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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

FORT AMITY: AN EXPERIMENT IN DOMICULTURE

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

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In 1898, the Salvation Army ventured into a colonization project to take urban working poor people, relocate them to rural areas, and allow them to become productive agriculturalists. The impetus for the project was the book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890), by General William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army.

General Booth's daughter, Emma, and son-in-law, Fredrick St. George de Lautour Booth-Tucker, took charge of the Salvation Army in the United States in 1896, and took it upon themselves to carry out General Booth's plan in the United States. The plan was characterized by Frederick Booth-Tucker as an experiment in “domiculture,” or the cultivation of families on family farms. The Booth-Tuckers appointed Col. Thomas Holland as the National Colonization Secretary, and together they chose sites in California, Colorado, and Ohio, for the colonies. This thesis concerns the Colorado colony, Fort Amity. It was founded near Holly, Colorado, near the Arkansas River, and was purported to be the most successful of the three experimental colonies. This thesis challenges the conclusions of previous authors regarding the demise of the colony, and documents the unexplored subject of what it was like to live on the Colorado prairie at Fort Amity.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A History of The Salvation Army in America

Literature Review

Colonel Thomas Holland's picture sat on a bookshelf in the living room of the modest home that I grew up in. It was a profile photo of a dashing young man with an imperial mustache, wavy dark hair, penetrating eyes, and an air of British confidence. My mother acquired the picture as a family heirloom when I was very young, and I knew little of the Colonel other than that he was my Great Grandmother Eva Dilley's father, and that his uniform was that of an officer in The Salvation Army.

Clark C. Spence's book *The Salvation Army Farm Colonies* (1985), chronicled a Salvation Army farm colonization plan in which my great-great-grandfather was mentioned numerous times. I took little interest in the book until I began research for this thesis. Having read the book, I found that Colonel Holland played a prominent role in the colonization program as the National Colonization Secretary for The Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army undertook its colonization program at the height of the Progressive Era in 1898, as a back-to-the-land solution to urban poverty. The commander of the U.S. Salvation Army, Frederick St. George de Lautour Booth-Tucker, and his wife, Consul Emma Booth-Tucker, sought to "...take Waste Labor in families

and place it upon the Waste Land by means of Waste Capital, and thereby convert this Trinity of Waste into a Unity of Production.”¹ The Commander labeled the colonization scheme “An Experiment in Domiculture,” or the cultivation and preservation of family life on a farm. This thesis will examine one of three of The Salvation Army’s farm colonies: Fort Amity.

Fort Amity, Colorado, was one of three farm colonies started by The Salvation Army in 1898 (Fort Romie, in California, and Fort Herrick, in Ohio were the other two). In 1898, the United States still suffered from the effects of the Panic of 1893, and the recession of 1895. Unemployment remained above ten percent and considerably affected the nation’s largest cities. Reformers of the day, like Upton Sinclair, Jacob Riis, and Jane Addams, worked on behalf of the disadvantaged populations of urban America, and forced the nation to take notice of what it did not want to see. The Salvation Army stepped into the fray by offering an agrarian solution to an urban problem.

This thesis will provide a study of how The Salvation Army went about organizing Fort Amity from within the organization and without, as well as what daily life was like on the colony. This examination will incorporate a study of the leadership of the corps, and what made them believe that their experiment could succeed.

Analyzing The Salvation Army’s utopian back-to-the-land experiment presents an historical conundrum. It was an attempt at a socialist means to a capitalist end. Private philanthropists initially funded the colonies, however, the stated goal of The Salvation Army was to transform their colonization plan into a publicly funded government program. They were urban Progressives who abandoned urban Progressivism, and

¹ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *Light in Darkness*, (New York: The Salvation Army Printing and Engraving Department, 1902), 34.

utopians that insisted that they were realists with a practical solution to poverty. The challenge in studying Fort Amity and the corps' colonization program is contextual. This thesis will explain why Fort Amity and The Salvation Army's agrarian experiment does not fit into the common historical perspective of the Progressive Era, or even that of The Salvation Army.

The history of The Salvation Army is rooted in London's East End, where William Booth, a Methodist Minister, sought to evangelize a population not generally welcome in London's established churches. The East End bore the overflow of poor and immigrant populations displaced by London's growing middle-class in the mid 1800's. Poverty led many of these unfortunates to prostitution, gambling, alcoholism, and lives of crime and vice. Booth's persistence in ministering to fallen women, gamblers, drunkards, and the wretchedly poor eventually led to conflict with his superiors in the Methodist Connexion, and he separated from the church in order to form his own ministry. Booth would later tell his followers, "When I saw those masses of poor people, so many of them evidently without God or hope...there and then my whole heart went out to them. I walked home and I said to my wife, 'Kate, I have found my destiny!' These are the people for whose salvation I have been longing all these years."² This was the seed from which The Salvation Army would germinate.

The name of Booth's ministry underwent a number of iterations during its first four years beginning in 1865, but Booth concluded that the name that suited his ministry best was "The Christian Mission." Booth encouraged those who were saved for Jesus

² Norman S. Marshall, "The Salvation Army: With heart to God and hand to Man 1865 – 1960," *Newcomen Society Publications* 626-650, 1959-60, (New York: The Newcomen Society in North America, February, 1960), 7.

through his ministry to join him in the streets as living examples of God's power to reform and encourage others to follow in their footsteps. Booth appointed himself as the General Superintendent of The Christian Mission, and his followers referred to him as "The General". According to the official history of The Salvation Army, Booth reviewed a printer's copy of the mission's 1878 annual report with his son, Bramwell, and his friend, George Railton, in which his followers were referred to as a "volunteer army." Bramwell vehemently objected to the inference that he was a volunteer. He insisted that he was compelled to serve God. Booth serendipitously reached over Railton's shoulder and scratched out the word "volunteer," and replaced it with the word "salvation."³ The name stuck. With that simple stroke of a pen, an army was raised and a war was waged against poverty and the forces of evil in the slums of London. That war, and Booth's army, would eventually encompass the globe.

The Salvation Army arrived on the shores of America in August 1879, when one of General Booth's young converts, Eliza Shirley, followed her father to Philadelphia as he began a new job in a silk factory. Seventeen-year-old Eliza gained the general's reluctant approval to continue the work of the corps in the U.S., and was told that if her efforts were successful, he would send a contingent to begin the work in earnest. In short order, but not without difficulties, Eliza and her parents opened a corps hall and began to win converts. Not long after the first corps hall opened, Eliza opened a second hall with positive results. Eliza's father, Amos, sent news clippings of their exploits back to the

³ "About Us: History," (The Salvation Army: International Headquarters). http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/www_sa.nsf (accessed February 5, 2011).

General, and in 1880, with a little prodding from his wife, Catharine, Booth sent his friend George Railton to take charge of The Salvation Army in America.⁴

According to historian Lillian Taiz, the arrival of The Salvation Army came at a time when mainstream Protestant churches were following their middle-class congregations to the more affluent suburbs, leaving the urban working-class population to shift for itself in spiritual matters. Taiz wrote, “Indeed, an investigation by the pastor of a Chicago Baptist church revealed that church-alienated workingmen in Chicago believed mainstream churches were, at best not interested in workingmen, and at worst, opposed to them.”⁵ The Salvation Army filled that void with their army of once lost souls.

Booth’s practice of enlisting his converts into The Salvation Army had the effect of casting the army as an unsophisticated lot, who spoke and acted much like those they sought to convert. *The Christian at Work*, a popular Christian periodical, wrote in 1883, “[i]t ought not to be forgotten that the Army is composed of a very peculiar class, drawn from the lower strata of society, and that it is on this same class they are striving to operate. The methods they use and the language they employ may not command themselves to more refined and intellectual Christian minds, but they are just such as seem to be appreciated and to reach the class they are intended for.”⁶ The army’s soldiers and officers could empathize with those they were charged to minister to because they were cut from the same cloth.

⁴ Edward H. McKinley, *Marching to Glory: The History of The Salvation Army in the United States of America 1880 – 1980*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1980), 5-9.

⁵ Lillian Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads & Lasses: Remaking The Salvation Army in America, 1880-1930*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 12.

⁶ *The Christian at Work*, quoted in *The War Cry*, 19 July 1883, 1; quoted in Taiz, *Hallelujah*, 13-14.

As the ranks of The Salvation Army grew, the General transformed the organization into an army in form as well as name. Norman S. Marshall noted, “Booth set up his entire organization along military lines, reasoning that it was just as valid to build an army of crusaders to save souls as it once had been to send armies to recover a sepulcher.”⁷ Members of the corps’ congregations were soldiers, and new converts were referred to as captives. Staff officers performed work in the international headquarters in London, and field officers performed missionary work. Cadets were officers in training, and officers ranged in rank from Lieutenant to a single General; an office occupied by Booth himself.

Daily operations were, and continue to be, referred to in military terms as well. Prayers are “knee drills,” short testimonies are “small shot,” bible reading is referred to as “rations,” and donations are called “cartridges.” Open-air and corps hall meetings are “sieges,” where officers engage in “hand-to-hand combat,” and “prisoners” are taken for the Lord. New babies born into the ranks are “reinforcements,” and when an officer dies, he is “promoted to glory.”⁸ Officers are often observed offering The Salvation Army’s salute with the right hand extended above the shoulder and the index finger pointing upward, signifying “recognition of a fellow-citizen of, and a traveller [*sic*] to, heaven, and a pledge to do everything possible to get others to heaven also.”⁹ The salute is sometimes accompanied by a jubilant shout of “Hallelujah!”

The military bearing of the American corps broke down in 1896, amid conflict within the Booth family that split the ranks of the corps. “The unexpected and

⁷ Marshall, “The Salvation Army,” 11.

⁸ Taiz, *Hallelujah*, 20.

⁹ “The Salute,” (The Salvation Army: International Heritage Centre).
http://www.salvationarmy.org/heritage.nsf/titles/The_Salute (accessed February 8, 2011).

peremptory [*sic*] order which came from England a few days ago relieving Commander Ballington Booth of his position at the head of the Salvation Army in America,” wrote the *New York Times* in January 1896, “has destroyed all idea of military discipline among its 30,000 soldiers in this country, and a sturdy revolt is in progress.”¹⁰ General Booth’s second son, Ballington, and his wife Maud, then commanders of The Salvation Army in America, objected to the General’s abrupt orders to “farewell,” or change duty assignments. The rift in the family was never fully repaired, and Ballington and Maud separated from The Salvation Army and formed their own Volunteers of America with loyal followers who defected from the corps. General Booth sent his daughter, Emma, and her husband, Frederick St. George de Lautour Booth-Tucker to take charge of the American operations, and bolster the ranks of the corps.¹¹

Once they arrived, the Booth-Tuckers set out to reform and reinvigorate The Salvation Army in America by increasing the number of social institutions operated by the corps. A Salvation Army report from 1898, titled, “The Social Work in the United States,” noted that in a single year the number of social institutions increased from 28 to 85. These urban institutions included Children’s Homes, Slum Brigades, Hotels for Workingmen, Industrial Homes for the unemployed, employment bureaus, and Second Hand Stores.¹² In that same year, Frederick and Emma opened three farm colonies that

¹⁰ “Keep the Booths Here: Monster mass Meeting to be Held at Carnegie Music Hall,” *The New York Times*, 25 January 1896.

¹¹ It had become customary for young men who married into the Booth family to take on the Booth name. Frederick, or “Fritz,” as he was affectionately referred to by the General, had served in the legal department of the International Headquarters, and then led a pioneer group of Salvationists to India, where his first wife, Louisa Mary died of cholera. In 1888, he wed Emma, the General’s second daughter.

¹² Taiz, *Hallelujah*, 111.

were in direct contrast to the familiar urban institutions that the corps operated successfully for more than thirty years in the UK and the U.S.

This thesis will rely heavily on primary sources because little secondary work of scholarly import has been done that is directly related to Fort Amity. Foremost among these primary sources is General William Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. This book is the foundation upon which the colonization scheme was built. Other primary sources provide a broad perspective of Fort Amity. Correspondence between colonists and the director of the Colorado Agricultural Experimental Station provide insight to the types of crops that the colonists wanted to grow, and also the problems associated with irrigated farming. The local newspaper, *The Holly Chieftain*, gives a detailed account of daily life on the colony, and offers commentary from the perspective of non-colonists.

In 1905, the British Parliament commissioned novelist H. Rider Haggard to explore the feasibility of colonizing the urban poor. His report, *The Poor and the Land: Being a Report On The Salvation Army colonies in the United States and at Hadleigh, England*, was the product of his investigation. Haggard visited Fort Romie and Fort Amity, and through personal interviews, detailed the financial condition of many of the colonists, as well as where they were from, what their initial trade was, and what crops and animals made up their small farms. Haggard also interviewed Booth-Tucker and Holland, among other leaders of the Army, and provides insight to the philosophy and execution of the American front of General Booth's colonization scheme.

The Salvation Army's weekly publication, *The War Cry*, contributes interviews with Commander Booth-Tucker, and National Colonization Secretary, Colonel Thomas

Holland. These interviews included accounts of the status of the colonists at Fort Amity, and they revealed that Holland and Booth-Tucker promoted the colonization scheme through their undying optimism, no matter what the circumstances might convey.

Clark C. Spence's *The Salvation Army Farm Colonies* argued that The Salvation Army's main purpose in establishing the farm colonies was to grow the ranks of the corps. Spence provides a detailed look at the business side of the colonization scheme through meticulous research of The Salvation Army's archival collections. His account of the financial records focuses attention on the Army's methods of maintaining the colonies, and the overly benevolent nature of the leadership towards the colonists. Spence treats the colonization plan as an anomaly in the history of The Salvation Army, and dismisses it as such when he downplays the significance of Fort Amity and the other colonies in relation to The Salvation Army's more successful and popularly recognized urban institutions. "In the end," Spence wrote, "it proved that man could be saved in his urban environment; success here indirectly proved that he need not be transplanted to achieve full potential."¹³ In his review of Spence's book, John F. McClymer of Assumption College, stated that it, "...is a meticulously researched and well-written account of a project of real insignificance."¹⁴ This thesis will argue that The Salvation Army's efforts to colonize were significant in that the leaders of the corps were willing to stray from conventional norms to provide immediate remedies for the urban working

¹³ Clark C. Spence, *The Salvation Army Farm Colonies*, (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1985), 118.

¹⁴ John F. McClymer, review of *The Salvation Army Farm Colonies*, by Clark C. Spence, *The American Historical Review* 91, No. 3 (June 1986): 751-752.

poor, rather than wait on the hoped for reforms instigated by their progressive counterparts.

Marie Antalek, the first scholar to take an interest in Fort Amity, wrote her 1968 Master's Thesis, "The Amity Colony" for the Kansas State Teacher's College. Spence described her thesis, which he cited throughout his own book, as "an excellent piece of work."¹⁵ Antalek's purpose in writing about Fort Amity was "...to preserve a little known aspect of American history, and perhaps to reactivate interest in the experiment that was tried by our forefathers as an attempt to solve the plight of the destitute in urban areas."¹⁶ She concluded that the demise of Fort Amity was attributed to problems with the soil, setting the resale price of the land to the colonists too low, and she places a great deal of importance on the loss of leadership following a train wreck that claimed the life of Consul Emma Booth-Tucker.

Technological advances like the Internet and low cost telecommunications have made research into Fort Amity more fruitful than it might have been when Antalek or Spence compiled their work. Accordingly, this thesis will provide a more detailed approach to the much broader aspects of the colony explored by Spence and Antalek. Spence was more interested in how the colony functioned on a local and national basis, and he paid little attention to what life was like for Amity's settlers. This thesis attempts to fill that void. Antalek's documentary approach to Fort Amity was thorough, and provided a foundation for both Spence's book and this thesis.

¹⁵ Ibid., 142.

¹⁶ Marie Antalek, "The Amity Colony" (master's thesis, Kansas State Teachers College, 1968), 2.

Ava Betz, a journalist and historian, wrote, *A Prowers County History*, which is a history of Prowers County, its towns, and the individuals who played important roles in founding the county. The chapter on Fort Amity provides some wonderful details on the robbery of the Amity Bank, and background information on the bank robbers, Henry Starr, also known as “The Cherokee Badman,” and Kid Wilson. Betz was kind enough to grant an interview for this thesis, and she was adamant that Fort Amity’s collapse was due to inexperience on the part of The Salvation Army, and the colonists.

Chapter One of this thesis will address the impetus for The Salvation Army’s colonization scheme, and why General Booth believed that the corps was in the best position to embark on such a plan. The scope of General Booth’s scheme was limited to small experimental farms with the intention of demonstrating the feasibility of farm colonies for the relief of urban poverty. Booth believed that once The Salvation Army demonstrated the feasibility of his plan, governments would gain confidence in colonization and embark on publicly funded colonies for the poor. Chapter One will also examine the process of building Fort Amity from site selection to financing the colonization scheme. This chapter also adds to the history of The Salvation Army’s attempt to nationalize the colonization plan by documenting the reasons for the failure of S 5126, a U.S. senate bill known as “The Booth-Tucker Bill” that failed to reach the senate floor for debate.

Chapter Two provides a more detailed approach than other authors have taken with regard to the people and organizations outside of The Salvation Army that assisted with establishing Fort Amity. The corps’ limited capital and lack of experience in agriculture made outside assistance imperative. The Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe

Railway, the Colorado Agricultural Experimental Station, and numerous politicians on the local, state, and national levels all made significant contributions in transportation, expertise, capital, and political support.

Chapter Three examines daily life at Fort Amity. No other authors have addressed this aspect of Fort Amity's history. The colonists endured hardships that were unlike any they were accustomed to in the cities, however, they endured them all as if they were as adept at life on the Colorado prairie as their pioneer neighbors who first settled in the Arkansas River Valley. Certainly, they experienced hail, floods, frost, drought, and other phenomenon brought on by the weather, but they had never been as dependent on the weather for their livelihood. An early fall frost would have been considered mundane in their urban settings, but when that frost fell on their first crop of cantaloupes they were made aware that the weather could bring prosperity or poverty. They learned to adapt, endure, and live on the prairie.

Chapter Four takes a retrospective look at Fort Amity, and places it in context with the utopian socialist philosophy of Robert Owen known as Owenism. The socialist philosophies of Owen and General William Booth were quite similar, and that of Booth provided a foundation for his argument in favor of colonizing the urban poor. This chapter will also analyze the successes and failures of The Salvation Army's attempt to colonize the urban working poor, and examine the many contradictions that rural colonization by an urban organization produced.

There were many successful irrigation colonies in Colorado when the Booth-Tuckers set their sights on the Arkansas River Valley. Greeley and Longmont are two examples that surpassed their farm colony roots to become bustling cities on the

Colorado plains. Fort Amity was unlike any other irrigated colony. Spence points out that "...because of the uniqueness of the Army's approach, it is impossible to make valid comparisons."¹⁷ Where other colonies required investment on the part of colonists, The Salvation Army invested on their behalf. When the colonists of other colonies failed as farmers, they failed on their own with no hope of outside assistance. Colonists at Fort Amity, on the other hand, were excused from their failures, and encouraged to persist with the hope of an eventual favorable outcome. Other irrigated colonies were founded by people with agricultural experience, who selected ground that was suitable for crop production. The Salvation Army was forced to rely on the expertise of others, and the end result was that they selected ground that failed shortly after it was put into production. The Salvation Army's attempt to emulate successful irrigated colonies was, in the end, little more than a poor imitation.

