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This Special Issue provides a brief overview of a NY Correction History Society slide presentation prepared for the SUNY University at Albany History Dept.-sponsored *Researching NY 2002 Conference*.



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(718) 417-2315

(718) 417-2326

Fax

Correction
Academy, 66-26
Metropolitan Ave,
Middle Village, N.Y. 11379

NYCHS@nyc.rr.com
www.correctionhistory.org



The Archival Record That Nearly Wasn't

NYCHS presentation at Researching NY 2002

Friday, Nov. 22, 2002 University at Albany,

Campus Center, Session IV *In the Archives* (1:15 - 3 pm)

What this presentation calls *The Archival Record That Nearly Wasn't* is a book, *The Obsequies of Abraham Lincoln in the City of New York*, published by the Common Council in 1866.

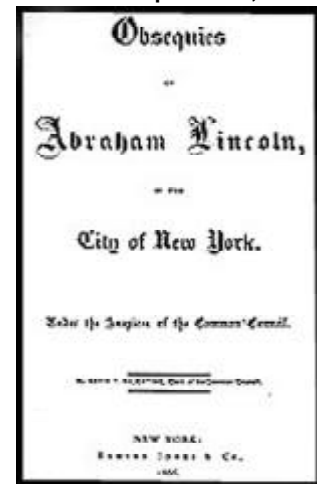
The 7.5" x 11" book has 254 pages with 7 detailed illustrations of Lincoln's funeral rites April 24 - 25, 1865 and contains proclamations, notices, eulogies, resolutions, mourners lists, lines of march, and other details.

An intriguing footnote about this historical resource was found during research on a mayor with a correction connection who had coped with terrorists trying to incinerate Lower Manhattan, an attack that a mastermind financed and directed from a foreign base. During Mayor C. Godfrey Gunther's term 137 years before the 9/11 attack, a Confederate team of American-born and bred terrorists – reputedly directed by Jacob Thompson — firebombed Lower Manhattan hotels, museums, and theatres filled with civilian men, women and children.

Less than a month after the one firebomber captured was hanged for it at a prison fort in NY Harbor, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated and the city conducted massive funeral rites for him. A little more than a month later, Mayor Gunther (whose duties had required him to preside at those rites) vetoed a Council plan to publish in book form the funeral arrangements committee's full report on those observances. The presentation takes up the question of "why the veto?" (continued Page 2)

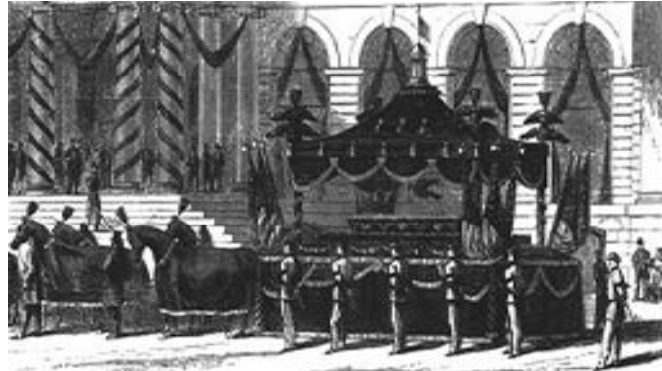


C. Godfrey Gunther, NYC's 77th mayor, former president of the elected board of governors for its jails and charitable institutions. The Common Council overrode his veto of its publishing 25,000 copies of the 254-page book detailing the Lincoln funeral rites in NYC April 24-25, 1865.



Why did NYC's 77th mayor veto the Lincoln rites book?

(Continued from Page 1) The veto message -- citing cost and unnecessary content -- falls short of providing a full answer; thus the need to look at the forces in play then. They give a basis and context for solid surmises about the real reasons behind the book plan and the veto.



Council book illustration of Lincoln catafalque at City Hall.

The story involves matters of governance between city and state as well as within the city, politics and Tammany Hall, key players' biographical backgrounds, the Civil War, certain historical ironies and -- quite relevant to our own era -- terrorism.



Reputed top terrorist Jacob Thompson: a 6-term Congressman and U.S. Secretary of the Interior under Buchanan.

