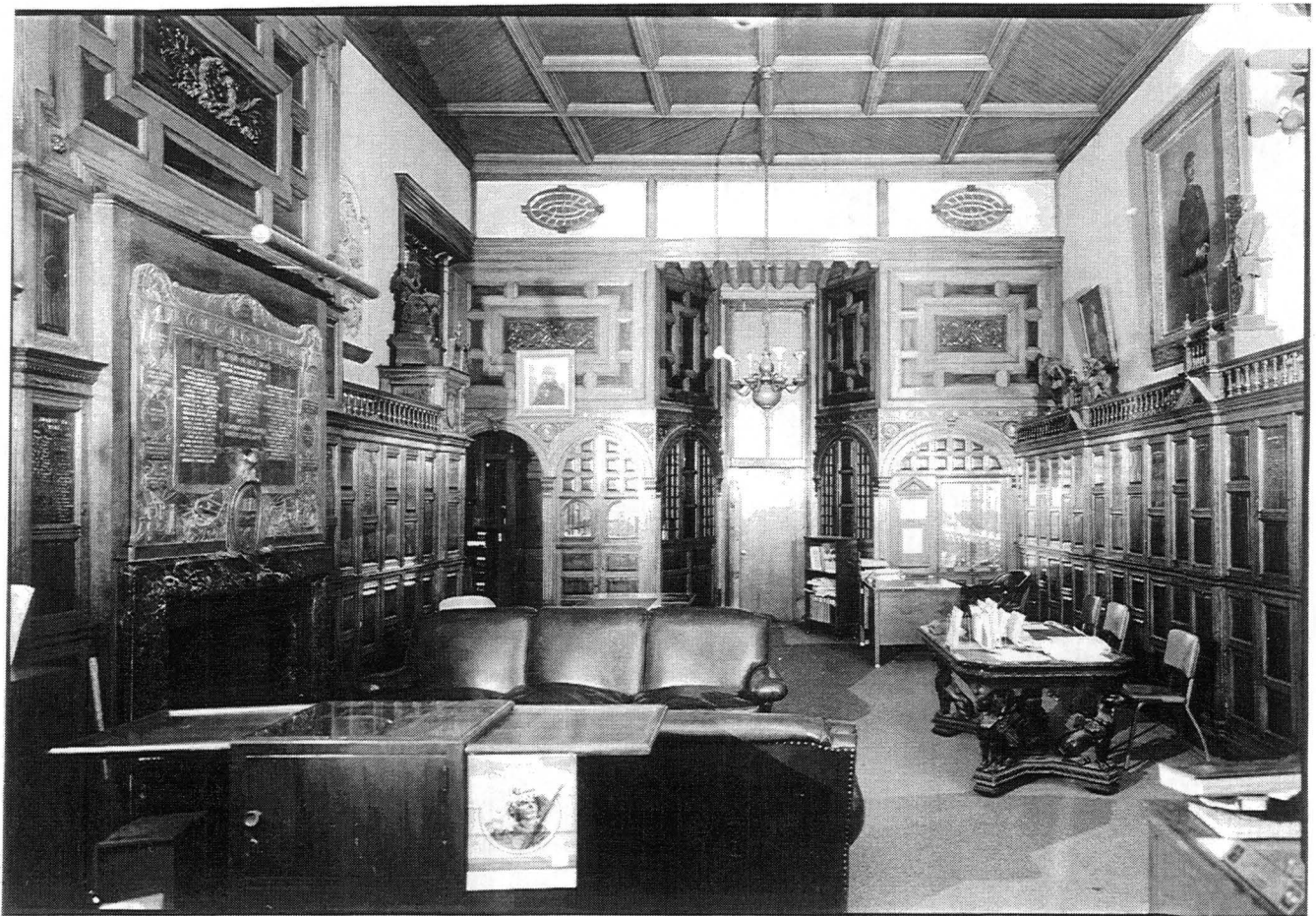
Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *NYT* (Apr. 10, 1880); *Minutes, Board of Officers* (June 7, 1879); *SRG* (1891-1933); Albert Waks photograph; *Tenth Company Minutes* (1895-1913); Holbrook; LPC, *New York House and School of Industry Designation Report*



Company K Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society





Company K Room

Photo: Jack Boucher, HABS

## **COMPANY L ROOM** (Originally Non-commissioned Staff Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Altered: 1935

