

# Attica in Mourning as Rites Are Held for Six



Associated Press

Coffin of Sgt. Edward T. Cunningham, a slain hostage, is carried past correction officers and troopers in Attica

NYTimes

SEP 18 1971

## Guards From Afar

By DAVID K. SHIPLER  
Special to The New York Times

ATTICA, N. Y., Sept. 17— Today was a long and sorrowful day for the village of Attica.

From early morning until late afternoon, there was scarcely a moment without a funeral, a cortege or a graveside ceremony in progress.

Six dead guards and civilian employes, killed in the police assault on the Attica

Correction Facility Monday, were mourned at services that brought prison guards and policemen from Maryland, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania and around New York State to stand silently in ranks, saluting the coffins as they passed from funeral home to hearse, from hearse to church, from church to

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## Inmates' Kin Critical

By BARBARA CAMPBELL

A year ago Mr. and Mrs. Preston McNeil, as a last resort to keep their son out of trouble, convinced him to give up his parole and return to prison for the last 18 months of his sentence.

Today their son, Lorenzo, who was 29 years old, is dead, killed along with 29 other inmates by police who stormed Attica Correctional Facility on Monday after a five-day inmate revolt.

All over the state, families like the McNeils are mourning their dead, following the release yesterday of a complete official list of victims.

The release of the list ended the frustration, anxiety and worry of other families of the 1,200 inmates involved in the incident who, during the week, had tried unsuccessfully to find out who was

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# Attica Mourns as Rites Are Held for 6

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cemetery.

Many Attica residents, including some slightly injured prison guards, spent the entire day going to funerals, following the hearses to the graveside, standing in the sun to hear the clergymen's final words, then driving the short way back to what was often the same church or the same funeral home from which they had just come, to honor another of their colleagues at the next ceremony.

But even this day of agony failed to end properly for Attica. After each graveside ceremony, when the mourners had departed, each coffin was placed again in the hearse and returned to the funeral home for further examination of the body by pathologists who are checking to verify earlier findings that the hostages died of gunshot wounds.

## Stores Are Closed

The town was solemn. Stores were closed after post-small signs printed in black ink, saying: "In respect, closing Friday, Sept. 17." Children in houses along the streets near the funeral homes pressed their faces to the windows to watch the processions.

At a street corner near Marley's Funeral Home, two telephone linemen climbed down from a pole where they were installing extra lines to serve the state investigators in the prison. They sat in their truck during the funeral of Herbert W. Jones Jr., a 26-year-old account clerk in the prison's industrial plant.

"We didn't think we should be working while this was going on," one said.

At a double funeral for Ronald D. Werner, a 34-year-old guard, and his uncle, Elon F. Werner, 63, who was an account clerk in the prison, the Rev. Charles F. Williman of St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Attica, old the mourners:

"My experience has been to this point that to be from Attica took some explaining — so far from Buffalo, in Western New York, near Niagara Falls.

"We will never have to explain, for all the world knows the name of Attica now. Until nine long days ago we could believe we were sheltered from the rest of the world, separated as it were from the problems of people in the city, in the ghettos and the rest of the world.

"If we did not know it then, we know it now: Attica is part of the tragedy that is the world. The tragedy has touched all of us and it has left its scar, and because of this we will never be the same."

## Guards Stand in Ranks

As Mr. Williman spoke inside Marley's Funeral Home, which is just a few blocks from the prison, his remarks were carried by loudspeaker to an overflow crowd standing outside, including 75 uniformed prison guards who stood in ranks lining the walkway from the funeral home.

"Life will go on," Mr. Williman said. "We shall return to normalcy; time will heal the loneliness and the grief we feel now.

"But Attica can never return to the Attica of nine days ago. "We know that, and so does the world. And because of that, the world will continue to watch us and focus its attention on what we do to see what we shall become."

He urged the mourners "to make Attica a showplace of love."

"Until nine days ago," the minister said, "to make that love known wasn't too difficult. Our neighbors were close by; we felt sheltered. But now, by the event that took place, we belong to the world, and that makes loving a lot tougher than it once was.

"And maybe that's what Godis still doing," said Mr. Williman, "asking us in our grief to be a showcase for love for all the world to see."

Then the two coffins—the one of Ronald Werner draped with a flag in recognition of his military service—were taken to Forest Hills Cemetery for a brief ceremony. The graves are on a gentle slope from which the red-pointed roofs of the guard towers of the prison are visible.

The day began before 9 A.M., when about 150 policemen and correction officers in gray and blue uniforms formed two lines flanking the walkway from Marley's Funeral Home.

The honor guard included sheriff's deputies from Nassau and Suffolk Counties, prison guards from New Jersey and Maryland, and women prison guards from New York State, all with strips of black tape on their badges.

The first funeral was for Elmer G. Hardie, a 58-year-old foreman in the machine shop. And as his widow, Betty, walked with her eight children up the walkway toward the home, a guard commanded, "Detail, attention!" There was no other sound.

