

Relief Work in Kansas,  
1856-1857

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Thesis  
1928  
O'Meara  
c.2





Relief Work in Kansas, 1856 - 1857

by

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Foreword:

I wish to express a sense of appreciation and gratitude to Professor James C. Malin for his advice and assistance in the preparation of this thesis.

Edith O'Meara

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## INTRODUCTION

A description of the efforts made to aid the Kansas settlers who were suffering from hunger, cold, and exposure during the winter of 1856 and 1857 forms the subject of this thesis. It contains an account of the various agencies which contributed to the work and an estimate of the work done by each. An attempt is made to determine what agency or agencies were primarily responsible for obtaining money and clothing, transporting them to Kansas, and distributing them to the needy. No effort has been made to describe similar work carried on by the South in the interests of the pro-slavery settlers.

The material has been obtained almost entirely from manuscript collections in the library of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka, Kansas.

## Chapter I

The New England Emigrant Aid Company

## CHAPTER I

## The New England Emigrant Aid Company

The Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Company was incorporated April 26, 1854, by act of the Legislature of Massachusetts. A capital stock, which should not exceed five million dollars, was divided into shares of one hundred dollars each. As stated by the charter the purpose was to assist emigrants to settle in the West. To this indefinite statement may be added the statement of the stock committee, that the company purposed to organize emigration to the West, to plant a free state in Kansas, and to return a handsome profit to the stockholders upon their investment. The company planned to send mills and printing presses into Kansas and to establish boarding houses for the emigrants.

No organization was effected under the first charter because the associated individuals feared objectionable monetary liabilities. The organizers of the company maintained a trusteeship and continued their plan. In February, 1855, a second charter was obtained in the name of the New England Emigrant Aid Company and authorizing it to direct emigration westward and to aid in providing accommodations for the emigrants after arriving at their places of destination. John C. Brown was named president; Thomas Webb, secretary; Amos A. Lawrence, Treasurer; and Eli Thayer was in charge of the organization of emigration.

Contrary to the prevalent belief, the company was organized and directed as a business enterprise and not as a philanthropic organization. The failure to pay dividends on the money invested in Kansas was due in large part to conditions over which the company had no control. The

destruction of the company's hotel in Lawrence was a great loss and although the claim against the government for damages was very just, it was never allowed. When the interests in Kansas were sold, this claim was transferred to the University of Kansas. As the outbreak of the civil war made Kansas property of little value, town lots and shares purchased at high prices by the company became almost worthless. The investments in Kansas constituted only a small part of the entire enterprise. Similiar investments were made in Oregon and Texas in addition to projects for land reclamation in Virginia.

The records of the meetings of the board of directors do not show that the company in any way overstepped the authority delegated by the charter. The money received from the sale of its stock was spent for land, saw-mills, printing presses and for the establishment of boarding houses and hotels.<sup>1</sup> The misconceptions which have developed concerning the activities of the New England Emigrant Aid company are due to the fact that the officers and directors of the company were the nationally known free-state leaders of the time. Their individual acts are often confused with their official acts.

The company was prevented by its charter from taking any active part under its own name in the "Kansas Struggle" and was forced to form a new organization which had no objection to supplying arms and ammunition, and could openly solicit funds for relief work. Numerous individuals sent contributions to the New England Emigrant Aid company for the relief of

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1. New England Emigrant Co. Records, Vol. III, Directors' Meetings, May 15, May 26, 1857.



the Kansas settlers. The officers of the company organized a Kansas Relief Fund,<sup>2</sup> and accepted and administered by its agents such aid as was voluntarily offered to them. Replying to a request for aid, Thomas Webb, secretary, said in part: "however desirable it might be for the New England Emigrant Aid Company to render pecuniary assistance to individuals, the means and policy of the company will not allow it." The company was always opposed to the administration of charity as a means of relief work. The Executive Committee authorized the treasurer on Nov. 7, 1856, to use any relief funds in his hands for hiring workers in Kansas as it considered employment the best way to administer relief.

Many accusations have been levied against the New England Emigrant Aid Company that it purchased arms and ammunition to send to Kansas and peopled Kansas with the most undesirable classes from New England. The officers of the company testified before a congressional investigating committee that the company had never sent or paid for sending firearms to Kansas.<sup>3</sup>

In April, 1855, Charles Robinson, the agent of the Emigrant Aid Company in Lawrence, Kansas, sent G. W. Deitzler, a clerk of the company, to Eli Thayer asking for rifles. The directors of the company gave Deitzler an order for one hundred Sharps rifles costing \$3,000. Other plans of the company had to be suspended to use the funds for this pur-

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2. New England Emigrant Aid Co. Transfers, Vol.II, p.68.

