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The Ends of Relief: British Quakers and the First World War in Vienna

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Building on growing humanitarian history scholarship, this article asks: when should relief end? During any war, the emergency nature of material assistance seems obvious, but after the treaties are signed, it is not always clear to those working in shattered societies how or when to extricate themselves. This article uses one case study to explore this broad question by examining the predicament that Hilda Clark, a Quaker physician, faced in ending her unit's relief mission in post-First World War Europe. Clark's Austrian Unit serves as a particularly rich case for analysing efforts to manage the scope of humanitarian programmes because of rich primary source materials that show the genuine struggles Clark and her colleagues experienced in trying to define the extent of their humanitarian presence.

Any humanitarian enterprise must decide when to provide aid, how to administer it, and most importantly, who deserves it.[1] As Rebecca Gill has argued, modern relief is characterised by 'competing visions of rationalised compassion' that arose in order to make such decisions.[2] Historians, especially in the past quarter century, have centred increased attention on these defining questions about the motivations for 'saving strangers', with particular emphasis on justifications for intervention and the interlocking networks of aid organisations.[3] Other scholars have explicitly identified the First World War as a key period in this business of relief to war victims.[4] Among those innovators at the centre of foreign relief endeavours were the Anglo-American Religious Society of Friends (hereafter, Quakers or Friends), whose temporary presence in nineteenth-century conflict zones metamorphosed into permanent organisations by the 1920s.[5]

Building on this growing scholarship about the history of humanitarian aid, this article asks a different and perhaps an even thornier question: ***when*** should relief end? During any war, the emergency nature of material assistance seems obvious—at least on the surface—but after the armistice is declared and the treaties are signed, it is not always clear to those working in shattered societies how or when to extricate themselves. The cessation of war never signals the immediate termination of need, so identifying when to stop intervening also proves complex. After all, what counts as war-related suffering and what reflects more endemic problems of poverty and social inequality? For those engaged in the day-to-day humanitarian labours, their decisions could be based on a number of factors: continued need, financial resources, labour and supplies, and intangible issues that were hard to quantify.

This article uses one case study to explore the broader question of when relief ends after a war by examining the predicament that the Friends faced in trying to extricate themselves from delivering aid to suffering war victims in post-First World War

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[1] Gill, R., *Calculating Compassion: humanity and relief in war, Britain 1870–1914*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013, p. 4.

[2] Gill, R., '"The Rational Administration of Compassion": the origins of British relief in war,' *Le movement social* 227 (2009), p. 10.

[3] See, for example, Barnett, M., *Empire of Humanity: a history of humanitarianism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011; Roddy, S., Strange, J.-M., and Taithe, B., *The Charity Market and Humanitarianism in Britain, 1870–1912*, London: Bloomsbury, 2019; and Wheeler, N.J., *Saving Strangers: humanitarian intervention in international society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

[4] Cabanes, B., *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism, 1918–1924*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014; and Skinner, R., and Lester, A., 'Humanitarianism and Empire: new research agendas,' *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40 (2012), pp. 729–47.

[5] Baughan, E., *Saving the Children: humanitarianism, internationalism, and empire*, Oakland: University of California Press, 1922; Gill, *Calculating Compassion*; and Kelly, L., *British Humanitarian Activity in Russia, 1890–1923*, Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Europe. Chary of implementing permanent development regimes, but also dazzled by the possibilities of such work, Friends sought at a number of locations to promote self-help and lasting institutions without crossing the line into imperial-style intervention or long-term development. This proved tricky, however, because on-site personnel witnessed continued deprivation and pain. As one report from the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to donors explained in summer 1923, 'The armistice was signed five years ago, but it has not resolved itself into a permanent peace . . . and many innocent people have continued to suffer.'[6] A year later, the AFSC still reported widespread misery, noting 'these cases may appear to be unrelated to the conflict of 1914–18, but they represent the casualties of the great war as truly as those who fell on the battlefield'.[7] But the question remained as to whether these wartime victims still constituted war casualties in 1924, more than five years after the conflict's official end.

Using the case of Hilda Clark, a Quaker physician and aid administrator, this essay provides a window into the dilemma of when and how to leave by focussing on the relief mission she directed in Austria after the war. The first part of this article aims to explain the origins and motivations behind Clark's unit before turning to the central quandary of how to contain its scope of work and end its foreign involvement. The Friends' Austrian Unit serves as a particularly rich case for analysing efforts to manage the scope of humanitarian programmes for a number of reasons. First, Vienna was the capital city of a defeated enemy, and as such, required special persuasion in public fundraising appeals. Second, in the hierarchy of post-war privation and need for foreign aid, Austria proved to be a cause célèbre in international circles in 1919, but it lost that status as time went on, particularly with the inclusion of Soviet famine regions in Friends' benevolent appeals.[8] Finally, Clark's personal and professional papers are voluminous and frank in their discussion of the challenges she faced, making the source base particularly evocative. As a member of the prominent Quaker manufacturing family who owned Clark Shoes, she had important ties within the Friends' religious and social network, which are reflected in her correspondence.[9]

Her private and public letters, along with others in her unit, show the genuine struggles they experienced in trying to define the purpose and extent of their humanitarian aid presence. In particular, they agonised over the extent of Britain's

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[6] *Bulletin No. 58* (June 1, 1922–May 31, 1923), p. 1; Bulletins, American Friends Service Committee Archives, Philadelphia (AFSC).

[7] *Bulletin No. 59* (June 1, 1923–May 31, 1924), p. 1; AFSC.

[8] The Friends operated in a number of countries, including Austria, Hungary, Germany, Poland, USSR, and others.

[9] Obituary for Clark, *The Friend* 113:10 (11 March 1955); Box FL458, Folder 7KDC/K/11/1-3; Courtney Collection; Women's Library, London (WL), and Holton, S., *Quaker Women: personal life, memory and radicalism in the lives of women Friends, 1780–1930*, London: Routledge, 2007.

post-war responsibility to former enemies and how best to reach those in need. In her first month in Vienna, Clark already perceived the problem of putting a small bandage on a big wound, writing home: 'I am concerned that you cannot do much for children unless you help family life', which was a much bigger task.[10] The idea of containing their programmes to just one or two targeted appeals appeared impossible, yet other agencies' decisions encouraged the Friends to expand. Clark reported in a March 1921 letter that the American Relief Administration (ARA) planned to continue another year, giving "great scope" for the Friends to continue as well.[11] As this report suggests, Clark and her colleagues had to cooperate and compete with other organisations from a number of countries and perspectives. These interlocking circles of relief sometimes shared common funding, meaning that their fortunes and decisions were also linked. Such constraints led to frustration when Friends had to curb their enthusiasm for projects that they perceived to be vital to post-war recovery.