Style: neo-Classical

Company L Room was one of the two company rooms created in 1909-11, when the additions and alterations were made to the armory, in response to federal legislation requiring National Guard units to have twelve companies. In 1880 the room was the Non-commissioned Staff Room, with light oak woodwork and furniture by Pottier & Stymus and decorations by Herter Brothers; it was "somewhat similar in style" to the original (Queen Anne) Adjutant's Room (also by Pottier & Stymus). Company L was formally organized in May 1909. Plans by Robinson & Knust, the firm responsible for the work at the armory in 1909-11, indicate the essentials of the new room (though some aspects were later changed): stairs and a gallery along the east wall leading to lockers located in a mezzanine room, a beamed ceiling, new wainscot, and a "remodeled" fireplace. Robinson & Knust may have designed the room. The dark oak paneled wainscot, mantel and overmantel, gallery and stairs were completed by the end of 1910; the bracketed and molded, beamed ceiling was finished somewhat later. In 1935 the gallery stairs were removed (and access was provided from an adjacent room).

### Descriptive List of Significant Features

dark oak woodwork, including:

continuous high paneled wainscot

1 door surround with double doors

south wall mantel (fireplace has glazed terra-cotta surround and metal basketweave fireback) and overmantel

east wall gallery with balustrade (the stairs were removed in 1935, and a door inserted leading to the adjacent (north) room/stairs)

2 French doors to the Drill Room gallery

bracketed beamed ceiling with a molded cornice

bronze WWI memorial tablet on north wall

8 ceiling light fixtures (1931)

parquet floor (1935)

References: Clark; *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements*; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); *SRG* (1909-35)



Company L Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



**COMPANY M ROOM** (Originally Adjutant's Room; later Company M Machine Gun Company Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Interior Designed By: Sgt. Henry L. Butler, 1911-13

Style: Tudor Revival

Company M Room was one of the two company rooms created in 1909-11, when the additions and alterations were made to the armory, in response to federal legislation requiring National Guard units to have twelve companies. In 1880 the room was the Adjutant's Room, with white ash woodwork and furniture in the Queen Anne style by Pottier & Stymus. Plans by Robinson & Knust, the firm responsible for the work at the armory in 1909-11, indicate the essentials of the new room (though some aspects were later changed): stairs and a gallery along the east wall leading to lockers located in a mezzanine room, a beamed ceiling, new wainscot, and a "remodeled" fireplace. The *Seventh Regiment Gazette* in December 1911 stated that "the decoration for Company M will soon be commenced as the plans submitted by Sgt. H.L. Butler of Company H have been approved and only await formal action..."; this seems to indicate that Butler was the designer. Henry Langdon Butler (1876-1940) was born in New York City, graduated from Columbia Institute, was promoted through all of the non-commissioned ranks of the Seventh Regiment, received an appointment to West Point in 1900, and served a continuous forty years in the military. The *Gazette* indicated that the room was "completed and ready to use" in December 1912, but as late as September 1913 mentioned some work remained. The Tudor Revival room has a high paneled oak wainscot, a Tudor-arched fireplace with a mantel and overmantel panel, and a paneled ceiling with large bracketed (with pendants) beams. In June 1921 the Machine Gun Company (organized in 1914, the first in the U.S. Army) was redesignated the Company M Machine Gun Company and moved into this room; the old Company M became the Howitzer Company and moved elsewhere in the armory. The lighting fixtures probably date from that year.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

oak woodwork, including:

continuous high paneled wainscot

1 door surround with double doors (and transom)

north wall mantel (with brick and stone or cast-stone fireplace) and overmantel panel

gallery wall with central niche flanked by 2 doorways (northern one to Drill Room window and gallery stairs; southern one to closet has post-1955 double doors)

gallery with arcaded balustrade

paneled ceiling with large bracketed (with pendants) beams

tacked leather wall covering

2 wheel chandeliers and 2 wall bracket light fixtures (probably 1921)

wide plank oak floor (1931)

References

Clark; *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements*; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); *SRG* (1909-34); Butler obit., *NYT* (Mar. 15, 1940), 23.