3. Following material based on "Sharps Rifle Episode in Kansas History," by W. H. Isley, American Historical Review, Vol. 12, p.546.

pose. The company was later reimbursed for this expenditure from the Rifle Fund. In August of the same year the purchase of another hundred rifles was ordered. Dr. Cabot, a director of the Emigrant Company, became treasurer of a hastily organized Rifle Fund which spent \$12,500 for rifles and ammunition. Of this amount \$2,500 was contributed by the national Kansas Committee. This committee armed many of the 2,000 emigrants which it sent to the territory and reported about \$10,000 spent for arms and ammunition.

The Kansas Committee of New York raised \$643.37 for rifles while the Kansas Committee of Massachusetts, evolved from a sub-committee of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, spent \$4,947.88. These rifles were given to the National Kansas Committee which had transported them as far as Tabor, Iowa, when peace was established in the territory. Later the Massachusetts Committee directed the National Kansas Committee to give these rifles to John Brown who took them to Harpers Ferry.

From the accessible data it has been estimated that \$43,074.26 were spent for arms and ammunition. This estimate does not include the fire-arms belonging to the emigrants or those supplied privately.

While the New England Emigrant Aid Company did not send arms to Kansas, they were sent to the agents of the company who distributed them. The funds of the company were loaned for the purchase of arms but were not permanently expended for that purpose. Its influence was more potent than the other organizations which sent arms and ammunition later when they were not so badly needed. Technically, the company was innocent of any responsibility but in practice it was the generative force of the whole movement.

The New England Emigrant Aid Company is often credited or blamed with the work of various independent aid committees. Chief among them is the Worcester Emigrant Aid Committee which appropriated fifty dollars to each emigrant, for expenses to Kansas via the Iowa route, and put into the hands of the treasurer of each party a contingent fund for possible expenses caused by sickness, delay or lack of work in the territory.<sup>4</sup>

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4. New England Emigrant Aid Transfers, Vol.II, p.52.

**Chapter II**

**The National Kansas Committee**

## CHAPTER II

## The National Kansas Committee

In the spring of 1856 Eli Thayer conceived the idea of a National Kansas Committee to administer relief work in Kansas. He called a meeting for June 20, at Cleveland, Ohio. Mr Thayer could not attend the meeting but made the following suggestion. There should be an outfitting depot at Chicago, and for efficient service, the officers and directors should be at Chicago. In addition to the National Committee there should be state, township, and city organizations. The president should be the controlling worker in giving the committee form and efficiency.

Governor Reeder as a suggestion to the Cleveland meeting, outlined a plan for the distribution of funds and the organization and direction of emigration. He proposed to establish 5,000 armed settlers in Kansas and to provision them for one year; and to organize a fund of \$2,000,000 in the hands of the National Kansas Committee at Chicago. Emigration should be conducted through Iowa and Nebraska in order to avoid the Missouri River. He wished to proclaim to the world that the Missouri River was infested with pirates and was unsafe as a highway of travel; and that organized bands of ruffians boarded the steamers and disarmed and murdered free state emigrants.<sup>5</sup>

Through a misunderstanding of the date, the delegation of the New England Emigrant Aid Company did not attend the Cleveland meeting which merely adjourned to meet July 11, 1856 at Buffalo, New York. There the

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5. Hyatt Papers. Report of Kansas Committee Meeting, June 26, 1856.

National Kansas Committee was formed with Thaddeus Hyatt, president; George Dole, treasurer; H. B. Hurd, secretary; J. D. Webster, vice-president and chairman of directors; Dr. S. G. Howe, general financial agent; and Eli Thayer, general agent to organize the states. A suggestion that Mr. Thayer's connection with the New England Emigrant Aid Company might make his appointment unpopular was disregarded. This was explained on the ground that the Buffalo convention was the child of the mind of Eli Thayer, and would never have existed had not the Emigrant Aid Company established the free state party in Kansas. There was no work for the National Kansas Committee except to supplement the work of the New England Emigrant Aid Company.<sup>6</sup>

The plan of organization suggested by Mr. Thayer to the Cleveland convention was adopted and each state, county, and district requested to organize. It provided that the National Kansas Committee should deal only with the state committee, which in turn should deal with the county committees, and those with the district committees. The correspondence of Mr. Hyatt shows that this elaborate system was not practical due to incomplete organization; and that the national and state committees dealt directly with individuals.

State committees were accordingly formed in all the northern states except Massachusetts which was already organized. There the Boston Relief Committee had been formed in the spring of 1856 to send clothing, provisions, and money to the free settlers in Kansas. It raised over

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6. Clipping from the Boston Advertiser, July 17, 1856.

\$20,000 for the purpose. In June, 1856, the State Kansas Committee of Massachusetts was organized and superseded the Boston Relief Committee. George L. Stearns directed the work of both organizations. The second committee sent clothing and provisions, and raised \$78,000 for relief. Of this fund, \$2,000 was appropriated to the use of the Kansas National Committee, and nearly \$5,000 was spent for rifles.<sup>7</sup>

The Buffalo convention stated its purpose to retain all actual free state settlers in Kansas by providing food, clothing, and shelter; to induce all free state absentees to return to the territory; and to urge actual settlers from free states to enter the Kansas territory as fast as possible.

