

Commissioners of the necessity of a permanent home for the local troops. The lot at the southwest corner of Adams and Market Streets was purchased, and after months of discussion and delay, construction began in October, 1896, and the local companies occupied the completed building July 30, 1897. In style the armory was Romanesque with battlement cornices. It was 70x70 feet, 3 stories high, built of Georgia granite rock by T. S. Leonard for \$24,000. The third floor was the infantry drill hall, 26 feet in the clear. On the second floor were club rooms and quarters. The ground floor was the drill-hall of Wilson's Battery, company rooms, magazine, and rooms for storage. Although supposed to be fireproof, the armory crumbled like an eggshell in the fire of May 3, 1901.

After the fire the former courthouse at the northeast corner of Forsyth and Market Streets, the walls of which remained intact, was reconstructed and turned over to the military for an armory. The building was not suitable for the purpose and became entirely inadequate later, when two of the local companies were compelled to find quarters elsewhere. Again the question of a larger and better armory for the local troops arose and again it went through a lengthy discussion, ending finally in floating a bond issue for \$150,000 in January, 1914. From these funds the present armory was built by F. W. Long & Co. It was completed and accepted by the County March 28, 1916; the troops moved in April 20, and it was formally opened with a public reception May 2, 1916. The building is absolutely fireproof in every particular, well arranged and adequate, and a credit to the County.

#### Bibliography, Chapter XXVI

*a*Evening Times-Union, Jan. 6, 1896; *b*From diary of O. L. Keene, charter member; *c*John L. Doggett; *d*Soldiers of Florida, official State publication; *e*Record from local newspapers; *f*J. B. Morello; *g*Head dates are usually those of election by the company as noted in the local newspapers at the time; commissions followed later; *h*Florida Historical Society Quarterly, Jan., 1925.