¹⁷Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 8.

CHAPTER II

BUILDING THE COLONY FROM WITHIN

The Impetus and Methods of Colonization

In the early morning hours of a cold and rainy day in April of 1898, a rag-tag collection of want-to-be farmers and their families disembarked from their Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe rail cars in Holly, Colorado in search of new lives on the Colorado prairie. The majority of them left a meager life of subsistence behind in Chicago, while others hailed from New York as well as other cities east of the Mississippi. They were there under the auspices of the U.S. Salvation Army, after having undergone a selection process that deemed them to be among the “meritorious poor,” and worthy of The Salvation Army’s assistance.

The Salvation Army set about to relieve the social, political and economic conditions of poverty inflicted upon a generally exploited urban population. Colonel Thomas Holland, The Salvation Army’s National Colonization Secretary, arrived two days ahead of them to arrange for their supplies to meet them upon their arrival. Within three days, lumber, farm implements, beasts of burden, tents, and various other necessities arrived in the rail yard, and without delay the new arrivals gathered up the supplies and began the seven-mile walk in the cold rain to the land that was to become their new home and a grand social experiment for The Salvation Army, Fort Amity, Colorado.

The Salvation Army's colonization plan was the brainchild of General William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army. Booth and his army had long been engaged in the battle against poverty, and the crime and vice that accompanied it. Booth said of his plan, "I believe, at the present moment, The Salvation Army supplies more food and shelter to the destitute than any other organisation [*sic*] in London, and it is the experience and encouragement which I have gained in the working of these Food and Shelter Depots which has largely encouraged me to propound this scheme."¹⁸ Officers of The Salvation Army walked the mean streets of London seeking to enlist poverty's victims as soldiers in their army. These unfortunates found their way to one of many shelters operated by The Salvation Army where they could find a meal, a hot bath, and the comfort of God's word to sooth their souls. Hence the somewhat whimsical symbolism of the three S's found on every Salvation Army officer's uniform that evolved into the motto for the corps: Soup, Soap, and Salvation. "Of the three parts of their motto," wrote Daphne Spain, "...soap was the least important."¹⁹

Booth found the inspiration for his plan to assist these unclean masses in a popular book written by an American journalist and adventurer. In 1890, Sir Henry M. Stanley's book, *In Darkest Africa: Or the Quest, Rescue, and Retreat of Emin Governor of Equatoria*, was among the most popular books in the British Isles. It was the true account of Stanley's search for Dr. Edward Schnitzler, who had been appointed by the British government as the governor, or Pasha, of the southern Sudan while practicing medicine in Khartoum. A religious and political uprising forced the doctor to flee south

¹⁸ William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1890), 90.

¹⁹ Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 145.

to Lake Albert in present day Uganda, and Stanley was sent to find him and exact his rescue. The wilds of Africa were still exotic and largely unknown in Victorian England, and Stanley's description of pygmies, hyenas, baboons and myriad other creatures and inhabitants of the African jungles captured the imagination of the young and old alike. The story captured the imagination of General Booth as well, but for different reasons.

For Booth, Stanley's characterizations of his subjects were analogous to the unfortunate and sometimes-vicious population who wandered unnoticed and unwanted in London's granite paved pathways and parks of the Thames Embankment.²⁰ Stanley's *In Darkest Africa* was the inspiration for Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. Booth surmised, "May we not find a parallel at our own doors, and discover within a stone's throw of our cathedrals and palaces similar horrors to those which Stanley has found existing in the Great Equatorial forest?"²¹ Stanley's baboon became Booth's "vicious, lazy lout," and the pygmy became "the toiling slave." The "beautiful Negress," as described by Stanley, was transformed into the young and pretty penniless girl forced to choose between starvation and prostitution, only to be scorned by the very men who drove her to a life of sin. Most important to Booth were the trees that ceaselessly blocked Stanley's progress and impeded his vision. For Booth, the trees represented the vice, poverty and crime that forever stood in the way of England's destitute poor. London's downtrodden were lost in this forest of sin. Booth saw from the street-side window of his home in London the world that Stanley traveled deep into Africa to find.

²⁰ Architect and city planner, Sir Joseph Bazalgette, constructed the Thames Embankment in 1862 to reclaim marshy land along the River Thames in central London. It is renowned for its exquisite gardens and outdoor cafes and is promoted as one of London's most popular tourist destinations.

²¹ Booth, *In Darkest England*, 11-12.

Booth interpreted Christ's teachings on the Christian's responsibility to the poor to be foundational to the doctrine of Christian faith. Through his experience, General Booth found the results of Christian charity severely lacking. While he did not question the motives or discount the efforts of Christians who sought to assist the poor through the occasional handout and a prayer, he recognized that before a soul could be saved – the first and foremost goal of his colonization scheme - the body must be mended. From this simple premise, Booth put forth a plan that he hoped would have international implications.

Booth's "scheme," as he called it, was clearly illustrated in *In Darkest England*. "I propose to devote the bulk of this volume to setting forth what can practically be done with one of the most pressing parts of the problem, namely, that relating to those who are out of work, and who, as the result, are more or less destitute."²² Booth proposed a three-fold venture in which the urban poor would be restored to a condition of self-sufficiency and respect. The first of the three was The City Colony. Here the shipwrecked in life, character, or circumstances could find refuge. They would be given food, shelter, and work in Salvation Army run industrial centers. The industrial centers would offer opportunities for earning a small sum, as well as work experience necessary for gaining employment outside the auspices of The Salvation Army. Those who were unable to find gainful employment over a course of time would be evaluated for sincerity, industry, and honesty to be forwarded on to the second phase, the Farm Colony.

The restorative process would continue at the farm, where many of the colonists would regain their position in society and return to their former homes and friends. Once

²² Ibid., 90.

again, those who remained settled in cottages provided by The Salvation Army, continuing to operate the farm, and assisting with providing leadership to new colonists. Others would move on to the third phase, the Over-Sea Colony.

Booth did not see his proposed farm colony plan as a utopian movement. In fact, he bristled at any inference of utopia that was directed toward his idea. His view was that utopian thinkers obsessed on the future with no regard for present circumstances. To illustrate his point, he invented John Jones, a “stout stalwart labourer [*sic*] in rags, who has not had one square meal for a month, who has been hunting for work that will enable him to keep body and soul together, and hunting in vain.”²³ Jones was not as much a fictional character as he was a conglomeration of the men and women found on any given day in the numerous shelters operated by The Salvation Army throughout the United Kingdom. As Booth saw things, John Jones could take no comfort in a future utopia while his present condition was focused merely on surviving until tomorrow. Booth wrote of utopian thinkers, “I leave the limitless infinite of the Future to the Utopians. They may build there as they please. As for me, it is indispensable that whatever I do is founded on existing fact, and provides a present help for the actual need.”²⁴ Booth saw his scheme as a practical solution to present problems that could be resolved with almost immediate effect if people dedicated to its cause undertook it.

Despite Booth’s insistence to the contrary, his plan was indeed a utopian experiment in political, social and economic reform. Booth realized that society as a whole was victimized by poverty. Those who were caught in poverty’s perpetual grasp were often driven to lives of crime and vice in an effort to survive. Booth’s prospective

²³ *Ibid.*, 79.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 80.

colonists would rediscover their dignity, self worth, and self-reliance through the fruits of their labor in his farm colonies. His hope was that once the world observed the success of the farm colony plan, governments would undertake their own colonization plans and emulate the work of The Salvation Army.

Booth proposed that the British colonies of South Africa, Canada, and Western Australia were ripe for settlement, and he intended to purchase tracts of land in these colonies and establish homes for graduates of the Farm Colony. “Forwarding them from the city to the Country, and there continuing the process of regeneration, and then pouring them forth on to the virgin soils that await their coming in other lands, keeping hold of them with a strong government, and yet making them free men and women; and so laying the foundations, perchance, of another Empire to swell to vast proportions in later times.”²⁵ Thus, the seed of reform was planted, and eight years later it would be brought to America to germinate with his daughter and son-in-law after a split within the corps.

The widely publicized internal strife within the ranks of the corps in 1896 shook the public’s confidence in The Salvation Army. The *New York Times* reported: “Commander Ballington Booth of the Salvation Army last night announced to the members of his staff that he had decided not to relinquish command of the army in the United States, and that under no circumstances would he take orders from England.”²⁶ Ballington later asserted that he was forced to resign from the corps, and General Booth replaced him with his most favored daughter, Emma, and her husband, Frederick St.

²⁵ Ibid., 93.

²⁶ “Salvation Army Crisis: Commander Ballington Booth Will Take No Orders from England,” *The New York Times*, 24 February 1896.

George de Lautour Booth-Tucker. Together, they took command of the U.S. Salvation Army as “Joint Territorial Commanders,” however; Frederick would be known as the Commander, and Emma, the Consul. As they traveled the U.S. in an effort to rebuild confidence in The Salvation Army, they were impressed by the amount of unsettled land. The Booth-Tuckers saw the potential for the farm colonies that Emma’s father hoped for, and through their efforts, in 1898, the General’s “scheme” took shape in the United States.

The Booth-Tuckers, Colonel Thomas Holland, and a small committee of Salvation Army officers began the site selection process during the summer and fall of 1897. Marie Antalek pointed out that good land, a steady supply of water for irrigation, and a market that was reliable and offered fair profits were essential to secure the best possible opportunity for success of the future colonists.²⁷ Wrote Albert Shaw, “The Salvation Army officers were able to enlist the good will of the Santa Fe Railroad and of gentlemen in control of one of the largest and most reliable land and irrigation companies in the entire country.”²⁸

The search committee stopped in the small town of Rocky Ford, Colorado, where Commander Booth-Tucker and Colonel Holland met small farmers who were successfully growing and marketing cantaloupes. The Commander and the Colonel agreed that the area and the crop were ideal for their new colony. Colonel Holland was directed to begin searching for available land that fulfilled the requisite conditions.

²⁷ Antalek, “The Amity Colony,” 39.

²⁸ Albert Shaw, “A Successful Farm Colony In The Irrigation Country,” *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* 16 (November 1902): 562.

In short order, Holland secured 640 acres with no down payment from the Amity Land and Irrigation Company for \$20 an acre, with an additional agreement that water would be supplied at a rate of fifty-cents per acre per year.²⁹ Close Brothers, a British investment firm, invested heavily in American agricultural projects throughout the 1880s. The Great Plains Water Company was one of their many American holdings, and the Amity Land and Irrigation Company was an affiliate. By the time The Salvation Army was looking for available land, The Great Plains Water Company had constructed 750 miles of laterals, and a 14,000-acre storage reservoir in the lower Arkansas River Valley of Colorado.³⁰ Holland selected land that was bordered on the south by the Arkansas River, and on the north by the newly constructed Buffalo Canal, from which water for irrigation would be drawn. There was also land available for expansion to the east when the colony reached its carrying capacity.

Irrigation was promoted as an agricultural panacea at the turn of the century. The Close Brothers marketed their land under the Amity Canal in Colorado by touting the advantages of irrigation over eastern farms that relied solely on rainfall. “Have you ever stopped to think how many millions of dollars the farmers lose every year in consequence of lack of rain when most needed or too much rain when not needed? Why, then, depend on rain? Why not farm by irrigation?”³¹ Their advertisement was circulated throughout the mid-west, and it exclaimed that crop yields could be increased by as much as four times on irrigated land. “A man can make more money with less labor off 40 acres of

²⁹ Ava Betz, *A Prowers County History*, (Lamar: The Prowers County Historical Society, 1986), 128.

³⁰ Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 43.

³¹ *About Farming By Irrigation Under the Amity Canal in Colorado: Some Information Regarding Prowers County in the Arkansas Valley...Colorado, its Crops, and the Amity Irrigation and Reservoir System*, (Chicago: Close Bros. & Company, 1900), 3.

irrigated land than can be made off the best quarter section in the eastern states, and ten acres planted to fruit and vegetables will give a large income every year, enough to live very comfortably.”³² This was exactly what The Salvation Army was looking for; high yields, small acreages, a living wage, and manageable by a moderate amount of labor. As a consequence of the exceptional prospects for small acreages, the 640-acres were divided into 64, 10-acre lots, 320 feet wide and ¼ mile long. The new settlers were placed on alternating lots, and they were obligated to rent one 10-acre lot with the option to rent or purchase the adjacent lot. The rental fee was \$2.00 for each acre per year for eleven years, with the title transferred to their ownership after satisfying their commitment.

After selecting the land, the Army turned its attention to financing the colony. The plan called for colonists to become self-sufficient in short order, and that they would quickly retire their debts to the corps. Before they could do that, they had to be established on the colony at considerable expense. Antalek noted that the colonists were provided with,

One horse, a small plow, one shovel plow, a pair of gas pipe harrows, two cultivators, one of five and the other of fourteen teeth, a seed drill, a set of harness and such spades, hoes and shovels as were deemed necessary in order to properly cultivate the land.³³

Additionally, each family was allotted building materials for the construction of a home sized in accordance with the number of family members. Colonel Holland kept track of the cash value of the implements and building materials, and applied that value to the settler’s accounts as eleven-year loans at six percent interest.

³² Ibid.

³³ *Rocky Mountain News*, 1 January 1899, quoted in Antalek, *The Amity Colony*, 44.

The Army embarked on its colonization scheme without adequate capital or a solid financial plan. “Early financing of the settlements had been both haphazard and precarious,” wrote Spence. After the site selection tour, Booth-Tucker announced his plans to colonize the urban poor at The Salvation Army’s annual meeting at Carnegie Music Hall on November 30, 1897. The *New York Times* reported that nearly \$30,000 in private donations was raised in support of the plan at that meeting. Booth-Tucker explained that funding would be provided through a ten-year loan at five percent interest, however, \$100,000 was needed immediately to begin the work.³⁴ The \$30,000 came from “angels” that Booth-Tucker hoped would be plentiful in cities across the nation. The corps used testimonials of mayors, governors, jurists, cabinet members and industrialists to convince wealthy Americans of the worthiness of the colonization scheme, but until the colonies proved themselves as a mechanism of reform and relief, Booth-Tucker’s “angels” and their money would remain difficult to come by.³⁵

In an effort to bolster their coffers, the corps announced the sale of \$150,000 in thirty-year gold bonds in 1901. The bonds bore five percent interest paid semi-annually. The proceeds from these bond sales were used to provide a more secure financial base for The Salvation Army, and for the expansion of the colonization efforts. The properties at Fort Romie and Fort Amity were mortgaged through the North American Trust Company of New York to secure each of the \$500 bonds. North American Trust acted as the trustee for the individual bondholders. The sale of the bonds was completed sometime in

³⁴ “Salvation Colony Scheme: Nearly \$30,000 Subscribed at the Anniversary Meeting in Carnegie Music Hall,” *The New York Times*, 1 December 1887.

³⁵ Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 78.

1903, and by the end of September in 1904 two Salvation Army divisions and fifty-five individual bondholders held the bonds.³⁶

The Salvation Army also tried to encourage smaller contributions by creating the Century Endowment Fund, to which contributions as small as \$10 could be made. Booth-Tucker hoped that contributions would eventually exceed \$100,000. The Century Endowment Fund was meant to be a revolving loan fund that would loan money to individual colonists and then reloan the money as it was repaid. The fund reached its peak of \$38,297 in 1904, and lingered until 1914 when the account was closed with a balance of \$11,875.³⁷

Other sources of funding included the Harvest Festival Fund that was an annual occurrence each October, and the Self-Denial Fund. Salvation Army officers and soldiers attended “Harvest Festivals” and made contributions to the fund for the furtherance of The Salvation Army’s mission. The Self-Denial Fund was funded through individual sacrifices of Salvation Army officers and soldiers. For one week each year, Salvationists denied themselves certain luxuries and returned the monetary savings to National Headquarters. When necessary, funds were transferred from the Harvest Festival Fund and the Self-Denial Fund to the farm colony accounts.³⁸

The return on The Salvation Army’s investment was abysmal. Wrote Spence, “Despite Booth-Tucker’s invariable optimism and the roseate statements of the press, the colonists were slow to meet their obligations.”³⁹ Major Madison Ferris, The Salvation Army’s legal council, expressed his continual dismay at the state of the colonists’

³⁶ Ibid., 80.

³⁷ Ibid., 80-81.

³⁸ Ibid., 81.

³⁹ Ibid., 90.

financial obligation to the corps. “When, for gracious sake,” he asked Holland in 1901, “are we going to get the money from this year’s harvest from them, or are they going to try to bilk us out of that?”⁴⁰ Neither Booth-Tucker nor Holland expressed concern over the colonists’ failure to meet their obligations. Holland explained, “We have not worried about this, however, because we found that these people, starting without capital, had to spend what money their farms would produce in the purchase of cattle, implements, etc., and in the improving of their lands and buildings so as to warrant the prospect of their being able to do better as a result.”⁴¹

Despite the insistence of Holland and others that the colony scheme was being run as a business, the evidence suggests otherwise. Holland said, “The Army does not expect and cannot afford to make losses upon the schemes, which are undertaken by The Salvation Army in a spirit of philanthropy, it is true, but with the object of inculcating the principles of self-support.” However, Spence pointed out that colonists who failed to fulfill their commitments often left or sold their holdings to third parties, and left the Army to start fresh with a new family. Spence concludes, “The Salvation Army was a soft-hearted creditor, unwilling, or perhaps unable, to exert real pressure on those who lagged.”⁴²

The Salvation Army was not alone in its concern for the urban poor. The people who recognized corruption and exploitation, and stood in the trenches to fight against the political, social, and economic conditions that victimized the American lower and middle

⁴⁰ Madison Ferris to Thomas Holland, 15 November 1901, Salvation Army National Archives, Arlington, Virginia, RG 20.100.

⁴¹ H. Rider Haggard, *The Poor and The Land: Being a Report on The Salvation Army Colonies in the United States and at Hadleigh, England*, (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905), 47-48.

⁴² Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 91.

classes made their mark on the Progressive Era. Reformers like Jane Addams, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Roosevelt, and many others, effected social and political changes that were a lasting legacy to the era. While The Salvation Army had a brief and unsuccessful foray into the legislative arena, there was little in the way of lasting reform in their efforts. It is true that The Salvation Army was quite aware of the social conditions created by urban poverty, but rather than attempt to change the immediate conditions through political and social activism, they removed a select few from the problem. The Army's colonization plan provided some relief for the fortunate few who benefited from their efforts, but a starving, fighting, and neglected mass of humanity was left behind to fend for themselves, or rely on the efforts of others who would take up their cause in the halls of power and influence.