Company M Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

**APPENDIX: ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, AND INTERIOR DECORATION  
AND  
OTHER FIRMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY INTERIORS**

**Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.)/Tiffany Studios**

Library, 1880-81  
Veterans' Room, 1880-81  
Company B Room, 1906

Associated Artists, only in existence between 1879 and 1883, is considered one of the most important firms of the American Aesthetic Movement, known for its exotic combinations of ornament and materials. Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933), widely regarded for his glasswork, joined with painters Samuel Colman and Lockwood de Forest and textile designer Candace Wheeler in this collaborative artistic interior decoration enterprise. Among its prestigious interior commissions were the George Kemp House (1879); Madison Square Theater curtain (1880); Union League Club (1880-81); Mark Twain House, Hartford, Conn. (1881-82); the Cornelius Vanderbilt II House (1881-82); the Ogden Goelet House (1881-82); and the White House, Washington (1882-83) during Chester Arthur's Presidency; of these only the work at the Twain House is extant. The Tiffany firm contributed a substantial \$1000 to the New Armory Fund in October 1877; it undoubtedly received the initial armory commissions due to the presence of Edward Kemp (George's brother), also head of subscriptions for the fund, on the Building Committee and Veterans' committee. In the Library and Veterans' Room of the armory, Associated Artists was assisted by architect Stanford White of the recently formed McKim, Mead, & White and painters Francis D. Millet and George H. Yewell. After the demise of Associated Artists, Tiffany continued glassmaking and decorating activities under a variety of firm names; in 1906 Tiffany Studios was employed in the redecoration of the Company B Room.

References: Daniel Cohen, "Splendor in Glass," *Historic Preservation* 39 (July-Aug. 1987), 22-29; *New Armory Fund Receipts*; Catherine Hoover Voorsanger, *In Pursuit of Beauty*; Wendy Kaplan, *"The Art that is Life": The Arts & Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1987); "Masterworks of Louis Comfort Tiffany" chronology (National Museum of American Art, 1989); Robert J. Clark, *The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1876-1916* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972)

**Charles William Clinton/Clinton & Russell**

Seventh Regiment Armory, 1877-81  
Equipment Room, 1895  
Stair Hall metal screen, 1895

Charles William Clinton (1838-1910), architect of the Seventh Regiment Armory, was born and raised in New York, and received his architectural training in the office of Richard Upjohn, until he left in 1858 to begin an independent practice. The following year, he formed a partnership with



Anthony B. McDonald, Jr., which lasted until 1862; he was later associated with Edward T. Potter. For the next 32 years Clinton practiced alone, and most of his important buildings during this period were office buildings based on Italian Renaissance prototypes. In 1894, Clinton joined William Hamilton Russell in partnership. Russell (1856-1907), also a native New Yorker, studied at the Columbia School of Mines before joining the firm of his great-uncle, James Renwick, in 1878. Five years later, he became a partner in the firm and remained there until 1894, during which time the firm became Aspinwall, Renwick & Russell. Clinton & Russell was responsible for scores of buildings including early skyscrapers, luxury apartment houses, institutions, and fashionable hotels. The firm's apartment buildings include the Graham Court Apartments (1899-1901) and the Aphorpe (1906-08), both designated New York City Landmarks, constructed for the Astors. After Russell's death, Clinton continued to practice under the name of Clinton & Russell, and the firm continued in existence until 1940.

Clinton joined Co. C of the Seventh Regiment in 1857, became third sergeant of Co. K in 1861, and served in the Civil War in 1863 as first sergeant of that company. He was responsible for planning a number of the company rooms in the regiment's Tompkins Market Armory (1855-60). Clinton was chosen to design the Seventh Regiment Armory in 1874; Clinton & Russell was hired for a number of miscellaneous jobs at the armory in the 1890s.

References: *SRG* (Jan. 1911); LPC files; Clark

### **George C. Flint & Co.**

Entrance Hall, Stair Hall, Corridors, 1879-80  
[Company A, B or F Room]?, 1880

George C. Flint (c. 1840-1924) was born in Boston, came to New York City as a young man, and was involved in the furniture business for most of his life. He first became established at 396 Hudson Street around 1868, and he continued to move uptown with his clientele, first to 104/106 West 14th Street by 1877, then to West 23rd Street from at least 1894 to 1913, and later to 20 West 36th Street (as Flint & Horner). In 1891 he purchased the firm of German-American cabinetmaker Henry Bruner (established in 1840). An advertisement in 1885 listed fine furniture, upholstery, and bedding among its wares:

*The furnishing of flats and country residences a specialty. A whole house may be completely and nicely furnished for \$500. At our Nineteenth Street Factory we manufacture Inlaid Wood Flooring, Wood Mantels, and all kinds of Cabinet Wood Work for Houses, Banks, Offices, etc.*

H.C. Glinsmann was in charge of the firm's work at the armory.

