



AMERICA WE THANK YOU

An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

FLORIDA FACT SHEET

Florida was an integral supporter of Near East Relief (NER), the American-led campaign that quickly sparked an international response with its unprecedented humanitarian endeavor, mobilizing all segments of American citizenry including elected officials, celebrities and laypersons alike, to help rescue victims of the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey from 1915-1930.

food

millions starving
400,000 orphans -
\$5 a month saves a life
suffering intense - winter
increases distress -
war does not stop relief -
all gifts reach destitute
expenses met privately
send money to Cleveland H.
Dodge - treasurer - American
Committee - Armenian, Syrian,
Relief. One Madison Ave. N.Y.

*How much will
you supply?*

- Florida coordinated its relief efforts through neighbor state Georgia's NER state headquarters located at the Atlanta Trust Company Building in Atlanta.
- On February 6, 1920, Florida's *Fernandina News-Record* publication ran the story "America! America!!! The Millions Cry in Sad Armenia, Land of Stalking Death," describing the deplorable conditions of the Armenian orphans who, in the face of Turkish brutality, faced starvation and who, without the invaluable assistance rendered through NER, would be left to die in the streets.
- Florida native Melville Chater was one of many Americans who left her home and comforts and traveled across land and sea to assist with relief efforts overseas. Upon her return home to Florida her eye-witness testimony was published in *National Geographic Magazine* where she recounted orphan children sucking out the marrow from bones of other deceased children who had perished from hunger and nakedness in the face of severe weather.
- Ms. Chater had spent several days in Yerevan, Armenia, observing the work of the Near East Relief for the thousands of refugees, "whose whole hope of existence lie[d] on the generosity of the American people as expressed through this organization, which, in desperate need of funds to continue the work, through its treasurer...is now making an appeal for continued support by the American people."
- Through such publications and pleas for assistance to the American nation, the State of Florida requested prayer days for the dying as it rallied to raise critical funds to sustain NER's invaluable efforts to rescue and rehabilitate millions of refugees and orphans.



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- Another publication in the *Fernandina* reported the story of Jacksonville Florida native Dr. Harold Marvin's travels to the biblical land of Armenia, where he was aiding the NER in relieving the distress of the Armenian people. Dr. Marvin sent a telegram to E. E. McLin, the NER state chairman for Florida expressing, "conditions here [Armenia] are very bad. Many are dying from lack of clothing and proper nourishment...We are doing all we can with the limited funds at our disposal. The whole hope of the Near East people is generous-hearted America. Please urge the people of my state to do their share for the Near East Relief."
- Responding to the call for help, Florida designated specific days of the year as "Bundle Days," wherein residents generously donated hundreds of bags of blankets, warm clothing and shoes, which were collected and shipped overseas to alleviate the suffering of Armenians.

Florida, We Thank You!

Thanks to the generosity of the Near East Relief, its participating organizations and entities, the U.S. Government and State Governments, and especially the American people at large, over 1,000,000 refugees and 132,000 orphans of the Armenian Nation and other Christian minorities were rescued, fed, clothed, and educated. We have survived, thrived, and prospered from the horrors of Genocide at the hands of Ottoman Turkey.

For your unwavering support and unprecedented generosity in donating to Near East Relief's humanitarian efforts, Florida, We Thank You!



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