Even more problematic than choosing projects for funding was the question of ceasing the Friends' intervention in Austria. Leaving the country proved difficult to time, not only because poverty and disease remained apparent in the early 1920s, but also because workers themselves had an investment in the communities they served. Humanitarians often experienced an intense emotional attraction to the experience of saving war victims. In addition to a sense of fulfilment, there was also a frisson of excitement from doing meaningful and pioneering work as aid personnel. This echoed the experiences of those who worked in poor British communities prior to the war, and it was not coincidental that many of the volunteers for these wartime and post-war philanthropic activities emerged from that crowd, many of whom were female Friends. Emily Baughan succinctly sums up this flow of knowledge and expertise in her recent book on Save the Children, a Quaker-affiliated agency, 'Britain imported and exported child welfare practices' using techniques pioneered in the United States or other parts of Europe, tested in imperial settings and poor communities at home, and then implemented again in post-war Europe.[12] This transnational network of people, ideas, and practices proved to be central to the Austrian Friends' Mission after the First World War.

Working overseas allowed seasoned domestic social reformers a new field for their ambitions, which amplified the feeling of transgressing boundaries of class, gender, and nation in a foreign country after a war. The language of helping others pervaded the writing of both the middle-class urban reformers and activists as well as the new

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[10] Clark to Pye, E., 7 Sep 1919; TEMP MSS 301/COR/13/2; Library of the Society of Friends – London (LSF).

[11] Clark to Pye, Mar 1921, in Pye, E.M., (ed), *War and Its Aftermath: letters from Hilda Clark, M.B., B.S. from France, Austria and the Near East 1914–1924*, London: Clare, Son & Co., 1956, p. 62.

[12] Baughan, *Saving the Children*, p. 6.

humanitarian professionals like Clark. Historian Seth Koven's description of activists in Britain who had 'a sincerely felt and lived ethos of service' alongside a fascination with the 'titillating squalor of the slums' equally explains the labours of helping war victims abroad.[13] Clark herself had been inspired early in the war to do humanitarian work, and she wanted to get to France as soon as possible in 1914, writing to her father: 'Think what a difference it would have made in South Africa if the concentration camps had been properly organised at the outset.'[14] Clark recognised that she had the skill set and ambition to set up relief properly in France, and she just needed the opportunity. Therefore, for Clark and other women, humanitarian activities constituted meaningful work that allowed for personal satisfaction and a certain liberation from the confines of British gender and class norms. That sense of freedom was difficult to leave behind.

Finally, for many relief personnel, they hoped to stay until they knew that their labour had resulted in permanent change. The best way to see that impact, they reasoned, was in a perpetual mark of their toils, perhaps in the form of legacy institutions administered by local authorities. These longer-term efforts looked less like emergency relief and more like modern development projects based around an understanding of progress that they themselves construed as universal and positive. It is not a surprise, given that many of the British Friends had pre-war backgrounds in public health, social work, and urban settlements, that their notions of the purpose and ends of relief often resembled social engineering. Most had trained in a Victorian self-help ideology, which theorised that lasting societal change required a commitment to self-improvement and responsibility.[15] They looked for signs in their overseas missions that the recipients of aid had absorbed the values necessary to succeed without British tutelage. Ultimately, the Friends reluctantly shuttered their missions in Austria, Germany, Poland, and other parts of Europe after more than five years, but in some ways this work never ended as they left a legacy of permanent Quaker aid organisations still with us today.

The Quaker Relief and Austria

The origins of Friends' relief to Europe lies in an important doctrine within the faith that emphasised ministering to war victims as a means of modelling peaceful solutions and approaches to war's devastation. As one official history of the AFSC explained, Friends pursued not 'good will in action' by individuals, but wanted to foster 'eternal human and community values.'[16] During the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71), the Friends created

[13] Koven, S., *Slumming: sexual and social politics in Victorian London*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 20.

[14] Clark to father, 12 September 1914; TEMP MSS 301/COR/5; LSF.

[15] Gill, '"The Rational Administration",' p. 22.

[16] Forbes, J., *The Quaker Star Under Seven Flags, 1917–1927*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962, p. 19.

the Friends' War Victims' Relief fund (later called FWVRC) as a temporary way to aid those affected by war. The FWVRC emerged again in 1912 in the Balkans, and such efforts set the tone for other smaller missions to rebuild civilian lives destroyed by famine or wartime violence. By 1914, these values and actions had coalesced around the concept of engaged interaction with the world, whether that be in politics, professional life, or relief of suffering.[17] Central to their conception of healing the wounds of modern society was an emphasis on liberal ideals of self-help and public work.[18] This emphasis aligned well with broader societal trends that highlighted progress through engagement with imperial improvement projects, programmes aimed at the urban poor, and service to local communities. The Friends hoped to alleviate poverty, heal the sick, and emphasise their religious witness with its focus on 'the sacredness of human life.'[19] It was this invigorated attention to social progress that guided their actions when confronting a new war, bolstered by innovative tools in logistics and financing that enabled longer and better funded programmes.[20] In August 1914, Clark helped reactivate the FWVRC in order to address non-combatant distress in France as the Friends had done in the Franco-Prussian War.[21] In these operations, as with their post-war endeavours, they provided medical aid, addressed the problems of poverty and famine, and administered general charity, often within a framework of social reform. Thus, by 1914, the Friends were experienced in the work of ministering to strangers in times of need. However, these efforts had always been seen as temporary mobilisations in the past; the First World War changed that.

The other important consideration in staffing aid bureaus was how to acquire volunteers. Male Friends, as pacifists, seemed an obvious choice for humanitarian service abroad, since many sought opportunities that did not constitute combat. After the advent of conscription in 1916, Quaker men had to register as conscientious objectors, take on alternate war service, or face prison because of their principles.[22] A number of these men worked in the Friends' Ambulance Unit (FAU), but others

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17 Holton, S., 'Kinship and Friendship: Quaker women's networks and the women's movement,' *Women's History Review* 14 (2005), p. 377.

18 Kelly, *British Humanitarian Activity*, pp. 40–3.

19 Kennedy, T.C., 'The Quaker Renaissance and the Origins of the Modern British Peace Movement, 1895–1920,' *Albion* 16 (1984), p. 247.

20 Trentmann, F., 'Coping with Shortage: the problem of food security and global visions of coordination, c. 1890s–1950,' in Trentmann and Just, F., (eds), *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars*; London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, pp. 29–30; and Cabanes, *The Great War*, p. 4.

21 Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, p. 43; Clark, H., and Harley, T.E., "War Victims Relief Committee Report," *The Friend* 54:40 (10 October 1914), p. 725.