The New York Tribune ardently supported the National Kansas Committee, as it had upheld the New England Emigrant Aid Company, by often refusing to print adverse criticism.<sup>8</sup> The Tribune raised a relief fund \$2,000 of which was donated to the use of the National Kansas Committee.

At a mass meeting held at the Broadway Tabernacle of New York, great enthusiasm was shown for the Kansas relief work; a fund was raised, and a committee chosen with Thaddeus Hyatt as president and secretary. The directors of the fund spent \$546 for individual relief in Kansas, and gave \$1,000 to the central Kansas Committee. After sending a representative to the Kansas Territory to determine the best method of giving aid, it was decided that the National Kansas Committee could most efficiently and wisely apply the funds. Accordingly the balance of the

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7. Hyatt Papers. G.L. Stearns to H. B. Furd. Boston, October 25, 1856.

8. Hyatt Papers. Hyatt to Horace White. New York, October 27, 1856.

fund, \$2309.70, was paid to Thaddeus Hyatt for the National Kansas Committee.<sup>9</sup>

At the Broadway Tabernacle meeting a resolution was adopted to entreat President Pierce to interpose his authority for the protection of the free state settlers from the lawless outrages of the invading Missouri mobs and their auxiliaries. The National Kansas Committee resolved to send W. F. M. Army as a special messenger to the President for the same purpose. Mr. Army was denied an interview on the ground that the President was too engaged to consider the matter. Later President Pierce stated that "if Kansas had been more anxious for peace and less anxious about institutions, there would have been no trouble."<sup>10</sup> He accused the various Kansas Aid Societies of stirring up rebellion by sending in armed men instead of peace loving settlers. "Each party," he affirmed, "urged against the other exactly the same charges, and at such a distance from the strife, the President could not determine between them."<sup>11</sup> The army stationed in Kansas was there not to prevent or correct outrages unless they should constitute invasion or insurrection. The Civil power was competent to maintain peace and the settlers should depend upon the civil authorities." After President Pierce refused to assist the Kansas emigrants, petitions were circulated in the northern states to be presented to the governors to summon the legislatures in special session to give aid to Kansas. A circular letter sponsored by

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9. Webb Scrap Book. Vol. 16, p.161. New York Post, August 27, 1856.

10. Ibid. p.215. Boston Evening Telegraph, Sept. 1, 1856.

11. Webb Scrap Book, Vol. 16, p.251. New York Tribune, Sept. 5, 1856.



the National Kansas Committee was sent to the governors for the same purpose. The House of Representatives of Massachusetts made an appropriation but the bill was defeated in the Senate. The legislature of Vermont appropriated \$20,000 to be used for Kansas relief upon satisfactory proof of the necessity for it. Governor Fletcher of Vermont requested information of Governor Geary whose reply did not give the satisfactory proof and which need be quoted only in part: "I am not aware of the existence of any condition in the territory rendering necessary the employment of money. No man able or willing to work need be destitute of the means of a comfortable livelihood in Kansas." The legislature of Michigan appropriated \$1,000 to supply seeds to needy settlers who had emigrated from Michigan.

The National Kansas Committee appealed to the states to organize for the purpose of raising money and collecting clothing for the Kansas sufferers. Mr. Hyatt who was in charge of this work sent many speakers throughout the country. They found about three-fourths of the people disposed to assist the settlers. Many lecturers also worked to promote the election of Fremont to the presidency. This soon led to the accusation that the funds raised were used for political purposes instead of bringing aid to the residents of the territory, but this accusation could not be maintained. The officers of the National Kansas Committee felt that the election of Fremont was essential to their cause since it would mean a change in the territorial government and would probably cause the pro-slavery advocates to abandon their attempts to make Kansas a slave state. Both sides realized the influence of the Kansas situation on the

presidential election. Governor Geary had warned the pro-slavery men that another raid into Kansas would insure the election of Fremont and the defeat of Buchanan.

The plan for the organization of the states, adopted by the Buffalo convention proved too complicated and soon the lecturers urged the people to donate to the National Kansas Committee rather than to spend valuable time in effecting a complicated organization. All the contributions were to be sent to the committee in Chicago where a forwarding depot was maintained. The entire North and East rose with great accord to meet the emergency and contributions poured in upon the Chicago committee and upon Mr. Hyatt who was identified as the personification of the relief work. The use of the telegraph wires without payment was given to the members of the committee. The Burlington and Missouri Railroad extended to the National Kansas Committee one thousand free tickets from Burlington to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, and reduced the fare from Chicago to Mt. Pleasant to three dollars for Kansas immigrants.<sup>12</sup> Other important railroads granted proportionate reductions.