A factor in the mix was Gunther's own role as an anti-abolitionist Peace Democrat who had written Lincoln a personal letter asking him to expedite a cotton-for-blankets plan to save Confederates from freezing to death in the Elmira POW camp. Another

factor was Gunther's own background as a volunteer fireman and leader among fire "vols." His beloved fire volunteers had performed well during the draft/race riot of 1863 and the terrorist firebombings of 1864. NYC volunteer fire companies organized the first volunteer Union regiment under Col. Elmer Ellsworth, the first Union officer killed in the war.

But Albany lawmakers in the President's party saw the municipal fire companies as political clubs allied with the Democrats. Just two weeks before the assassination, the state legislature mandated the volunteer system be replaced by a paid department.

Mayoral politics figured in the Lincoln rites book plan and the veto. Boss Tweed and his War Democrat buddies on the rites arrangement committee wanted to promote themselves. Gunther's veto delayed publication until after the election.

Who was the rites book hero and who the villain?

Gunther who vetoed the book or Tweed who helped override it?



Gettysburg monument to NYC volunteer firemen who served.



Daniel F. Tiemann, NYC's 74th mayor, former member of the board of governors of the city's jails and charitable institutions.

Soilers-Almshouse Board Was Elected

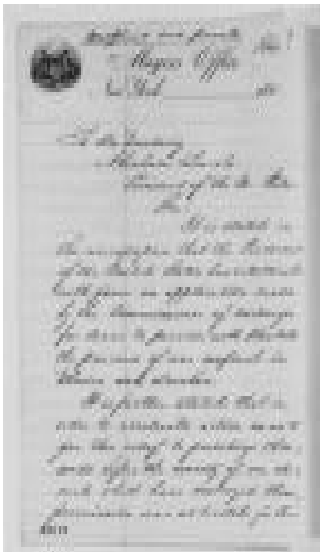
Two future mayors -- Daniel F. Tiemann and C. Godfrey Gunther -- served together 1855-57 on the board that ran the jails and almshouse. Though on the same board and both Democrats, they were not allies.

In 1854, when Gunther's anti-abolitionist group nominated him for election to the almshouse board, Free Soilers nominated Tiemann in opposition. Gunther lost but ran well. The next year, he was renominated and won.

Gunther became almshouse board president in 1857, the year Tiemann was renominated for mayor as an Independent, defeated Tammany incumbent Fernando Wood. In 1863, Tammany nominated Wood on a political hack that a new reform group emerged to run Gunther for mayor as an Independent. He won with 29,121 votes, a margin of more than 6,000.



The prison can be seen in the distance from the resting place of about 3000 Confederates who died in the Elmira POW camp operated by Union military.



Text of Documents From Mayor, Council

Mayor's Office
New York March 31, 1865

Proclamation

Whereas a bill has been passed by the Legislature of this State making certain changes in the Fire Department of this city, and establishing a Metropolitan Fire District, which will doubtless be approved by the Governor and become law.

Now, I, C. Godfrey Gunther, Mayor of the City of New York, do hereby earnestly recommend to the members of the Fire Department of this city, and the citizens generally, not to listen to the suggestions which may be made by ill advised or designing individuals, but faithfully to obey the laws of the land and the directions of the officers of the Department, and others in authority, to continue to perform all the duties incumbent on them as members thereof, to abstain from all demonstrations, which may be considered as tending to disorder, to watch over & protect the public property entrusted to their care, and to act in all respects worthy of the dignity & high character of the Firemen of New York.

To my former associates & friends I appeal not to tarnish, by any imprudent act, the noble record of the Department but to let its conclusion be marked by the same devotion to law that has attended its past honorable career of usefulness.

C. Godfrey Gunther,
Mayor

Gunther to Lincoln about Elmira POWs

Mayor's Office
New York, _____, 186__

Unofficial and private

His Excellency,
Abraham Lincoln,
President of the U.S.

It is stated in the newspapers that the United States has entered with favor the application made by the Commission of Exchanges for leave to provide with blankets the prisoners of war confined to Elmira and elsewhere. It is further stated that in order to accelerate action so as to give relief to perishing thousands and to prevent the severity of our climate from having destroyed them, permission was solicited for the transportation of a cargo of cotton to this city, here to be converted to the use of the sick by the way.

