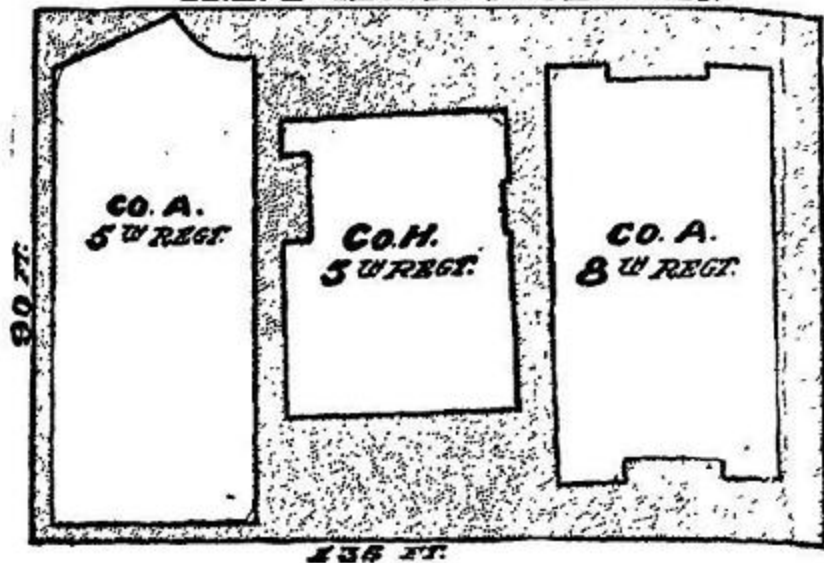


NEW ARMORY FOR CHARLESTOWN.

Military Men of This District Claim Their Present Quarters Are Inadequate—Fire Department May Take the Building Now Occupied by the Charlestown City Guards.

CO. B. BUREAU. M.V.M. OF EVERETT.



Shaded Portion Shows the Drill Space Occupied by Co B of Everett, as Compared with Space Allotted to the Three Charlestown Companies.

* Since Chief Cheswell of the Boston fire department recommended the establishment of a new engine company in the house of combination wagon 7, situated just back of St. Mary's Catholic church, fronting on Winthrop st, Charlestown, which was the result of the annual tour of inspection of Fire Commissioner Benjamin W. Wells in the Bunker Hill district, there is considerable speculation among military men as to where the Charlestown city guards will be housed should the city take the building for such purposes.

The structure at present is occupied by the Charlestown city guards, Co H, 5th Infantry, M.V.M., one of the oldest military organizations in the state, the fire apparatus and sleeping quarters for the members of the fire company. Over the street floor, where the wagon is installed, is a small assembly room, adjoining which is a much smaller room used by the officers of the military company.

Opposite, on the same floor, are the firemen's quarters. On the third floor is the drill hall, which is by far the smallest armory in the entire state, the drill space being entirely inadequate to accommodate a full company during drills.

There is need of an engine in closer proximity to the water-front danger district, the Hoosac tunnel docks and elevator and the transatlantic liners' piers. At present the nearest fire engine house is in Elm st, not far from Bunker Hill monument. A large yard in the rear of the Winthrop-st firehouse, which extends to Soley st, affords plenty of opportunity for an addition to the present structure, in which a large and powerful steam fire engine could be installed.

A number of well-known citizens of Charlestown, some of whom are deeply interested in the construction of a battalion armory in that district large enough to accommodate four companies of militia, believe the City guard's armory quarters should be given over entirely to the city for an up-to-date firehouse, which they claim is a great necessity. The members of combination wagon 7 are considerably handicapped on account of working space and sufficient sleeping quarters.

Repeated efforts have been made by

members of the Charlestown improvement association to secure a battalion armory in that district, as each of the three armories now used are ancient structures and inadequate for armory purposes.

It is a question where the city guards will find quarters should the city take the entire Winthrop-st structure for a fire house. Both the south and east armories have as many companies as they can accommodate. By the erection of a battalion armory the matter can be very easily settled, but unless some action is taken by Mayor Collins, in whose power the matter rests entirely, the citizens of Charlestown will be keenly disappointed.

Mayor Collins has been waited upon on several occasions by military men and by a committee of representatives of the Charlestown improvement association who explained the need of such an armory in the Bunker Hill district and the great expense the city is undergoing at the present time in maintaining the three armories now in use.

As matters stand at the present time it is up to Mayor Collins and the city council to request the state to build the armory. The state constructs the armory and the city has to pay for it in 30 years. It costs about \$10,000 to carry \$200,000, the interest for 30 years. It is estimated by men well posted on the cost of constructing battalion armories in this state that the expense of building such a building in Charlestown would be \$200,000.

It is costing the city of Boston at the present time on an average of \$750 a year for maintenance and repairs of the present armories, which item of expense is saved by the construction of a battalion armory in the Bunker Hill district, so that the net cost to the city would approximately be from \$250 to \$300 yearly for 30 years, and at that time the armory would be paid for in full and the title would pass to the city of Boston.

When this proposition was presented to Mayor Collins he stated to the committee that the battalion armory for Charlestown was the proper thing, and it was his belief that the armory should be built, and that the method proposed of having the state build it would be a saving investment for the city.

The expense of \$750 a year under which the city is laboring would amount to \$225,000 in 30 years, or more than enough to construct a suitable armory for four companies of militia in the Bunker Hill district.