During the month of December, 1856, which Mr. Hyatt spent in the territory, he collected statements from fifty-two settlers in various parts of the territory concerning their experiences from the time they left their former homes. These statements contain valuable information regarding the nature of the soil and the amount of unclaimed land in each locality. Mr. Hyatt planned to make a set of maps of each township subdivided into claims with the name of every settler and the character

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12. Webb Scrap Book. Vol.16, p.211. Chicago Atlas, Sept.1, 1856.

of the land. Being unable to carry out this plan to locate immigrants, he delegated the work to Rev. J. E. Stewart, a settler in the territory who visited during the winter of 1856-1857 nearly every settlement and place suited to settlement. He indicated on a map all the land still unclaimed and obtained a description of the land from the nearby settlers. As a result he was able to direct over 400 persons to suitable claims.

Chapter III

The Kansas Central Committee

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## The Kansas Central Committee

The executive committee of the National Kansas Committee commenced its sessions July 19, 1856, only one week after the national committee had been organized at Buffalo. A month was spent organizing the states and collecting money before the work of distribution could begin.<sup>13</sup> Mr. Army, general agent of the committee, went to Kansas in August, where he found nearly half of the settlers unarmed and all in need of clothing and blankets for the coming winter. Many whose crops had been destroyed during the troubles in the territory or who had been engaged in military service were planning to leave because there seemed to be no possibility of obtaining a livelihood during the coming winter.

The Kansas State Central Committee which was attempting to relieve the situation had only \$11.00 in its treasury.<sup>14</sup> This committee of eleven members had been appointed by a convention of the Kansas Free State Party held in Topeka, July 3-4, 1856 to assume the management and control of the party in Kansas.<sup>15</sup> The condition of the inhabitants of the territory was reported to the convention and the committee undertook to furnish the necessary aid, estimated at \$500,000 and relieved from duty all local safety and aid committees in the territory. The convention appropriated \$500 to build a road for a stage route between Topeka and Nebraska City since the Missouri River was not considered a safe means

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13. Hyatt Papers. Army to New York Tabernacle Comm. N.Y., Aug.16, 1856.

14. Ibid.

15. Kansas Tribune, Topeka, Kansas. July 9, 1856.

of transportation for the emigrants from the free states. A Missouri River steamer with 75 settlers on board had docked at Leavenworth but the passengers, who had been disarmed on the way, were not allowed to land but were taken back to Alton, Illinois. They finally reached Kansas by the Iowa route which was much more costly than the river route but was the only safe way to reach the territory. Although the river route was used to send freight to the territory there was always danger that the goods might be seized in transit. The emigrants sent by the National Kansas Committee were sent through Iowa and much freight was transported in the emigrant trains by this route. When it is realized that these wagon trains had to travel from Iowa to Kansas -- a distance of some 500 miles -- over roads which were little better than prairie trails, it is evident that the collection of the supplies was of little effort compared to the task of conveying them to the territory. To determine the needs of each locality and to give the supplies to the most needy rather than to the most clamorous presented innumerable problems.

Mr. Army arranged for the State Central Committee to abandon its attempts to raise funds and to act as the distributing agent in the territory for the National Kansas Committee.<sup>16</sup> Col. S. W. Eldridge, a member of the National Kansas Committee who was conducting immigrants trains to Kansas was to assist in the work of distribution. Almost immediately trouble arose between the two committees over the appointment. It was charged that Col. Eldridge took possession of all supplies of the

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16. Kansas Historical Collections. Vol.7, p.406. Report of Wm. Hutchinson. Dec.1, 1856.

immigrant train and when the territory was reached, forced the immigrants to buy these supplies.

Mr. Hyatt suggested a number of plans which if adopted might have eliminated much of the trouble which the National Kansas Committee later encountered. One plan was to purchase food in Chicago and then to call upon volunteers from Illinois and Iowa to act as an escort into the territory. The guards were to finance and provision themselves,<sup>17</sup> and thus save the committee the expense of an armed guard. Some of the emigrants were to settle in Nebraska along the highway leading to Kansas. Despite repeated efforts to have this plan adopted, the committee never attempted to put it into practice. Mr. Hyatt constantly stressed the idea that the two committees should work in concert if anything was to be accomplished. The Kansas Committee should make monthly reports of its activities; and Col. Eldridge, the intermediary between the two committees, should be held strictly accountable to each, for when the troubles should be over, both committees would have to render accounts of their activities. He suggested that some disinterested person should be designated to serve in the territory as a balance wheel on the Central Committee. This suggestion like the others was disregarded by the National Kansas Committee until the necessity demanded that they take some action.

Due to criticism that the Central Committee was political in character and did not represent the territory,<sup>18</sup> Mr. Army, under an assumed name, made a second trip to Kansas in October. His own statement tells

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17. Hyatt Papers. Hyatt to National Kans. Committee. N.Y., Sept. 4, 1856.

