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Apr 1865*

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

OHIO STATE MILITARY AGENT.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

1865.



REPORT

OF

JAMES C. WETMORE,

OHIO STATE MILITARY AGENT,

TO

THE GOVERNOR OF OHIO.

WASHINGTON, D. C.:

Chas. Wetmore, Agent, Wash. D. C.

1865.



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Executive Department,
State of Ohio, Military Agency,

WASHINGTON, DEC. 1, 1865.

To His Excellency CHARLES ANDERSON,

Governor of Ohio.

SIR :

I had the honor to submit, on the first of December, 1864, to your Excellency's predecessor, a report of the operations of this Agency for the fiscal year which closed at that date. I have now a similar honor in reporting to you an abstract of the workings of the Agency for the year just closed.

Though the last twelve months have not been marked by scenes of so much stirring interest as those that preceded, they have nevertheless been, we trust, of great practical good to a large and every way worthy portion of your constituency.

The business of this office in all its branches, save in that of personal calls for aid, has greatly increased, till it now doubles that of the corresponding months of 1864.

The Agency has furnished, during the past year, seven hundred and seventy-seven thousand nine hundred and twenty-three (777,923) miles of transportation to individual enlisted men from Ohio, amounting to thirteen thousand three hundred and twenty dollars

and fifty-five cents, (\$ 13,320 55,) against five hundred and ninety-three thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven (593,887) miles, amounting to eight thousand six hundred and fifty-six dollars and fifty-six cents, (\$8,656 56,) furnished in 1864 ; being an increase of one hundred and eighty-four thousand and thirty-six (184,036) miles.*

The money thus saved to our patriotic volunteers by this arrangement, amounts to some four thousand and five hundred dollars, (\$4,500,) more than sufficient to pay the salaries of your agent and the clerical service employed in the Agency.

The Agency has collected at the Paymaster General's and at the United States Treasury, for individual Ohio officers and soldiers discharged the service, and for soldiers' families and citizens of Ohio, and remitted free of cost to them, nine hundred and sixty-five thousand eight hundred and sixty-two dollars and eighty cents, (\$965,862 80,) against some two hundred and fifty thousand (\$250,000) dollars in 1864.†

When it is taken into consideration that the pay of a soldier has been but sixteen to eighteen dollars per month, and that more or less embarrassment attends all claims of officers and men who have received their discharges, or died in the service before the arrears due them have been settled, it will be readily perceived that many thousand citizens of our State have reaped a great pecuniary advantage by your Agency at the seat of the Federal Government.

* It may be well to state that the railroads of our State, discontinuing on the middle of September last, left but ten and a-half months in which transportation was furnished.

† To which should be added amount received through the Pension Bureau, which would very considerably swell the amount above \$1,000,000.

I am unable to give a statement of the number of thousands of dollars secured through the Pension Bureau to invalid soldiers, widows, orphans and mothers of Ohioans, that have died in the service, for the reason that the amounts have been paid direct to the pensioners by Pension agents at Cincinnati, Columbus and Cleveland.

Your agent might add here a large sum to the amount of this branch of the business of the Agency, by reason of daily calls, in person and by letter, for his aid and influence in getting through claims that have been filed by the principals themselves, or by their attorneys, the results of which have not come upon the books of the Agency.

This Agency has received from generous ladies of Ohio, through the several Aid Societies, eleven hundred and twelve (1,112) boxes, packages, etc., of Sanitary stores, and has purchased with funds furnished by the Governor's War Contingent Fund, and by individuals and societies, six hundred and fourteen (614) packages: making a total of seventeen hundred and twenty-six packages, against seven hundred and fifty packages reported last year, of an estimated value of eighty-eight thousand (\$ 88,000) dollars; all of which were distributed to the soldiers in the field and hospitals without the cost of a dollar to the donors, or any deduction whatever from the contributions.

It has received and forwarded to prisoners of war that were suffering in rebel prisons, four hundred and twenty-eight (428) packages and parcels.

It has attended to the wants and furnished gratuitous information to the rise of twelve thousand (12,000) correspondents.

It has rendered relief to thousands of our soldiers in the encampments of our armies in Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia, of which special reports have made from time to time.

It has befriended and rendered assistance to a great number who have made known their situation at its office.

It has caused to be visited the hospitals of Washington, Alexandria, Baltimore and Annapolis, for the purpose of learning the wants and necessities of the unfortunate Ohio soldier.