Half an hour later, when the copper-colored coffin was carried out by six pallbearers, the uniformed men saluted. Then they marched behind the gray hearse the several blocks to the white clapboard St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church.

## Eight Clergymen Officiate

The honor guard remained outside during the celebrated mass of the resurrection. Eight clergymen officiated, among them the chief concelebrant, Msgr. John Dempsey, who was once pastor at the church and is now at Immaculate Conception Church in East Aurora, N. Y. The co-concelebrants included the Revs. Alton LaRusch, Norman McLaughlin, Eugene Kolb and John Mitka.



The New York Times/Tyrone Dukes

**MOURNERS:** Mr. and Mrs. Preston McNeil, right, parents of one of the inmates killed at Attica, at their Queens home yesterday. They were waiting for the body of their son, Lorenzo, to be brought home. With them is Lorenzo's aunt, Miss Catherine Allen.



# For Families of Inmates, Word Is Late

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alive and who was dead.

Some families first heard of a death through news reports and were later sent a telegram, others, like the McNeils, have never received official notification.

Mrs. McNeil sat in the living room of her Springfield Gardens, Queens, home yesterday, waiting for her son's body to be brought home. She said she first heard of his death from a reporter who called her on Monday.

"I swear, in God's name, I have not to this day heard from the prison," she said, dry-eyed but wearing dark glasses.

Unlike many other relatives of prisoners who drove to Attica last week and were turned away, Mrs. McNeil said she waited at home and kept calling the prison, following the tragedy of the uprising and the shootings on television.

She shrugged her shoulders helplessly when she recalled how she and her husband had talked to her son a year ago in the same living room and he had agreed to return to prison.

## 'Was Heading Downhill'

"We thought we were doing the best thing at the time," she said. "He was heading downhill—not looking for a job and starting to hang on the corner. If he had gotten into trouble, he would have been sent away for a long time."

Lorenzo, she said had been given a two-to-five-year sentence for stealing money from a Brooklyn grocery store but had been paroled in 1968 after serving three years.

"He tried to keep a job, but every time they would find out he was a convict they would fire him," she said. "We were afraid he would go out and steal some money again and it was better to send him back again than to let him do that."

Prison, Mrs. McNeil said, was the only sanctuary for her son and, apparently, he believed so himself. At first he was sent to Greenhaven State Prison at Stormville, N. Y., but was transferred to Attica in June.

## Express Bitterness

The McNeils' comments about the shootings at Attica evidenced a deep bitterness. The killings of inmates, they said, was another example of "the white man's hate for blacks."

"I am the first one to say if you do wrong you should go to jail," said Mr. McNeil, who is a postal worker and also works part time in a neighborhood school cafeteria.

"But while you are in jail you shouldn't be treated worse than dogs," he added.

Mrs. McNeil, however, said she believed that her son would be alive today, "if somebody on the outside would have gone out on a limb" and not believed that "once you do bad you always going to be bad."

The McNeils now know a few details about how their son died. The mortician who went to Rochester to claim the body told them that Lorenzo had not died instantly at the prison but in a Rochester hospital 50 miles from Attica.

But like many of the families with dead sons at Attica, they will not be satisfied until they know the there. "I don't believe in autopsies," said Mrs. McNeil, "but when we get him here, I'm going to have the undertaker go over him with a fine-toothed comb. Going 50 miles to hospital—that's a long way to bleed."

The family of Santiago Santos received the official news of his death a day after they read about it in the newspapers.

In their basement apartment at 830 Beck Street, in the Bronx, they displayed the

telegram from Attica that read:

"Regret to inform you that your son died 9/13/71. His body at Strong Memorial Hospital, 260 Crittenden Boulevard, Rochester. If you wish to claim body, immediately notify Vincent R. Mancusi, superintendent, Attica Correctional facilities."

The telegram was signed V. R. Mancusi.

The grief-stricken Santos family—Santos' wife, Maria; his 6-year-old son, and his mother, also named Maria—remember Santos as a quiet, passive gentle man. But his wife said he was mentally ill and did not belong at Attica.

Although her husband had graduated with honors from the Modern Business College in Ponce, P. R., in 1964, she said he began to disintegrate mentally five years ago, often telling her he was told by God to commit robberies.

## Arrested 5 Years Ago

Santiago, she said, came to New York from Penuelas, P. R., a suburb of Ponce, when he was 6 years old and went to primary schools here. Five years ago he was arrested and served seven months in prison for burglary.

When he was killed, he had served two and a half years of a four-year sentence for breaking into an apartment on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx.

Before he was sent up, Santiago, then 29, worked on and off at factory jobs in New York, his wife said.

Mrs. Santos does not believe her husband took part in the uprising but happened to be in cell block D when the disturbance started.

"He never complained of anything at the prison," she said, noting that a recent letter mentioned nothing of the trouble at Attica.

"He had to be punished," his mother said, "he did wrong but they should not have sent him there with those murderers."