References: *NYT*, Apr. 10, 1880; Flint obit., *NYT*, Nov. 13, 1924, 21; *The Decorator and Furnisher* (Jan. 1885), 152; NYC Directories; Eileen & Richard Dubrow, *American Furniture of the 19th Century 1840-1880* (Exton, Pa.: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 1983); *19th-Century America: Furniture and Other Decorative Arts*

## **J.L. Gaumer & Co.**

Electric lighting fixtures, 1897

The armory's new electric lighting fixtures were designed by Frank S. Brady, who acted as general superintendent of the work and supervised their manufacture by J.L. Gaumer & Co., of Philadelphia.

References: *SRG* (Dec. 1897)

## **Robert G. Hatfield (1815-1879)**

Robert Griffith Hatfield, consulting architect for the Seventh Regiment Armory, was born in Elizabeth, N.J., started in the building trades, wrote a widely distributed book, *The American House Carpenter*, and began an architectural practice by 1844, which was joined by his brother Oliver Perry Hatfield in 1848. Both brothers were charter members of the American Institute of Architects (1857). In 1850-51, R. G. Hatfield collaborated with James Bogardus in the design of one of the country's first important cast-iron-fronted buildings, the Sun Building in Baltimore. The Sun Building was largely responsible for establishing his reputation, and he participated in the design and construction of many buildings utilizing cast-iron fronts or structural elements, as well as publishing a treatise, *The Theory of Transverse Strain*, on iron. Hatfield supplied the design in 1851-53 for a large railroad freight station, shared by the N.Y. & Harlem and N.Y. & New Haven Railroads, located at Centre and Franklin Streets, and is credited with having been involved in the design of the iron trusses of the shed of the first Grand Central Depot (1869-71). Emmons Clark stated that Hatfield was responsible for "the study of the working plans as drawn with reference to the strength of materials and of the construction of the [armory] in its various parts" until his death in February 1879.

References: Francis; James Dilts and Catherine Black, *Baltimore's Cast-Iron Buildings and Architectural Ironwork* (Centreville, Md.: Tidewater Publishers, 1991); *American Architect & Building News* 5 (Mar. 1, 1879), 65; LPC, Hatfield files

## **Herter Brothers**

Reception Room, 1880  
Board of Officers Room, 1880  
Colonel's Room, 1880  
Company C Room, 1880  
Company H Room, 1880-81

Gustave Herter (1830-1898), adopted son of a German cabinetmaker, emigrated to the United States in 1848; he settled in the "Little Germany" section of the Lower East Side, possibly worked for Tiffany, Young & Ellis, was associated with Edward W. Hutchings, and in 1851 joined Auguste Pottier in Herter, Pottier & Co., cabinetmakers. Around 1853 he was a partner in [Erastus] Bulkley & Herter, which moved to a shop at 547 Broadway in 1854; Gustave Herter maintained his own

business at this location starting in 1858. Christian Herter (1839-1883), Gustave's half-brother, educated in Europe, came to the United States around 1859 and worked for a short time with Tiffany & Co.; he joined in Herter Brothers in 1864. Christian returned to Europe in 1868-70, and upon his return and Gustave's retirement (and move to Germany) he took over Herter Brothers; he guided the firm to the forefront of progressive design and quality in furniture and interior decoration during the American Aesthetic Movement of the 1870s and 1880s, and Herter Brothers became the leading decorating firm in New York City. The company produced designs in a wide variety of revival styles, but was particularly noted for its "Anglo-Japanese" furniture with marquetry decoration, and received numerous interior decoration commissions from the very wealthy for mansions on Fifth Avenue and elsewhere, notably for William H. Vanderbilt (1879-82). Herter Brothers retained a number of designers (most of them architects) in the 1870s, including Charles B. Atwood, Francis H. Bacon, Alexandre Sandier, and William B. Bigelow. Thomas Hastings' father claimed that his son worked on the design of one of the rooms at the armory. William Baumgarten (1845-1906), a designer and assistant first employed in 1870, was the director of the firm in 1882-91 after Christian Herter's retirement. The company continued as an important decoration firm, ceasing operation in 1906. At the Seventh Regiment Armory, Herter Brothers also decorated the Non-Commissioned Staff Room (1880), on the second floor; the Memorial Room (1880), as well as its conversion to the Library (1895-96), on the third floor; and the Quartermaster's Room (1895), on the first floor.

