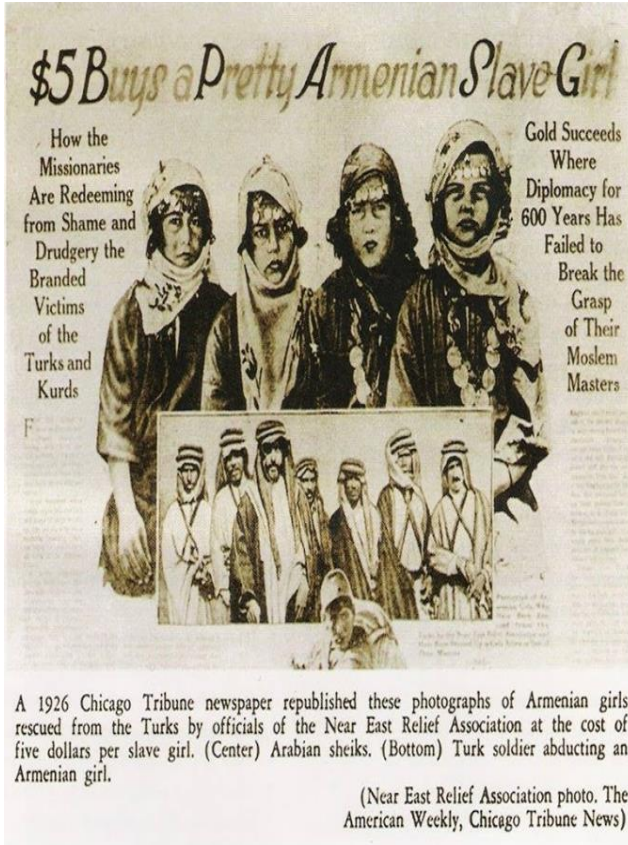




**AMERICA
WE THANK YOU**
An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

ILLINOIS
**FACT
SHEET**

Illinois was a staunch 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.



- Illinois resident, American educator and women’s suffragist, Frances Elizabeth Caroline Willard in her role as President of the National Women’s Christian Temperance Movement, with a membership of over 1,000,000 persons, petitioned Congress to “take such action as shall put our home-loving republic on record as having used its moral and material influence for the relief of Armenia, the martyr nation, in this time of its supreme distress.”

- In Washington D.C., each state is represented by a statue of its most honored citizen.

- Of all the fifty states, only Illinois, the land of Lincoln, is represented by a woman. That woman is Frances Elizabeth Caroline Willard.

- The NER was blessed with the service efforts of Miss Webster of Galesburg, Illinois. Miss Webster was a student of

Lombard College and did canteen work with the YMCA in France during World War I. She was a volunteer with the Red Cross in Galesburg and in 1923, she sailed overseas to become an orphanage director in Syria, tending to the needs of thousands of orphaned Armenian children who had lost their parents during the Genocide at the hands of the Ottoman Turks.

- In 1921, Illinois partnered with Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Ohio, South Dakota, Colorado, Missouri and Minnesota to launch a great Corn Campaign and ultimately donated over 400 car loads of corn for overseas shipment. In addition, the Farm Bureau’s cash gift of \$60,000 allowed for the additional purchase of corn that was dispersed throughout the NER orphanages. These gifts saved the lives of hundreds of hunger-stricken Armenian orphans.



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- In December 1921, 750 children of Mooseheart, Illinois, went to bed without their evening Christmas meal. The children, who were the sons and daughters of the Loyal Order of Moose, sacrificed the cost of their Christmas dinner (22 cents a child, totaling \$165) and donated this sum to NER to feed the starving Armenian orphans.
- In 1922 in Western Springs, Illinois, 1,500 citizens responded to the appeal of the NER by raising \$1,800 in contributions. The following year, in 1923, the town residents collectively donated \$2,000 to the humanitarian efforts of Near East Relief.

Illinois, 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, Illinois, We Thank You!



An ANCA WR Initiative

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