A number of citizens, impelled by motives of humanity, have observed with pain and anxiety that at this point the negotiations are desultory. Each chilly night increases the anxiety; the thought that poor men are perishing from the cold not being thrust away; it will not be.

These citizens have pressed me to read an appeal to your Excellency to act, and to act favorably to the measure.

It has appeared to me that if an act of charity and humanity is to be performed, it had best be the spontaneous act of the Executive in his own motion and from the

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Assassination Announced

Mayor's Office
New York, April 15, 1865

To the Honorable
Common Council:

With irrepressible horror I announce to you this event, coupled as it is with violence. Just at the moment when peace began its dawn over our afflicted land, this dreadful blow fell on him on whom its destinies seemed to depend.

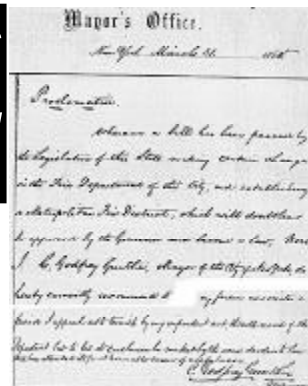
Your Honorable Body, I am sure, will take appropriate action, in view of this awful dispensation, to signify those sentiments of public respect and grief, due alike to the exalted station and fearful death of the Chief Magistrate of the United States, which now pervade our whole people, and have plunged them into universal distress and misery.

promptings of his own benevolence. In this view of the matter, I have declined to concur in any public application to you, whilst I can suppose it to be unnecessary.

Merely for my personal direction I solicit the favor of information of whether your Excellency intends to comply with the request in question.

I beg an early reply.

Very respectfully,
Your Obt. Servant,
C. Godfrey Gunther



Mayor's plea to firemen.

'Illumination' veto message

Mayor's Office
New York, Sept. 29, 1864

To the Hon. Common Council

Your resolution of the 20th, appointing a committee from each Board, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements to cause the various public buildings to be illuminated, in honor of the recent victories on land and sea, is returned unapproved.

I might acquiesce in your response to an appeal of your fellow citizens to give an expression to their feelings respecting these victories but I must decline to comply with your request to issue a proclamation to the citizens, generally, to join in such an illumination for various reasons, which I will briefly elaborate.

1st, If I should issue such a proclamation . . . many citizens . . . would be denounced as disloyal, if through want of opportunity, or inclination, or of means, they failed to comply with the recommendation.

2nd, By those in authority, they are not claimed as Union victories, but as a result of the Emancipation Proclamation, as announced in the "To Whom It May Concern" manifesto.

3rd, It is asserted that the new policy of the Administration will give us a succession of victories. If this is the case,

(Continued from Page 1)

Mayor, Council Document Texts

Continued from Page 3)

our honorable body will be called upon to illumineate every fortnight, and if papers in employ of the Administration, which daily parade "the great of the rebels," are to be eved, three times a week. I yield to no man in my attachment to "the Union, as it is, and the Constitution, as it is," but as the President demands of the Southern people abandon the rights which the Constitution confers, I do not see those who have always held the Federal Government having to do with the domestic intentions of the States can be expected to rejoice over victories which, whatever they may be, they are not Union victories. If these victories were to united States, and were a sure harbinger of peace, I would be pleased could issue such a proclamation as would induce the poorest man to part with his last mite the purchase of a single tallow candle to celebrate the event.

4th. It has been the immemorial custom of all mankind, in all climes, to abstain from celebrating over victories gained in wars, and such as been the practice thus far during the current strife, which has distracted our happy Union.

The only effect of departing in this usage, sanctioned alike to humanity and sound policy, will acknowledge, by such exhibitions, that these are victories over us and enemies, and that there is no hope of securing peace on the basis of the Federal Union.

This hope, in common with a large portion of our fellow-citizens, I am not prepared to abandon.

You are aware that here is the essential difference between the parties now contending for political mastery in the Northern States.

One of these declares no terms be offered "except such as may be based on unconditional surrender of the rights of the States and other maintains that "peace be restored on the basis of the Federal Union" Taking into con-



C. Godfrey Gunther

Mayor Gunther's 'Obsequies' Veto Message

I approve your desire that those imposing ceremonies, with their lesson, shall not share the fate of pageants faded, but leave a permanent memorial.