Conditions for the laboring masses of Chicago, as well as other major cities in the U.S. at the close of the nineteenth century, were deplorable. In a book that documented the methods of charity among the developed countries of the world, C. J. Bushnell wrote of the slums of the cities, "The sickening squalor, ill health, and degradation of these slum districts...are often due to the brutal cupidity of landlords who keep their tenements crowded to suffocation by ignorant and infected humanity who pay the most remunerative rent returns for their miserable accommodations."⁴³ According to Bushnell, living conditions in cities like Chicago were complicated by low wages, a high cost of living, over crowded tenements, the employment of women and children in industry, and

⁴³ Charles Richmond Henderson and others, *Modern Methods of Charity: An Account of the Systems of Relief, Public and Private, in the Principal Countries Having Modern Methods*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904), 383.

periodic high unemployment.⁴⁴ Bushnell attributed these conditions to the necessity of the workforce to live near their work in the factories. “Not that the factories are primarily or chiefly to blame,” wrote Bushnell, “. . .but the rapid, unregulated, and intensely competitive development of modern industry has certainly neglected if it has not aggravated the evils of the average workingman’s home and neighborhood.”⁴⁵

Bushnell cited an unnamed study from *The American Journal of Sociology*, in which the well-to-do neighborhood of Hyde Park was statistically compared to the stockyard district where a large population of working-class families lived. With regard to mortality rates, the study showed that for the years 1894 to 1900, average deaths per thousand for Hyde Park were 10.65, and in the stockyard district the rate was 14.21. An even greater disparity existed when measuring the mortality of children under five, where the rate per thousand in Hyde Park was 25.7, and 38.7 in the stockyard district. That same study measured the number of families in economic distress between the two districts in 1897, and found that there were 98 in Hyde Park, and 1,726 in the stockyard district. The average annual income in Hyde Park was \$2,500, and in the stockyard district it was \$500. The ratio of population for the two districts was one to two in favor of the stockyard district.⁴⁶ This imbalance in human conditions inspired reformers who fought to improve the economic and social environment for the working class through improvements in infrastructure - sewer systems and water treatment facilities - organized labor, and political and legislative intervention in the areas of public health and safety.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 380-383.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 384.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 384-385.

Robert H. Wiebe writes “It was in the major cities that a fair number of citizens first gained a sufficient grip upon their lives to look anew at the society around them.”⁴⁷ The complexities of the urban environment gave rise to new perspectives on government that made it more effective and responsive. Urban progressives replaced the party machine with administrative professionals, who were trained to manage public health, public utilities, transportation, housing, education, and many other facets of government that had once been the realm of party bosses and elected officials who managed through graft and corruption. As the professionals operated within their areas of expertise, they gained the respect of legislators who sought their advice on matters of legislation, and consequently, new laws favored progressive reforms. Diverse interest groups with disparate motives united around a common cause; children. “He [the child] united the campaigns for health, education and a richer city environment,” wrote Wiebe, “and he dominated much of the interest in labor legislation.”⁴⁸ This progressive unity manifested itself in political power with the election of progressive candidates to local and state offices, thereby making the prospect of reform through legislation even more possible. Certainly, not all of the goals of progressivism were met; even so, the urban environment underwent a transformation that brought with it the hope of a more comfortable life in the city. The city was slowly becoming a place where the working masses could live in dignity rather than squalor.

Whether Fort Amity’s Chicago settlers were impatient with the pace of reform, had little faith in the efforts of the reformers, or just wanted out of the city, they left urban

⁴⁷ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order 1877 – 1920*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 166.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 169.

life behind for the promise of financial independence and “a happy life in the sunshine and fresh air of the country,” on the Colorado prairie.⁴⁹ The Salvation Army maintained their presence in Chicago and other metropolitan areas to serve the needs of those who were not immediately impacted by progressive reforms, while at the same time experimenting with a form of relief that they hoped would prove to be more fruitful than urban reform. General Booth’s warriors remained aloof in the battle for urban reforms, and led the charge to the rear as they assisted a chosen few with escape from the daily war against all of the ills associated with urban life. The battles that the settlers fought in the cities were replaced with battles against the weather, the agricultural marketplace, and the soil. They were armed with farm implements, hand tools, and their own grit and determination to succeed.

General Booth’s plan of escape for the urban poor was full of hope and promise, and seemed to come about at a time when it was most needed. That it was embraced at all by politicians, a few wealthy Americans, and the poor who participated in the scheme says a great deal about their trust in The Salvation Army, and their ability to see it through. Unfortunately for all concerned, the scheme did not live up to its promise. Few of the colonists remained at Fort Amity after 1909, and the Army abandoned its colonization efforts.

⁴⁹ Shaw, *A successful Farm Colony*, 561.

CHAPTER III

BUILDING THE COLONY FROM WITHOUT

Outside Interest and Assistance for Fort Amity

Fort Amity was established during the apex of settlement on the American frontier. Great stationary herds of cattle replaced the once-dominant American Bison that roamed freely across the prairies. Gone too were the Plains Indian tribes of Arapahoe, Cheyenne, Pawnee, and Kiowa whose teepees were replaced by the homes of farmers and merchants who heeded Horace Greeley's call to "Go West, young man! Go West!"⁵⁰ By 1898, the American West was no longer wild, but vast open prairies remained to be settled, and The Salvation Army capitalized on the opportunity to colonize on southeastern Colorado's unsettled lands.

The Salvation Army received support for their colonization plan from many outside organizations and individuals. The Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Rail Road assisted with the initial site selection for the colony in an effort to promote the production of agricultural products along its line. The Colorado Agricultural Experimental Station – later to become Colorado State University - provided educational and practical advice on crop selection and soil management techniques to the new farmers. In addition,

⁵⁰ The original call to go west was penned by John B. L. Soule in an editorial for the *Terre Haute Express* in 1851. Greeley often repeated the phrase in his own *New York Tribune*, which led many to believe that he was the originator. The original exhortation read, "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country!"

representatives from the Fort Collins, Colorado headquarters of the agricultural experimental station made an annual trek to Fort Amity for farmer's institutes where the latest agricultural practices were conveyed to the colonists for their continuing agricultural education. Among the leading proponents of the Salvation Army's efforts was Ohio Senator Mark Hanna, the architect of William McKinley's successful presidential campaign, which led to his ascension to the chairmanship of the Republican Party.

As Frederick and Emma Booth-Tucker toured America as Commander and Consul of the American Salvation Army in 1896, they were impressed by the vastness of the American West and its potential for agricultural development. Frederick read and enthusiastically endorsed General Booth's *In Darkest England*. He recognized the opportunity to embark on Booth's "scheme" in America if he could enlist the assistance of philanthropically minded institutions and individuals in the U.S. With General Booth's consent, the Commander and Consul began to promote an American colonization plan. On July 12, 1897, Booth-Tucker met with President William McKinley to promote the plan, and according to *The New York Times*, "The President showed much interest in the subject."⁵¹ Ohio Senator Mark Hanna proved to be among the most enthusiastic politicians in support of the plan. Financial contributions, as well as offers of land donations came from across the nation. The colonization plan took shape with the assistance of wealthy philanthropists, politicians, educational institutions, most major newspapers of the day, and not inconsequentially, the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad.

⁵¹ "To colonize city poor: Booth-Tucker unfolds a Salvation Army scheme to the President," *The New York Times*, 13 July 1897.

The road to settlement and progress was paved by American railroads. The extent of involvement on the part of railroads in agricultural pursuits and promoting the settlement of towns on the frontier is given too little attention in history texts. Settlers did not just take advantage of a somewhat symbiotic relationship with the rail systems that were spreading across the west. The railroads hired colonization agents who recruited farmers from the Eastern U.S. as well as from Europe and Russia. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, the ATSF engaged in a campaign to transform the lands surrounding its fledgling railway in Kansas from prairie grasslands to agriculturally productive farms. In *The History of the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad*, Keith L. Bryant Junior wrote that the growth of population and agriculture in counties surrounding the rail lines of the ATSF significantly outpaced the rest of the state. Noted Bryant: “The ATSF made a substantial contribution to the prosperity of the state as the number of farms along its route leaped from 6,000 in 1870 to 21,500 ten years later.”⁵² As the Kansas prairie was transformed into productive farms, the ATSF turned its attention to Colorado.

In November 1900, Colorado Governor Charles S. Thomas received the following letter addressed to “his Excellency the Governor of Denver, Colorado,” from Mr. J.P.

Spanier, the ATSF’s European agent in Rome,

As you will observe from the above heading the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway System have opened their offices in Europe with a view of stimulating and encouraging the emigration of an able-bodied, desirable and useful class of people to the States through which their railroad runs, therefore I would be pleased if you would kindly send me by mail all printed matter issued by your State that may be of interest to prospective

⁵² Keith L. Bryant, Jr. *History of the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway*, Railroads of America, ed. Thomas B. Brewer (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1974) 65.

settlers, I think your annual reports as also State Laws would be of considerable service.⁵³

Though the colonization programs of the ATSF had virtually ended by 1886, the railroad continued to promote agriculture and settlement along its routes well into the 20th century.

In 1906, Wesley Merritt, the Industrial Commissioner for the ATSF, wrote to L.G. Carpenter, the head of Colorado's Agricultural Experiment Station, requesting his opinion on the Campbell System of crop rotation for dryland farming.⁵⁴ Said Merritt, "This company contemplates issuing a pamphlet setting forth the principles of this system as applying to that particular territory which is served by this company's rails."⁵⁵

Carpenter, who had been consulted on a number of issues at Fort Amity, offered a four-page reply that was both frank and perhaps a little discouraging. Carpenter wrote:

I know of so many who have gone in financially or actually that are bound to reap failure, and so prone have many of the advocates been to distort the least word of encouragement that I hate to say anything which can be understood as a word of encouragement. There is bound to be a great deal of disappointment and they will be absolutely be [*sic*] wiped out and will have to be helped out of the country...⁵⁶

Carpenter's experiences with the colonists at Fort Amity may have been the source of his apprehension.

⁵³ J. P. Spanier to Gov. Charles S. Thomas, Rome, Italy, 3 November 1900, Colorado State Archives, Denver, Colorado.

⁵⁴ The "Scientific Farming System" was developed by South Dakota farmer Hardy Webster Campbell. Campbell's system set up a routine designed to retain the precipitation of two years for use during a single crop season by developing a reservoir of moisture in the subsoil and reducing surface evaporation.

⁵⁵ Wesley Merritt to L.G. Carpenter, 5 November 1906, Chicago, Colorado State University Archives, Fort Collins, Colorado, uncataloged collection.

⁵⁶ Carpenter to Merritt, 9 November 1906, Fort Collins, Colorado State University Archives, Fort Collins, Colorado, uncataloged collection.

The ATSF took great interest in The Salvation Army's colonization plan. E. P. Ripley, President of the railroad, said of the plan: "No effort will be spared on the part of this Company to make the enterprise a success."⁵⁷ In July 1897, Commander Booth-Tucker, and the Consul, Emma Booth-Tucker, accompanied by James A. Davis, the General Industrial Commissioner of the ATSF, and John E. Frost, ATSF Land Commissioner, toured the Western U.S. to select lands for colonization. The railroad provided a private car for the comfort and convenience of the Commander and Consul as they traveled. That tour resulted in the visit to Rocky Ford, and the subsequent selection of Fort Amity's site seven miles west of Holly. The prospective colony's location was below the newly constructed Buffalo Canal, which was served by the Amity Ditch irrigation system in Prowers County, Colorado. An impartial panel of experts studied the site for its agricultural potential. Colonel Holland described the land as "... the richest possible soil that can be found anywhere. It is all alluvial, washed from the mountains for centuries - one heap of decomposed vegetable matter."⁵⁸

After the plan was made public, as many as 5,000 applications poured in from across the country. Because The Salvation Army wanted to reduce the risk of failure, selection of the colonists followed the Gospel of Wealth philosophy promoted by Andrew Carnegie: moral character, physical ability, abstinence from alcohol, experience in agriculture – though in many instances the colonists knew little about farming – and practical skills such as carpentry, stonemasonry, painters, and plasterers. Men with families received preference over single men or women as the Commander reasoned:

⁵⁷ *Opinions Regarding the Colony*, Colorado Historical Society Archives, Denver, Colorado.

⁵⁸ "Colonel Holland and the Colony at Fort Amity," *The War Cry* (New York), June 17, 1899, 16.

“.... The family may be a little more expensive at the outset but it pays over and over; it roots the man to the land and the labor of the children is invaluable.”⁵⁹

Nearly all of the initial colonists came from the Chicago area. Chicago of the 1890s was an international hub of iron and steel manufacturing, the meat packing industry, and the garment industry. Large populations of immigrants were routinely exploited as laborers in each of these industries, and kept in perpetual poverty. Since the ATSF originated in Chicago, The Salvation Army could minimize transportation costs for those families that they subsidized if they all came from Chicago. The cashbook for the enterprise indicates that fares were paid for twenty-four adults. The Salvation Army also covered shipping costs that ranged from sixty cents for Chris Christensen’s 150- pound trunk, to the sixteen dollars paid for Staff Captain James Burrow’s 4,000 pounds of household goods.⁶⁰ Children traveled for free.

The initial contingent of colonists consisted of fourteen families, about ninety people in all. In an interview for The Salvation Army’s periodical *The War Cry*, Colonel Holland described the arrival of the first colonists to Fort Amity: “We arrived, between seventy-five and 100 souls strong, in Holly at 2 o’clock of an April morning. The rain was coming down verily by the bucketful. We were so prompt in arriving that we came three days AHEAD OF OUR EQUIPMENT....”⁶¹ The Colonel noted that the AT&SF accommodated the travelers by allowing the women and children to reside in the passenger cars, and the men took shelter in box cars until their supplies arrived. Once the

⁵⁹ Frederick Booth-Tucker to Herbert Booth, 27 February 1902, New York, Salvation Army National Archives and Research Center (SANA), Arlington, Virginia, RG 20.100

⁶⁰ Fort Amity Cashbook, SANA, Arlington, Virginia. RG 1.9.

⁶¹ “Roughing It: An Interesting Description of Pioneer Days on the Fort Amity Colony.” *The War Cry*, 11 November 1899, 4.

supplies arrived the colonists immediately set to work hitching horses to wagons and loading their belongings, tools, lumber and other necessities for the trip to the colony site. Said the Colonel: “It was a seven miles’ haul through the most unconscionable downpour, and when we arrived nothing but the barren land and the lowering sky to welcome us.”⁶²

The first growing season went reasonably well for the colonists with prospects for a profitable crop. The first crop was a communal undertaking, since the efforts of everyone were needed to break ground, build houses, and to construct lateral ditches from the Buffalo Canal, the source of the colony’s water rights. The first crop was the famed Rocky Ford cantaloupe that had brought much acclaim to Southern Colorado, and was one of the chief reasons for the Commander’s choice of the site for Fort Amity. The local growers association in Holly assisted with securing St Louis commission agent, Nat Wetzel, to market the colony’s first truck of produce, and early and late crops were planted. While the early harvest made its way to market by rail, Mr. Wetzel’s company failed, and the entire shipment rotted in a Kansas City rail yard. The late crop succumbed to an early frost, and The Salvation Army was forced to further subsidize the colonists due to the losses. Throughout the winter, and indeed the life of the colony, the colonists turned to their trades to supplement their income, and were able to find enough work to see themselves through. The Commander remained optimistic for the prospects of the colony, and he continued negotiations to procure more land adjacent to the initial 640 acres.

⁶² Ibid.

While cantaloupes continued as a staple on the colony, the volatility of the market led the colonists to diversify into other crops. The sugar beet industry gained in popularity among farmers in Colorado, where the climate and soil combined to produce superior sugar content (as much as 21%) in the crop. In a bulletin published by the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station in Fort Collins, W.W. Cooke wrote,

What can be said is this; that sugar beets will grow as well in Colorado as any where in the world, both as regards to their quantity per acre and richness in sugar. Moreover, land suitable for the growth of the beet exists in large bodies now under cultivation in several different parts of the State... It follows therefore that if prices are such as to make the business profitable anywhere, then it will pay in Colorado.⁶³

The prospect of growing sugar beets in Colorado played into the Spanish-American War. Colorado Senator Henry Teller's amendment to the joint resolution that authorized President McKinley's Declaration of War on Spain thwarted any imperial aspirations for Cuba. Lars Schoultz wrote of Teller's intentions: "There is little question that ... Teller proposed his antiannexation resolution primarily to ensure that Western beet sugar interests would never have to face 'domestic' Cuban competition."⁶⁴

The colonists soon realized the benefit of growing sugar beets, and by the fall of 1900, Amity boasted of a loading track, scales, freight platform, a melon shed, and a coalhouse, as well as a promise from the ATSF to build a depot and siding.⁶⁵ By 1904, Holly Sugar built a sugar factory in nearby Holly, and the sugar beet became "the safest and most remunerative [*sic*] crop in the district."⁶⁶ The ATSF was slow to deliver on its

⁶³ Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station, *Sugar Beets*, by W.W. Cooke, Bulletin no. 36, (Fort Collins, March 1897), 4.

⁶⁴ Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Toward Latin America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 139.

⁶⁵ Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 53.

⁶⁶ Haggard, *The Poor and The Land*, 70.

promise of a depot, and colonists also complained about persistent shortages of beet cars during the harvest. In 1902, The Salvation Army committed \$500.00 towards the depot, which the residents of Fort Amity matched. Two years later, when the contract had been let out but construction had not begun on a permanent depot, the following poem appeared in the *Amity Optimist*:

*Seasons coming! Seasons going!
And we're growing old, slack!
While we all are shiv'ring, swelt'ring,
In that same old dingy shack.
And we wonder what's the reason,
While the railroad has the "mon.,"
They don't get a hustle on them
And soon get the depot done.⁶⁷*

A relationship fostered on goodwill and mutual benefit deteriorated into a strained business arrangement clouded by mistrust and growing dissatisfaction on the part of the colonists.

Although the partnership between Amity's residents and the ATSF lost its luster, The Salvation Army recognized the necessity to foster relationships with individuals and organizations that would contribute to the success of Fort Amity. They continued to seek out experts in agriculture for their advice and instruction. Professor Alston Ellis, director of the Colorado Agricultural Experimental Station in Fort Collins, received numerous requests from Colonel Holland and the colonists for printed bulletins issued by his agency. These bulletins covered topics such as disease and pest control, tilling techniques, and crop varieties, among other topics. The professor was most accommodating in fulfilling the colonist's requests, though he grew less cordial when the colonists sent unsolicited soil and water samples for analysis.

⁶⁷ "How About the Depot?" from *Amity Optimist*, quoted in *The War Cry* (NY), September 3, 1904.

One exchange between Colonel Holland and Professor Ellis demonstrated how strained relations between the two became. In February 1899, the Colonel sent an unsolicited soil sample to the experimental station requesting analysis for the suitability of growing potatoes such as were being grown in Greeley. Ellis responded that soil samples were time consuming and expensive, and that, unless there was some benefit to the state, the analysis would not be undertaken. The Colonel appealed to the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, and in late March, Colonel Holland received the following letter devoid of the customary pleasantries included in previous letters.

Dear Sir:-

Your letter of the 1st inst., addressed to the Secretary of The State Board of Agriculture was brought to my attention yesterday. I have referred your inquiry to our Horticulturist, Prof. C. S. Crandall, and have asked him to write to you at his earliest convenience.