18. Hyatt Papers. Hyatt to National Kans. Committee. N.Y., Oct. 6, 1856.

what was accomplished.<sup>19</sup> "Upon my arrival in the territory I found a state of things existing with regard to the Central Committee which rendered it necessary in my estimation to have the people of Kansas reorganize that committee and I am happy to say that I succeeded and that I believe we have now a committee who will be efficient and will faithfully appropriate all money and articles for the relief of the sufferers. Three persons in each district are to ascertain the wants of their respective localities and report the same from time to time to the Central Committee. The new officers are S. E. Martin, president; Wm. Hutchinson, secretary; and James Blood, treasurer."

Fearing an invasion from Missouri, he had arranged with Governor Geary for the organization of the free state men into volunteer companies under the command of Col. Perry. Mr. Army stressed the need of sending clothing and arms quickly and secretly. It had previously been arranged that all money should be sent by draft payable to the treasurer. The drafts were to be sent to the secretary so that he might obtain a receipt from the treasurer and thus prevent a misapplication of the funds. Mr. Army learned, while in Iowa before his second trip to Kansas, of trouble between the members of the Central Committee which had been reorganized as a result of his first visit. Dr. Root, who had gone to the northern states to buy supplies had not been authorized by the Central Committee.<sup>20</sup> Col. Lane offered to conduct the immigrant train, then assembling in Iowa, into the territory. Dr. Root sanctioned this arrangement in the

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19. Hyatt Papers. Army to Hyatt. Alton, Ill., Oct. 23, 1856.

20. Hyatt Papers. Army to Hyatt. Chicago, Sept. 21, 1856.



name of the Central Committee although it was to have nothing to do with the transportation of supplies to Kansas. Dr. Howe and Mr. Hyatt tried to dissuade Lane from accompanying the train. Dr. Howe suggested that the National Committee grant no supplies if Col. Lane was to resume command of the expedition. This threat proved effective. The United States troops were attempting to capture Lane and there was danger that a military force might be sent to oppose the immigration if he accompanied the train.

Chapter IV

Distribution of Aid in Kansas

## CHAPTER IV

## Distribution of Aid in Kansas

It is impossible to tell when the settlers began to receive aid from the various relief organizations. Many localities in the East sent money to former residents who had emigrated to Kansas, and no records of these donations are available. "The Vermont Patriot" indignantly stated that the "Kansas Game" was merely a political confidence game and that thousands of dollars had been collected for the widows and orphans of the murdered free state men, and not a dollar had ever reached Kansas.<sup>21</sup> While this particular criticism was not directed against the National Kansas Committee the same complaint was later made against it, because its leaders worked actively for the election of Fremont to the presidency.

Early in November, Dr. Cutler of the State Central Committee complained that the North might as well have done nothing, for Kansas had had no benefit except in Lawrence.<sup>22</sup>

The Central Committee's records show donations of groceries and money from July 24, 1856, to July 15, 1857. The first clothing was given out in October, 1856. A notice in the "Lawrence Herald of Freedom" of November 22, 1856, announced that the Central Committee had opened offices in Lawrence under the management of Col. Eldridge and Wm. Hutchinson, and was prepared to deliver clothing and provisions to those who

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21. Clipping from The Vermont Patriot. July 25, 1856.

22. Ryatt Papers. Ryatt to White. N.Y. Oct. 20, 1856.

had no other visible means of support. Written orders for relief signed by the local committees were required. Another notice of the same date stated that the committee had purchased 3,000 sacks of flour and a proportional quantity of groceries -- enough in its opinion to feed all the destitute in the territory until May of the next year.<sup>23</sup> It was soon evident that this estimate would suffice for only a short time. The following issues of the paper contain lists of the supplies disbursed and the names of the persons to whom the supplies were given.

The Central Committee appointed two of its members, Wm. Hutchinson and J. M. Winchell to serve as commissioners, in concert with the National Committee, to stimulate immigration and the investment of northern capital, during the following spring and summer.<sup>24</sup> This proposed work was not started as Mr. Army arrived in Lawrence the same day and after several weeks of investigation removed all business from the Central Committee. Thirty residents of the territory in a sworn statement, regarding the work of the committee testified that they had been insulted when applying at the committee rooms for aid; that the poor were turned away and the supplies given to the friends of the committee. Many similar statements were obtained from individuals. After watching the progress of business in the committee rooms about November 1, Rev. J. E. Stewart stated that the Central Committee was amply supplied with food and clothing. While some people were given

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23. Herald of Freedom. Lawrence, Kansas. Nov. 22, 1856.