In the mode proposed for the preparation, it is evident to any mind that an immense mass of rubbish will be included with what is really important and thus the object of the Common Council will be defeated, notwithstanding the lavish expenditure required to print 25,000 copies of this voluminous report.

I would suggest that the gentleman who delivered the eulogy on the deceased President . . . be requested to prepare an historical memoir of them. Let the work be printed by contract, in accordance with the provisions of the charter, and . . . the Common Council take 5,000 copies at the stipulated price for distribution, giving the privilege to the publisher to sell the balance, and pay the author his copy money.

In this manner there will be, not a "public document," but a living book; not piles of printed lumber, never read, seldom consulted, and destined eventually for the paper-mill, but a volume that will hold its place in history.

C. Godfrey Gunther, Mayor

consideration that a canvass is now in progress, of the most exciting character, I am forced to regard the proposed demonstration as one of a political nature, and according to the rule which I laid down for my

guidance on entering upon the duties of Mayor, I cannot give it my official endorsement.

C. Godfrey Gunther, Mayor

In Common Council,

OCTOBER 19, 1865.

Whereas, The late imposing ceremonies incident to the sudden death of our much beloved and martyred President of the United States, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, deserve conspicuous mention in the annals of fame, and should be duly chronicled and preserved in tangible form for future reference and for the information of after generations, although an little expending ought to remain the present supporting evidence of every question relating to a nation's betterment; and,

Resolved, It is hereby that there should be collected, in chronological and accurate form, a detailed account of the obsequies, which report, if not unique, ought that has ever been seen of a similar nature in the world; and inasmuch as the records of our City Government should be complete in recording every memorable incident in the history of our city; therefore, be it

Resolved, That twenty-five thousand copies of the full and detailed report of the Committee, having in charge the obsequies of our late lamented President of the United States, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, with full descriptions of every matter of interest in connection therewith, be printed and bound in neat and appropriate form, for the use of the City Government, and for placing in the public libraries.

Resolved, That the report herein designated be selected, printed, and bound under the direction and supervision of DAVID T. VAUGHAN, Esq., Clerk of the Common Council.

Adopted by the Board of Aldermen, May 15, 1865.

Adopted by the Board of Councilmen, May 22, 1865.

Board of Aldermen, June 3, 1865, received from his Honor the Mayor, with his objections thereunto.

Board of Councilmen, October 19, 1865, taken up and the above action of the Board of Aldermen concurred in, two-thirds of all the members elected having voted therefor; therefore under the provisions of the Amended Charter, the same became adopted.

In Common Council

October 19, 1865

Whereas, The late imposing ceremonies incident to the sudden death of our much beloved and martyred President . . . Abraham Lincoln, deserved conspicuous mention in the annals of fame, and should be duly chronicled and preserved in tangible form for future reference and for the information of after generations . . .

Resolved, That 25,000 copies of the full and detailed report of the Committee, having in charge the obsequies of our late lamented President . . . with full descriptions . . . be printed and bound in neat and appropriate form, for the use of City Government, and for placing in the public libraries.

Adopted by the Board of Aldermen, May 15, 1865.

Adopted by the Board of Councilmen, May 22, 1865.

Board of Aldermen, June 3, 1865, received from his Honor the Mayor, with his objections thereto.

Board of Aldermen. June 29, 1865, taken up and adopted, notwithstanding the objections of his Honor the Mayor, two-thirds of all the members elected having voted therefor.

Board of Councilmen. October 19, 1865, taken up and with the above action of the Board of Aldermen concurred in, two-thirds of all the members elected having voted therefor; therefore under the provisions of the Amended Charter, the same became adopted.

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Archival, Print & Web Resources Researched

C Municipal Archives and Reference Library, 31 Chambers St., NY NY

eens Borough Public Library, Microfilm tion, NY Times, June 1865 reel.

y of New York, *Annual Reports of the Board of Governors of the Alms House, 1855-57.*

win G. Burrows & Mike Wallace, *Gothan: A History of New York City to 1898*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999.

ward Robb Ellis, *The Epic of New York City*, Lansha America, 1997.

shael Horigan, *Elmira: Death Camp of the 1860s*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, Pa., 2.

meth T. Jackson, Editor, *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, Yale University Press and the New York Historical Society, 1995.

stavus Myers, *The History of Tammany Hall*, originally published in 1917 and republished Dover Publications, New York, 1971.

yd Lewis, *Myths After Lincoln*, Hartcourt, Brace & Co., 1929, republished by The Read-Club Press, New York, 1941.

mie R. Speer, *Portals to Hell: Military Prisons of the Civil War*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, Pa., 1997.