22 Kennedy, T.C., *The Hound of Conscience: a history of the No-Conscription Fellowship 1914–1919*, Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1981, p. 106; Rae, J., *Conscience and Politics: the British government and the conscientious objector to military service, 1916–1919*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, pp. 71, 131–2. Ireland was exempt from conscription.

gravitated toward other overseas relief work, especially in the last years of the war and after the Armistice.[23] For Quaker women, the war represented an opportunity for them to utilise skills in medicine, social reform, and public health. Additionally, with the major suffrage societies in Britain taking a pro-war stance, pacifist women became disillusioned with these campaigns for the vote and put their energies elsewhere.[24]

One satisfying way for both male and female Friends to serve humanity during wartime was to volunteer to administer relief to those enduring hardships borne out of the emergency. As Clark assured her mother, the objects of their aid were civilians, implying these were worthy recipients of care who had not chosen to participate in the violence.[25] From the beginning of the Friends' multiple missions in 1914, they aided non-combatants that nations widely considered enemies, both 'aliens' stranded in Britain and those abroad. So perhaps it was not a surprise that in the months following the signing of the peace treaty, Clark and her colleagues worked to establish relief to civilians in the new nation of Austria, a region only liberated from the Allied wartime blockade in summer 1919.[26] For outside donors and possible aid workers, Austria represented (often unlike Germany) a deserving target for relief, for as Patricia Clavin has persuasively argued, there was a widespread perception that Vienna was a 'treasury of high culture'; it was worth saving.[27]

Austria, despite war victims' self-advocacy and the state's mobilisation of its own charitable and welfare agencies, certainly needed assistance after the Armistice and fall of the monarchy in 1918.[28] As a fledgling nation-state that had emerged from the revolutionary end to the Habsburg war, Austrians faced severe material shortages. Austrian officials also confronted immediate challenges in the form of political instability, housing shortages, unemployment, refugees, and an influx of demobilised soldiers.[29] Perhaps most troubling was the question of how to feed nearly 6.5 million

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[23] Wynter, R., 'Conscription, Conscience and Controversy: the Friends' Ambulance Unit and the "middle course" in the first world war,' *Quaker Studies* 21 (2016), pp. 213–33.

[24] Holton, S., *Suffrage Days: stories from the women's suffrage movement*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 211.

[25] Clark to Helen Priestman Bright Clark, 9 October 1914, TEMP MSS 301/COR/5; LSF.

[26] Dehne, P.A., *After the Great War: the promise of peace in Paris 1919*, London: Bloomsbury, 2019. For Friends' work in Germany and Poland at the same time, see: Maul, D., *The Politics of Service: US-Amerikanische Quäker und internationale humanitäre hilfe, 1917–1945*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2021, and Back, L.S., 'The Quaker Mission in Poland: relief, reconstruction, and religion,' *Quaker History* 101:2 (Fall 2012), pp. 1–23.

[27] Clavin, P., 'The Austrian hunger crisis and the genesis of international organization,' *International Affairs* 90:2 (2014), p. 269.

[28] Hsia, K., *Victims' State: war and welfare in Austria, 1868–1925*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, pp. 9–13.

[29] Gruber, H., *Red Vienna: experiment in working-class culture, 1919–1934*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 13–6. The Republic of German Austria was born after King Karl I's withdrawal on Armistice Day 1918, followed the next day by the declaration of a new state by its provisional assembly. See Judson, P., *The Habsburg Empire: a new history*, Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2016, pp. 424–5, 437.

people when many of the agricultural regions of the old empire belonged to Hungary and neighbouring states.[30] The Austrian part of the empire suffered massive losses in grain crops, cattle, pigs, and sheep.[31] The continuation of the Allied blockade for months after the signed armistice also extended the misery of wartime for ordinary people.

Austrian non-combatants had already been through a brutal war in terms of access to food, fuel, and essentials for life.[32] The new Austrian government tried a number of reforms in housing, welfare provision, taxation, and public health to cope with long-term societal problems that had been exacerbated by war.[33] Austrians also developed relief programmes that either continued wartime efforts or as new ventures.[34] In cities and in Vienna especially, the overcrowding of dwellings and the scarcity of supplies led to diseases like tuberculosis and other problems.[35] Historian Maureen Healy has demonstrated clearly the price that the Viennese, in particular, paid. She described eating during the war as 'a mathematical exercise in consuming any available calories, no matter how disagreeable their source.'[36] A full year after the Armistice, Kathleen Courtney, a new arrival to the British Friends Mission, explained in a letter home:

> Conditions here are really appalling, the town lives from hand to mouth if it can be said to live at all. By paying enormous prices very rich people can procure more or less what they want, but the poor & even more the middle classes, with fixed incomes are practically starving. The rations are literally not enough . . . [37]

Austrian lives did not improve quickly either, because of continuing shortages, poor rationing efforts, and financial crises, particularly in 1922. Unemployment also spiked

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[30] Hungary also needed foreign help: Kind-Kovács, F., *Budapest's Children: humanitarian relief in the aftermath of the great war*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022.

[31] Langthaler, E., 'Dissolution before Dissolution: the crisis of the wartime food regime in Austria-Hungary,' in Tucker, R.P., Keller, T., McNeill, J.R., and Schmid, M., (eds), *Environmental Histories of the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018, p. 39.

[32] Langthaler, 'Dissolution before Dissolution,' pp. 47–9.

[33] Sieder, R., 'Housing Policy, Social Welfare, and Family Life in "Red Vienna", 1919–1934,' *Oral History* 13 (1985), pp. 35–48.

[34] Hsia, K., 'A Partnership of the Weak: war victims and the state in the early first Austrian republic," in Bischof, G., Plasser, F., and Berger, P., (eds), *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria*, New Orleans: University of New Orleans Press, 2010, pp. 199–201.

[35] Frei, A.G., *Die Arbeiterbewegung und die "Grazwurzeln" am Beispiel der Wiener Wohnungspolitik, 1919–1934*, Wien: Braumüller, 1991, pp. 120–3.

[36] Healy, M. *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: total war and everyday life in World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 47.