References: Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994); Catherine Hoover Voorsanger, *In Pursuit of Beauty*; David Gray, *Thomas Hastings, Architect* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1933); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book*; *SRG* (1895-96); *Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (1896)

### **Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport**

Board of Officers Room, restoration, 1932  
Colonel's Room, alterations, 1932-47  
[Field and Staff Room, alterations, 1933]

Albert H. Davenport (1845-1906), bookkeeper at the Ezra H. Brabrook Co. furniture firm in Boston, purchased the company in 1880 and within several years expanded the operation to include a factory in East Cambridge and an office in New York. The Davenport concern, a national leader in commercial interior decoration until about 1910, was able to supply large building projects in a variety of styles including the Colonial Revival; commissions included the Iolani Palace, Honolulu (c. 1883) and the White House (1902-03) during Theodore Roosevelt's Presidency. The firm maintained a close working relationship with such architects as H.H. Richardson, McKim, Mead & White, Peabody & Stearns, and Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Francis H. Bacon, brother of architect Henry Bacon, was chief designer from 1885 to 1908. After Davenport's death, the company was purchased in 1914 by Irving & Casson, another successful Boston furniture and woodworking firm. Charles R. Irving and Robert Casson, listed as Boston carpenters in 1874-83, expanded rapidly into the manufacture of mantels and other interior fittings, and in 1893 purchased a factory (established in the 1860s) adjacent to Davenport's. Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport was known for its neo-Gothic church interiors, some in collaboration with Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson; it remained in



operation during and after the Depression largely through institutional commissions, and ceased around 1973. The firm worked on a number of rehabilitation and alteration projects at the armory between about 1930 and 1947, including the decoration of the Daniel Appleton Memorial Mess Hall, Lounge Bar, and Colonial Room on the fourth floor (1930-31).

References: Anne Farnam, "A.H. Davenport and Company, Boston furniture makers," *Antiques* (May 1976), and "H.H. Richardson and A.H. Davenport: Architecture and Furniture as Big Business in America's Gilded Age," in *Tools and Technologies: America's Wooden Age* (Burlington, Vt.: Robt. H. Fleming Museum, 1979); Catherine Hoover Voorsanger, *In Pursuit of Beauty*

## **Kimbel & Cabus**

Company K Room, 1879-80

Anthony Kimbel (d. 1895), from a German cabinetmaking family, emigrated to the United States in the 1840s, worked with Charles Baudouine, and was a partner in the firm of [Anthony] Bembe & Kimbel from 1854 until 1862, when he joined Joseph Cabus. Cabus had worked with Alexander Roux (possibly as a partner) before starting his own business. During the 1870s Kimbel & Cabus was noted for its "Modern Gothic" furniture (which was displayed at the Centennial Exposition in 1876), as well as Renaissance Revival designs and ebonized furniture, and advertised as decorators. After the dissolution of the partnership in 1882, Kimbel formed A. Kimbel & Sons (which lasted until 1941), and Cabus continued as a cabinetmaker until 1897.

References: David Hanks, "Kimbel & Cabus," in *Nineteenth Century Furniture: Innovation, Revival and Reform* (New York: Roundtable Press, 1982); Catherine Hoover Voorsanger, *In Pursuit of Beauty*

## **Charles Macdonald (1837-1928)**

Drill Room, 1878-79

Charles Macdonald, consulting engineer for the Drill Room who was responsible for the design of the iron arch trusses, was born and educated in Canada and received a degree in civil engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1857. He worked as an engineer in the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway in Michigan and the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad in 1863-68. After moving to New York in 1868, Macdonald became a bridge and roof specialist, associated with a number of firms: Burton & Macdonald (1870); president of the Delaware Bridge Co. (1880-83), a subsidiary of the important iron-and-steel producing Cooper, Hewitt & Co.; Union Bridge Co. (1884-1900); and American Bridge Co. (1900-01).

References: Clark; *Who Was Who in America*, vol. 1 (Chicago: A.N. Marquis Co., 1943), 760; Victor C. Darnell, *A Directory of American Bridge-Building Companies 1840-1900* (Society for Industrial Archaeology, 1984)

## **Mitchell, Vance & Co.**

Gas lighting fixtures and metalwork, 1879-81

Mitchell, Vance & Co. was formed in 1854 as [John S.] Mitchell, [John] Bailey & Co., with Anson H. Colt and Samuel B.H. Vance; the firm was reorganized in 1860 as Mitchell, Vance & Co., with Aaron and Charles Benedict. After Mitchell's death in 1875, Charles Benedict became president of the company. At the Centennial Exposition in 1876, Mitchell, Vance won a number of awards, and in the 1870s emerged as the premier American gas lighting fixtures manufacturer. An advertisement in 1879 touted the company as the designer and manufacturer of "artistic gas fixtures," clocks, bronzes, metal and porcelain lamps, and ornamental metalwork for churches, dwellings, etc., and its fixtures were found in many of New York's finest nineteenth-century buildings, such as George B. Post's Western Union Telegraph Building, Richard Morris Hunt's N.Y. Tribune Building, and St. Patrick's Cathedral. Charles C. Perring was the firm's chief designer. The company continued successfully through the gas era until after the turn of the century, was later called the Mitchell Vance Co., and ceased operations in 1933.