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<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~blkyn/Dir.club.html#1859>
<http://rampages.onramp.net/~ekelton/OP.html>
<http://216.202.17.223/octo/octo-27.htm>
<http://nycdoitt.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/omb/html/ory.html>
<http://catnyp.nypl.org/record=b2575613>
<http://www.archaeology.org/gazine.php?page=online/features/cityhall/shouse>

levue history from almshouse days
<http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/v283n8/ffull/9223-2.html>

gles Byte Timelines
<http://www.home.eznet.net/~dminor/NY1861.html>
<http://www.home.eznet.net/~dminor/NY1865.html>

lerground RR
<http://www.nyhistory.com/ugrr/ple.htm>

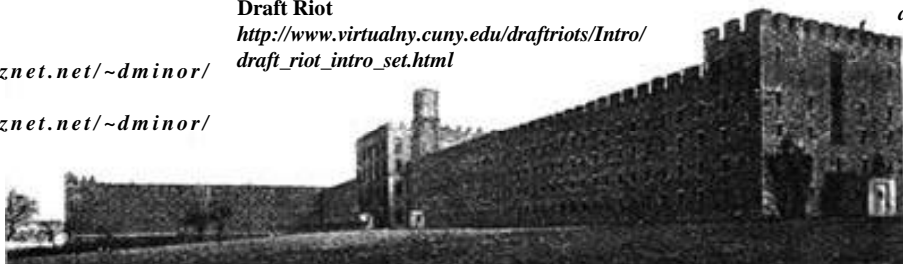
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Pages from annual report of the Board of Governors of the Alms House Dept.

| BOARD OF GOVERNORS | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|------|
| OF | | | |
| THE ALMS HOUSE, | | | |
| FOR 1867. | | | |
| C. GODFREY GUNTHER, President | | | |
| ISAAC J. OLIVER, Secretary | | | |
| WASHINGTON SMITH, Treasurer | | | |
| ANTHONY DUGRO | do. | do. | do. |
| CORNELIUS V. ANDERSON | do. | do. | 1868 |
| ISAAC TOWNSEND | do. | do. | do. |
| DANIEL F. TIEMANN | do. | do. | 1869 |
| JOSEPH S. TAYLOR | do. | do. | do. |
| ISAAC J. OLIVER | do. | do. | 1868 |
| C. GODFREY GUNTHER | do. | do. | do. |
| PATRICK G. MOLONEY | do. | do. | 1867 |
| BENJAMIN F. PINCKNEY | do. | do. | do. |

Draft Riot
http://www.virtualny.cuny.edu/draftriots/Intro/draft_riot_intro_set.html



Blackwell's Island Penitentiary was an Alms House Department facility.

New York Correction History Society newsletter *The Key* Autumn, 2002 Page 5

Charles Godfrey Gunther (1822-1885)
<http://www.picturehistory.com/find/p/5723/mcms.html>
<http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/gundry-guthery.html>

C. Godfrey Gunther, Esq. President of the Board of Governors of the Alms-House, U. S. Democratic Review.
 Vol.41, Issue 2 pp. 156-159 Feb. 1858
<http://moa.cit.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/sgml/moa-idx?notisid=AGD1642-0041-28>

Mayor Gunther and the Abolition War: The Old Guard. Vol. 2, iss. 10 pp 235-236 Oct 1864 C.C. Burr.
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpcoop/moahtml/title/oldg_vols.html
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/m/moajrnl/moajrnl-idx?notisid=AAG2687-OLDGUARD-97>

Gunther letter to Lincoln
http://216.239.51.100/search?q=cache:VY1OraT-DIEC:memory.loc.gov/mss/mal/maltext/rf_orig/mal067f.rtf+Mayor+Gunther+to+President+Lincoln+1864&hl=en&ie=UTF-8

Street Cleaning in 19th Century NY
<http://www.columbia.edu/~ma820/privatization.nlf.html>