Truly yours,
Alston Ellis⁶⁸

The content of the Colonel's letter to the State Board of Agriculture was not disclosed, but from that point forward, the exchanges between Holland and Ellis were rather terse on the part of the professor. Subsequent correspondence regarding the soil sample revealed that little information could be gained solely from them, since there were many more important conditions that were needed to raise potatoes. Despite this rebuff, potatoes did become one of the staple crops of the colony.

After the ill-fated harvest of 1898, the new settlers formed a Farmer's Institute, also called the Amity Institute. Clark C. Spence noted that in October of that year, William M. Wiley, a land agent for the Amity Land and Irrigation Company from whom The Salvation Army purchased the colony site, and subsequent head of the Holly Sugar

⁶⁸ Ellis to Holland, 28 March 1899, Fort Collins, Colorado State University Archives, Fort Collins, Colorado, uncataloged collection.

Company, met with colonists and discussed his hopes for their success: "...and several old-timers discussed their experiences at the Union Colony in Greeley."⁶⁹ The Amity Institute first met on October 20, 1898, and the members decided upon five organizational departments: Natural Science, Experiment, Library, Ways and Means, and Social Entertainment.⁷⁰ The institute's regular meetings consisted of refreshments, gossip, music performed by colonists, and, most of all, an opportunity to educate themselves and exchange ideas about their agricultural pursuits. Colonists and area farmers attended annual spring institutes held at Amity, where specialists from the State Agricultural College lectured on the latest innovations in agriculture. Marie Antalek wrote: "Through these institutes the agricultural knowledge of the colonists and the farmers in the area was improved. When problems arose concerning insects, diseases, crops, or livestock, the college could be called upon for help."⁷¹ Residents of Fort Amity called for assistance on several occasions because of outbreaks of blackleg, insect infestation, and unexplained livestock deaths.

Perhaps the most serious inquiry to the college referred to drainage problems that began to surface during the 1902-growing season. The *Holly Chieftain* reported, "Drainage is the subject of discussion on the colony these days, and there are nearly as many different views as there are colonists."⁷² Crop yields began to diminish on lower portions of the colony where signs of soil salinization began to surface. While the soil was "the richest possible soil that can be found anywhere," the flat ground did not allow for gravity runoff, and the water table was too high to allow for adequate drainage for

⁶⁹ Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 54.

⁷⁰ "Roughing It," *The War Cry*, 18 November, 1899 (NY), 12.

⁷¹ Antalek, "The Amity Colony," 58.

⁷² *Holly Chieftain*, 25 December, 1903.

irrigation. As moisture built up in the soil, minerals accumulated that would have normally been flushed out with proper drainage. The landowners saw evidence of mineral saturation, or salinization as a white residue on the surface of the soil.

Had Colonel Holland and Commander Booth-Tucker known and understood the history of the area, they would have situated the colony elsewhere. The Santa Fe Trail passed directly north of Fort Amity and traversed the top of a bluff. According to local amateur historian Pat Palmer, who conducted extensive research on the Santa Fe Trail, the early travelers of the trail bypassed this bottomland because their wagon wheels would bog down in the soft wet ground that was known as Big Salt Bottom.⁷³

By 1905, the drainage problem became critical, and Colonel Holland called on Colorado State Engineer L. G. Carpenter to offer his advice. After consulting with civil engineer Antoine Jacobs in 1904, The Salvation Army began a modest mitigation plan by constructing drainage ditches and tiling the irrigated ground. Tiling involved the installation of perforated tile pipes underground in the lowest portions of the field in order to facilitate efficient drainage. Carpenter advised deeper drainage ditches and a more aggressive tiling plan. Colonel Holland estimated the cost of the project to be roughly \$50 per acre, and this news was not received well by the Army's Finance Council in New York. Holland overcame the council's initial objections by rationalizing that if the plan was not begun, the result would be "...an alkali swamp incapable of producing even the commonest weeds."⁷⁴ The council reluctantly agreed to undertake the plan, but stipulated that the colonists should provide as much of the required labor as

⁷³ Pat Palmer, interview by author, Lamar, Colorado, 11 June, 2009; Ava Betz, *A Prowers County History*, (Lamar: The Prowers County Historical Society, 1986), 38.

⁷⁴ Holland to the Board of Trustees of The Salvation Army, 2 April, 1906, Fort Amity, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 1.14.

possible, for which they would be compensated through reductions in their debts to the Army.⁷⁵

The colonists completed the project in time for the spring 1907 planting, but to no avail. It can take years to reclaim soil that has been lost to salinization, and a flood in November of 1908 further exacerbated the problem by depositing a thick layer of silt on the already distressed ground. The flood sealed the fate of the colony, and many of the colonists either sold or abandoned their land. L. G. Carpenter's reply to the ATSF's Industrial Commissioner, Wesley Merritt, in 1906, was hauntingly prophetic. The Army offered assistance to those who wished to relocate as a final act of support for the colonists. Some relocated to Holly, others went to Lamar and other nearby towns, and still others left the region entirely. A few of the colonists who occupied land not affected by salinization chose to remain and were given generous terms on which to settle their debts to The Salvation Army.

Even as the Army was fighting the salinization problem in 1905, Commander Booth-Tucker remained doggedly optimistic for the prospects of the colonists and the colony. The British Parliament commissioned H. Rider Haggard, a British novelist, in 1905 to inspect and report on the progress of The Salvation Army's colonization scheme for the purpose of evaluating the prospects of embarking on a similar program run by the British government. During his visit to Fort Amity, Haggard asked the Commander: "Is The Salvation Army sufficiently satisfied with these experiments to be willing ... to undertake the management of such settlements on a large scale?" The Commander replied,

⁷⁵ Salvation Army Finance Council Minutes, 5 July, 1906, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 1.9.

Yes. . . . Our experience goes to show that the man without money makes a better average colonist and a better average settler than the man with money, and it seems to me a radical mistake that this and other countries should confine their settlements to the man with money, and ignore the man whose capital consists of brain and muscle, but who can be turned into a prosperous “home owner”.⁷⁶

The Commander’s optimism persuaded Haggard to return to England as an advocate for The Salvation Army and its farm colonization plan. Upon release of Commissioner Haggard’s report, William Thomas Stead, publisher of *Review of Reviews*, invited Booth-Tucker to his *sanctum* at Mowbray House, whereupon he greeted Booth-Tucker with, “I congratulate you, Commander, upon the first-class certificate which Commissioner Rider Haggard has granted The Salvation Army as a colonizing agency.” To which the commander gave an uncharacteristically simple reply, “It is very good, isn’t it?”⁷⁷

Were it not for Frederick and Emma’s infectious optimism, the colonization scheme would have never been undertaken. The Commander acknowledged his optimism at the Eleventh National Irrigation Congress of 1903: “My friends look upon me as optimistic, and I plead guilty to that. I would rather be optimistic than pessimistic. This reminds me of a gentleman who fell from a ten-story skyscraper in New York; as he fell past each story he was heard to say, ‘All right so far!’”⁷⁸

Mark Hanna, shared their optimism and became an ardent supporter of The Salvation Army and the farm colonization plan. Hanna intended to introduce a bill in the U.S. Senate that would procure public funding for a colonization scheme much like that of The Salvation Army’s, but he died on February 15, 1904, before he had the

⁷⁶ Haggard, *The Poor and The Land*, 79-80.

⁷⁷ William Thomas Stead, “The Salvation Army As Coloniser: Commander Booth-Tucker” *Review of Reviews* 32 July – December, (1905): 38.

⁷⁸ *The Official Proceeding of the Eleventh National Irrigation Congress*, ed. Gilbert McClurg (Ogden: The Proceedings Publishing Co., January, 1904), 95.

opportunity. Commander Booth-Tucker officiated at a memorial service for the senator at The Salvation Army's National Headquarters in New York City, where he stated, "We have lost one of the stanchest [*sic*] of our friends in this country, a great man who was never ashamed to tell of his interest in us and to work for us."⁷⁹ The Commander told a story of Hanna's generosity towards The Salvation Army. The Consul made a personal call on Hanna to solicit help in raising \$20,000 for Fort Herrick in Ohio, Hanna's home state. Hanna was quick to write a personal check for \$1,000. The Consul then asked Hanna for a list of names of men who would be inclined to help, and he willingly provided her with a handwritten list. The Commander recalled, "It was a magic document. When these men saw the Senator's handwriting they subscribed at once and the money was quickly realized."⁸⁰ Frederick and Emma hoped that Hanna's influence would translate into support for The Salvation Army from the American public as well as in the halls of Congress.

On March 21, 1904, Massachusetts Senator George F. Hoar, another enthusiastic supporter of The Salvation Army who met General Booth at a dinner sponsored by Senator Hanna, introduced Senate Bill S. 5126, requesting that it be assigned to the Committee on Education and Labor, as was the custom with regard to bills "for humane and benevolent objects." Senator Henry Clay Hansbrough of North Dakota requested that the bill be assigned to the Committee on Public Lands, of which he was chairman, as

⁷⁹ "Salvationists Honor the Memory of Hanna," *The New York Times*, 22 February, 1904.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

it called for distribution of public lands. Senator Hoar did not object, and Hansbrough's committee took up consideration of the measure.⁸¹

Commander Booth-Tucker laid out a blueprint for Hanna's bill in his 1902 publication, *Light In Darkness*. Booth-Tucker's plan was to, "...take the Waste labor in *families* and place it upon the Waste Land by means of Waste Capital, and thereby convert this Trinity of Waste Into a Unity of Production."⁸² He promoted six foundational principles for a colonization plan. First, there must be a sufficiency of capital. Second, the land must be carefully selected and suitably laid out. Third, the colonists must be well selected. Fourth, there must be able supervision. Fifth, the principle of homeownership must be followed. And last, God must be recognized.

The Commander made his case for a publicly funded colonization plan at the Eleventh National Irrigation Congress in September 1903 at Ogden, Utah. Among the topics for discussion at the congress was colonization on irrigated lands, and the principal speaker on the topic was Commander Booth-Tucker. The Commander emphasized the success of Fort Amity and Fort Romie, valuing the individual farms at Fort Amity from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Every colonist on these two colonies was "...entirely self supporting, and the repayments have amounted to considerably more than \$20,000."⁸³ The Commander's optimism shaded into exaggeration, for the Army in 1903 still supported many of the colonists, in particular the new arrivals who had not established self-sufficiency.

⁸¹ *Creation of a Colonization Bureau and to Provide For Advances to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain*, S 5126, 58th Cong., 2d sess., *Congressional Record* 38 (March 21, 1904): 3454-3455.

⁸² Frederick Booth-Tucker, *Light In Darkness* (New York: The Salvation Army Printing and Engraving Department, 1902), 34.

⁸³ *Official Proceeding*, 100.

The *New York Times* reported this excerpt from Booth-Tucker's speech,

President Roosevelt spoke to the heart of the Nation when he pointed out the dangers of race extinction and the importance of the family – the large family – to the well-being of the Nation. We must show the poor man how he can afford to get married and can bring up his family in decency and comfort, and become a homeowner. If this cannot be in the city, let us throw open to him our irrigated lands and provide him with the means for making a start.⁸⁴

Booth-Tucker recounted to Senator Hansbrough in a letter dated April 12, 1904, advocating S. 5126, "I may say further that it was only after the very favorable and indeed enthusiastic reception given to the proposition at last year's National Irrigation Congress in Ogden that I ventured to crystallize the suggestions there made regarding Colonization into the form of a Bill."⁸⁵

S. 5126 became known as the "Booth-Tucker Bill" in the halls of Congress. The Commander drafted the bill himself, but he made it clear in his letter to Hansbrough that the bill had been drafted with the assistance of F.H. Newell, Commissioner of the U.S. Reclamation Bureau; Gifford Pinchot, director of the U.S. Forest Service; Agriculture Secretary James Wilson, and others with knowledge of land use and irrigation. Booth-Tucker wanted to obtain "...the best possible advice from those who would be the best in a position to give it."⁸⁶ Enclosed with Booth-Tucker's letter was a second letter endorsing the bill from newspaper magnate E.W. Scripps. The Commander made it clear that S 5126 had been well thought out, and enjoyed wide support from the general public and cabinet-level officials.

⁸⁴ "To Colonize City Poor: Booth-Tucker Launches Plan to Settle Vast Irrigation Domain," *The New York Times*, 17 September, 1903.

⁸⁵ Booth-Tucker to Sen. H.C. Hansbrough, 12 April, 1904, Seattle, U.S. National Archives, RG 46, Box 48.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

Booth-Tucker also submitted a summary of the bill with “*An Explanatory Memorandum*” to each member of the Committee on Public Lands. The memorandum countered many of the arguments against the bill; arguments that the Commander said had plagued The Salvation Army’s efforts towards colonization of the working poor. The memorandum was rife with platitudes and financial charts that did not reflect The Salvation Army’s own experience with colonization. Booth-Tucker ignored the early crop failures, failed business arrangements, or the chronic salinity of the soil. In arguing against the idea that the bill was overly paternalistic, Booth-Tucker wrote, “Paternalism in this sense is *with us to stay*. It is indeed the very *basis of society* and of all orderly government.”⁸⁷ He argued against leaving the question to private enterprise: “Neither the farmer, the land owner nor the Irrigation Company have been willing to provide the capital for placing the landless man on the manless land.”⁸⁸ Booth-Tucker concluded with quotations from America’s most notable citizens, both historical and contemporary. From President George Washington, “Agriculture is the most beautiful, most useful, and most noble employment of man.” And from President Theodore Roosevelt, “Give every man who wants it a chance to get a home on the land.”⁸⁹ In the end, the memorandum offered an emotional plea rather than a logical argument for a public colonization plan.

Interior Secretary Ethan A. Hitchcock’s name was noticeably absent from Booth-Tucker’s list of cabinet level consultants. After S. 5126 was introduced, Hitchcock asked General Land Office Commissioner W.A. Richards for his assessment and comments.

⁸⁷ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *A Bill to Create the Colonization Bureau, and to Provide For Advances to Actual Settlers On the Public Domain: With an Explanatory Memorandum*, undated, no publisher, pg. 4, U.S. National Archives.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

Richards found many reasons to oppose the measure, as it called for government loans of up to \$1500 to prospective colonists at an interest rate of six percent per annum. The bill also imposed an additional fee of one percent of their proceeds from production.

Richards claimed that private lending institutions could extend better terms on these types of loans. He also noted that land claims must be filed with state offices, and in the event of foreclosure, the federal government would be required to take action in local or state courts in order to collect on delinquent accounts, thereby complicating administration of the program. Richards' most convincing argument rested on the fact that under the current Homestead Act, settlers could gain entry on 160 acres of land "...while under this law the quantity of land he may take may be limited to as small an amount as ten acres and cannot under any circumstances exceed eighty." ⁹⁰

Richards concluded his evaluation by stating, "These considerations tend very much to discourage the belief that the plan proposed by this bill is a feasible one, and are such as to cause this office to withhold its favorable recommendation...."⁹¹ One week later, Hitchcock wrote to Senator Hansbrough: "In response to the request for an expression of views from this Department, I enclose copy of a report from the Commissioner of the General Land Office dated the 7th instant, in which for reasons stated he does not favor the passage of the bill. I concur in the views of the Commissioner."⁹² There is no record of further debate on the bill, either in the Committee on Public Lands, or on the floor of the Senate. The defeat of the Booth-

⁹⁰ W.A. Richards to Ethan .A. Hitchcock, 7 April 1904, Washington D.C., U.S. National Archives, RG 46, Box 48.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ethan A. Hitchcock to Henry C. Hansbrough, 14 April 1904, Washington D.C. U.S. National Archives, RG 46, Box 48.

Tucker Bill was one of many setbacks that The Salvation Army would endure in its colonization plan.

After the failure of S 5126, members of The Salvation Army continued to provide relief for the urban poor through soup kitchens, industrial homes, and homes for fallen women. There were no further efforts to reform the social, economic, and political causes of poverty. Reform was left to political activists of the day.

The Commander returned to England shortly after his failed attempt at public support through S. 5126. Upon his return to England, Booth-Tucker, along with H. Rider Haggard, attempted a similar proposal before the British parliament, only to be disappointed again for many of the same reasons that S. 5126 failed. Fort Amity persisted with meager success for another five years. The flood of November 1908, a slow recovery from the salinization problems, and a robbery of the Fort Amity Bank marked the closing days of the colony. Frederic Booth-Tucker was replaced by his sister-in-law, Evangeline Cory Booth, and, like her brothers and sisters, she had little enthusiasm for the colonization plan. Without the support of The Salvation Army's leadership, public and private interest waned, and the colony dissipated.

There was a great deal of outside support for The Salvation Army's colonization plan. The ATSF's investment was considerable, however, it was not uncharacteristic or unprecedented. It was in the railroad's interest to populate the lands along its rail lines, and despite the colony's failure, the ground brought under the plow remains in production today. The assistance of the Colorado Agricultural Experimental Station was valuable to the early colonists, but it was neither more or less than any other agriculturist would have received in Colorado. Politicians also influenced the colonization scheme. Unfortunately

for The Salvation Army, political support could not be translated into public funding. Despite all of the assistance, the success of the colony depended solely on the ability of the colonists to grasp the opportunity and succeed for themselves, just as the pioneers who preceded them on the frontier.

On paper, the colonization scheme looked as if it could not fail. Frederick Booth-Tucker certainly believed that. Regrettably, what looks good on paper seldom fulfills its promise. The Salvation Army based its colonization plan on perfect conditions that even under the best of circumstances do not exist. Perfect soil, perfect weather, perfect water supply, and perfect personal and business relationships have almost never existed individually, much less collectively in agriculture. Like many visionaries before and since, Booth-Tucker failed to view any of the negatives that might be associated with his vision.

CHAPTER IV

DAILY LIFE AT FORT AMITY

How Chicago Paupers Became Colorado Farmers

The Salvation Army sought to prove the worthiness of its colonization scheme through the colonists who were selected for Fort Amity. They in turn expected much of The Salvation Army. Commander Booth-Tucker always presented the colonization scheme in a positive light to the American public, but in doing so, he painted a picture that sometimes strayed from reality. The colonists were not always happy with The Salvation Army, nor the Army with them. The Commander had a potentially viable plan for the colony and the colonists, but he failed to account for the uncertainties of life. Conditions at Fort Amity often were difficult, and sometimes tragic. Yet the colonists persevered, and saw themselves better off than they had been in their previous circumstances.

When residents of Holly, Colorado, heard of The Salvation Army's plans to relocate urban paupers to the Arkansas Valley, they were less than enthusiastic. They held many preconceived notions about the class of people that The Salvation Army might have recruited. Any misgivings local residents held would fade when they witnessed the arrival of the first colonists. Colonel Holland related the story to *The War Cry* in November 1899:

You never saw anything to surpass the alacrity with which the men of our party set to work, harnessing the animals to our wagons loading up and pressing forward through that pitiless downpour to the land of our hope and promise. It was this sturdy energy and enthusiasm that made the first impression on the old-time settlers thereabout; the general opinion was that our people were all right.⁹³

Colonel Holland's assessment of the feelings towards the colonists was confirmed by William Wiley in a conversation he had with Commander Booth-Tucker in August 1898. The Commander told the Colonization Finance Board that Wiley was "...particularly pleased that it [the colony] should have so favorably impressed all the old farmers and cow-boys throughout the district, as they had been inclined to view the effort with disfavor and criticism but are now loud in their praises as to its successful management."⁹⁴ The cowboys and "old farmers" of the area did not impress easily, and their approval of the colonists was no small accomplishment.