References: Denys P. Myers, *Picture Book of Authentic Mid-Victorian Gas Lighting Fixtures* (NY: Dover Publications, 1984); *Knapsack* (Dec. 5, 1879)

## **Passaic Rolling Mill Co.**

Drill Room, 1878-79

Passaic Rolling Mill Co., of Paterson, New Jersey, which supplied the ironwork for the Drill Room, was established in 1868 when Watts Cooke, a superintendent of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, and several brothers purchased and upgraded the former Paterson Iron Co. (1863), rolling its first iron that same year; in 1869 it was chartered as the Passaic Rolling Mill Co. During the economic depression of the 1870s the firm remained solvent by changing its product to I-beams and channel iron, and it became one of the largest and most important American iron manufacturers of the day, supplying iron for such projects as the N.Y. Evening Post Building, the New York State Capitol in Albany, the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, and the elevated railroads in New York. The company produced some 1,150,000 pounds of iron for the Seventh Regiment Armory alone. Passaic re-built after a fire in 1878 and expanded in 1882 and 1888-89, particularly its bridge-building and steel-producing capabilities. Notable bridges constructed by Passaic include the Washington Bridge (1886-89), for which it supplied 16 million pounds of iron and steel, and the Macomb's Dam Bridge (1890-95), both over the Harlem River and designated New York City Landmarks. After 1903 the firm was known as the Passaic Steel Company.

References: Shriner; LPC, *Macomb's Dam Bridge and 155th Street Viaduct Designation Report*

## **Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co.**

Field and Staff Room, 1880  
Company D Room, 1880  
Company E Room, 1879-80  
Company G Room, 1879-80  
Company I Room, 1880

Auguste Pottier (1823-1896), a French woodsculptor apprentice, emigrated to New York in 1847, worked as a sculptor with Edward W. Hutchings by 1850, joined with Gustave Herter in Herter, Pottier & Co. in 1851, and worked with William Pierre Stymus as foremen in the Rochefort & Skarren decoration firm. After Rochefort's death in 1857, Pottier and Stymus ran that business, forming a partnership in 1859 as cabinetmakers and upholsterers. By the 1860s the firm had expanded, and a factory was completed at Lexington Avenue and East 42nd Street in 1871 which covered the entire block. Among its important commissions in the 1860s in Washington were rooms in the U.S. Treasury Building, the U.S. Navy Department, and the White House during Ulysses S. Grant's Presidency. Pottier & Stymus produced furniture (noted at the Centennial Exposition) in a variety of revival styles, including the Egyptian, neo-Grec, and Renaissance Revival, and became one of the leading New York furniture and decoration concerns of the 1870s-80s, directly competing with Herter Brothers and others. Among its many wealthy clients, one of the more lucrative was Henry M. Flagler of New York and Florida, for whom Pottier & Stymus decorated several houses, hotels, and a church. After Pottier's retirement in 1886 and the factory was destroyed by fire in 1888, the firm was dissolved and the new Pottier, Stymus & Co. was created under Pottier's nephew and Stymus' son; its last listing was 1919. Sophia D. Schachter has indicated that an advertisement from the 1880s stated that in the company rooms at the armory the chief designer was John P. Lochner (c. 1843-1924). Pottier & Stymus was also responsible for the woodwork of the Adjutant's and Non-commissioned Staff Rooms on the second floor of the armory in 1880.

References: David A. Hanks, "Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co.: Artistic Furniture & Decorations," *Art & Antiques* (Sept./Oct. 1982); *19th-Century America: Furniture and Other Decorative Arts*; Schachter; Lochner obit., *NYT*, Aug. 8, 1924, 13.