[37] Courtney to mother, 19/23 December 1919; KC3, Private Papers of Dame Kathleen Courtney; Documents.9785a; Box No. P96; Imperial War Museum (IWM).

in 1922–1923, which threw many families into distress again after initial post-war improvements in their situations.[38]

Children became a special concern both within Austria itself and increasingly for outsiders, with a focus on their potential to make or break the future of this new nation.[39] The outcry about the plight of Austrian children helped inspire a novel agency in the fight against wartime child hunger, which was largely the brainchild of sisters Eglantyne Jebb and Dorothy Buxton in Britain. Buxton's Fight the Famine Council, born in January 1919, grew quickly and by late spring became the Save the Children Fund (SCF), whose object was to raise monies to feed child war victims.[40] SCF-sponsored programmes sustained children in multiple regions of Europe and the Near East, with Austria receiving the lion's share of its intervention in the first five years. SCF functioned by partnering with other relief agencies like the Friends who already had an established presence in the regions being targeted. In fact, it was sometimes difficult to know 'where a Save the Children intervention ended and that of another organization began' because of SCF's extensive reliance on other agencies.[41]

Additionally, the SCF's pioneering marketing and their message of hope for the future through investment in children helped publicise the plight of young people in countries such as Austria during the immediate post-war period. Like the Friends, the SCF emphasised the importance of a self-help initiative alongside charity and aid in order to create lasting social change. One publication reminded readers: 'Famine relief, even as an emergency measure, can be given so as to stimulate at the same time the initiative and the power of self-help of those who receive it.'[42] SCF's tireless advocacy for what it deemed the 'Unknown Child' played a significant role in raising public awareness in Britain about child hunger and nutritional deficiencies in Austria, and in a larger sense, Jebb's advocacy and the evidence SCF gathered after the war led to a Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1923) by the League of Nations.[43]

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[38] Frei, *Die Arbeiterbewegung*, p. 96.

[39] Healy, *Vienna*, pp. 249–250.

[40] 'Survey of the work of the Save the Children Fund,' July 1922; EJ271, Reel 34; Cadbury Library, University of Birmingham (CL). Baughan, *Saving the Children;* Freeman, K., *If Any Man Build: the history of the Save the Children fund*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1965; and Boucher, E., 'Cultivating Internationalism: Save the Children fund, public opinion, and the meaning of child relief, 1919–1924," in Beers, L., and Thomas, G., (eds), *Brave New World: Imperial and Democratic Nation-Building in Britain between the wars*, London: University of London Press, 2011, pp. 169–88.

[41] Baughan, *Saving the Children*, pp. 13, 27.

[42] *The Record of the Save the Children Fund*, vol 1: no. 1 (1 October 1920), p. 3.

[43] Buxton, D.F., and Fuller, E., *The White Flame: the story of Save the Children fund*, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1931, p. vii; *The Brown Book: LMH chronicle December 1929*, Manchester: Sherratt & Hughes, 1929, p. 34; Lady Margaret Hall library, Oxford (LMH).

In this period of intense interest in child health, Clark's Mission in Vienna began in July 1919 with the basics – coal, food, and clothing.[44] For the first few weeks, the work of merely establishing operations consumed their time, especially since they had to survey children to determine need, then organise kitchens for food preparation and distribution. They also had to coordinate with other agencies in order to avoid overlapping care. Therefore, Clark and her colleagues controlled feeding centres for children aged 0–6 and nursing mothers, while the American Relief Administration (ARA) funded and administered a massive food programme for school-aged children (6–14) in Austria. On the surface, this was a rational division of the child and youth population between the British-led Friends and the American-led ARA, but tensions arose over procedures, approaches, and personalities, threatening the working relationship of the two groups. Some of the later concerns about when to end aid were tied to this relationship and the funding that the Friends received from American sources. Clark had to maintain cordial relations with the ARA and the American Red Cross (ARC) personnel so as not to jeopardise the dollars and supplies that came through those channels from the United States.[45]

A dozen other agencies also set up shop, and by 1920, relief in Austria came from the Netherlands, Argentina, Denmark, France, China, and the United States, to say nothing of International Red Cross work there. Given that Austria itself had organised aid for local communities as well, the relief field proved quite crowded by 1920.[46] Austria's political and financial challenges also sparked outside intervention from the League of Nations.[47] All this competition spurred Clark and her co-workers to broaden their remit to include new projects and other regions outside the city centre. As Clark wrote to her superiors, American agencies had not ventured into districts she knew needed help, so she proposed doing so herself. In writing the request, Clark recognised that perhaps the Americans had not 'ventured to start' on these districts 'because of the difficulty of knowing where to stop.'[48] But she had faith that her group could manage the challenges of gauging how to serve these communities and when to end that service.

And they assumed responsibility for a dizzying array of targeted programmes, most of which required conscientious and long-term efforts. Quakers truly wanted to make a real difference in individual lives, but their overreach meant failure in some

[44] Hurley, B., to AFSC, 11 November 1919; Box: General Administration (GA) 1919 Foreign Service Austria General, AFSC.

[45] Proctor, T.M. "An American enterprise? British participation in US food relief programmes (1914–1923), *First World War Studies* 5 (2014), pp. 29–42.

[46] Ferrière, S., "[Union Internationale de Secours aux Enfants, Geneva] Report on Vienna," 29 Sep 1920; EJ41, Reel 19; SCF records, CL.

[47] Marcus, N., *Austrian Reconstruction and the Collapse of Global Finance, 1921–1931*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018, pp. 109–11.

[48] Clark, Progress of Work report, Winter 1920–1921; Box: GA1920 Foreign Service Country Austria-Britain Reports, AFSC.

of their endeavours as they struggled to juggle the myriad jobs. For instance, in their cooperation with SCF to administer 'financial' adoptions, the Friends selected the children in need, matched a donor to an individual child, then tracked the relationships for publicity and fundraising purposes. The Quakers sent regular reports to SCF for distribution to the donors that included handwritten thank-you notes from each child, photographs, and reports from the workers assigned to oversee the programme. Mary E. Houghton, who led the Friends' adoption scheme in Vienna, demonstrated a real talent in the area and a focus on giving recipients opportunities for self-improvement. She also recognised that many of the families found it difficult to accept aid, so she organised ways for children to donate to someone even more needy, such as other hospitalised children. One report described this extension of the work: 'The response to this appeal was beyond all expectation. Nearly everyone brought something'.[49] Not only did Houghton encourage self-respect among recipients, a major goal for the Friends, but she cleverly extended the experience of saving strangers to others and provided fodder for fundraising literature abroad, which sought to highlight children's deserving nature. Despite its success—adoptions supported more than twelve hundred children each six-month period that it operated—it was also a lot of work. Houghton's investment in getting to know the individual families and donors spoke to the deep commitment that Friends had in 'their' special projects.[50]

Foreign adoptions functioned as only one of the many tangential programmes that the Friends sponsored in Austria, using monies donated from multiple nations, but particularly the United States. They funded orphanages, disease prevention programmes, clothing depots, subsidised restaurants, student canteens, and special programs for out-of-work professionals. The Unit created robust programmes aimed at middle-class professionals who had fallen on hard times, perhaps seeing their own lives in the plight of the respectable middling sorts.[51] Taken as a whole, the scope and audacity of the plans that relief workers pursued in post-war Austria are eerily reminiscent of empire building, while also prefiguring the development regimes of the post-Second World War world. Indeed, the official history of the Friends' work in the First World War and its aftermath baldly states that the Quakers possessed a 'Utopian strain which grew stronger as the war went on; they dreamed of social change and of the part they might play in it.'[52] The problem with this expansive notion of aid was that the multitude of projects stretched funding and personnel thin, leading to disorganisation

[49] Sidgwick, E., to Clark, A., 7 Oct 1922; EJ31, Reel 18; SCF records, CL.