Wiley described the pioneer cattlemen and farmers who previously settled the Arkansas Valley in an article reprinted in *The War Cry* from *The Chicago Record*.

The far west is composed of a peculiar class of people. The cowboy and the old settler are strongly allied in their characteristics. They are no respecters of persons. A man with several millions of dollars who lacks confidence in himself is as much a fool on the plains as the farmer in a metropolis. No higher praise could be given The Salvation Army Colony that they have secured for themselves the confidence and respect of this class of people among whom they are to live.⁹⁵

⁹³ "Roughing It: An Interesting Description of Pioneer Days on the Fort Amity Colony" *The War Cry* (New York), November 11, 1899, 4.

⁹⁴ Booth-Tucker, "Memorandum re Fort Amity, Colonel" to Colonization Finance Board, undated, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 20.100.

⁹⁵ "Farms for the Poor: Experiment of Booth-Tucker," *The War Cry*, (New York), 24 June 1899, 17.

Wiley went on to state that many of the colonists and officers were elected by their neighbors to “offices of trust and prominence in their farmer’s societies and institutes,”⁹⁶ further suggesting that the colonists had favorably impressed the locals.

As the colonists made their way to their “land of hope and promise,” many of them must have thought inwardly that they were on godforsaken ground. They took up residence in the remnants of two old stone buildings that once served as a ranch house and stagecoach stop at Yankee Bend; a curve on the Arkansas River on the western edge of the colony. The women and young children were sheltered in the buildings, while the men and boys slept in two large tents. Wiley noted that the colonists remained in good spirits, and without complaint. “It is almost incredible,” Wiley said, “that a careful examination has not discovered any serious complaint or objection from any of the people. On the contrary, all of them have written east and advised their friends to make application to become members of the colony.”⁹⁷ Early critics of The Salvation Army’s plan predicted that colonists would not come, they would not work, and they would not stay. Commander Booth-Tucker was heartened by the fact that on all three counts, the critics were wrong.

The colonists awoke to their first day at the colony on April 21, 1898, and despite the rain, Colonel Holland quickly organized working parties and divided the necessary jobs among them. Some of the men began breaking the ground with the assistance of local farmers whom the Colonel commissioned for help. Sagebrush, prickly pear cactus, and a solid mat of native prairie grass fought against the horse and plow, and would make backbreaking work of converting the native soil into productive farms. Those men

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

with the proper skills and experience set to work building homes, while others started pulling lateral ditches to carry water to the newly ploughed ground. The women and younger children prepared meals and assisted with planting the initial crop with Salvation Army-supplied cantaloupe seed. No one was idle, and within three months, the first crop was planted. Colonel Holland reported in *The War Cry* (June 11, 1898) that, “Now we have a house constructed for each colonist.”⁹⁸

After the first harvest, the colonists built a school for their children. The children met in the upper floor of the newly constructed colony office while their school was under construction. As with most of the buildings on the colony, the primary building material was limestone quarried from colonist T. Frank McAbee’s plot.⁹⁹ As the schoolhouse neared completion, the *Holly Chieftain* reported, “A bell tower has been built and in a few days the large bell will be fixed in position and ready for business. It will do just what it is tol(le)d to do.”¹⁰⁰ The structure was dedicated on Washington’s Birthday in 1899, and became the center of the community.

Alyce Carlson, the daughter of Staff Captain Nels Ericson, wrote: “There we gave school programs, box suppers, Salvation Army band concerts and once in a great while we had the excitement of a visit from a traveling troupe of performers.”¹⁰¹ The schoolhouse also served as the colony’s church and meeting house, where the Amity Institute held its regular meetings. Gatherings at the schoolhouse attracted colonists as

⁹⁸ “Colonel Holland and the Colony at Fort Amity,” *The War Cry*, 11 June 1898, 11.

⁹⁹ McAbee was an experienced stonemason, and he was able to supplement his farm income through the quarry.

¹⁰⁰ *Holly Chieftain*, 3 February 1899.

¹⁰¹ Alyce Carlson, *Amity*, unpublished, undated, Big Timbers Museum, Lamar, Colorado.

well as their friends and neighbors from nearby farms, ranches, and the towns of Holly, and Granada.

Nearly every organized event at the schoolhouse or elsewhere on the colony included music that The Salvation Army was famous for. Music was as much a part of the culture of The Salvation Army as their uniforms, as its members learned early on in the history of the corps that music attracted crowds, and crowds could be ministered to. An account of the first meeting of the Amity Institute in the *Holly Chieftain* noted that, “Music was furnished by Messrs. Baldwin and French, concertinas; Messrs. Coker and Davey guitars; Messrs. Newman and Thomas, cornets, and Mr. Cash, banjo.”¹⁰² The May 5, 1899 edition of the *Holly Chieftain* opened its “Amity Correspondence” column with, “The new grader works O.K. We have five little girls here who play brass instruments and several who play string instruments.”¹⁰³ Many of the colonists were musically inclined, and their talents drew praise from within and without the colony.

Amity’s inhabitants had a special, and somewhat peculiar relationship, with the local cowboys, most of whom hailed from the XY Ranch, owned by Fred Harvey of Harvey House fame.¹⁰⁴ The cowboys were known among the locals for their rough and tumble ways, but were among the earliest supporters of Fort Amity’s colonists. A favorite pastime for the cowboys, after a night of frivolity, was to ride alongside a passing train and steal the pillows from beneath the heads of sleeping passengers through an open window. Eva Holland-Dilley, Colonel Holland’s daughter, recalled with a laugh in a 1980 interview: “The cowboys from Granada used to, on Saturday nights, ride

¹⁰² *Holly Chieftain*, 3 February 1899.

¹⁰³ *Holly Chieftain*, 5 May 1899.

¹⁰⁴ Cattle from the XY furnished the beef steaks for Harvey’s Harvey House Restaurants. Betz, *A Prowers County*, 66.

through Amity and go to Holly, and get drunk. They came back in the wee small hours of Sunday morning and they were all shooting up the town.”¹⁰⁵ As if to make amends with the colonists, or perhaps as acts of penitence, the cowboys often attended the various religious meetings conducted by the leaders of the colony. An entry in the “Amity News” column of the *Holly Chieftain* noted, “The boys at the XY ranch are regular visitors at Amity and none are more welcome. They have stood by Amity since the beginning. We were glad to see them Saturday evening.”¹⁰⁶ One of the greatest attractions for the cowboys at Fort Amity was the music. The musicians most often kept time to the stomping of boots and the jangling of spurs, as cowboys rode as far as twenty miles to partake of the services and entertainment.

Eva Holland-Dilley noted that at first, the only percussion instruments on the colony were the famed Salvation Army tambourines. Then her brother, Thom, taught himself to play the snare drum. Eva had a small jenny donkey that she named Jenny, which she would hitch to a small two-wheeled gig that her father gave her. On one Memorial Day, after gathering at the schoolhouse, the colonists marched to the cemetery in a parade-like procession to decorate the graves. “Everything went fine,” Eva recalled with a giggle, “til’ Thom started playing the drum, and that scared Jenny, and she ran away and threw me out of the gig, and nearly ruined the procession.”¹⁰⁷ After the initial excitement, the colonists regrouped, and proceeded to the cemetery without further incident.

¹⁰⁵ Eva Holland-Dilley, interview by Capt. Ernie Oulette and Tracy Chapman, tape recording, 15 April 1980, Denver Public Library Western History Collection, Denver, Colorado.

¹⁰⁶ *Holley Chieftain*, 26 September 1902.

¹⁰⁷ Holland-Dilley, interview.

One of the most popular events presented by colonists was the “battle of song.”

The *Holly Chieftain* reported on the first occurrence of this Salvation Army tradition,

For the benefit of those who are not used to Salvation army [*sic*] phrases we may explain that a “battle of song” is a meeting composed almost entirely of music, both vocal and instrumental. The songs and choruses follow each other with the rapidity of a rapid firing gun, in fact they appear to an outsider as if they were all in one piece. One hundred songs and choruses were given in an hour and a half.¹⁰⁸

The article’s author wrote that this was “. . . a somewhat unusual sort of meeting,” and he questioned whether such a meeting had ever occurred in the Arkansas Valley.

While the colonists often celebrated life through song, they did not always have reason to sing. Calamity seemed to stalk them collectively and individually. Floods, fires, disease, and personal tragedy were frequent topics in the *Holly Chieftain*’s “Amity Correspondence,” or “Amity News” sections.

For most of the colonists, their troubles occurred after their arrival to Fort Amity. William Stevens, however, brought his problem with him. Stevens was one of a few colonists originally from Colorado. Holland laid out the details of Stevens’ problem in an empathetic letter (June 2, 1899,) to Major Madison Ferris, The Salvation Army’s legal officer. In March 1892, Stevens placed his two young children in the care of a “Home for Children” in Pueblo, Colorado, after his wife died and he was not in a position to care for them properly. He placed them there with the understanding that he would retrieve them when his circumstances improved. Stevens’ sister lived in Pueblo, and visited the children on a rather infrequent basis.

In December 1892, Stevens returned to the home to find that two families within fifty miles of Pueblo adopted the children the previous September without his knowledge.

¹⁰⁸ *Holly Chieftain*, 24 March 1899.

The home made no attempt to contact him through his sister or directly regarding these adoptions. In his letter, the Colonel wrote:

Now, nothing has happened since then and Stevens has been kept on the qui vive ever since to discover the whereabouts of hid [*sic*] children. He did not take any other means, because he despaired of getting any satisfaction from the Home officials and had no money to employ a lawyer to take up his case. Will you please write me and let me know what steps the man can take for the recovery of his children.¹⁰⁹

The Colonel's empathy was no doubt fostered by his own position as a father of three children.

Major Ferris' reply offered no relief from these sad circumstances. He stated that without copies of the documents that Stevens signed when he placed the children in the home – which Stevens did not have – he could be of little assistance in the matter. Said Ferris, “I am sorry to say that, nine times out of ten, where children have been placed in a Home, by a parent, through inability to provide for them, the Court decides, as a general thing, that it is for the best interests of the children to remain where they are.”¹¹⁰ Stevens remarried sometime prior to his arrival at Fort Amity, and fathered two more children with his second wife. Yet he still grieved the needless loss of his first two children. There is no record of Stevens being reunited with his children, and it is doubtful that he succeeded in doing so.

Frederick Booth-Tucker encouraged families to settle on the colony because of the labor that could be derived from children. Little account was made of the dangers posed to children working around farm machinery and animals. In July 1901, the colonists received a tragic object lesson in farm safety. Just three weeks after their arrival

¹⁰⁹ Holland to Major Madison Ferris, 2 June 1899, Fort Amity, Colorado, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 2.15.

¹¹⁰ Ferris to Holland, 9 June 1899, New York, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 2.15.

at Fort Amity, the Gilpin family was in the process of building their home. While helping their father by hauling stone from Frank McAbee's quarry to the building site, the three Gilpin boys lost control of the two-horse team that pulled their wagon. The youngest boy jumped to safety, but the two older boys tried to stay with the team to settle them down. When it became apparent that their efforts were useless, they jumped, and thirteen-year-old Charley landed on his head and died within a few minutes. The younger of the two sustained serious injuries, but was able to recover. The *Holly Chieftain* reported, "During all the three years the colony has been in existence death had not invaded its borders until last Monday afternoon when Brother Gilpin's little boy Charley was suddenly removed from our midst."¹¹¹ Charley was the first of many children to die at Fort Amity.

Tragedy visited the colony again in June 1902. On June 9, many of the colonists trekked to Holly to attend a production of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* performed by a traveling tent show. Alyce Carlson wrote, "They left behind them the dread disease of scarlet fever. Scores of school children became ill of it. Some died and were buried in the cemetery on the hill in crude wooden coffins hastily put together by the men of our town."¹¹² Layton Wilson, the current caretaker of Mt. Hope Cemetery where the children are interred, stated, "There are as many as fifty unmarked graves of children in the cemetery, a good deal of them from the scarlet fever epidemic."¹¹³ Carlson contracted

¹¹¹ *Holly Chieftain*, 19 July 1901.

¹¹² Carlson, *Amity*.

¹¹³ Layton Wilson, interview by author, Holly, Colorado, 9 June 2009.

the disease, but she survived with no lasting effects after a long illness. According to Carlson, another boy was left deaf and mute for the remainder of his life.¹¹⁴

Typhoid was a persistent problem at Fort Amity and throughout the region. A single issue of the *Holly Chieftain* reported, “We learn that Lillie, another of Mrs. Thrush’s children, is down with typhoid fever...H.W. Manning’s son, who is down with that dread disease, typhoid, is on the gain,” and that thirteen-year-old Roy Cram died of the disease. The same issue also reported that Ensign John Davy was called to Granada to assist with nursing a typhoid patient back to health. The report read, “John is a good nurse and if the doctors let him live John surely will.”¹¹⁵

The colonists never lost that sense of alacrity that Colonel Holland admired. Despite these trials, the residents of Fort Amity pressed on. Even when the elements united against them, they endured and persevered with a spirit that won them the admiration of all who took an interest in their lives. In May 1902, colonist Arthur Inman’s barbershop burned down. The following day, Inman, who was known for his strong work ethic among the colonists and the residents of Holly, purchased a simple chair from fellow colonist Augustus (Gust) Priebe, and offered his services in the middle of the street. According to the *Holly Chieftain*, Inman was kept busy cutting hair throughout the day. His tenacity was not uncommon on the colony, or on the part of The Salvation Army as a whole. It was this tenacity that prompted Commander Booth-Tucker to remain optimistic about the prospects of colonizing the working poor.

During his inspection of the colony for the British government in 1905, H. Rider Haggard inquired as to the colony’s solvency. Staff-Captain Hamon, from The Salvation

¹¹⁴ Carlson, *Amity*.

¹¹⁵ *Holly Chieftain*, 16 October 1903.

Army's headquarters, gave a defensive reply. He noted that that the colony would show a loss of \$23,111.50. Hamon went on to explain that, "...such loss would be scarcely likely to recur in any subsequent experiment, especially as we have had to meet many unforeseen conditions, such as alkali, and also certain seasons of great difficulty, including heavy hail storms, a total crop failure in one season and a flood in another."¹¹⁶ Still, The Salvation Army remained optimistic in its hope of expanding its colonization efforts. When asked if his experiment could work on a large scale, the Commander replied, "I am more than ever satisfied as to the soundness of the general principles, and am certain that they can be applied to any extent should the necessary capital be available. I consider it to be a sound business proposition."¹¹⁷ By comparison, \$23,000 in 1905 dollars equates to a relative worth of \$578,000 in 2009 dollars, according to a Consumer Price Index calculation. Always the optimist, Commander Booth-Tucker chose to accentuate the positive rather than dwell on the negative.

The Salvation Army carefully guarded the public face of the colonization scheme with regard to relations between the Corps and the colonists. Publicly, the colonists were always appreciative of the opportunities afforded their families by the Army. There were instances, however, where the colonists were less than satisfied or fully invested in The Salvation Army's plan. Within the first year, a problem arose that threatened the entire experiment. While publicly promoting the colonization program, Commander Booth-Tucker lauded the fact that by 1902, one of the colonists repaid his \$600 debt to The Salvation Army and owned his small farm outright. The Commander made no mention

¹¹⁶ H. Rider Haggard, *The Poor and The Land: Being a Report on The Salvation Army Colonies in the United States and at Hadleigh, England*, (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905), 81.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 79.

of the story behind the story. Ada M. Stimson came to the colony from Western Kansas in 1899 with \$1000 in hand, and wanted to purchase his ten-acre plot immediately. The problem was that the Amity Land Company, from whom The Salvation Army purchased the original plot of land on a mortgage contract, would only subdivide the property in forty-acre allotments.

Colonel Holland informed Major Ferris of the situation, and sought his legal opinion on April 4, 1899. In his reply, Ferris expressed his frustration over the numerous difficulties encountered while embarking on the colonization scheme. Apparently, a similar situation had arisen at Fort Romie, and Ferris was anxious to resolve the issue for both colonies. Ferris wrote to the Colonel,

What about the last Agreement I sent on? I trust that that will meet every past, present, and future, and everything that we may come in contact with between now and eternity, relative to these colonists. Otherwise, I shall almost give up ever getting one that will suit the past, present, and future emergencies.... The truth is, I have got such a bundle of these various agreements that have been changed from time to time to alter the various difficulties that seem to be constantly arising in this matter, that I am anxious to destroy them and get them out of my way.¹¹⁸

Ferris' frustrations were misplaced in this matter, for the problem rested with The Salvation Army, and perhaps even with Ferris himself. From the beginning, the Army intended to divide the property into ten-acre plots and sell them to the colonists with an option to purchase an additional ten acres. Presumably, Ferris reviewed and approved the original land contract and overlooked the offending clause. It soon became apparent that there was no immediate remedy to the situation.

Numerous letters flowed back and forth between the managers of the colony and the Army's Headquarters in New York over the next year regarding Stimson's desire to

¹¹⁸ Ferris to Holland, 7 April 1899, New York, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 2.15.

purchase his plot of land. A letter from Ensign Nels Erickson to Colonel Holland, not quite a year later in February 1900, expressed how dire the circumstances had become.

The position of affairs is getting desperate; we are obliged to do something and that right away if we are to maintain the confidence of the people here. Stimson offers us cash in hand for a contract or some kind of an agreement that thus far we have kept putting him off with promises that everything is all right and he need not worry, he as well as a number of the other colonists are beginning to feel that everything is not all right and that perhaps we will be unable to give title to the land.¹¹⁹

No further correspondence regarding this matter is available, but The Salvation Army retired its debt on the original 640-acre purchase in 1901, and thus released itself from the confines of the contract with Amity Land. Stimson recorded his deed to the property on May 4, 1903. In his 1905 interview with H. Rider Haggard, Stimson expressed his satisfaction with being a colonist, "I consider I have done very well here, and am glad I came."¹²⁰ Stimson made no mention of the difficulties in acquiring his land, or the discontent of the other colonists that arose out of his difficulties.

Another serious dispute arose between the colonists and The Salvation Army in 1900. This time, the colonists demanded more than they should have. By 1900, the corps purchased a number of beef cattle for the settlers, and the district brand inspector impressed on the colonists their obligation to brand them. In the fall of 1899, Holland relocated to New York as the National Colonization Secretary. There, he managed the colonization program as a whole, while Brigadier Joseph Streeton replaced him as the manager of Fort Amity. Major Ferris received a letter from Streeton dated January 30, 1900, that expressed the colonist's discontent with the Army's decision to brand the cattle with a SAC brand. Streeton wrote that the colonists believed that in the event that the

¹¹⁹ Ensign Nels Erickson to Holland, 28 February 1900, Fort Amity, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 2.15.