The labor of its agents, at Annapolis, attending to the relief of sick and starved men from the rebel pens and prisons, was of exciting interest.

Of the twelve thousand and odd of those subjects of the cruel barbarity of those who warred against the Government, who arrived at that point during January, February and March of this year, about one-eighth were sons of Ohio. On their being met on landing, by representatives of their own native State, they gave manifestations of the greatest joy; and blessing after blessing was bestowed by them upon the Governor and their kind friends at home. The part taken for the relief of those noble, patriotic men, is a source of great satisfaction to your agent; and he believes that it has been appreciated by the citizens of the State, as well as those who were in a measure relieved.

The amount disbursed the past year, from the fund placed at the disposal of your agent, by Governor Brough and yourself, and by the Ladies' Aid Societies of our State, for the relief of the sick, wounded and destitute Ohio soldier, has been twenty thousand five hundred and seventy-eight (\$20,578) dollars, against

seven thousand, one hundred and fifteen dollars and twenty-seven cents (\$7,115 27) reported last December. This increased amount of expenditure was owing to the great demands made by our returning prisoners, and the great addition to the numbers requiring relief that were thrown into this department and on the Atlantic coast, by the movements of the grand armies of Generals Grant and Sherman.

The preceding embraces a summary of the material workings of your Agency. It has also a history, which I esteem of tenfold more value than that I have attempted to give you. I have reference to the succor that it has rendered to the sick, emaciated, destitute soldiers of our State; and to the poor, heart-broken widows, orphans and mothers of those who have died in rebel prisons, in the hospitals, and on the battle-field.

To the President, your agent is indebted for acts of clemency to certain of our men who have been obliged to seek it through this Agency.

To the Honorable E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, he is also indebted for many recognitions of the services of Ohio commissioned and non-commissioned officers, and for kind consideration of matters brought to his notice.

In this connection I deem it pertinent, now that the rebellion is crushed, to give my feeble testimony of the great and invaluable services rendered the nation by this distinguished officer of the General Government. From daily observation made at his department for the past three years, I have come to the irresistible conclusion, that to no man, living or dead, is the country so much indebted this day for its salvation, as to Edwin M. Stanton, for reasons that could be given were it proper in a communication of this nature.

If the unwritten history of this war could be known, my statement would be more than fully verified. Did we not know that posterity and impartial history metes out justice to statesmen, we would have occasion for sorrow when reflecting upon the unceasing labors and self-sacrifices that have been made by the Honorable Secretary of War, for the unity of the States that compose this great free Republic.

To the Hon. Joseph Holt, Judge Advocate General, U. S. A., we are under obligations for privileges granted in his department.

To Maj. Gen. E. A. Hitchcock, Commissioner of Exchange, we are also under obligations for much kindly sympathy and valuable aid to our officers and men in southern prisons.

To Bvt. Maj. Gen. Joseph K. Barnes, Surgeon General, U. S. A., for many orders looking to the relief of Ohio soldiers, and for transportaton of sanitary stores upon government vessels, free of charge.

To Bvt. Maj. Gen. B. W. Brice, Paymaster General, U. S. A., for facilities in collecting claims in his department, and for important orders affecting the interests of citizens of Ohio.

To Bvt. Maj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, Asst. Adjt. Gen.,
U. S. A.;

Bvt. Maj. Gen. James A. Hardie, Asst. Adjt. Gen.,
U. S. A.;

Bvt. Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Vincent, Asst. Adjt. Gen.,
U. S. A.;

Bvt. Brig. Gen. Samuel Breck, Asst. Adjt. Gen.,
U. S. A.;

Bvt. Brig. Gen. Robert Williams, Asst. Adjt. Gen.,
U. S. A.;

Bvt. Brig. Gen. C. W. Foster., Asst. Adjt. Gen.,
U. S. A., and to

Bvt. Col. L. H. Pelouze, Asst. Adjt. Gen., U. S.
A.,

all of the War Department proper for many acts of kindness and courtesy.

To Messrs. Jay Cooke & Co., bankers, for many hundred thousand dollars of exchange furnished at par.

In closing this brief report of the duties performed by this Agency, I desire to add a few words in humble tribute to the memory of your lamented predecessor, Governor John Brough.

It was my privilege to enjoy, in some degree, his confidence, and I can testify, that in all his communications, written or oral, he had a single eye to the honor of the State, the good of its people and the welfare of her sons who were fighting the battles of the country. Of his great executive ability and talents, better and abler persons have testified.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES C. WETMORE,

Ohio State Military Agency

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