

October 5th 2025 Mid-year meeting of the Department of New York.

Commander Jeff French called the meeting to order at 5:00 with 10 members.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given

The Commander will be sending his annual report to the C-In-C, he will be sending a copy to the Department.

The Encampment is coming in April and there may be a headstone dedication on Sunday afterward. Brother Duffy described research efforts that discovered about 11 veterans who had no headstones. The city the cemetery is in is willing to set the stones for no charge if they are acquired. The applications to the VA have not been sent in yet. The ceremony is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 on Sunday, if they're in place and ready.

Resolutions and By-law changes – no later than 3, February.

Awards and certificates – make sure you have your awards set up if you're giving them out.

The recruitment award will be announced at the encampment rather than the past practice of waiting until May. The Brothers agreed that a potential by-law change could be considered, making the award period from Jan 1 to Dec 31st of each year. The same for several other similar awards.

The Commander has 2 nominees for the Dr. Mary Walker award, they'll be announced at the Encampment.

All relevant information is now on the web site. Cornell University will not let us sell raffle tickets at the college so we'll need to purchase them through the web site. We can still purchase tickets at the hotel on Friday night at the "meet and greet".

Encampment options in 2027- the Daughters are working on bringing back the "campfire"

We may, from now on, have set locations in each region.

Fundraising – little support through the bottle and can drive. We need a Chairman for the Scholarship program.

Commander French will be looking into "games of chance" types of fundraising at the Camp/county level, raffling off the firearm discussed at the last encampment.

The Department is looking at investing some of what we have saved. Brother Albanese added that we do have low-risk mutual fund investments already. There was further discussion on the Permanent Fund, investment options and potential by-law changes.

There was discussion on a By-Law change to the Legislative Committee.

Battle Flag preservation – now that the State has increased storage space, the Fundraising Committee will be looking for grants to preserve certain flags. We can then perhaps go to the State for more funds. Brother Duffy was to have a meeting with a State legislator to discuss flag preservation, but it was cancelled. He has now made contact with a person on the Board of the Friends of the Military Museum.

Recruitment-Retention – C-in-C Tucker has emphasized it in his General Orders. Commander French stated we need to be visible to the public, and make any new members welcome in the Order. Use their enthusiasm and talents. We need to grab them and pull them in.

Brother Orton expressed concern that there is no list of members' ancestors, and when they joined the Sons. He wants the Department to recreate a list of everyone who has ever been a member of the Department. Secretary Pugsley will be consulted to see what he has.

Dep't SVC Schwarzmuller – In May, he put out word on a project in Albion about a veteran who was found in the poorhouse cemetery. Other preservation projects are in the works. Lincoln Camp has acquired 3 Pomeroy markers and they are now in the possession of the site-holders. There may be ceremonies in the works.

Brother Orton mentioned the condition of the GAR hall in Halsey Valley. Commander French added that Smith Camp will be trying to fix the up the building. Brother Schwarzmuller added that Smith Camp is now in possession of a new Pomeroy historic marker arranged by Lincoln Camp.

He described his efforts to add to the graves database. He also described Lincoln Camp's activities in putting out flag holders in Mt. Hope Cemetery. He described Eagle Scout presentations by Lincoln Camp.

He described a program that Wal-Mart has that helps non-profit orgs... He's looking into how that works.

Department JVC, not present

Dep't Secretary- not present

Treasurer- The deposit to Cornell for the encampment has been paid, the per capita was paid to National, with an assortment of other routine business.

Dep't Council – Brother Castler- Nothing to report.

Committees-

Archives...No real report. Still need a climate-controlled place for the archives that we can afford.

Monuments and Memorial Grant- Received one grant application- pending. Brother Wheeler added that the application is for \$2000 for a sign at the Danby monument.

Legislation Committee – Brother Duffy- no report.

Graves Registration- the database development isn't moving very fast.

ROTC Certificates- National has handed that down to the Departments and Camps. National still has certs and medals.

Camp Commanders-

Lincoln Camp- Brother Schwarzmuller- referred back to his previous remarks earlier in the meeting in re. Lincoln Camp's activities. He then asked Brother Castler about the space needed to place the contents of the archives. The answer is about an 8X10 space with proper shelves, security, desk, etc.

There may be space in a railroad museum in Western NY. Brother Albanese added that there is a small amount of money set aside for this.

French Camp- Brother Jeff – no report

Tilden Camp – No report

Sidney Camp- Brother Wheeler – no further report beyond the remarks earlier in the meeting.

Webber #44- No report

Hicks Camp #111- No report

Searle Camp- No report

Ellis Camp- Paul Ellis-Graham- will be submitting an application for 2 headstone replacements. Approved a #250 grant toward restoring a cannon at the Hillside Cemetery in Cortland, NY. The Camp is looking at having a ceremony at the Col. Augustus VanHorne Ellis grave in a family plot in NYC. There will be a speaker in Goshen in October in re. the USS Monitor.

Tanner Camp- No Report

Ireland Camp- No Report

Caywood Camp- The Camp is busy and they're meeting every month.

Willard Camp – Brother Castler said the Camp Commander (Rev. Dr. Isaacs) father passed away. The Camp is still working in the Mt. Ida Cemetery and will soon start in a cemetery in Schenectady with about 20 GAR members.

Smith Camp – In reorganization. Brother Schillington is helping.

Cook Camp- No report

Catlin Camp- No report

Baldwin Camp- Brother McMahon stated the Camp has been busy. They dedicated a headstone in Sayville and made the news. They've picked up 5 new members in 2025. Four more headstone dedications for 2026. They're becoming active in the JROTC and ROTC. They're honoring businesses that fly the flag and honor vets.

Lilly Camp – Brother Henry- the Camp celebrated their 1 year anniversary. Two brothers attended a headstone cleaning class. He attended the National encampment. They've gained 1 new member. There may be a plaque dedication in Ft. Hill in Spring of 2026. The person is buried near Harriett Tubman. The 148thSVR will likely attend.

Brother Ellis-Graham suggested that headstone cleaning tips and education materials be referenced on the Department web site.

There is a new Camp forming that may have 20 new members by the time they have paperwork finalized. They're out of Madrid that run Ft. Tribute.

Osborn Camp (potential new Camp)– was invited to attend this meeting.

National is working on a new Patriotic Instructor form.

For the good of the Order-

Brother Orton has a list of all the known CW cannons in NYS, but it can't be published for the safety of the items. He'll send you a copy if you ask.

Brother Duffy suggested the Commander appoint a Committee to help with the web site protocols. Brother LeMay (Web Master) added that National recently posted new guidelines. He asked if you send something that it be web-ready, like a .pdf document. The web site is up to date as to the information he's been given so far.

No further comments.

The motion was made and seconded to close the meeting at 7:00pm.