24. Herald of Freedom. Lawrence, Kansas. Nov. 29, 1856.

practically nothing, others returned repeatedly and received large supplies each time.<sup>25</sup>

When Mr. Hyatt learned of these conditions, he made a trip to Kansas and, upon his arrival in Lawrence, began to reorganize the system of distributing aid. In conjunction with Mr. Army, he opened store rooms which were stocked with the supplies arriving from the Chicago office and those obtained from the Central Committee. They offered to reimburse all individuals who had purchased any property from the agents of the National Committee; and to compensate all persons who had not received money or property dispatched to them from the East, through the National Committee.<sup>26</sup> Neither Mr. Hyatt nor Mr. Army could deny requests for aid, and both gave generously to relieve any distress which was brought to their attention. As a result they were eulogized by the settlers for their open-handedness and the members of the Central Committee were condemned more harshly.

Although public sentiment was greatly embittered against the Central Committee, the "Herald of Freedom" attempted to smooth over the situation by an editorial containing the following remarks: "The giving of charity is often as delicate a matter as the receiving of charity. We have felt that our committee of disbursement had placed themselves in very difficult circumstances. If the members had any defects of character, this position would be likely to draw them out and expose them. The

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25. Hyatt Papers. Stewart to Hyatt. Lawrence, Jan 10, 1857.

26. Herald of Freedom, Lawrence, Kansas. Dec. 20, 1856.

committee has made a trial and failed and much complaint is made against it. But as it was not appointed by the people for this business, it has done as well as could be expected."<sup>27</sup>

A new local committee was appointed composed of Rev. S. Y. Lum, Rev. E. Nuts, G. W. Hutchinson, Rev. C. H. Lovejoy, and Charles Stearns who was to be treasurer and agent of the committee. He gave bond and security for \$20,000 to the National Kansas Committee.<sup>28</sup> Mr. Army left \$2200 in cash and arranged for \$2000 credit in groceries and other goods from F. Conant of Kansas City.<sup>29</sup> During the first three weeks this new committee distributed 325 packages valued at \$43,675 and was supplied with flour and groceries over \$16,000 in value.

The investigation of the affairs of the Central Committee resulted in the following report by Mr. Army.<sup>30</sup>

Horses sold and unaccounted for as per certificate of Wm. Hutchinson	\$2,064.25
Notes in treasury per report of J. Blood	614.55
Flour not yet delivered to Central Committee	3,500.00
Cash in hand reported by J. Blood	<u>3,921.65</u>
	10,100.43
Flour and provisions delivered to Army	<u>1,386.68</u>
	<u>\$ 8,713.68</u>

Mr. Army demanded the return of this balance which included only money paid to the Central Committee after the October visit of Mr. Army to the territory. The accounts of the Central Committee credit Mr. Army with \$8,000 on December 2, just before the committee was deposed, and

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27. Herald of Freedom, Lawrence, Kans., Dec. 3, 1856.

28. Hyatt Papers. Army to Hyatt, Lawrence, Dec. 27, 1856.

29. Hyatt Papers. Army to Hyatt, Kansas City, Mo., Dec. 29, 1856.

30. Herald of Freedom, Lawrence, Ks., Dec. 27, 1856.

\$2,000 on December 15, which was paid to the committee for orders drawn by Mr. Army. The publishing of the report, followed by the statement that the citizens of the territory should see that the fund be properly appropriated to the comfort of the destitute settlers,<sup>31</sup> caused the members of the Central Committee to staunchly defend its work.

James Blood, treasurer of the Central Committee, reported that he held an unpaid balance of \$1,300 for orders issued on his store by Mr. Army and explained that the money in the treasury had been withheld from Army because he failed to show authority from the National Committee. This statement must be discredited as Mr. Army had a letter from H. B. Hurd authorizing him to repudiate the Central Committee. Mr. Blood further charged that the Central Committee had been delayed in making any report because Mr. Army had extracted important documents from the files of the committee while in his hands for inspection.<sup>32</sup> January 24, 1857, the committee published its official report as follows:

Total number of articles received	16,334
Articles taken by Mr. Army	1,000
Value of sales from Committee rooms (Sold to persons of limited means at 2/3 actual value)	\$76.25
Flour and groceries purchased	\$7,600.00
Expense incurred in distribution	332.41

This report merely indicates the extent of the work of the committee. The 15,334 articles presumably disbursed by the committee, are not a point of the controversy except with regard to the justice with which

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31. Herald of Freedom, Lawrence, Ks., Jan. 3, 1857.

32. Herald of Freedom, Lawrence, Ks., Jan. 24, 1857.

they were distributed. The remainder of the report is quite worthless with the exception of the \$76.25 representing sales, which would indicate that the central committee had not sold donations extensively.

