



**Q&A BASED ON RESEARCH
& WRITINGS OF THE LATE
AUBURN PRISON
HISTORIAN DEP.
SUPERINTENDENT
JOHN N. MISKELL
PRESENTED ON
NYCHS WEBSITE AT
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*Multiple choice questions. Mark letter choice.
Answer key: Bottom back page.*

- 1 - The first NY state prison was?
(a)Clinton (b)Sing Sing (c)Auburn (d)Newgate
- 2 – Auburn Prison construction began?
(a)1817 (b)1819 (c)1816 (d)1818
- 3 – State got Auburn prison site by eminent domain.
(a)False (b)True
- 4 – Auburn Prison builder and 1st warden was?
(a)Elam Lynds (b)Wm Britten (c)John Cray
- 5 – Which early Auburn wing became model for most prisons in America? South wing or North wing?
(a)South wing (b)North wing
- 6 – That wing's cell dimensions were?
(a)7' x 7' x 3 ½' (b) 6' x 6' x 3' (c)8' x 8' x 4'
- 7 – Keepers usually gave commands by?
(a)loud voice (b)hand signals (c)cane raps
- 8 – Inmate uniforms were striped to?
(a)humiliate them (b)spot escapees (c) both
- 9 – Inmates at meals (a) all faced one way (b)faced others (c)could chose to face one way or face others.
- 10 – Auburn inmates in 1845 started building Sing Sing.
(a) True (b)False
- 11 – Prison ceased Shower Bath punishment because of?
(a)paddle preference (b)inmate death (c)water shortage

- 12 – “Copper John” atop Auburn Prison weighs?
 (a)800 lbs (b)700 lbs (c)600 lbs (d)500 lbs
- 13 – In 1890 Prison began selling inmate-made goods to
 (a)highest bidder (b)1st come 1st serve (c)only government
- 14 – When was last execution by hanging in Auburn before
 1890 when the prison held the world’s 1st electric execution?
 (a)1884 (b)1885 (c)1886 (d)1887
- 15 – NY adopted electric executions as (a)more humane
 than hangings (b)to preserve capital punishment (c)both
- 16 – Edison and Westinghouse rivalry was also a factor.
 (a)False (b)True
- 17 – How many were executed in Auburn electric chair?
 (a)35 (b)55 (c)75 (d)95
- 18 – Another NY prison besides Auburn with electric chair?
 (a)only Sing Sing (b)Only Clinton (c)both (d)neither
- 19 – Leon Czolgosz died in Auburn chair for killing
 (a)pregnant girl as in *American Tragedy* (b)U.S. President
- 20 – Auburn sent Elmira its 1st inmates who found (a)same
 stress on “hard labor” (b)more education emphasis
- 21 – Elmira Reformatory influence credited with easing
 Auburn (a)silence rule (b)punishments (c)both
- 22 – By early 1900s Auburn prison even (a)started inmate
 school (b)ended “lockstep” (c)ended zebra stripes (d) all 3
- 23 – Inmate “self-government” league set up at Auburn by

- (a)Elam Lynds (b)John Cray (c)Thomas Mott Osborne
 (a)paddle preference (b)inmate death (c)water
 shortage
 24 – Auburn Prison “Plan” featured (a)solitary cells
 (b)group work (c)hard labor (d)strict silence (e)all that

- 25 – Prison’s Bloodiest Day – 8 inmates & principal keeper
 killed, 9 persons wounded & 3 inmates later executed –
 was a riot on July 28 (a)1921 (b)1929 (c)1933

- 26 – Women prison operated at Auburn Prison from 1894
 (a)to 1923 (b)to 1933 (c)to 1943 (d)to 1953

- 27 – An inmate school erected on women prison site began
 operating Jan. 22 (a)1951 (b)1961 (c)1971 (d)1981

- 28 – Reflecting changed purpose the prison was renamed
 correctional facility in (a)1950 (b)1960 (c)1970 (d)1980

- 29 – Strike by uniform and civilian staffers lasted 16 days in
 (a)1959 (b)1969 (c)1979 (d)1989

- 30 – Medal of Honor recipient for role in Civil War capture
 of Confederate train but who suffered in POW camp and
 eventually died in Auburn Asylum for Criminally Insane was
 (a)Robert Buffum (b)Chester Gillette (c)James Farmer

Answers: 1–(d). 2–(c). 3–(a). 4–(b). 5–(b). 6–(a). 7–(c). 8–(c).
 9–(a). 10–(b). 11–(b). 12–(c). 13–(c). 14–(b). 15–(c). 16–(b).
 17–(b). 18–(c). 19–(b). 20–(b). 21–(c). 22–(d). 23–(c). (24–(e).
 25–(b). 26–(b) 27(b). 28–(c). 29–(c). 30–(a).

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