## **Robinson & Knust**

Adjutant's, Equipment, Outer and Inner Committee, Company L, and Company M Rooms,  
and armory additions and alterations, 1909-11  
Drill Room alterations, 1911-13

The firm of Robinson & Knust is listed in New York City directories between 1902 and 1911. Leo Frederick Knust (1876-1946), born in Germany, had begun a practice by 1899, and continued, after his participation in the firm, until 1936. Floyd L. Robinson was listed as an architect until 1933. Knust was to have been the architect, with Henry H. Holly, of the regiment's first proposed mess hall (outside the armory) in 1907, and was credited with having planned and secured the appropriation for the reconstruction of the armory in 1909-11. After Robinson filed plans for the Drill Room in 1911, he was called "the architect in charge of the alterations in the armory two years



ago." Despite his work on the armory, and his having been in the Seventh Regiment for some twenty years (and serving as captain of Co. E) and an American citizen for forty years, Leo Knust was relieved of duty when the United States entered World War I, and he retired permanently from the military.

References: Knust obit., *NYT*, Aug. 10, 1946, 13; Ward; Francis; *SRG* (Dec. 1909; Oct. 1911; June 1933)

### **Alexander Roux & Co.**

Reception Room (woodwork), 1880  
[Company A, B, or F Room?], 1880

French cabinetmaker Alexander Roux (c. 1813-1886) emigrated to New York and opened a shop in 1837 which specialized in French style and imported furniture, becoming one of New York's most successful operations by the 1850s. The firm manufactured furniture and woodwork in all the popular revival styles of the nineteenth century, and at its height in the 1870s is said to have produced around one million dollars of furniture a year; it also did interior decorating. Roux retired in 1881 and the business was operated by his son until 1898.

References: Oscar P. Fitzgerald, *Three Centuries of American Furniture* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982); *19th-Century America: Furniture and Other Decorative Arts*

### **Alfred R. Whitney (1835-1909)**

Drill Room, 1878-79

Alfred Rutgers Whitney, contractor for the ironwork of the Drill Room, although starting in the grocery business, entered the ironwork field, becoming a clerk at the Abbott Iron Co., and was later associated with engineer/shipbuilder Thomas F. Rowland, whom he assisted in supplying the ironwork for the Civil War gunboat *Monitor* in 1861. Whitney began his own iron business in 1865 and received several important contracts for ironwork construction in New York City: the first Grand Central Depot (1869-71), one of the largest such projects up to that time; and the Greenwich Street, Second Avenue, Third Avenue, and part of the Sixth Avenue elevated railroads in the 1870s. He began an association with Cooper, Hewitt & Co. and became an agent for the Passaic Rolling Mill Co., both important iron and steel producers located in New Jersey. In the 1880s, Whitney was appointed the agent for the New York area of the Carnegie Steel Co., and was made a partner in the corporation several years prior to his retirement in 1900.

References: Whitney obit., *NYT*, Oct. 23, 1909, 11

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, architecture, and other features of this Interior, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Seventh Regiment Armory Interior, first floor interior, consisting of the Entrance Hall, the main corridor, the grand Stair Hall and staircase leading to the basement and to the second floor, the Veterans' Room, the Library, the Reception Room, the Board of Officers Room (Colonel Emmons Clark Memorial Room), the Colonel's Room, the Adjutant's Room, the Equipment Room, the Outer Committee Room, the Inner Committee Room, the Field and Staff Room, and the Drill Room (excluding the storage rooms beneath the gallery, but including the four corner stairs and the passageways to the Lexington Avenue and administration building entrances); the second floor interior, consisting of the main corridor, the grand Stair Hall and staircase leading to the third floor, the staircases at the north and south ends of the main corridor leading to the third floor, the Company A (First Company) Room, the Company B (Second Company) Room, the Company C (Third Company) Room, the Company D (Fourth Company) Room, the Company E (Fifth Company) Room and western alcove, the Company F (Sixth Company) Room and western alcove, the Company G (Seventh Company) Room, the Company H (Eighth Company) Room, the Company I (Ninth Company) Room, the Company K (Tenth Company) Room, the Company L (Eleventh Company) Room, and the Company M (Twelfth Company) Room; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall, ceiling, and floor surfaces, woodwork, cabinets, fireplaces, doors and door hardware, chandeliers, light fixtures, stained-glass window screens, stair railings, radiators, affixed paintings, attached decorative elements, and Drill Room roof trusses; has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City, and that the Interior or parts thereof are thirty years old or more, and that the Interior is one which is customarily open and accessible to the public, and to which the public is customarily invited.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Seventh Regiment Armory Interior, with its historically and architecturally significant spaces, was privately commissioned in 1879-81 for the prestigious, elite Seventh Regiment, under the leadership of Col. Emmons Clark, to the overall designs of architect Charles W. Clinton, a veteran of Co. K of the regiment; that as a volunteer militia unit often referred to as the "Silk Stocking Regiment" due to its ties to socially prominent New York families, the Seventh Regiment had an illustrious military history dating from 1806 and was the first to adopt the term "national guard"; that the palatial Seventh Regiment Armory, one of the finest and most costly American armories of the nineteenth century, had national influence in establishing the armory as a distinct building type, for both functional design and architectural imagery, and that aside from its military and police function, the Seventh Regiment served largely as a social club for its members, and the interiors of the armory reflect this; that while Col. Clark credited architect Clinton for "the architectural beauty of the building, exterior and interior, and for the complete construction and finish of every part of the immense structure," in addition, to decorate and furnish the interiors in 1879-81, the regiment and individual companies chose some of the most prominent American design and interior decoration firms of the day, including Associated Artists, Herter Brothers, Pottier & Stymus, Kimbel & Cabus, Alexander Roux & Co., and George C. Flint & Co., resulting in the creation of a series of lavish late-Victorian interiors, most with Aesthetic Movement decoration and Renaissance Revival woodwork; that as an ensemble, the regimental and company rooms of the Seventh Regiment Armory are a nationally important collection of high-style interiors, which are on a scale with and display an elegance and quality usually found only in the interiors of private clubs and the most ornate residences, few of which survive in New York City from this period, and they represent the height