J. H. Winshell and Wm. Hutchinson published a lengthy report of the history and activities of the Kansas Central Committee. After receiving the arrangement for the division of work made with the National Kansas Committee in October through W. F. M. Army, they explained that the members of the Central Committee had used their personal credit to furnish supplies, relying for security upon prospective payments by the National Committee, only to have the payments restricted to the purchase of further provisions. Through insinuations by Hyatt and Army that the Central Committee had appropriated relief funds to political uses, and that disbursements had been partial, it could no longer obtain donations to reimburse the members of the committee or to carry on relief work. Except for the fund set aside to purchase flour only \$8,000 had been received and of this sum, \$5,000 had been returned in supplies to Mr. Army. Although the National Committee had declared its confidence in the Central Committee, it had declined to repose any responsible trust in its charge.<sup>33</sup>

Upon the publication of these two reports Mr. Army immediately pointed out the discrepancies between them. Blood's report showed that \$386.75 in supplies had been ordered by Army while the other report showed \$5,000. Of the unpaid balance of \$1,386.75, the National Kansas

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33. Kansas Relief Clippings, 1860-61. New York Times. Jan.30, 1857.



Committee had paid Blood \$1,382.62 leaving a balance of \$4.13 which represented personal purchases of Army. Regarding the account of \$2,064.25 for horses belonging to the National Kansas Committee and sold by Hutchinson, Blood had one pair, Col. Eldridge had sold and received payment for another pair, while the remainder had been sold back to the National Committee.<sup>34</sup>

This controversy between the two committees in Kansas discredited generally the Central Committee and a considerable part of the discredit reflected on the National Committee and undoubtably diminished the volume of contributions which were sent to Chicago. The resignation of Mr. Army as general agent was forced in an effort to check criticism against the National Committee. Mr. Hyatt was greatly hampered in his work by the complaints of some of the committee members. He considered seriously the advisability of resigning from his position as president.

Much of the criticism was directed against Hyatt's action regarding Col. Harvey's colony in Anderson County, and contributed in large part to Mr. Army's resignation. The Central Committee accused Hyatt and Army of having given unwarranted sums of money and supplies to this settlement because each had pecuniary interests in the colony.

Col. James A. Harvey, with his entire company of 90 men of the Third Free State Regiment, took claims in Anderson county and established the town of Hyattville or Garnett as it was later called. Mr. Hyatt visited the colony and authorized Mr. Army to provide arms and

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34. Herald of Freedom, Lawrence, Kansas, Mar. 4, 1857.

ammunition to the colony as it was the first outpost of defense. Governor Geary had sustained this action because the men were out of employment, as temporary peace had been established, and were likely to become a charge upon the town of Lawrence.<sup>35</sup> Many immigrants had been too occupied with military service to secure claims before winter and when the military organizations were disbanded, found themselves in Lawrence. The town opposed further immigration and urged that no more people should come until spring because the supply of food was limited.

The National Kansas Committee notified Mr. Hyatt that he had no authority to use the funds of the committee for the colony in Anderson County and urged him to give an immediate account of his disbursements. Mr. Hyatt spiritedly replied that he did not assume authority but did assume responsibility for the money spent to keep the colony on the soil and from starving. As reasons for his "remarkable line of policy" he did not regard the free will offerings of the North as alms or the recipients as paupers. The North had emphatically said "keep the settlers on the soil." He had been compelled to act promptly to save the men from freezing. The members of the National Kansas Committee were in Chicago caring for their personal business while Hyatt had left home, neglected his business, paid his expenses and contributed \$6,000. Under these circumstances he felt that he had a right to assume authority. He was sending a steam saw, grist mill, lath machines, and

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35. Kansas Historical Collections. Vol. 7, p.407. Governor Geary to W. L. Marcy. Leocompton, Kansas. Dec. 22, 1856.

tools for carpenters and blacksmiths to the colony; and had directed Army to purchase teams, plows, and seed corn. If the committee should not approve these expenditures he would refund the money.<sup>36</sup>

Mr. Hyatt travelled twenty days on horseback over Kansas during December, 1856, and January, 1857. He personally distributed \$1,000 worth of supplies. He found that the distribution of the northern gifts had not been perfect but that much had been done to help the needy.<sup>37</sup> He estimated that only half of the clothing had arrived in the territory, and of that half much was unsuitable and worn out.<sup>38</sup> In spite of these discouraging facts he started agitation to supply seeds for the coming spring and to establish a loan fund to aid the settlers in making the necessary payments on their claims.

After the resignation of W. F. M. Army, E. B. Whitman became general agent and supervised the work in the territory. The local committee continued to distribute clothing, food, and seeds sent by individuals. The state of Michigan appropriated \$1,000 to be used by Mr. Whitman to supply seeds to former residents of Michigan.<sup>39</sup> Finally the National Kansas Committee directed Mr. Whitman to distribute all remaining supplies on credit of one year. The funds arising from this sale should be used to redeem the "Protection Fund Scrip" which had been issued to defray the expenses of repelling the invasion by Shannon's militia in

36. Hyatt Papers. Hyatt to Hard. New York. Mar. 19, 1857.

37. Hyatt Papers. Hyatt to Cleveland. Kans. T. Jan. 4, 1857.

38. Hyatt Papers. Hyatt to Amos Lawrence. N. Y., Feb. 11, 1857.

39. Herald of Freedom, Lawrence, Kans., April 11, 1857.

1855, and later had been used in payment by the agent of the New England Emigrant Aid Company and the Central Committee.<sup>40</sup>

The second meeting of the National Kansas Committee was held in Chicago, Jan. 27, 1857. It proved to be the last one ever held as no final accounting was ever made by the committee. Horace Greeley, Gerritt Smith, Charles Dana, Amos Lawrence, and other donors and friends were invited to attend. The State Central Committee, the various sub-committees, and all agents of the National Kansas Committee were requested to make reports.