[50] Houghton, M.G., "Report of the Save the Children Adoption Scheme" (from Jan 1921–July 1921 and October 1921–June 1922); EJ32, Reel 18; SCF records, CL.

[51] Jones, H., *Women in British Public Life, 1914–1950: gender, power, and social policy*, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 109–10.

[52] Greenwood, J.O., *Quaker Encounters Volume 1: friends and relief*, York: William Sessions Limited, 1975, pp. 194–5.

and ineffectiveness at times. As Ethel Sidgwick indicated in a letter denying additional SCF funding for a tuberculosis home for children in Austria, 'Nowadays, as you know, it is all the public can do to think of one branch of distress at a time, and we have had, as always, to press the points of greatest need, in Germany and the Near East, on their attention.'[53] She went on to remark that the SCF already had substantial funds tied up in child feeding operations and milk distribution. Meanwhile, the fundraising drives and the distributions continued, often with no end in sight. Saying no to some needs was hard, but it was also necessary in order to continue at all.

When to Stay and When to Go

As the Vienna mission pursued its big feeding projects and its smaller offshoots, debates raged nearly continuously about when the Friends should leave Austria. Each summer when weather improved, an internal discussion ensued regarding an end date for the unit. As early as 1920, external and internal forces clamoured for a withdrawal of Quaker aid workers, leading to the appointment of special commissioners to investigate conditions. Frederick J. Libby, one of the commissioners and a member of the AFSC with relief experience, toured the European missions in 1920. In his report, he categorically stated that it would be irresponsible to leave now:

> It is not for "sentimental" reasons that the American Relief Administration, under Lt. Stockton's able management, has decided that its relief to the children of school age in Vienna must continue another year. It is not for "sentimental" reasons that the American Red Cross, headed by major Van Denburg, while other fields are being closed, has decided to continue in Vienna. ... Our depot workers are heart sick from the sights they see, and when a reporter, after a two days' stop at Vienna's best hotel, goes away again to spread abroad in specious words, so vicious a lie, it is enough to make angels weep, and devils rejoice.[54]

As Libby made clear, none of the agencies operating in Vienna thought that they could safely abandon their work yet, and he noted that the Friends felt the same way despite media criticism of their presence. Quaker officials in Philadelphia and London, tired of personnel disputes and endless fundraising, continued to question the necessity of this European work, but bowed to the assessments of those in the field.[55]

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[53] Levin, H., to Sidgwick, E., 14 May 1924; EJ50, Reel 20; SCF records, CL. Sidgwick, a novelist, became deeply involved in SCF in the 1920s. See Mahood, L., *Feminism and Voluntary Action: Eglantyne Jebb and Save the Children fund, 1876–1928*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 210–2.

[54] Report on the Vienna Mission by F.J. Libby, 18 July 1920; Box: GA1920, Austria-Britain Reports; AFSC. Libby was responding to a critical article about the Vienna relief published in the London *Times*.

[55] See, for instance, Thomas, W., to Fry, A.R., 15 June 1920; Box: GA1920 Austria-Britain Reports; AFSC.

In 1921, officials leading the fundraising campaigns again questioned the existence of the Vienna Mission. That autumn, Clark and her life partner, Edith Pye, went on a successful tour of the United States in order to raise awareness of Austria's privations and to raise needed money for continuation. While there, Clark met with Herbert Hoover, who controlled funds raised for European child aid, and as such had an outsized power in determining which countries received US dollars and how much they could expect. He told her bluntly that 'America ought to stop helping Austria and force the countries which are responsible for the position Austria is in to help her. He said it wasn't England's fault—but the fault of the countries round and therefore of France which supports them.'[56] Clark nevertheless left the meeting with a promise of funding for Austria for the coming winter at least. This pattern of a summer threat to end relief followed by an appropriation for the winter followed by a subsequent threat to cut off funds, turned into an annual cycle that lasted through 1924, when it became almost impossible to continue to raise funds. By this time, the donations had largely dried up as compassion fatigue at the endless calls for helping the war victims consolidated.

Over the years, as the Austrian unit expanded and developed, Clark's colleagues devised new projects or collaborated with other entities to expand their work. With every new programme, it looked harder and harder to extricate the Friends from Austria. Instead, they had turned temporary relief into something that resembled permanent investment in social life there. Two of the Quakers' more ambitious agendas demonstrate how relief bled into social welfare: a land settlement housing project and a milk cow scheme.

For the first, Friends sought to support Austrians who had created 'wild' settlements in and around the city during the war, where they developed allotments to grow food and to support themselves.[57] The settlers wanted to make these communities permanent after the war and to found something akin to Garden Cities by relying on donated funds and materials as well as labour from the prospective inhabitants. Based around a popular concept developed by the British reformer, Ebenezer Howard, so-called garden cities aimed to bring together the elevating qualities of the countryside and the natural world with the need for industry and labour. While these Viennese communities differed from the original concept, they did embody many of the principles of self-sufficiency and a melding of town and country attributes. As Howard explained in his 1898 manifesto, *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, 'Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together.'[58] Howard's notion of peace, modernity, and pastoral

[56] Clark, H., to Clark, A., 23 November 1921; TEMP MSS 301/COR/4/2; LSF.

[57] Blau, E., *The Architecture of Red Vienna, 1919–1934*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999, pp. 89–92

[58] Howard, E., *To-Morrow: a peaceful path to real reform*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010 [1898], p. 9.

pleasures as a balm for the problems of industrial urbanisation and conflict held great appeal for the Friends and for urban planners around the world by the 1920s. While the Friends envisioned garden communities with utopian cooperative values, many of the Austrian advocates of post-war housing projects focused around social-democratic ideas of engineering an ideal socialist society.