¹²⁰ Haggard, *The Poor and the Land*, 93.

cattle strayed, or were stolen, they would be returned directly to The Salvation Army rather than to the individual owners, who would be left without remedy. Streeton proposed that the cattle be branded with a secondary brand of each colonist's allotment number, and he requested that Ferris draw up the appropriate legal papers to accommodate his proposal. Ferris was annoyed at the inference that The Salvation Army would treat the colonists unfairly in this circumstance, or any other circumstance for that matter, as he offered the following indignant reply.

As I understand it, these cattle are not yet paid for; and I would not for one moment consent that any other brand should be put upon them than The salvation [*sic*] Army brand, so that if they are lost or stolen we can reclaim them; and then if they are paid for, if they (the colonists) cannot trust us to restore back to them the property that they have paid for, after all that has been done for them and is being done for them by us, and the fact that the cattle are theirs or to become theirs through our purchasing them for them, it seems to me a downright piece of injustice and ingratitude.¹²¹

Ferris chastised Streeton with regard to his plan, "My dear Brigadier, you cannot ride two horses in different directions," as he pointed out that a secondary brand would negate the intentions of the primary brand.¹²² There was an intentional double entendre in Ferris' admonition suggesting that Streeton should be more of a manager and less of a champion towards the colonists.

This appears to be the last major dispute between the colonists and The Salvation Army. While visiting Fort Amity, Haggard asked the Colonel if any of the colonists had left the colony since its inception. Holland told the commissioner that sixteen families had "removed from the colony" for various reasons, most of them concerning ill health or

¹²¹ Ferris to Brigadier Joseph Streeton, 3 February 1900, New York, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 2.15.

¹²² Ibid.

because they sought agricultural or commercial opportunities in nearby towns.¹²³

Holland did not mention that B. L. Yourden, left the colony without notice, taking all of his mortgaged livestock with him. In short order, local law enforcement caught up with Yourden just west of Granada, and the *Holly Chieftain* reported, “...(Yourden) will be asked by the local court to explain.”¹²⁴ The next week, the following note appeared in the *Chieftain*, “B. L. Yourdan [*sic*] who ran off with considerable property belonging to The Salvation Army, dropped the same and was glad to give up the cows, horses, etc.”¹²⁵ Despite the Army’s best efforts to attract people of the highest character, Yourden’s case illustrates that they were not always successful.

With the exception of Yourden, the colonists appear to have lived up to the theme for which Fort Amity was named with regard to relations among themselves. Alyce Carlson wrote, “There real friendships were made because of the common need for each other and the willingness of each one to help. No one who needed help lacked it.” The colonists developed an abiding trust in each other because of their close proximity. “Doors were never locked,” Carlson wrote, “If you were not at home a neighbor could enter and borrow what he needed. This was by mutual agreement.”¹²⁶ According to Carlson, these friendships lasted well beyond the demise of Fort Amity.

In addition to the demonstrated loyalty and ‘amity’ that the residents of Fort Amity shared for each other, The Salvation Army remained confident that they held to the moral precept of temperance. In June of 1899, a *War Cry* reporter asked Colonel Holland, “Let me see – you are a temperance community?” Holland responded, “So far

¹²³ Haggard, *The Poor and the Land*, 77-78.

¹²⁴ *Holly Chieftain*, 6 June 1902.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 13 June 1902.

¹²⁶ Carlson, *Amity*.

as we are in control, a pointblank total abstinence one. By the terms of our leaseholds, not a drop of liquor can be sold on the colony land without forfeit; but we have had no trouble of the sort whatever. Our people are not of the drinking kind....”¹²⁷ Nothing occurred to raise the Colonel’s suspicions regarding the consumption or sale of alcohol for the duration of the colony’s existence. However, the Holly Historical Society conducted a public meeting with some of the “Old Timers” of the community sometime in 1957, and they recorded the proceedings. Among the “Old Timers”, was Frank McGrath, a colonist who owned a grocery store that included a pharmacy and a soda fountain. A member of the audience inquired, “Who was the druggist, Frank?” McGrath replied that he was the druggist. Another member of the audience asked if he was the doctor too? His answer caused the audience to burst out in laughter. “There was three doctors and a horse doctor;” and after a brief pause, he stated, “and I sold whiskey too!”¹²⁸ Few people, if any, came from Holly or Granada to patronize McGrath’s store. Clearly, a colonist sold whiskey, and colonists purchased and consumed it. It turns out that some of them were the drinking kind.

Despite occasional forays into the sinful use of alcohol, the colonists’ spiritual lives were carefully guided by managers who oversaw the business and spiritual affairs of the colony. The Salvation Army held true to General Booth’s *In Darkest England* plan, where no colonist was required to become a Salvationist, or even subscribe to Christianity. Yet, no opportunity to present the gospel message was overlooked, as birthday parties, Amity Institute meetings, and holiday celebrations almost always

¹²⁷ *The War Cry*, 17 June 1899.

¹²⁸ Interview by the Holly Historical Society, tape recording, c. 1957 and 1958, Holly, Colorado.

evolved into revival meetings that included spontaneous sermons and songs. Many of the colonists traveled to Holly for Sunday services, and a very few chose not to participate in services at all. The majority did participate in the weekly meetings conducted by the Army, either out of gratitude and a sense of obligation, or because they enlisted as soldiers of the Army.

A number of Salvation Army officers served as colonists, and occasionally in managerial roles as well. Brothers A. J. (John) and Wallace Davey, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hargreaves, James Burrows, and William Stevens and Augustus Priebe, all were officers in The Salvation Army. Hargreaves relocated to Fort Amity for health reasons, as Colorado's dry temperate climate was known to provide relief from a variety of ailments. Other colonists, like Frank McAbee and A. K. Durand, were closely related to Salvation Army officers. Officers in The Salvation Army were, and continue to be, trained pastors, and thus a strong pastoral influence was always present at Fort Amity, even in the absence of the appointed managers.

The Commander and Consul visited Fort Amity as often as they could, and each visit gave occasion to conduct rousing Salvation meetings. The Commander visited the colony on its fifth anniversary in April 1903. He recorded in his diary that he addressed "a huge concourse of people. About 200 buggies & 1000 present." The following evening he conducted a meeting prior to his departure in which the soldiers "made a splendid dash for souls," and the Commander himself did well in the "hand-to-hand conflict."¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Frederick Booth-Tucker, diary, 16, 17 April 1903, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 20.100.

In October 1903, the Consul concluded a national tour with a visit to Fort Amity. The Commander wrote of the Consul's affection for the colony: "Its interests had ever been very close to her heart, since she had driven across the prairie and helped to select the site."¹³⁰ She spent five days interviewing the colonists and participating in meetings much like the one described by her husband. The Consul's personal secretary, Ensign Hester Dammes, recorded that after a few days, "one of the doctors on the Colony telephoned to Mrs. Holland that he wanted to live a better life and wished to have a talk with the Consul."¹³¹ The latter obliged, and the meeting concluded with the doctor, the Consul, and Mrs. Holland kneeling in prayer on his behalf. The following Sunday, the doctor gave public testimony to his changed life.

At the conclusion of her stay, the Consul requested that Holland accompany her to Chicago to meet with the Commander concerning the colony "with a view to arranging for the various advances which she had planned."¹³² Holland complied with her request, and they boarded the train at 12:30 am on Tuesday, October 28, while the colonists sang, "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." At 5:00 pm, the train had a brief layover in Kansas City, where the Consul took advantage of the opportunity to visit a new Industrial Home just acquired by The Salvation Army. After her visit, she and the Colonel returned to the same car they occupied previously which was now being carried as a "deadhead;" referring to an empty passenger car. The Consul preferred to stay in this car rather than move to the car they were assigned because it was quiet.

¹³⁰ Booth-Tucker, *The Consul: A Sketch of Emma Booth-Tucker*, (New York: The Salvation Army Publishing Department, 1903), 148.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid., 147.

As the train passed through Dean Lake, Missouri at about 9:00 pm, it hit an open switch. The last three cars were de-railed, and the most forward of the three, the car that Colonel Holland and the Consul occupied, was thrown into a steel water tower. Ensign Dammes, who left the Consul and the Colonel to prepare the Consul's berth in a Pullman just moments before the accident, made her way out of the wreckage in time to see the Colonel and the Consul removed from their mangled railcar. The Consul was motionless, and Dammes rushed to her aid. In her report on the accident, Dammes wrote,

At one time I saw that the doctor was going to ask me to press together the edges of the wound in her head and I said "Oh, doctor, don't ask me to hold her head." He replied, "Now you are a Salvation Army lass and you must be brave." Then I said, "Alright, I'll hold it." and I stooped over and pressed the wound together until a gentleman relieved me at the doctor's direction.¹³³

Two hours and fifteen minutes after the accident, the Consul died from a fractured skull and internal injuries.¹³⁴

News of the accident reached the colony through a phone call to Mrs. Holland. She boarded the first train East to be by her husband's side. Details about the accident were excluded from the report in the *Holly Chieftain*, except to state: "The news was a great shock to the people here. There are few women in this country whose death would bring sorrow to a greater number of hearts than the death of consul Booth-Tucker."¹³⁵ According to Prowers County historian Ava Betz, "There was no need to print the details.

¹³³ Ensign Hester Dammes, "Report on Promotion to Glory of the Consul Emma Booth-Tucker – October 28, 1903," undated, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 20.100.

¹³⁴ The following day, the *New York Times* erroneously reported that Colonel Holland had been fatally wounded, but had not yet expired.

¹³⁵ *Holly Chieftain*, 30 October 1903.

The colonists knew what happened, and the *Chieftain's* editors didn't want to cause more grief over the situation."¹³⁶

Colonel Holland recovered, and returned to Fort Amity on November 24th, though he was never his former self. Commander Booth-Tucker was devastated by the loss of his wife, and early in 1904, he relinquished his American command to his sister-in-law, Evangeline Cory Booth. The colonization scheme lost its two greatest proponents, and its most able manager. Colonel Holland retained his position as National Colonization Secretary, with a brief reassignment to New York City to assist in forming a suicide prevention bureau in 1907. The new Commander's indifference towards The Salvation Army's foray into colonization was evidenced by her absence from any of H. Rider Haggard's interviews during his fact-finding mission in 1905. As Evangeline's subordinate, the Colonel was unable to advance the cause of the colonization scheme to the extent he was able to under his former leaders. This marked the beginning of the end of The Salvation Army's grand experiment in colonization.

Still, the colonists at Fort Amity continued their struggle for financial independence through their small farms, and between 1903 and 1905 the colony continued to grow. The origins of the new colonists were more diversified than the earliest days of the colony. Illinois had been replaced as the major source of colonists as newcomers arrived from Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, and the Oklahoma Indian Territory. At its zenith, the colony reached a population of roughly 450 men, women, and children, spread across 1,830 acres. As Colonel Holland noted in his interview with H. Rider Haggard, some colonists left, but others were quick to take their place.

¹³⁶ Ava Betz, telephone interview with the author, 10 June 2009.

Every member of the family contributed to the success of their small farm, and the success of the colony as a whole. The women of the colony filled a variety of vital roles as colonists. They worked alongside their husbands in the fields and tending livestock, as well as managing their households. Most of the families raised small gardens, and the women and children were kept busy in the fall harvesting and canning the garden produce. Women were also responsible for the many social events that took place on the colony, such as birthday parties, and baby and wedding showers. It was not unusual for female officers to present sermons at religious services. The women of the colony also assisted with preparing the dead for burial, as was the case in most rural areas.

The Salvation Army was not adverse to putting women in leadership roles, as was evidenced by Staff Captain Alice Benjamin's position as the head of the Cherry Tree Home, an orphanage that was constructed at Fort Amity in 1901 to replace one of the same name in New Jersey. When the Cherry Tree Home in Colorado was completed, the children from New Jersey's Cherry Tree Home were relocated to the new home with the hope that they too would become colonists. The Salvation Army's goal for the children was not adoption. They wanted to educate them in the practical skills of agriculture. Benjamin traveled throughout Colorado, promoting the worthy purpose of The Cherry Tree Home, and enlisting financial support for the home with much success. Prowers County residents donated furnishings for the home, and a Denver realtor's association donated a milk cow to meet the needs of the children.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 61.

The Cherry Tree Home was short-lived, as the city children did not adapt well to the Colorado Prairie. After The Salvation Army acquired a large estate in Lytton Springs, California, the children were moved to that location. The move was made more lucrative by the State of California as the state shared half of the expenses for the children's maintenance.¹³⁸ There seemed to be a vast difference in the constitutional makeup between the children of the colonists and the transplanted orphans. Alyce Carlson and Eva Holland-Dilley both expressed fond memories of growing up at the colony. Holland-Dilley was asked specifically how she liked growing up there, and her immediate response was: "Loved it!"¹³⁹ Many of the colonist's children grew up on the colony and knew nothing else, whereas the orphans were accustomed to tree-lined city streets and sidewalks, and more humid environs with plenty of rain. The dry climate made trees scarce at Fort Amity, where streets were dirt roads, and sidewalks were an impractical luxury on the Colorado prairie. As it turned out, the New Jersey orphans had no interest in life as farmers at Fort Amity.

From 1905, when the drainage problem was attacked in earnest, to the waning days of the colony in 1909, the colonists labored to succeed at farming. The most successful colonists had occupational skills that were in demand outside of the colony. R. P. Frewing advertised, "Plain and Ornamental Plastering" in the *Holly Chieftain*; D. H. Coker marketed his skills in "House and Sign Painting, Paper Hanging, and Interior Decorating"; Robert and J. H. Newman promoted their carpentry skills; and C. A. Erikson's expertise at boot and shoe repair became well known throughout the area.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Ibid., 61-62.

¹³⁹ Holland-Dilley, interview.

¹⁴⁰ *Holly Chieftain*, 24 March 1899.

His skills in manufacturing and repairing tack for the local cowboys became quite lucrative.

Not long after the colony began, some of the colonists, with the encouragement of The Salvation Army, started small businesses. In short order, McGrath's grocery store and pharmacy opened, and W. J. Carter's new hardware store sold almost any farm implements that Amity's farmers needed. Holland assisted with selecting a building in Coolidge, the next town west of Granada, and had it moved to Fort Amity where it operated as a hotel. "It was considered as quite a prosperous little town," Eva Holland Dilley recalled, "as little towns went, you know."¹⁴¹

As businesses grew, it became apparent that a local bank would enhance the convenience of doing business in Fort Amity, and the Amity Bank was formed. One of the last acts of note on the colony would involve the Amity Bank. July 9, 1908, A. J. Davy, who served as the lone teller and clerk, returned from lunch when a local merchant followed him into the bank stating that he forgot his passbook on his previous visit. Davy failed to notice two strangers, one tall and the other short, lingering outside the bank. After the merchant left, Davy took his place behind the teller's counter. As he turned towards the front of the one-roomed bank, he found himself staring down the barrels of two six-shooters. Henry Starr and Kid Wilson were passing through town after robbing a bank in Tyro, Kansas. The Amity Bank was precariously located away from the other businesses in Fort Amity, and proved to be an easy target. "Open the safe and give us all of the money," the taller of the two, Kid Wilson, demanded of Davy.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Holland Dilley, interview.

¹⁴² Ava Betz, *A Prowers County History*, (Lamar: The Prowers County Historical Society, Big Timbers Museum, 1986), 139-142.

Henry Starr was the nephew – by marriage, he was always quick to point out – of Belle Starr, who was known for her close association with the James and Younger gang. Nicknamed “The Cherokee Badman,” Starr bragged of having stolen more money than the James-Younger and Doolan-Dalton gangs put together. Little is known about Kid Wilson, other than that he had a long association with Henry Starr.¹⁴³

Prowers County historian, Robert Christy, gave a full account of the Amity Bank robbery in a brief history of Fort Amity. Christy wrote that Davy was quite nervous as he was trying to open the safe, and his trembling fingers made it difficult to dial in the combination. After Davy failed to open the safe on his first attempt, Wilson said, “Let’s give him ten seconds, and if the safe isn’t open then, I’ll blow his brains out!” At this, Davy, who was not a big man, got his ire up and he called their bluff, “Take the guns off of me, and I’ll open the safe. Otherwise, go ahead and shoot!” The gunmen backed down, and Davy opened the safe.¹⁴⁴

Starr made it his practice to never ride his horse to his destination because the noise would signal his arrival. The robbers’ horses were tied up near the river, about a mile walk from town. They escorted Davy at gunpoint, and anyone else who happened upon them during their walk through town, to the site where their horses were tied. Ava Betz wrote of Hugh Manning’s account of the robbery in her book. Manning was a boy at the time of the robbery, and he would often tell of Charles Stimson’s reaction to the gunmen.

¹⁴³ “Henry Starr- The Cherokee Badman,” *Legends of America: A Travel Site for the Nostalgic and Historic Minded*, <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-henrystarr.html>, accessed on 12 October 2009.

¹⁴⁴ Robert Christy, *Fort Amity, Colorado*, undated, unpublished, Big Timbers Museum, Lamar, Colorado.

Charles Stimson drove his buckboard to town to fetch a load of coal. Brandishing their guns, the robbers ordered him to get down off his buckboard and join the group for a walk to the river. Stimson replied, "My wife sent me to town for coal. I'm going to get it and go home." Whereupon he clucked to his horses and drove on, leaving the bankrobbers [*sic*] dumbfounded and his fellow Amity citizens, who expected the robbers to shoot him at any second, aghast.¹⁴⁵

Soon after the captives got back to town, news of the robbery spread quickly, and the residents formed a posse. Young Thom Holland joined the posse, much to the distress of his mother who feared that he would be killed.¹⁴⁶ Despite having the benefit of the use of a local rancher's Maxwell automobile, the posse's efforts were unsuccessful.

Sometime during the robbery, Kid Wilson said that he wanted to find Colonel Holland and kill him, just to make a statement: though what that statement might have been is open to interpretation. Starr prevented Wilson from acting on his desire, and the Colonel was made aware of that fact. After the Amity robbery, Wilson and Starr parted ways, and Wilson was never heard from again. Starr, on the other hand, was apprehended in Arizona, and was returned to Prowers County, where he plead guilty to the Amity Bank robbery, and was sentenced to twenty-five years in the Colorado State Penitentiary. Colonel Holland appeared at Starr's sentencing as a character witness, due to Starr's intervention on Wilson's plan to kill him.¹⁴⁷ Colonel Holland's request for leniency must have carried some weight, because Starr was paroled after serving only five years of his twenty-five year sentence.

¹⁴⁵ Betz, *A Prowers County History*, 139.

¹⁴⁶ Holland-Dilley, interview.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, During the interview, Mrs. Holland-Dilley and the interviewers confused the roles of the men in the plan to kill her father. She stated that it was Wilson who prevented the killing. She also noted that her father testified at his sentencing, which would clearly indicate that it was Starr who prevented the killing, since Wilson was never apprehended.