Following is the report submitted by the Secretary:<sup>41</sup>

Financial Report

Received from all sources	\$90,000
Expended	<u>81,000</u>
Balance in treasury	9,000
Furnished by Massachusetts	\$27,000
"    " New York	33,000
"    " Illinois	10,000
"    " other states	<u>20,000</u>
Total	90,000

Emigrants sent by the Comm. - 2,000  
Provisions and groceries purchased - \$20,000 - 30,000

Clothing Report

	Boxes	Estimated Value
Clothing received at Chicago	763	\$110,000
Shipped from St. Louis Oct.1-Dec.10 (110 detained on Mo. River by close of navigation)	412	60,000
On hand at Chicago	<u>351</u>	<u>50,000</u>
Total Cost of Transportation .....		\$4,108.79

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40. Kansas Relief Papers. 1856-57. E.B. Whitman to people of Kansas.

41. Clipping from New York Tribune. Jan. 27, 1857.

This report represents the work of the Committee for six months -- from July 1856 to January 1857, although the committee's activities did not cease until May 1857, and does not include funds intrusted to Mr. Hyatt personally, which would amount to several thousand dollars could the amount be ascertained.

The Kansas Central Committee raised money by its own efforts before and after its connection with the National Kansas Committee. The books of the Kansas Committee show disbursements of supplies and money from July 25, 1856 to July 15, 1857, although it acted as the agent for the National Kansas Committee for only two months. The activities during these two months far exceeded the activities of all the other months of the year.

There is no evidence to show that the New England Emigrant Aid Company ever carried on any relief work. In the report of the Board of Directors, May 27, 1856, is an item "Donations \$3,303.63.<sup>42</sup> Since we know that the officers of the New England Emigrant Aid Company accepted contributions for the Kansas sufferers and that its agents distributed this money in the territory we may assume that this item indicates the amount of the contributions. After the National Kansas Committee was formed all such contributions were turned over to that committee. Is there, then, any doubt as to which organization is responsible for the relief work when we compare the \$3,303.63 possible donations received by the New England Emigrant Aid Company with the \$81,000 expended by the

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42. New England Emigrant Aid Co. Records. May 27, 1856.

National Committee before January 27, 1857 and at least \$9,000 spent later, besides donations of clothing valued at \$100,000? After deducting \$4,000 expense incurred in transporting clothing and \$10,000 spent for arms and ammunition from \$90,000 total expenditures, we have \$76,000 which was spent for relief in the territory.

The report shows that the National Kansas Committee sent 2000 settlers from July to January, the six months of the year when emigration would be the least popular because of the season and the political troubles. The most generous estimate made for the New England Emigrant Aid Company is 1,000 emigrants, who were sent over a period of several years.<sup>45</sup>

While these figures seem quite conclusive, they do not tell the entire story because the New England Emigrant Aid Company blazed the trail in the work of making Kansas a free state and created interest throughout the North. When the New England Emigrant Aid Company stepped aside and the National Kansas Committee assumed the task of providing food and clothing for the Kansas settlers the foundations of the work

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43. 500 settlers in 1855 - Estimate made by Edward B. Hale, Lawrence, Ks. Sept. 16, 1879  
 1300 settlers before June, 1856 - Statement by Thomas Webb, Boston, June 23, 1856.  
 500 settlers - Sent in 1857 - New England Emigrant Aid Co. Ticket Books.

New England Emigrant Aid Company sent trains of 50 emigrants.  
 National Kansas Committee trains were composed of from 500 to 500 emigrants.

were already laid.

Being a business enterprise the New England Emigrant Aid Company could not conduct a nation wide charitable movement. Its hands were tied by the limitations of the charter and a new organization had to be formed which was unrestricted in its nature and could assume any new burdens which might present themselves. The New England Emigrant Aid Company prepared pamphlets describing the climate and soil of Kansas and advising the best routes of reaching Kansas.

The publication of lists of current prices in the territory saved needless transportation by the emigrants of many things which they could purchase in Kansas. Many settlers later testified that they came to Kansas primarily to better their economic conditions and only secondarily to advance the free state cause. These people would never have left their homes for a new country had not some organization been fostering the movement and giving assurances that towns would be established, schools organized, and the country developed by additional capital.

Likewise the influence of the National Kansas Committee and the people who contributed money and clothing cannot be estimated. Without the assurances which it gave, to provide food and clothing, hundreds of settlers would have left Kansas and the free state cause would have been materially injured.

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