Quakers and other post-war advocates embraced the cooperative nature of these organisations, but settlers themselves provided much of the work to construct the permanent housing and allotments. By 1921, the Friends arranged funding and equipment for two types of evolving model communities that catered to former soldiers and civilians. In their reports, they divided these into suburban housing estates with garden city elements (*Wohn siedlung*) and self-supporting agricultural settlements (*Wirtschafts siedlung*).[59] Under pressure from tens of thousands of existing settlers, or, as the authorities saw them, squatters, the city agreed to zone land for the conversion of existing temporary communities into permanent housing and agricultural allotments.[60] These boutique schemes co-existed alongside massive public housing construction by the Social Democratic leaders of Vienna in the same time period, who also sought to create apartment complexes that embraced modern, hygienic, and comfortable standards designed to raise the status of workers.[61] While the public housing of the city emphasised efficiency and modern life, the settlements sought to inculcate a more radical ideal of suburban/rural working cooperatives. These dreams often featured in the titles of the settlements, as in the Friends-supported *Reformsiedlung Eden* designed by Margarete Lihotzky, whose main thoroughfare was named Eden Street.[62]

The Friends, alongside other foreign aid groups, loaned money to *siedlungen* and provided gifts of supplies as well as agricultural machinery. They imagined that the land settlements would support themselves but also provide food for the poor of Vienna. The settlements they imagined could become self-sustaining in a way that might make it easier for Quakers to leave with the promise that ravaged communities might thrive on their own.[63] Funding for these projects remained precarious, however, and at times, the Friends had to go with hat in hand to other groups hoping to support their continued existence. As Alice Clark noted in an October 1922 letter to the SCF: 'The

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[59] Dr. Kampfmeyer, "Back to the Land Movement," 6 May 1921; FEWVRC/MISSIONS/4/6/1/1: Relief Mission Austria, Land Settlement (June 1920–Sep 1921); LSF.

[60] Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna*, p. 98.

[61] Timms, E., "School for Socialism: Karl Seitz and the cultural politics of Vienna," *Austrian Studies* 14 (2006), p. 45. By the early 1930s, the Social Democrats had sponsored construction of housing for more than 200,000 people.

[62] Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna*, pp. 116–7.

[63] 'Land Settlements,' *Friends Relief Mission Report Winter 1921–1922* (1 February 1922), Box 657, Reel 770; Folder 3 Austria, AFSC; Hoover Institution, Stanford (HI).

crisis threatens the existence of the Land Settlements which have struggled so bravely for the last year and a half. We are wanting £600 urgently to save what is already in process of building, and £80 to provide the goats of the settlers with fodder during this winter. Next year they will be able to grow more food stuff for them.'[64] Despite their commitment to supporting the programme, Friends' efforts could not meet the size of the need. In fact, in this case, Quaker fears about ending their relief too soon came true. When they cut off funding, the loss of that contribution led directly to the dissolution of the settlement bureau in 1925.[65]

The Friends' other large-scale agricultural effort concerned the importation of milk cows from the Netherlands, the Tyrol, and Switzerland into Austria as a partnership with local authorities. In setting up this venture, Friends argued that not only was there a severe milk shortage in Vienna but that lack of milk hurt young children. Further, they rejected the idea that powdered or condensed canned milk could substitute for fresh milk, maintaining the need to invest in milk cows.[66] With the help of a German-speaking American Mennonite volunteer, P.C. Hiebert, American Quaker Frederick Kuh assumed responsibility for setting up the arrangements with local farmers in autumn 1919.[67] Soon after this, British Friend Helen Andrews took over the section, overseeing cows at local farms as well as the Mission's own herd; eventually the Friends imported about 1500 cows for infant milk relief.[68] Transported by the Friends via train, the cows provided fresh milk for urban children while also furnishing fodder, work, and self-respect to local farmers, or so their benefactors presumed. The funding for the cows was complicated, including foreign gifts, sales of surplus goods in exchange for fodder, and municipal Austrian monies. In one deal the ARC negotiated with the Austrian government, ARC tobacco, which had been donated from unused American Army stores, became the property of the Austrian state tobacco monopoly to sell to the public. The proceeds came back to the ARC and its sponsored groups (such as the AFSC) for the purchase of milk cows.[69] After that, in exchange for cows, Austrian dairy farmers distributed fresh milk to hospitals and other children's institutions in the cities. Such

[64] Clark, A., to Sidgwick, E., 30 October 1922; EJ31, Reel 18; SCF records, CL.

[65] Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna*, 96, 130. The Österreichischer Verband für Siedlungs- und Kleingartenwesen (ÖVSK) founded in 1921 received Friends' financial help from 1922 until 1924. The end of that stipend contributed to its demise in 1925.

[66] 'Notes on the Fresh Milk Scheme of the Vienna Mission of the Friends' Emergency and War Victims Relief Committee,' 23 July 1920; FEWVRC/MISSIONS/4/6/3/2: Relief Mission Austria, Milk Production (Jan–July 1920); LSF.

[67] Kuh, F., to Thomas, W., 23 October 1919; Box: GA1919 Foreign Service Country Austria-Britain Reports; AFSC.

[68] Greenwood, *Quaker Encounters*, p. 227.

[69] Bakeman, G.W., 'How Tobacco converted into Infants' Food in Austria,' 4 May 1922; Folder 952.621 Austria, Vienna Unit; Box 877; RG200, American Red Cross 1917–1934; National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NARA).

complicated arrangements for credit, swap, sales, and donation were a central feature of a lot of the aid provisions in the 1920s as relief staffs scrambled for resources.

This relationship between the unit and local farmers seemed ideal to Clark, Andrews, and other Quakers because while it helped children in need, the plan had the added advantage of encouraging self-sufficiency among farmers, and it promised a permanent solution to milk shortages. Indeed, the Friends 'dreamed big' with the milk cow scheme, even planning for a dairy farming school that would train milking personnel, cheesemakers, and inspectors.[70] As with the land settlements, such development plans echoed imperial modernisation schemes and notions of proper progress toward autonomy.[71] Austrians proved a pliable population for improvement, given their difficult post-war food realities; farmers hoping to get an investment of cows, equipment, and fodder eagerly signed on to take some of the Quaker cows.[72] The idea that involving local people, incentivising them economically, and providing needed structure would lead to lasting change had appeal for the Friends. They favoured self-support over pure charity in all their programmes, and the agricultural schemes seemed to fit this conception well.[73] Arguments that the Austrians could administer these funds themselves fell on deaf ears.

Many of these agricultural activities remained little known outside of Austria, but one high-profile project centred around children and art, a winning combination for the purposes of foreign propaganda. The Friends worked again with the SCF to help support an exhibition of art educator Franz Cižek's students' art. He had pioneered children's art classes in Vienna prior to the war. Friend Francesca Wilson helped arrange the exhibit, which opened in London in November 1920. Wilson visited the art classes, selected works to travel for the event, and authored catalogues to accompany the show. She delighted in interacting with the child artists, later writing that when remembering her time in Vienna, 'it isn't starvation and relief work that come into my mind, but the laughter and gaiety of gifted children.'[74] The exhibit subsequently travelled around Britain and Ireland then to Australia.[75] Motives for sponsoring the exhibit varied, but in

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[70] Plan for Proposed dairy farming school in Austria (Schloss Sausenstein), May 1920; FEWVRC/MISSIONS 4/6/3/2: Relief Mission Austria, Milk Production (Jan–July 1920); LSF.