of American interior design within a single building, for a "single" (in this case military) client, during a period of fifty years; that the Veterans' Room and Library, designed and decorated by Associated Artists (Louis C. Tiffany & Co.), are considered among the most beautiful and significant surviving interiors of the American Aesthetic Movement; that the Board of Officers Room was decorated by Herter Brothers and "restored" in 1932 by Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport, making it a very rare surviving Herter Brothers interior and an early instance in the historic preservation of a significant nineteenth-century American interior; that the Company K Room, designed by architect Sidney V. Stratton, is a rare surviving intact interior in the Queen Anne style; that the rooms in the armory contain an abundance of woodwork and cabinetry, particularly the company rooms, and as a whole they exhibit an unusual degree of intactness, despite their usage by the national guard and the exigencies for changes; that the alterations to these rooms made during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exhibit either change in contemporary taste or the skillful adaptation to existing decor; that these rooms, with the newly created rooms of 1909-13, the corridors, and the Stair Hall, also contain a large and important collection of both original gas and early electric chandeliers and other lighting fixtures; and that the Drill Room, designed by Clinton in collaboration with consulting architect Robert G. Hatfield and consulting engineer Charles Macdonald, who was responsible for the design of the eleven elliptical iron arch trusses, is highly significant for its engineering in the creation of one of the largest unobstructed spaces in New York City of its day, with what is considered the oldest extant "balloon shed" roof, and has accommodated numerous events and large gatherings throughout its history.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Interior Landmark the Seventh Regiment Armory Interior, first floor interior, consisting of the Entrance Hall, the main corridor, the grand Stair Hall and staircase leading to the basement and to the second floor, the Veterans' Room, the Library, the Reception Room, the Board of Officers Room (Colonel Emmons Clark Memorial Room), the Colonel's Room, the Adjutant's Room, the Equipment Room, the Outer Committee Room, the Inner Committee Room, the Field and Staff Room, and the Drill Room (excluding the storage rooms beneath the gallery, but including the four corner stairs and the passageways to the Lexington Avenue and administration building entrances); the second floor interior, consisting of the main corridor, the grand Stair Hall and staircase leading to the third floor, the staircases at the north and south ends of the main corridor leading to the third floor, the Company A (First Company) Room, the Company B (Second Company) Room, the Company C (Third Company) Room, the Company D (Fourth Company) Room, the Company E (Fifth Company) Room and western alcove, the Company F (Sixth Company) Room and western alcove, the Company G (Seventh Company) Room, the Company H (Eighth Company) Room, the Company I (Ninth Company) Room, the Company K (Tenth Company) Room, the Company L (Eleventh Company) Room, and the Company M (Twelfth Company) Room; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall, ceiling, and floor surfaces, woodwork, cabinets, fireplaces, doors and door hardware, chandeliers, light fixtures, stained-glass window screens, stair railings, radiators, affixed paintings, attached decorative elements, and Drill Room roof trusses; 643 Park Avenue, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Manhattan Tax Map Block 1401, Lot 1, as its Landmark Site.



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