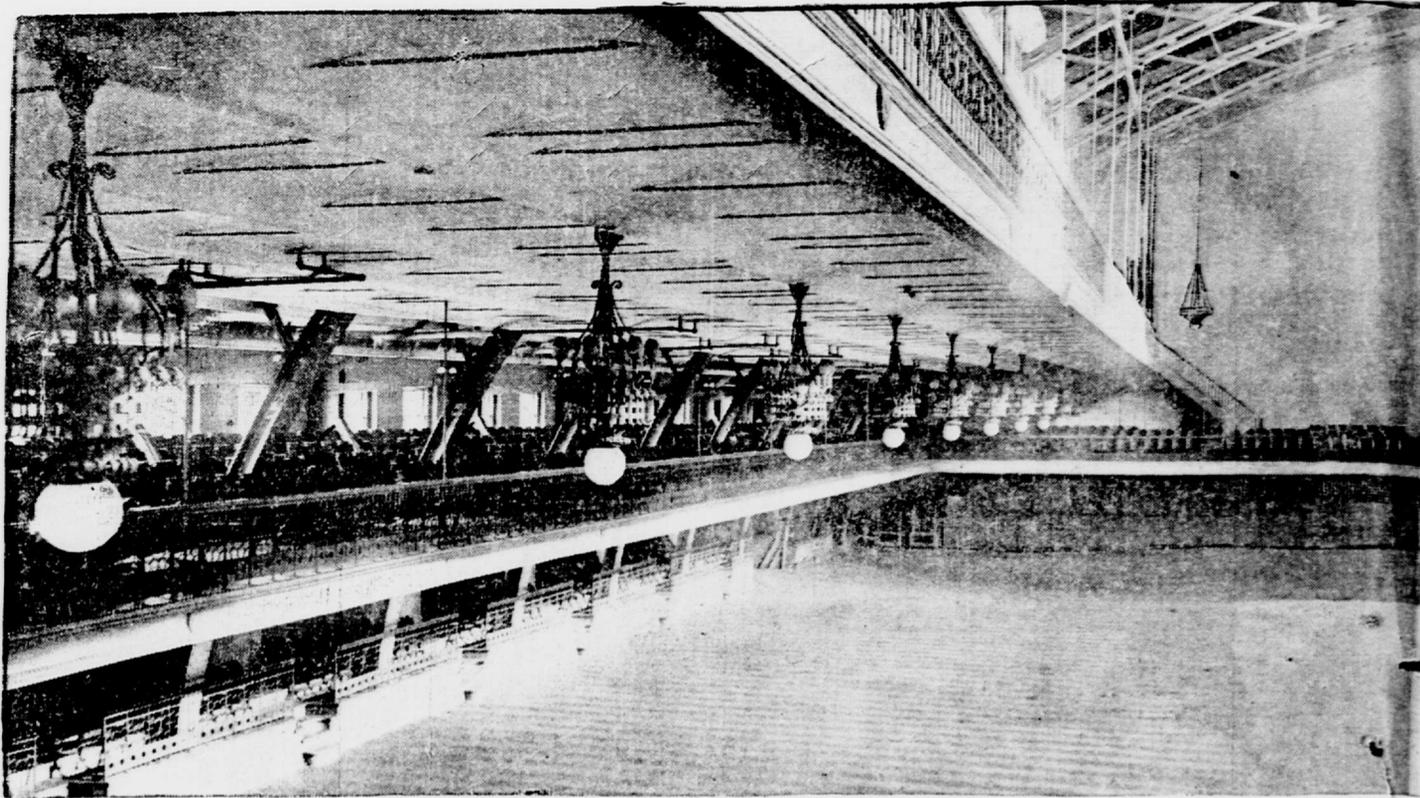


who was Sheriff of New-York in 1813, was its first colonel. A battalion of the regiment under Major Daniel D. Smith was detailed for federal service in April, 1814, and on September 5 division orders were issued to the effect that "the battalions of artillery commanded by Majors Colin V. G. Forbes and Smith are directed to take charge of the North Battery, Red Fort." On September 10, 1824, the regiment paraded under command of Colonel Alexander M. Muir for review by General Lafayette, and later presented to him a handsome sword and belt, described in orders as "a small token of the esteem in which he is held by them for his private worth and distinguished services during the war which gave independence to the country." In accepting the gift General Lafayette said:

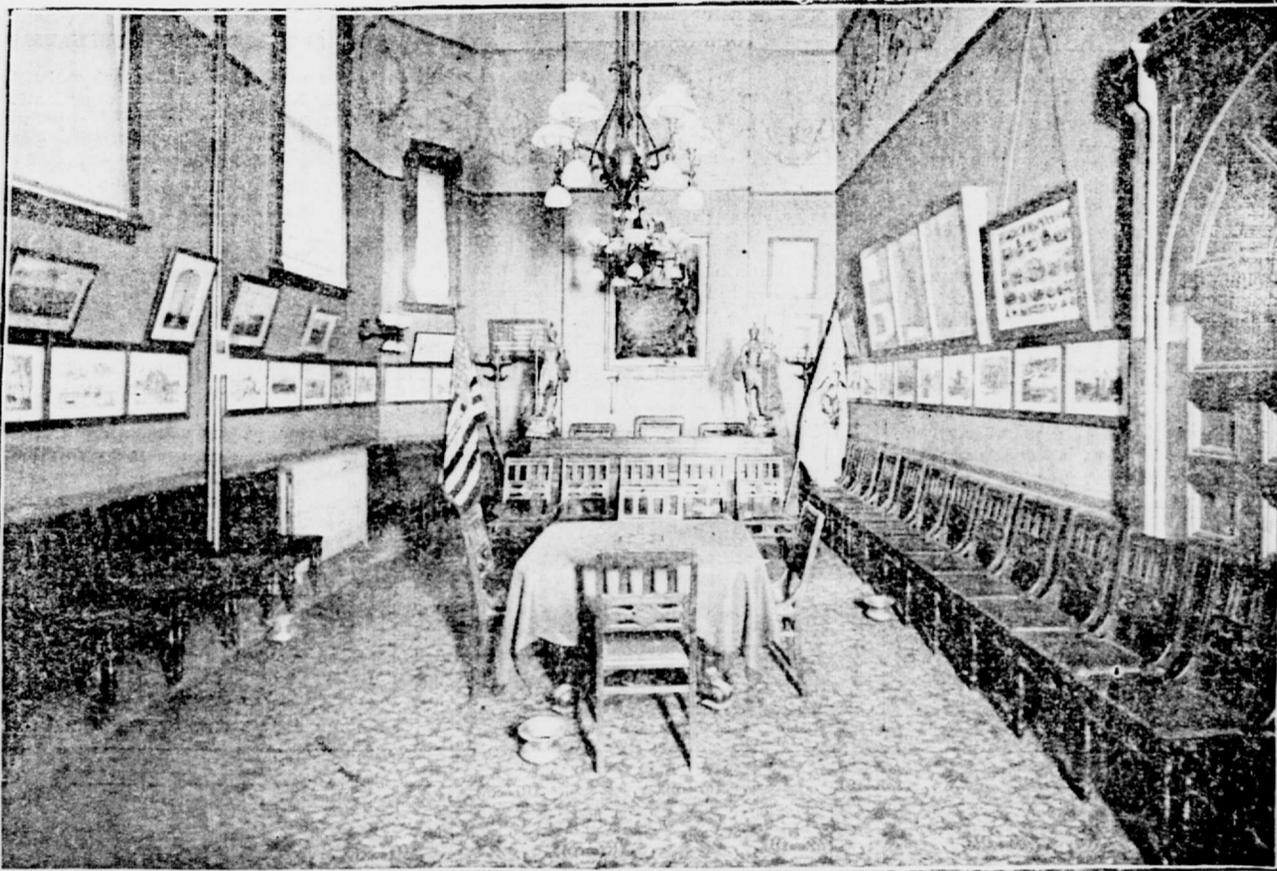
With the highest pleasure and gratitude I receive this most valuable present from a distinguished corps of citizen soldiers, every one of whom knows that swords have been given to men to defend liberty where it exists, to conquer it when it has been invaded by crowned and privileged usurpers. Accept, dear colonel, and let all the officers and soldiers of your corps accept, my most affectionate thanks.

The abolition riots in 1835 and the great fire gave the 9th Regiment opportunities for public service. When the war with Mexico broke out the 9th Regiment offered its services to the federal government through Colonel Ebenezer Jessup, jr., but enough troops had already been accepted, and the offer was declined.

From that time forward the history of the regiment contained little of an exciting nature. There were reviews and parades, and the various companies held meetings in their rooms, but the regiment had no armory. In 1848 a new element came into the 9th Regiment which made itself manifest for the first time at a meeting which took place at the Shakespeare Hotel. At this meeting the revolution in France was discussed, but the real object of the meet-



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THE COLONELS

ing was, according to the call, to help Ireland and to "decide upon the best means for accomplishing the freedom of that unhappy country." Captain George A. Hussey in his history of the 9th Regiment says:

Many eloquent speeches were made, notable among which was one by Michael T. O'Connor, who, upon concluding, was asked by Michael Phelan the pertinent question: "Can you fight as well as you have spoken?"

The result of the meeting was the organization of a brigade under the title of "Irish Republican Union." The first company was recruited from dealers in Washington Market, and was named the "Mitchell Guard." When, in 1850, this company was enrolled in the State militia it became the third company of the 9th Regiment.

The Irish Republican Union was really an incipient army of liberation, and each company was named for some distinguished Irishman. But it was deemed advisable to have the organization incorporated as a part of the State militia, and this was accomplished in May, 1850, when it became the 9th Regiment.

On St. Patrick's Day, 1851, the regiment paraded in honor of St. Patrick, and this was the first military celebration of St. Patrick's Day in New-York. At that time nearly every member of the regiment was also enrolled in a secret organization known as the "S. F.," the aim of which was the liberation of Ireland. The character of the organization as it was in those days may be judged by a letter from one of its officers published in "The Irish People." In this letter he says:

Upon the surface, the regiment to which I was attached was the 9th N. Y. S. M., simply. A few of the members were nothing else, but

the bulk were Irish rebels in disguise. The wheel within a wheel was the order of the S. F.'s.

The writer said also that the organization was being used for political purposes by men who made politics a trade, and "as a consequence a powerful and promising organization has been stripped of its boasted unity of action, if not of purpose."

The S. F.'s remained a part of the regiment until 1858, when they were transferred to the 69th Regiment and the 9th was disbanded. But there was a means at hand for the restoration of the 9th Regiment. One foreign element had caused its disruption, and another similar element was responsible for its reorganization. Among the regimental organizations in New-York at that time was the 55th Regiment, known also as the "Garde Lafayette." This was composed of eight companies. Three of these were made up of native Americans and Swiss and five companies had nothing but native Frenchmen in their ranks. The French companies constituted one battalion and the other three companies formed the second battalion. It was one regiment, and should have been a harmonious body, but it was far from that. There was continual strife between the two battalions, harmony seemed to be unattainable, and the fights in the 55th were common talk. There was difference even as to uniform, each battalion having its own style of trousers. A wag offered his services as arbitrator, and suggested that the regiment bury its differences and its trousers and wear kilts.

But neither the wag nor the disciplinarian could induce the men to come to terms, and when the 9th was disbanded the "right wing" of the 55th, which contained the Americans,



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