[71] Prakash, V., Casciato, M., and Coslett, D.E. (eds), *Rethinking Global Modernism: architectural historiography and the postcolonial*, London: Routledge, 2021.

[72] Note from Andrews, H., 1920; FEWVRC/MISSIONS/4/6/3/2: Relief Mission Austria, Milk Production (Jan–July 1920); LSF.

[73] Roberts, S., 'Place, Life Histories and the Politics of Relief: episodes in the life of Francesca Wilson, humanitarian educator activist,' PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2010, pp. 39–40.

[74] Wilson, F.M., I*n the Margins of Chaos: recollections of relief work in and between three wars*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1945, p. 138.

[75] Roberts, S., 'Exhibiting Children at Risk: child art, international exhibitions, and Save the Children fund in Vienna, 1919–1923,' *Paedagogica Historica* 45 (2009), pp. 175–8.

addition to the publicity and sympathy it generated for Austria's children, sales of the artwork subsidised more art classes and Friends' child feeding operations.[76] Everything seemed to fit together and each endeavour required commitment to the future, making the sense of an ending hard to contemplate.

But who would continue to pay for such long-term investment in a foreign nation? This was especially true because Austria competed with other Quaker missions in Europe, such as Germany, Poland, and the Soviet Union. When Clark toured the United States to raise awareness and funds in 1921, she lamented the problem of continually fighting for resources in a letter to a friend: 'I think Austria will just be dropped if we don't impress the Committee with the importance of saving the children we have already carried so far, & we have to concentrate on it.'[77] Even though the London headquarters suggested in internal correspondence as early as autumn 1920 that the Vienna mission should close, Clark managed to argue for its continuation, especially as conditions on the ground kept changing.[78]

Each time the various national Friends' Units in Europe met for a conference, as in a July 1920 gathering in Vienna, the personnel had to state publicly how much longer they could serve in their roles.[79] Those who stayed multiple years had deep connections in the community and increasingly long-term investments in their projects, making the core group of old timers less likely to want to leave. However, the effort to justify each new season of work took a toll, and by February 1922, even Clark was beginning to outline strategies for turning their projects over to Austrian agencies. Yet a mere two months later, when American Quakers offered help for an additional winter season, Clark made it clear that recruiting should proceed. She remembered the toll that cold winters took on poor children, and she could not face a complete closure of the unit.[80] Particular concern for middle-class aid recipients in 1922 helped fuel continued food relief, when under the League of Nations financial bailout of Austria, the state had to agree to slash subsidies, including food provisions.[81]

The urge to go bigger and to further improve Austria remained alluring to many Friends, and their ever-expanding projects focused not just on reconstruction and recovery, but on permanent development. What appears striking about all these schemes

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[76] Wilson to Hawker, B., 23 July 1922, and Hawker to Jebb, E., 16 July 1922; EJ49, Reel 20; SCF records, CL.

[77] Clark to Courtney, K., 12 November 1921; HC/6/2; Alfred Gillett Trust, Street (AGT).

[78] Fry to Thomas, 25 February 1921; Box: GA1921 Foreign Service Austria Letters; AFSC.

[79] "Minutes of a Conference of All Fields of Friends Relief Service held in Vienna," June 3–5, 1920; Box: GA1920 Foreign Service Country Germany; AFSC.

[80] These decisions dominate a series of letters Clark wrote to Pye from February to April 1922; TEMP MSS 301/COR/13/5 and TEMP MSS 301/COR/13/6; LSF.

[81] Clavin, 'The Austrian hunger crisis,' p. 276.

is the imperial language of protection and tutelage that imbued the justifications of each. Outside relief agencies claimed that each new programme required the expertise and resources of their own personnel, rather than just handing funds to Austrians in order to solve their own problems. Yet as one ARC report from Vienna pointed out, the Austrians involved in relief distribution were both capable and accomplished: 'I object to the term 'native personnel' with its implications of ignorance, perhaps, when applied to the extremely intelligent high class Austrians who are employed here. These latter include a former Admiral of the Austrian navy (employed as a clerk), a daughter of a former ambassador employed as a secretary, and a Baroness'.[82] In answer to such arguments, Quakers insisted that there would come a time when Austrians had proved self-sufficient, but it always seemed to be in the future.

Meanwhile patience was disappearing on the administrative side in London and Philadelphia as the management of people at various sites caused innumerable headaches. The conferences allowed for some planning regarding substitution when workers went home, but more often than not, the two headquarters had to tamp down anger when one unit poached good personnel from another. For example, the American Friends moved three workers from Vienna to Berlin in 1920, leading to complaints from both Clark in Austria and A. Ruth Fry in London.[83] Much of the correspondence in 1922 concerned finding and keeping good workers at the various European sites. These contentious relationships, especially between Berlin and Vienna, helped convince the London and Philadelphia officers that the units should be dissolved sooner rather than later.

Yet when the Quakers met in 1922 with a new target to create plans for withdrawal from Austria, it still remained a long, complex and piecemeal series of actions that took nearly two years to complete. The Friends were not alone in facing this dilemma. The ARA planned originally to close its operations in 1922, but they extended until 1923 because conditions on the ground continued to be dire, especially for children. However, once Hoover's ARA did leave in summer 1923, they also stopped providing financial grants to other groups.[84] At this juncture, the Friends knew that their own work had to cease. The unit, which had numbered about 60 in 1920, gradually closed its programs and reduced in size.[85] Only a handful of British and American personnel

[82] Bird, H.S., "Reports on Conditions in ARC Vienna Unit," May 1921; Folder 952.108 Austria Vienna Unit, WWI; Box 877; RG200; NARA

[83] Rhoads, J.E., to Thomas 1 Jul 1920 [#39]; Box: GA1920, Foreign Service Germany Letters to Phila; AFSC.

[84] 'Sails to Relieve Vienna Sufferers,' *New York Times* (5 November 1922), p. 22, and 'Hanisch Thanks America,' *New York Times* (7 July 1923), p. 4.

