



# AMERICA WE THANK YOU

An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

# OHIO FACT SHEET

Ohio 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.



- Ohio's NER efforts were facilitated through its NER state office headquarters located at 1900 Euclid Building in Cleveland.

- Rev. B.R Johnson of the First Church of Christ headed the Near East Relief Drive for the East Liverpool district in 1920. Each 250 persons in the community were asked to contribute \$60, which would support one orphan for one year. The campaign was

waged largely through churches, fraternal organizations and schools. A quota of \$7,200 was established and funds derived from the campaign were forwarded to Near East Relief's headquarters of Ohio in Cleveland for transfer to proper authorities in Asia Minor. The Evening Review of East Liverpool, Ohio stated in its October 6, 1920 issue: "The money will used in extending material assistance to the starving people of Armenia and Asia Minor, the victims of Turkish aggression and cruelty."

- *The New Near East*, the official publication of the NER, which boasted a monthly readership of over 100,000 persons, reported in its June 1923 issue that the rural schoolchildren of Ohio had donated \$2,000 in cash to NER.
- During the Children's Crusade in 1924, Jackie Coogan, Hollywood's first humanitarian, stopped in Columbus, Cincinnati, and Cleveland to collect milk, clothing and non-perishable food to be included in the million-dollar cargo of the ship he was "piloting" for the orphaned children of the Near East. Pictured above are the barrels used for collecting the donations which poured in from across America.



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- Every school child in the United States was encouraged to participate in collecting donations and almost everyone who came to greet Jackie brought with them gifts—cans and cases of milk, boxes and packages of food and money. Jackie’s tour received unprecedented media coverage in the U.S. through newspapers, movies magazines, and newsreels.
- June 25, 1924 was designated as “Bundle Day” in Hamilton, Ohio, and an appeal was made for clothing to benefit the people in the Near East. Tags that were then attached to the bundles designating whether they were bundles of shoes, clothing or blankets were distributed by the Hamilton Boy Scouts to every home and business in the city. The Butler County automobile club organized to collect the bundles.
- A. Vic Donahey, Governor of Ohio, issued a Statement regarding Ohio’s designated “Golden Rule Day,” which was observed throughout the world under the leadership of Americans. Participants were encouraged to substitute their otherwise plentiful Sunday dinner with a modest orphan meal and donate the difference directly to NER’s efforts to sustain and rehabilitate the orphans.
- In a letter to nearly 1,000 community chairmen chosen for the Golden Rule Sunday campaign, Governor Donahey stated: “My earnest desire is that people of Ohio will observe this program...for a better appreciation of the brotherhood of man and the benefit of those in adversity.”

## Ohio, 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, Ohio, We Thank You!



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