

Attica Is Stirred by Slaying of a Civilian

By McCANDLISH PHILLIPS

Special to the New York Times

ATTICA, N. Y., Sept. 14—Residents of this stunned village were trying today to come to some kind of terms with the tragic events at Attica prison and with the violent deaths of friends and family members who worked there.

In a community that esteems neighborliness, family regularity, patriotism and civic participation, the death of Elon F. Werner, the 63-year-old civilian employe who was seized as a hostage and slain, seemed particularly senseless and hard to accept.

Mr. Werner was regarded by many here as a nonpareil, a man of gentle demeanor, quick to help others, and his neighbors cannot understand why he, of all men, should have been killed in the inmates' revolt.

Tributes Are Warm

To his minister Mr. Werner was "a good person . . . a saint." To a lodge brother he was "one hell of a good fellow" and "a faithful fraternalist." To a friend of nearly 50 years, he was "one of the best, you'd better believe it."

Mr. Werner's office job did not place him in a disciplinarian relationship to the inmates, so they could have had no grudge against him, they said.

Certain facts seemed to others to give his death a particular poignancy: Mr. Werner would have been 64 years old next Thursday; he and his wife, Ruth, would have celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in December; a great nephew was born while he was held



Associated Press

Elon F. Werner

hostage, but he never heard of it.

The victim, who sat as a Justice of the Peace in this pastoral village for a dozen years, leaves a son and a daughter, both married, and six grandchildren.

Career Is Recalled

At Timm's Hardware Store on Main Street, a few steps up the hill from the muddy waters of the Tonawanda Creek, Frank Mandeville put his black boot on the low rung of a ladder and stared out a window.

"Words are hard," he said. "I know maybe a dozen of them — the hostages — they were friends, customers. Elon was the closest to me of any of them."

He recalled that Mr. Werner had started his career with one of the two largest employers

here, the Westinghouse plant, and had ended it in the other, the State Correctional Facility, where he had worked for about 14 years in various office jobs, starting as a correspondence censor.

He was a senior accountant at death, earning \$10,500 a year.

"Elon was a devout father, and I would have to call him a never-tiring man in service to our village," Mr. Mandeville said. "He was the volunteer treasurer of the Attica Cemetery Association for many years."

"He took an injury at Westinghouse over 25 years ago and he was pretty badly hurt in his back. He had his own insurance office in town before going into state service."

Mr. Mandeville turned to the larger question of the prison tragedy, and he figured some good might finally come of it. "If this can straighten out any of this mishandled penal situation, we can afford it 10 times," he said. "If that happens, it's paid for itself."

Governors Name Moore

SAN JUAN, P. R., Sept. 14 (AP) — Republican Governors chose Gov. Arch A. Moore Jr. of West Virginia today as the next chairman of the National Governors Conference. He defeated Gov. Daniel J. Evans of Washington on a secret ballot. The conference chairmanship rotates between the two parties. Mr. Moore will be formally elected tomorrow to succeed Gov. Warren E. Hearnes of Missouri.