[85] Bulletin No. 33 (June 1919–September 1920), p. 1; AFSC.

remained in 1924 to tie up loose ends with the milk cow scheme and anti-tuberculosis work.[86] By that time many of the central experts in relief had left, including Clark herself.[87]

Conclusion

The Friends' emphasis on modelling peaceful solutions for a post-war world led them to cling to hope for a visible and permanent change, but they never attained a clear 'mission accomplished' moment. This reality, alongside depleted pools of recruits, exhaustion of financial resources, and limited patience among leading officials helped end the Friends' Unit in Austria. The Quakers faced problems common to humanitarian endeavours, namely knowing how to limit the interventions and when to leave. Certainly, the line between temporary aid and long-term investment was and remains today a thin one, especially as permanent development organisations have become embedded in state and non-governmental activities.[88] Clark's Austrian unit is only a small piece of this larger story, but it illustrates tensions at the heart of any humanitarian mission.

The longer the Friends stayed, the more they understood the interrelated problems that created inequality, malnourishment, and other social ills in urban society, which led them to try to design more and more ways to fix Austria. Rather than fighting to address the evils arising from the war, they moved more toward waging war on poverty itself. Clark knew that any intractable problem often had roots in other social ills, and after nearly a decade of humanitarian work, she had become somewhat jaded about the possibilities for lasting societal change, writing to her sister in 1920:

> I often daren't go into our outer office, which is generally full of the most piteous special cases, for each of whom one feels that one must make an exception, if one happens to hear the story. Of course, we can't and the only plan is to make the same person deal always with them, because they then realize they can't [. . .] Everybody feels it very much and I often feel very sorry for the younger workers when they get up against it. The beggars are like the noise of the guns in France, always there in the background, and although one gets away from them in night, find they pursue my thoughts even worse than the guns did.[89]

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[86] Bulletin No. 59 (June 1, 1923—May 31, 1924), p. 4; AFSC.

[87] Clark to Pye, 14 February 1922; TEMP MSS 301/COR/13/5; LSF.

[88] Sobocinska, A., *Saving the World? western volunteers and the rise of the humanitarian-development complex*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, pp. 4–10.

[89] Clark to Clark, A., February 1920 [AFSC copy]; Folder 900.02 American Friends Service Committee; Box 820; RG200, NARA.

While she recognised the emotional minefield of care, it remained hard to ignore the pitiful requests for help. The need to continue as long as it took to see real transformation bedevilled the unit. If fifty percent of underweight children improved, did that constitute enough progress? Forty percent? The lack of clear markers for success undermined confidence that a departure was possible.

Detaching themselves from this work was wrenching personally as well. Emotionally, Clark's mission got immediate feedback that made them feel good about their generosity and time. The letters, cards, gifts, and other expressions of gratitude reinforced the relationship between donor and recipient, which must have made the thought of severing those connections difficult. In a sampling of some of the thank-you letters, the diversity of recipients is apparent: parents, young children, elderly people, university students, patients in hospitals, orphans, widows, nuns, and veterans, just to name a few, all of whom effusively offered their gratitude for the Quakers.[90] Perhaps a local official from Salzburg said it best in his letter of thanks for cod-liver oil, milk cows, fodder, food, drugs, Vaseline, and medical supplies: 'Salzburg stands impressed by this truly, Christian work [which is] a real gift of providence, the value of which becomes even more, because through it, faith in mankind is beginning again to grow in the hearts of a sorely stricken people.'[91] This promise—that war relief and humanitarian aid could also repair faith in humanity proved hard to refuse for those employed in the Friends Mission, and they continued to hope that their spiritual mission would prove fruitful and lasting.

Lastly, aid workers relished the sense of purpose and usefulness such a vocation gave them. They were often reluctant to leave the excitement of wartime and post-war necessities for the mundane life of home. As Wilson noted, 'I was always being asked to break new ground, so I never grew stale.'[92] Her colleague, E. Josephine Gilmore, reported wistfully as she concluded her work in Austria in 1924: 'It is a real sorrow to wind up all the interesting personal friendships we have made with many of these families and they are going to miss the help very much; but Austria is now learning to stand alone and it seems time foreign organisations withdrew, only thus can Austria expect to win the confidence of the financial world in her stability.'[93] Gilmore's reflection echoes the widespread sentiment that although the work might not be finished, it did have to be relinquished.

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[90] The AFSC archives in Philadelphia include many examples of letters, drawings, presentation volumes, and other expressions of gratitude to the American and British Friends. Other examples can be found in the Library of Congress, the Hoover Institution archives, and the Hoover Presidential Library collections.

[91] Salzburg State Council (Landeshauptmann O Meyer) to Quakers, 23 Oct 1920; Parcel 2, Box 4, Folder 2 Vienna Mission letters; LSF.

[92] Wilson, *In the Margins of Chaos*, p. 133.

[93] Gilmore, E.J., (Head of Dept, Vienna Friends Mission) to Miss Pittman Davis (SCF), 9 April 1924; EJ53, Reel 20; SCF Records, CL.

As for Clark, she recognised by late spring 1922 that she was chafing at the bureaucracy and political jockeying among the Viennese relief agencies. Rather than stay and fight small battles over turf and procedure, Clark instead accepted a role travelling to other sites to report on operations. She wrote to Pye explaining that her pioneering work and sense of control had ended as the operation expanded and as more Americans arrived at the mission: 'The trouble is that I shall want to keep things running in the way I want, but I expect I had better clear out & let them run it themselves.'[94] In a sense her vision of an expansive social reform model in Vienna outpaced her ability to administer the site.

The ultimate decision about when to end operations at any of the European sites came down to money. The London and Philadelphia offices managed and paid the personnel, conducted the fundraising appeals, and audited each unit's operations. In virtually every case, the ability to raise funds or secure loans determined the fate of the projects, and once a massive American fundraising campaign for feeding and public health of European children had been spent, organisations had to decide: end their work and leave, or find new donors.[95] Most chose to sever their ties to war relief in favour of redesigning their agencies for a permanent global mission, creating associations still functioning today such as Save the Children and the AFSC. The British Friends' units split into two permanent post-war organisations – the Council for International Service and the Friends' Service Union, then later became the Friends Service Council that today still works with the AFSC.[96] By creating permanent legacies, the Friends could rely on having an ongoing humanitarian impact while also recognising the need for pacifist organisations to plan for future war and to employ generations of relief experts. Thus, perhaps the answer to the question of when the need for relief ends for humanitarian agencies is that it never does in a militarised world.

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[94] Clark to Pye, 6 April 2022; TEMP MSS 301/COR/13/6; LSF.

[95] This $33 million campaign brought together all the major US aid groups to create the European Relief Council in 1920, and much of the Friends' subsequent Austrian funding came from the ERC. They continued to receive funds from other smaller donations, but they came to rely on American resources for their work. Irwin, J., *Making the World Safe: the American Red Cross and a nation's humanitarian awakening*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 174–82.

[96] The FSC and AFSC were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947. See Kelly, *British Humanitarian Activity*, pp. 47–8.

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The author has no competing interests to declare.