Gunther and his railroad
<http://www.rapidtransit.com/net/thirdrail/9909/westend1.htm>
<http://www.forgotten-ny.com/Alleys/utrecht/utrecht.html>
<http://naid.spsr.ucla.edu/coneyisland/articles/transportation.htm>

Abraham Jacobi by German Info Center,
<http://uweb.superlink.net/czorn/library/AbrahamJacobi.htm>

Lenox Hill Hospital history
<http://www.lenoxhillhospital.org/about/history.html>

New York Times Nov. 27, 1864 VOL. XIV.NO. 4111 The Plot
<http://www.lostmuseum.cuny.edu/archives/1864past2.htm>

Attack on NY
<http://americanhistory.about.com/library/prm/blattackonnewyork1.htm>
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/courses/magic/plot/57.html>

(Continued on Page 6)

(Continued from Page 5)

Across the Border by Adam Mayers
http://www.thehistorynet.com/civilwartimes/files/2001/0601_text.htm

Thompson-related material
<http://www.famousamericans.net/bthompson/>
<http://members.home.net/apr1jan/thompson.html>
<http://www.doi.gov/anniversary/secretaries.html>
<http://www.lib.usm.edu/~archives/m224.htm>
<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/lisdisplay.pl?index=T000203>
<http://www.clements.unich.edu/Webguides/off/B/Burns.html>
<http://www.historybuff.com/library/urnny.html>

Historian Robert Cobb Kennedy-related material
<http://members.tripod.com/beag27/nyfires.html>
<http://members.tripod.com/beag27/johnson.html>
<http://members.tripod.com/beag27/rkennedy.html>
http://www.louisiana.edu/InfoTech/Library/artments/larm/spec_coll/givens.html
<http://www.historybuff.com/library/urnny.html>

Alphonsus McMaster
with arsonists)
<http://classic.archives.nd.edu/findaids/ead/x/MMA001.htm>
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09506a.htm>



Lincoln's funeral train departs from New York City about 4 p.m. April 25, 1865.

<http://www.catholicsinpublicsquare.org/papers/spring2000joint/mcgreevy/mcgreevyfull/mcgreevypaper2.htm>

[PoliticsAndPoliticians/lincolnsfuneral.html](http://www.politicsandpoliticians.com/lincolnsfuneral.html)

Lincoln Funeral in New York
<http://www.picturehistory.com/find/p/3226/mcms.html>

The Place of Abraham Lincoln in History by George Bancroft [The Atlantic, 1865]
http://www.cooperativeindividualism.org/bancroft_george_on_abraham_lincoln.html

Route of Abraham Lincoln's Funeral Train
<http://members.aol.com/RVSNorton1/Lincoln51.html>

The Obsequies of Abraham Lincoln in the City of NY (described on rare book site)
<http://www.joslinhall.com/gravef.htm>

Lincoln's Funeral 1,700 miles of mourners
<http://civilwar.bluegrass.net/>

Buffalo staged two funerals for Abraham Lincoln by Ben Maryniak
<http://bfnet.org/preservationworks/hist/essays/linc/linc.html>



Tents and barracks at the Camp Chemung for Confederate POWs in Elmira.

Elmira Death Camp of the North
Michael Horigan
<http://www.cw-book-news.com/release%20info/03/elmira.html>

SC Confederate Soldiers who died in Elmira Prison buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Elmira, NY
<http://dfgensoc.homestead.com/elmira.html>

Elmira War Prisoner/Prison Research Site
<http://home.jam.rr.com/rjcourt52/cwprisons/iran.htm>

Official City of Elmira Site
http://www.ci.elmira.ny.us/history/john_jones.html

Elmira Prison Camp OnLine Library
<http://www.angelfire.com/ny5/elmiraprison/tsdellarticle.html>

Elmira Counties Genealogy & History Sites
Joyce M. Tice
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nychemun/diary/ers.htm>
<http://www.rootsweb.com/%7Enychemun/on.htm>

Woodlawn National Cemetery - Elmira
Elmira Prison Camp "Adopt-a-Grave"
<http://www.geocities.com/potomacgrays1861/ira.html>



Volunteer firemen fought draft rioters' and Confederate terrorists' blazes.