After 1905, the focus of The Salvation Army shifted from increasing the number of colonists to maintaining the colonists that they had. The problems with the soil had become well known, and it was nearly impossible to attract new people to the colony. Holland was frustrated that the colonists were unable to provide for themselves solely on their land, and were forced to supplement their incomes by working in nearby mines, on the construction of nearby reservoirs, or by falling back on the trades that they left behind for a hope of a better life in agriculture. In many cases, they did not make enough to meet their obligations to The Salvation Army. Major Ferris, whose frustrations with the colonists were well documented, recognized the necessity of leniency towards the delinquent account holders: "We cannot afford to fire them off the Colony, we cannot afford to press the screws too hard, now that we have them: and we cannot get over the fact that we are their Moses and must bring them safely through their difficulties unto the promised land, with a good unencumbered title."¹⁴⁸ Ferris was adamant though, that the colonists should meet their obligations in due course. The Salvation Army, through its lease agreement with each colonist, was entitled to up to half of each crop in payment of any amount that the individual colonist might be in arrears, but there is no record of this clause being enforced.

By 1909, The Salvation Army bowed to the reality of the situation at Fort Amity. Assistance was offered to those colonists who wanted to relocate, and the Army gave them credit for improvements made to their properties, which was applied towards their debt. In a few of the cases, the amount allowed for improvements completely satisfied their obligations, no doubt due to The Salvation Army's generous allowances. Most of

¹⁴⁸ Ferris to Holland, 21 July 1905, New York, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 2.15.

the colonists who left were not able to meet their obligations, and no real effort was made to collect from them.

The experience of the colonists at Fort Amity abounded in hope in the beginning, and ultimately ended in disappointment. The colonists lamented that they could not achieve the dream of self-sufficiency. The Salvation Army was disappointed that the colonization scheme was not as practical or affordable as they once envisioned. Neither could say that they were disappointed in the other. Both parties to the plan put forth their best effort, and for that, each was grateful to the other. Advances in agricultural practices and technology would soon tame and subdue the Colorado prairie, but those advances came too late for The Salvation Army, and the people of Fort Amity.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The Failure of A Landless Man to a Manless Land

The Salvation Army's experiment on behalf of the working poor embraced the notion of the virtue of the yeoman farmer. This notion was not new to America. From the earliest days of the United States, farming was promoted by men like Thomas Jefferson and Daniel Webster as the occupation that was central to the future social, political, and economic success of America. Jefferson surmised, "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever He had a chosen people, whose breasts He has made his peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue."¹⁴⁹ Others, like Alexander Hamilton and his Federalist allies, believed that the strength of the nation rested on the promotion of industry and commerce. The conflict between city industry and rural agriculture wound its way through the halls of Congress, the nation's banks, and the domestic and international marketplace. As the industrial revolution of the late 19th century progressed, evidence of this conflict was most visible in America's largest cities, where urban populations were most vulnerable to unchecked capitalism.

Like Jefferson, General William Booth advocated the social benefits of agricultural pursuits, and subsequently he and his daughter and son-in-law, Emma and

¹⁴⁹ *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson: Including the Autobiography, the Declaration of Independence and His Public and Private Letters*, Adrienne Koch and William Peden eds. (New York: The Modern Library, 2004), 259.

Frederick Booth-Tucker respectively, saw the cure for the exploited poor in a back-to-the-land philosophy. Booth believed that urban populations grew during times of economic distress as yeoman farmers left their failing farms to seek economic opportunities in large cities. An abundance of labor drove wages down, which in turn caused the working poor to be caught in a cycle of perpetual poverty because they did not have access to the capital necessary to escape their circumstances. The Salvation Army sought to break the cycle by providing the necessary capital to the worthy poor, often without any contribution from the recipient. Booth and his Army offered a utopian solution to one of history's oldest social problems.

As a utopian movement, The Salvation Army's experiment is difficult to catalogue into a category with other efforts of its kind. Robert S. Fogarty, in his book, *All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860 – 1914*, studied 125 utopian communities, and Fort Amity was among them. Fogarty listed three categories that reflected the leadership and style of these communities: charismatic perfectionists, political pragmatists, and cooperative colonists.¹⁵⁰ Elements of all three groups appeared in The Salvation Army's colonization scheme. Fogarty classified Fort Amity among the cooperative colonists.

Fogarty defined the charismatic nature of charismatic perfectionists as being based either on "the personal sanctity of the membership as a whole or on the personal sanctity, special gifts, or powers of a forceful leader." They believed that "the perfect life could be attained within the confines of a community."¹⁵¹ Fogarty further stated that

¹⁵⁰ Robert S. Fogarty, *All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860 – 1914* (New York: Lexington Books, 2003), 16-18.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

these communities met certain religious needs, and usually operated in either spiritualist or millennialist traditions. The Methodist roots of The Salvation Army certainly point to a millennialist doctrine, and fall in line with Fogarty's definition. Though the perfect life was never a goal of the Army's colonization scheme, an improved life certainly was.

Colonel Thomas Holland and the Booth-Tuckers were indeed charismatic individuals. Clark C. Spence described Commander Booth-Tucker as a man who "had that human touch that enabled him to don a cowboy hat and become one of his people in the West or to pose rustically for an artist as 'The Man Behind the Plow.'" The Consul was tall and graceful with a quick wit, and was as forceful as she was charming. Someone once described her as a "feminine spiritual Bismarck."¹⁵² Holland, because of his nearly constant contact with the colonists, was perhaps the most influential and charismatic of the three. A writer for the *War Cry* wrote of Holland, "In the absence of positive information, one may assume the Colonel was born on a sunshiny day, and has never got over the fact."¹⁵³ His daughter, Eva, spoke of Holland's business acumen, and his warm personality.¹⁵⁴ These three individuals were the driving force behind The Salvation Army's colonization program in the U.S. Without them, the colonization plan would have never begun in the U.S., nor would it have had any hope of success.

The best evidence of the charismatic perfectionist nature of The Salvation Army's colonization scheme may be found in its demise. Marie Antalek wrote: "The Salvation Army had the leadership with initiative and determination and dedication to plant the colonies." The 1903 train accident that took the life of the Consul and injured Colonel

¹⁵² Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 17.

¹⁵³ "Colonel Thomas Holland, National Colonization Secretary," *The War Cry* (New York), May 21, 1904, 3.

¹⁵⁴ Holland-Dilley, interview.

Holland was devastating to the colonization plan. Holland never fully recovered from his physical and emotional injuries. Commander Booth-Tucker was overcome with grief, and returned to England in 1904 with his six children. He relinquished his American command to his sister-in-law, Evangeline Booth. Antalek wrote, “The new leaders did not take as much interest in the colonies, and with the instigators of the program and its guiding, driving force missing, the program was weakened.”¹⁵⁵ Spence wrote, “If the Army was correct in its belief that one of its most important contributions to the cause of colonization was leadership, then the accidental death of Consul Emma Booth-Tucker may have dealt the crippling blow to Fort Amity.”¹⁵⁶ There were many factors that led to Fort Amity’s failure, but it is clear that both of these authors agreed that the loss of leadership was paramount.

Fogarty could have just as easily placed Fort Amity with political pragmatists. Political pragmatists, Fogarty wrote, “...consisted of political and social radicals who were seeking an arena within which to test their principles and publicize their ideals.”¹⁵⁷ General Booth wrote specifically of testing his *scheme* in the public arena.

*Is it not worthy at least of being tried as an experiment? Tens of thousands of pounds are yearly spent in “trying” for minerals, boring for coals, sinking for water. ... Should these adventurers fail in their varied operations...they will not complain; because they have at least attempted the accomplishment of that which they felt ought to be done.*¹⁵⁸

Booth-Tucker’s failed effort to transform The Salvation Army’s colonization scheme into public policy through S. 5126 in 1904 clearly illustrates Fogarty’s political pragmatism.

¹⁵⁵ Antalek, “The Amity Colony,” 86.

¹⁵⁶ Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 114.

¹⁵⁷ Fogarty, *All Things New*, 18.

¹⁵⁸ Booth, *In Darkest England*, 281-282.

Fogarty overstated the cooperative element of The Salvation Army's colonization plan by categorizing Fort Amity with cooperative colonizers. Fogarty wrote that cooperative colonizers "believed that secular salvation could be attained by establishing groups in new settlements and that by collectively assuming responsibility for the financial future of their communities, the colonists would improve both their moral and their economic conditions."¹⁵⁹ In 1898, the first year of the colony, Fort Amity was cooperative in nature out of necessity, but the overall purpose of The Salvation Army was to offer an opportunity for financial independence to the colonists. "While cooperative methods prevail, to the great advantage of all," wrote Albert Shaw in 1902, "this neighborhood must not be confounded with communistic enterprises; for it rests upon the very opposite principle. Each member of the community is an independent land owner."¹⁶⁰ The only other notion of cooperation attributable to the colonists would be the founding principle of temperance, though it has been demonstrated that not all of the colonists were cooperative on that matter.

What distinguished The Salvation Army's efforts from other utopian movements was its benevolence. Most other utopian experiments required a financial commitment on the part of colonists. Union Colony, for instance, required an initial membership fee of \$155.¹⁶¹ The poverty of The Salvation Army's prospective colonists made it nearly impossible to require them to make an initial financial investment. Had such an investment been required, the purpose of the colonization scheme would have been defeated.

¹⁵⁹ Fogarty, *All Things New*, 16.

¹⁶⁰ Shaw, *A Successful Farm Colony*, 564-565.

¹⁶¹ Fogarty, *All Things New*, 57

The *noblesse oblige* of General Booth and his Salvation Army was not original.

According to Norman H. Murdoch,

Booth acknowledged the influence of American reformers Edward Bellamy and Henry George, but he particularly noted the ideas of three British reformers, none of whom shared his Wesleyan-evangelical religious persuasion: Count Rumford, E. T. Craig, and the Earl of Meath.¹⁶²

Each of these reformers contributed different elements to Booth's approach to relieving the poverty stricken from their entrenched positions in life.

Count Rumford was an American who remained loyal to the British Crown during the Revolutionary War. At the conclusion of the war, the Count returned to England, and then moved on to Bavaria where he was *aid-de-camp* to the Prince-electoral Karl Theodor. While in the service of the Prince-electoral, Count Rumford was charged with establishing workhouses for the poor, or Houses of Industry, where he compelled beggars to work. Rumford found that kindness, justice, clean orderly surroundings, and inexpensive provisions produced a population of hard workers. Best of all for Booth, Rumford's Houses of Industry were self-supporting. Booth saw the merits of Rumford's militaristic approach, and agreed that the poor needed direction from a strong hand. Booth would organize his city colony workshops accordingly.¹⁶³

Reginald Brabazon, the 12th Earl of Meath, accused Booth of stealing his plan of social reform. Brabazon presided over a rival organization formed in the wake of Booth's Salvation Army, aptly named, the Church Army. The Church Army was associated with the Church of England, and was founded by Wilson Carlile, a priest in

¹⁶² Norman H. Murdoch, "Sources of Booth's Reforming Ideas," *Christian History* 9, no. 2 (1990): 36. *History Reference Center*, EBSCO host (accessed May 30, 2009).

¹⁶³ Ibid.

the Anglican Church. Brabazon held out hopes of uniting The Salvation Army and the Church Army under the auspices of the Church of England. In March of 1890, just seven months before *In Darkest England* was released in October of that same year, the Church Army produced a pamphlet entitled, “Our Tramps,” in which he presented a plan for a three-fold scheme of city, farm, and overseas colonies. Edgar Rowan related the Church Army’s response to *In Darkest England* in his book, *Wilson Carlile And the Church Army*.

We are forced to the conclusion that the two devoted men, agonising [*sic*] over the miseries of the poor, and trusting prayerfully in God for help in any undertaking, arrived at the same conclusion. Where some may see coincidence, others of us see God.¹⁶⁴

While the Church Army was willing to overlook Booth’s transgression, it is clear that Meath was less magnanimous. Norman Murdoch writes, “He [Brabazon] wrote in 1904 that a ‘great religious Nonconformist leader’ – almost certainly Booth – had not mentioned twenty-two German labor colonies in existence in 1890. Was this due to ignorance or to a desire to ‘claim credit for an idea which was not novel?’”¹⁶⁵ Brabazon certainly believed the later.

For his part, General Booth actually did acknowledge that there was no novelty in his approach. “Once more let me say, I claim no patent rights in any part of this Scheme. Indeed, I do not know what in it is original and what is not. Since formulating some of the plans, which I had thought were new under the sun, I have discovered that they have been already tried in different parts of the world, and that with great promise.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ Edgar Rowan, *Wilson Carlile and the Church Army*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1905), 263. <http://www.archive.org/details/wilsoncarlilechu00rowarich> (accessed Jan. 31, 2010).

¹⁶⁵ Murdoch, “Sources,” 36.

¹⁶⁶ Booth, *In Darkest England*, 270.

Booth's view was that resolving the problems associated with poverty was much more important than who got credit for resolving them.

E. T. Craig was a disciple of Robert Owen, and was responsible for establishing an agricultural cooperative experiment at Ralahine, Ireland in 1831. Craig's influence on Booth's plan was the prohibition of alcohol and tobacco at Ralahine.¹⁶⁷

Robert Owen, presently considered by many to be the "Father of British Socialism," put into practice a scheme much like that of General Booth some seventy years earlier in 1813, at his New Lanark cotton mill roughly thirty miles outside of Glasgow. The early years of the nineteenth-century were shaped by the convergence of three historically significant but distinct eras. The aftermath of the French Revolution spawned a *zeitgeist* predisposed to political and social change. The burgeoning Industrial Revolution gave rise to urbanization and a new socio-economic class known as the *bourgeoisie*. Lastly, the Romantic Movement redefined the fundamental ways in which people in Western cultures thought about themselves and about their world. The world was no longer viewed as subject solely to divine intervention or aristocratic guile, but as a place of opportunity where society could be lifted by the intellect of gifted individuals. Utopian thinkers, like Robert Owen, were the product of this convergence.

Owen was atypical among mill owners of his day. He was concerned about the well being of his workforce. "Instead of sticking to his grindstone and deriving satisfaction from his prosperity, Owen began to absorb himself more and more in the moral and economic condition of his workers and in plans for their education."¹⁶⁸ Owen

¹⁶⁷ Murdoch, "Sources," 36.

¹⁶⁸ Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979), 678.

was revolutionary in the practice of managing his workers. He restricted the workday to 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours, would not allow children under the age of ten to work in the mills - Owen would have preferred to set the limit at twelve, but made the concession to satisfy his business partners – and constructed a great hall where his employees could attend concerts and dances. Despite the lavish expenses he poured out on his employees, his mill operated at a profit and became an object of curiosity for visiting royalty and businessmen.

The success of his business led him to believe that he could construct a model for the whole of society. In March of 1817, Owen presented his *Report to the Committee of the Association for the Relief of the Manufacturing and Labouring Poor*, in which he laid out his plan for “...the formation of self-sustaining communities of unemployed workers, victims of technological advances and prey to vice and misery.”¹⁶⁹ Owen premised his plan on the theory that the indigent were products of their environment, and thus, by removing them from their corrupt situations, they would be persuaded by reason to abandon vice and immorality in favor of a more ordered society. Owen proposed to create quite sophisticated communal enclaves consisting of not more than 1200 people deemed to be among the meritorious poor, with manufacturing facilities near the living quarters, and farms in the outlying areas of the community. Owen referred to these enclaves as “villages of unity and mutual cooperation,” where they were, “set in remote places uncorrupted by the prevalent evils of working-class society, [and] would afford the philanthropic projector an opportunity to remold the poor as if they were children.”¹⁷⁰

Owen’s remolding took place through improved working and living conditions, education

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 679.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 680.

for the worker's children, and recreational opportunities afforded by increased leisure time. Owen believed that any rational being would be willing to give up vice and corruption in favor of these circumstances.

Owen's plan evolved into a socialist philosophy known as Owenism. His concept of equality was paramount to his philosophy. He surmised that the basic foundation of society – marriage and the family – was the root cause of society's ills by fostering greed through private property and the subjugation of women. He believed that women were as intellectually capable as men, but were held back by the irrational restrictions placed upon them by the confines of the "old immoral world."¹⁷¹ Owen advocated intellectual, economic, and social equality for women as well as men, and he provided for all three by educating young girls as well as boys, fostering financial independence for women, and encouraging women to adopt fashions more akin to their male counterparts.

A second precept for Owenism was an aversion to organized religion. Owen described religion as a "Great Error." The error, as Owen interpreted it, was that acts of good and evil were ascribed to the individual and their choice to either obey or disobey God. Owen argued that because mankind was a product of his environment he could not be held individually accountable for his actions, whether good or bad. "Owen presents the unusual spectacle of a mill owner who, instead of inveighing against the shiftlessness, drunkenness, sexual immorality of workers, finds them innocent victims of circumstance."¹⁷² This precept nullifies the notion of original sin. Owen explained his

¹⁷¹ Carol A. Kolmerten, "Unconscious Sexual Stereotyping in Utopia: A sample from the New Harmony Gazette, 1825-1827," in *Utopias: the American Experience*, Gairdner B. Moment and Otto F. Kraushaar, eds. (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1980), 74.

¹⁷² Manuel and Manuel, *Utopian Thought*, 682.

position in *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race; or, the Coming change from Irrationality to Rationality*.

It is a law of nature, obvious to our senses, that the internal and external character of all that have life upon the earth, is formed *for* them and not *by* them; that, in accordance with this law, the internal and external character of man is formed *for* him and *not by* him, as hitherto most erroneously imagined; and, therefore, he cannot have merit or demerit, or deserve praise or blame, reward or punishment, in this life, or in any future state of existence.¹⁷³

Owen believed mankind was inherently rational and loving, and that, “Men’s desires could be temperate if they were shown the reason for temperance.”¹⁷⁴ Owen surmised that once this truth was embraced, mankind would behave more benevolently towards his brother in order to foster the best possible environment for the individual, and society would benefit as a whole.

In 1824, Owen brought his philosophy and idealism to America, and set about constructing a utopian society at New Harmony, Indiana. New Harmony was a ready-made colony. George Rapp, the leader of the Harmony Society, whose members were known as Rappites, founded the cooperative colony named Harmony. Owen purchased the existing 180 buildings of Harmony and the surrounding 20,000 acres from the Harmonists when Rapp and his followers relocated to Pennsylvania. Owen renamed the colony New Harmony, and then traveled to New York, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. on lecture tours in order to recruit colonists for his utopian experiment where cooperative and temperate living would be pursued for the common good of its inhabitants.

New Harmony was beset with problems almost from its inception. Membership into the community was open to anyone who consented to sign the foundational

¹⁷³ Ibid., 683.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 684.

constitution for the Community of Equality without regard for the trades necessary to ensure the perpetuity of the community. As a consequence, tradesmen were far outnumbered by intellectuals, and the physical needs of the community suffered. Perhaps of greater consequence was the fact that Owen had not calculated what historian Samuel P. Huntington defined as “The American Creed.” The “Creed,” as Huntington defined it, holds to the principles of, “...liberty, equality, individualism, representative government, and private property.”¹⁷⁵ Of these, individualism, and private property were in direct conflict with Owen’s view of his utopian society.

Josiah Warren, purportedly America’s first anarchist, and one of New Harmony’s first inhabitants, reflected on the causes of New Harmony’s failure.

