



AMERICA WE THANK YOU

An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

NEW MEXICO FACT SHEET

New Mexico 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.



- New Mexico's NER activities were coordinated through neighboring Arizona's NER office located at 20 Central Building in Phoenix.

- Col. Twitchell of Santa Fe who worked with the Ministerial Alliance of Albuquerque and Judge M.E. Hickei, Chairman of the City Board of Education, facilitated the visits of NER serviceman and missionaries to local community meetings throughout New Mexico to educate the populace about the plight of the Armenians and secure donations from concerned citizens eager to assist with the relief efforts overseas.

- School children throughout New Mexico contributed to the NER's efforts because they had learned that schools in the Near East tending to the needs of Armenian orphan children lacked pens, ink or paper and were left with outdated books.

- An October 1921 article in NER's official publication, *The New Near East*, which boasted a readership of over 100,000 persons a month, reported on "King Winter's Carnival," an operetta given by the children of the South Side School in Raton, New

Mexico, which netted proceeds of \$119, all of which was donated to NER. The previous year, the school's gift to NER was \$125.

- "The American people, (and the Southwest has always done her share) have kept these little waifs alive for three years," reported New Mexico's *Estancia News Herald* in an article published on December 22, 1922, referring to the Armenian orphans under the care of NER. The article further publicized NER's efforts to save the children of Armenia for one more winter. Specifically, the article was pleading for "the mere lives of hundreds of thousands who are homeless and hungry...Relief must go now or never. At the Christmas season it is most fitting that every man, woman and child in this Christian land makes some sacrifice, however small, for the situation of the children in Armenia."



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- H.R. Mills Clayton of New Mexico and Reverend A.G. Searey, NER Field Representative in New Mexico, published an article on March 3, 1921 in *The Clovis News* (Clovis, New Mexico) with the headline, “Armenia Starving, Freezing, Dying.” The article stated, “The orphans of the Near East are the children of the Armenians, our allies in the late world war...The Armenians, our allies, are starving, freezing, and dying. Shall we allow them to perish...” God forbid! One million and nineteen hundred orphans hold out their emaciated hands to us here in America and cry, ‘Bread, bread, bread!’ Shall they starve? Let us right now say, **THEY SHALL NOT DIE.**”
- On January 29, 1921, *The Clayton News* (Clayton, New Mexico) ran an article entitled “Armenian Girl Pleads for Sisters,” which chronicled the orphanage work of the Near East in Armenia. Charles V. Vickrey, General Secretary of the Near East, had just returned from a trip throughout Central Europe and the Near East and reported on the facts related to the Armenian orphans.
- Vickrey stated that he believed that “a few million dollars wisely expended at this time in the education of children of the Near East, in character building and in molding these young lives, will be worth vastly more to the world than billions of dollars spent later in supporting international warfare and strife.”
- In what was labeled as an “Irresistible Appeal of Orphans,” Vickrey noted how orphanages in Alexandropol, different parts of the Caucasus, Anatolia, Syria, and Constantinople were filled beyond their capacity.
- One such orphanage was headed by a single American college girl the orphans called “Mother.” “Mother” was responsible for overseeing the lives of over 6,000 Armenian orphans in Kars.
- In the Kars hospital, which had 1,150 beds, Vickrey stated that 1,268 orphans were housed, often by placing two or more children in a single bed. Another hospital was strictly dedicated to care for blind children who had contracted trachoma.

New Mexico, We Thank You!

Thanks to the generosity of the Near East Relief, its participating organizations and entities, 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, New Mexico, We Thank You!



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