We had assured ourselves of our unanimous devotedness to the cause and expected unanimity of thought and action: but instead of this we met diversity of opinions, expedients and counteraction entirely beyond any thing we had just left behind us in common society: and the more we desired and called for “union” the more this diversity seemed to be developed: and instead of that harmonious co-operative we had expected, we found more antagonisms than we had been accustomed to in common life.¹⁷⁶

According to Ann Caldwell Butler, Warren asserted that there were differing opinions on even the most rudimentary precepts of the community. “Equality of labor meant for some that all should take equal turns in each of the different forms of labor, especially the most disagreeable. Others said that equality of labor simply meant equal amounts of time ‘employed in the service of the connected interest.’”¹⁷⁷ Eventually, differing philosophies led to splinter organizations, one of which counted two of Owen’s sons -

¹⁷⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 41.

¹⁷⁶ Ann Caldwell Butler, “Josiah Warren and the Sovereignty of the Individual,” *The Journal of Libertarian Studies*, no. 4 (fall 1980): 438.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Robert Dale, and William - among its leaders. Within two years, Owen's utopian experiment failed, and Owen returned to his native Scotland.

There is no evidence to suggest that General Booth had any intention to mimic Robert Owen's plan for improving the lot of the downtrodden. Nevertheless, the similarities are remarkable. Like Owen, Booth recognized that many of London's indigent population were victims of circumstance and products of their environment. Booth revealed his predisposition to Owenism when he wrote, "Favourable [*sic*] circumstances will not change a man's heart or transform his nature, but unpropitious circumstances may render it absolutely impossible for him to escape, no matter how he may desire to extricate himself."¹⁷⁸ Booth believed, as Owen did, that as long as the indigent remained in their inhospitable circumstances, there was little hope for reform. The main motivation for Booth's farm colonies was to offer the meritorious poor an opportunity to escape from those circumstances into a controlled environment isolated from the influences of those who would prey upon them. But the similarities did not end there.

As implausible as it may seem, General Booth's views on organized religion bore resemblance to those of Owen. According to the biography of Robert Owen found on the web site dedicated to New Harmony by the University of Southern Indiana, "He was not necessarily an atheist; his quarrel was with the established church. What he objected to was the negative effect of religion on man: 'By the errors of these systems, he has been made a weak, imbecile animal; a furious bigot and fanatic; or a miserable

¹⁷⁸ Booth, *In Darkest England*, 86.

hypocrite....”¹⁷⁹ Owen’s views on religion and the church were not adversarial, but were more indifferent in nature.

Even though The Salvation Army was a religious organization, Booth found the organizational structure of the church too restrictive and interested in its own preservation rather than focusing on its evangelistic mission of saving souls for the glory of God. From his earliest days in the ministry, Booth preferred the street corner to the pulpit. This revivalist tendency brought him into conflict with the leadership of the Independent Methodist Connexion, the separatist Methodist denomination that he was associated with more by circumstance than by choice. Booth resigned from the “Connexion” in 1862 after having been rebuffed in his numerous requests to resume his evangelistic work. Booth’s online biography maintained by the U.S. Southern Territory of The Salvation Army, offers the following assessment of Booth’s resignation.

In this way William Booth was saved from the coils of a somewhat narrow ecclesiasticism, and, being driven out of a particular Church, was driven towards his appointed destiny. He was not to serve one Church, but all the Churches; he was not to labour in one country, but in all countries.¹⁸⁰

Booth was adamant that the trappings of church authority would not intrude on the workings of The Salvation Army, and more specifically, on the colonization plan. Colonists were chosen based upon their ability to succeed in the colonies with no consideration as to their faith. Some colonists were Salvationists, but among them were Jews, Catholics, and atheists. Booth insisted that colonists not be compelled to participate in the regular church activities conducted at the colonies. “The man who

¹⁷⁹ “Robert Owen and the Owen/Maclure Experiment” (Historic New Harmony), www.usi.edu/hnh/owenexperiment.asp (accessed Dec. 16, 2009).

¹⁸⁰ “The Life of General William Booth,” ch. 19, www.salvationarmysouth.org/both/contents.htm (accessed Jan. 9, 2010).

professes to love and serve God will be helped because of such profession, and the man who does not will be helped in the hope that he will, sooner or later, in gratitude to God, do the same; but there will be no melancholy miserymaking [*sic*] for any.”¹⁸¹ If they participated, it would be of their own volition.

As much as The Salvation Army practiced the social reforms prescribed by Robert Owen by coincidence, they emulated the work of Nathan C. Meeker at Union Colony in Colorado deliberately. According to Spence, Booth-Tucker met with Governor Alva Adams at a “large public meeting” in which he reminded the audience “of the heritage of earlier colonies at Greeley and Colorado Springs.”¹⁸² The Commander was particularly keen on the moral qualities prescribed for the colonists of Union Colony. Horace Greeley endorsed Meeker’s colony plan in *The New York Tribune*, and commented on the attributes he thought necessary for the successful execution of Union Colony by writing “...we advise temperate, moral, industrious, intelligent men, who would like to make homes in the far west, to read his [Meeker] letter herewith published; and should his plan suit them, write to him...on the subject.”¹⁸³ Meeker further commented, “One thing more is equally important: happiness, wealth, and the glory of a state spring from the family, and it should be an aim and a high ambition to preserve the family pure in all its relations....”¹⁸⁴ Frederick Booth-Tucker was in complete accord with both Meeker and Greeley.

¹⁸¹ Booth, *In Darkest England*, 110.

¹⁸² Spence, *The Salvation Army Farm Colonies*, 22.

¹⁸³ David Boyd, A.M. *A History: Greeley and The Union Colony of Colorado* (Greeley: The Greeley Tribune Press, 1890), 35.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

Temperance was important enough to the cause of The Salvation Army's plan that they included the following clause in all deeds associated with the land acquired for Fort Amity.

1st:--That intoxicating liquors shall never be manufactured, sold or otherwise disposed of as a beverage, on said premises, and that said premises shall not be used for a saloon or any immoral purpose whatever; and in case this condition shall be broken, by or with the consent of said party of the second part, or her heirs or assigns, said deed shall become null and void, and title to said premises shall revert to party of the first part.¹⁸⁵

This clause has existed in perpetuity on all present deeds to land formerly owned by The Salvation Army in Prowers County, Colorado. In fact, other like-minded individuals throughout the county adopted this clause verbatim into their own warrantee deeds.

Meeker's point on recruiting families was equally important to Booth-Tucker. The Commander held the view that the family was under attack from economic and social pressures, and that this attack was destructive not only to families, but to the nation as a whole. "All this I call 'domicide.' It is the destruction of the home. It is the discouragement of home making. Destroy the family unit and you destroy the nation. 'Domicide' is to the nation what homicide is to the individual."¹⁸⁶ Booth-Tucker went on to explain, "Universities and departments of Government devote years and volumes to the study of the minutest details of agriculture, arboriculture, horticulture; but they never think of 'domiculture.' The preservation of the American forest is a matter of greater

¹⁸⁵ Deed of Trust, "Salvation Army to Ada M. Stimson," Guarantee Trust Co. Lamar, Colorado, Reception no. 19243, Book 48, pg. 328.

¹⁸⁶ "An Experiment in 'Domiculture,'" The Salvation Army's Colonies in California, Colorado, and Ohio" *The New York Times*, Sunday, September 8, 1901, sec. Magazine Supplement, p. SM10.

moment, apparently, than the preservation of the American family.”¹⁸⁷ Booth-Tucker wrote that his experiment in ‘domiculture’ was to unite “unemployed land, unemployed labor, and unemployed capital,” in an effort to encourage the building of American families while simultaneously relieving the problem of urban poverty.¹⁸⁸

There also were practical reasons for recruiting families. Spence pointed out that the unmarried poor could readily be taken care of in urban settings, and therefore, the Army had the view that it would be a mistake to colonize single men.¹⁸⁹ “The single man is too much like a rolling stone,” according to Booth-Tucker; “very often he is here today, and gone to-morrow.”¹⁹⁰ The Army encouraged large families to take part in their colonies, and indeed one family, the Childs family, came from Chicago to Fort Amity with nine children.

There were experiential reasons to emulate Greeley aside from the philosophical compatibilities. Meeker’s successful venture into irrigated agriculture on the arid Colorado plains was widely celebrated, and The Salvation Army - specifically Commander Booth-Tucker – recognized that the proven success of Greeley was cause for optimism for their own agricultural colonization plans. Irrigation was still in its experimental stage in American agriculture at the turn of the twentieth-century. Greeley was at the vanguard of irrigation experiments, and the colonists there seemed to have found the proper combination of water supply, crop selection, transportation, and market demand that gave rise to numerous other agricultural communities throughout Northern Colorado and the United States.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Spence, *The Salvation Army Farm Colonies*, 36.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

In an article for *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, Richard T. Ely wrote, "The best methods both of irrigation and of cultivation, were sought out through numberless experiments, until Greeley and its potatoes grew famous together...Boulder, Longmont, Loveland, and Fort Collins were the outgrowth of this success, and each adopted many of the ideas and tendencies of the parent colony."¹⁹¹ Fort Amity's proximity to an established irrigation canal on its northern border, the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway on its southern border, and rich bottomland soil in between emulated Greeley in a number of ways, and seemed to be the formula for agricultural success.

The Salvation Army gained broad vocal support for their colonization plan. Spence noted, "More than once, Booth-Tucker reported that men of influence (and affluence) had made it clear that the success of Amity or Romie was the key to much larger contributions."¹⁹² These "men of influence and affluence" were Progressives who believed that "...this idea would enrich the laborer, better the condition of the manufacturer, and advance the whole nation commercially, morally and intellectually."¹⁹³ Those contributions would never materialize because of the salinization problems at Fort Amity. Contributors recognized that the success of the colony depended on returning the soil back to its original production levels.

The efforts of The Salvation Army towards that end were indeed fruitful, but only after the Army abandoned its efforts there. According to Terry Howland, a descendent of one of the colonists and the current Superintendent of the Amity Mutual Irrigation Company in Holly, Colorado, the tile drainage system installed by The Salvation Army

¹⁹¹ Richard T. Ely, "A Study of a 'Decreed' Town," *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, February 1903, 396.

¹⁹² Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 113.

¹⁹³ *The War Cry*, 29 October 1904, 11.

continues to operate today, and, though production on the ground is not as high as in other parts of the Arkansas River Valley, its yields are profitable.¹⁹⁴

Success would elude The Salvation Army and the Fort Amity colonists. The fate of The Salvation Army's colonization program rested upon its own lofty goals. General Booth sought to offer the world a solution to the great social problem of poverty. Commander Booth-Tucker posited that if the monies annually spent on "charitable objects" – a sum he supposed to be \$50 million – were to be redirected to irrigated agricultural colonies like Fort Amity, then five million people could be relocated onto 20 million acres and produce a collective annual income of \$400 million.¹⁹⁵

By comparison, Fort Amity was comprised of 1,830 acres, and reached a peak population of 450 by 1903. There is no record of the annual income of the colonists aside from Commander Booth-Tucker's well intentioned but inflated figures. However, based upon Colonel Holland's lament that the colonists could not support themselves solely on the production from their small farms, suffice it to say that the colony never approached the level of self-sufficiency that Commander Booth-Tucker had hoped. As a small-scale experiment of the broader scheme, Fort Amity was a failure.

There are a number of reasons for the failure of Fort Amity. Among them was a lack of capital; a lack of understanding of irrigation practices, chiefly the need for proper drainage to prevent salinization of the soil; and the loss of leadership after Consul Booth-Tucker's death. The most compelling reason for the demise of Fort Amity is found in Commissioner W.A. Richards' evaluation of the Booth-Tucker Bill, S 5126, which was

¹⁹⁴ Terry Howland, interview by author, Holly, Colorado, 12 June 2009.

¹⁹⁵ "To Colonize City Poor: Booth-Tucker Launches Plan to Settle Vast Irrigation Domain," *The New York Times*, 17 September, 1903.

in essence the colonization scheme put into practice by The Salvation Army. The Army's plan, bolstered by the exaggerated promise of high yield production through irrigation, was to assist as many people possible on the least amount of land possible. Richards pointed out that where Booth-Tucker proposed to limit the amount of land distributed to colonists to a maximum of 80 acres, the federal government was distributing 160 acres through the existing Homestead Act. Fort Amity's farm plots were too small to support a family, and consequently, there was no hope of achieving the ultimate goal of relieving urban poverty with The Salvation Army's plan. As a result, the people at Fort Amity were forced to struggle for subsistence on their small farms rather than struggle as they had in the cities that they came from.

After Emma Booth-Tucker died, The Salvation Army seemed to lose its zeal for the colonization plan. Clark C. Spence wrote that Commander Booth-Tucker spoke in Carnegie Hall on his favorite topic, "The Landless Man to the Manless Land," in June of 1904, "...but the fire seemed to have gone out of his work."¹⁹⁶ Only four people in the upper echelons of The Salvation Army ever had that fire; General Booth, Frederick and Emma Booth-Tucker, and Colonel Holland. The rest of the Booth family demonstrated no interest in colonizing urban poor people. Emma's brother, Herbert, wrote of the colonization scheme from his post in Collie, Western Australia, "I am still not very much struck on it... Sometimes I am very perplexed about the whole business. It seems to me human nature is so ungrateful – the more you do the more you may in these respects, and in a good many others."¹⁹⁷ And so it was for the rest of the Booth family. Evangeline

¹⁹⁶ Spence, *The Salvation Army*, 115.

¹⁹⁷ Herbert Booth to Frederick Booth-Tucker, 1 June 1902, Collie, Western Australia, SANA, Arlington, Virginia, RG 20.100.

Cory Booth, Frederick's successor in America, showed little interest other than to liquidate the Army's holdings at Fort Amity. Colonel Holland's failing health, and lack of support from his Commander, left him ineffective where he had once been the driving force behind the day-to-day operations of the colonization program.

All that remains of Fort Amity is the Mount Hope Cemetery, the remnants of Frank McAbee's limestone quarry, and what may be a wall from one of the colonist's homes that has been built around a number of times through the years. The legacy of Fort Amity for The Salvation Army is lost in the larger mission of the corps. Fort Amity and the colonization scheme is but one of many programs throughout the history of The Salvation Army put forward on behalf of the impoverished. According to Colonel Ray Peacock, a past commander of the Intermountain Division of The Salvation Army in Denver, the Army wastes little time in lamenting over its failed programs. "If one of our programs doesn't work, we'll try another," Peacock said.¹⁹⁸ The Salvation Army is a forward-looking organization, and is in no way anchored to its past. Consequently, the colonization plan is relegated to no more than a footnote in the history of the Corps. General Booth's *In Darkest England* plan incorporated other plans that have been more successful in assisting the poor, such as second-hand stores, industrial workingmen's homes, and women's shelters. After the failure of the colonization scheme, The Salvation Army turned away from any utopian notion of ridding the world of poverty. Instead, they returned to their roots in the battle of mitigating the effects of poverty on the poor.

¹⁹⁸ Ray Peacock, interview by author, Golden, Colorado, 7 May 2009.

While The Salvation Army failed in its efforts to rid the world of poverty, the Progressive Era was marked by people who recognized corruption and exploitation, and they formed ranks to fight against the political, social, and economic conditions that victimized the American lower and middle classes. Progressive reformers effected social and political changes that were a lasting legacy to the era. While a select few did benefit from The Salvation Army's efforts, there were no monumental shifts in history, no significant social impacts, and no lasting effects on poverty attributed to The Salvation Army's efforts to colonize the urban poor.

The reason The Salvation Army is not counted among noted Progressive reformers is that, unlike their counterparts, they acted independently. As Progressives found common ground and political success on matters regarding children, The Salvation Army remained outside the Progressive fold. "The Salvation Army," wrote Daphne Spain, "focused less on neighborhood reform and more on rescuing individuals."¹⁹⁹ As a religious organization, they were more concerned with the salvation of individual souls than with railroad and labor reform, municipal improvements in infrastructure and parks, or eradicating disease through improved sanitary conditions in the slums.

General Booth maintained that his purpose in the colonization scheme was the salvation of men's souls. Booth wrote in the Preface of *In Darkest England*, "I have no intention to depart in the smallest degree from the main principles on which I have acted in the past. My only hope for the permanent deliverance of mankind from misery...is the regeneration or remaking of the individual by the power of the Holy Ghost through Jesus

¹⁹⁹ Spain, *How Women Saved*, 89.

Christ.”²⁰⁰ Edward H. McKinley reinforced this notion when he wrote, “If it were easier for a man to be saved outside of the crowded city with its evil influences, then removing him from the city, rejuvenating him in the country, and capturing him for Jesus would hasten the day when cities and evil influences would cease altogether.” McKinley concluded, “The goal was escape and salvation, not reform.”²⁰¹ This contradicts Booth’s own musings when he intimated “I propose to devote the bulk of this volume to setting forth what can practically be done with one of the most pressing parts of the problem, namely, that relating to those who are out of work, and who, as the result, are more or less destitute.”²⁰²

Booth, and his daughter and son-in-law, earnestly believed that the colonization plan was a practical solution to urban poverty. Fort Amity, and the other two American colonies, was an effort to prove their theory to the rest of the world. To assert that reform was not the goal of Booth’s scheme would be to ignore the facts, and Booth’s own writing. The Booth-Tucker Bill; Haggard’s commission to study the colonies for Parliament; the Commander’s promotion of Fort Romie and Fort Amity at the Eleventh National Irrigation Congress; and the courting of men like Presidents McKinley and Roosevelt, and Forest Service head, Gifford Pinchot, all point to the lengths to which The Salvation Army would go to promote urban reform by rural agricultural means.

The Salvation Army used a confusing array of goals and methods to promote the colonization scheme. This may account for Fogarty’s misplaced classification of the corps’ efforts among cooperative colonizers, as well as the lack of historical literature

²⁰⁰ Booth, preface to *In Darkest England*.

²⁰¹ McKinley, *Marching to Glory*, 89.

²⁰² Booth, *In Darkest England*, 90.

regarding the farm colonies. Part of the problem in studying The Salvation Army's colonization scheme is determining how it fits into the historical puzzle. We know what the picture should look like once the puzzle is assembled, but after putting the pieces together, we are left with a conglomerate of ill-defined images.

For all intents and purposes, the colonization plan was a Socialist endeavor. Clearly, had The Salvation Army not fully funded the colonists' initial transportation to the colony, and the means of production once they arrived, the colonists would have never been able to venture out of the city with their own resources. Simply put, they were too poor to escape the grip of poverty. That The Salvation Army used socialist methods is no surprise, for the General was admittedly a Socialist. In response to an inquiry about General Booth's position on Socialism from a *New York Times* reporter, Booth responded, "Socialism is a celestial doctrine, and requires celestial people to carry it out. If I had been present at the creation of the world and had had the regulation of things then, I would have been a Socialist, and would have made all other people Socialists."²⁰³ The problem then, in retrospect, is that the plan called for a departure from its Socialist origins and the transformation of the collective settlers into capitalist landowners. So, was the colonization plan a socialist collective community, or an experiment in venture capitalism? The answer, in deference to Fogarty, is, yes.

²⁰³ "Gen. William Booth Here: Salvation Army commander in Chief Discusses His Plans and Family Affairs," *The New York Times*, 16 January 1898.

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