



# The Sower

THE AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL

THESSALONIKI, GREECE

Number  
68  
1968

## GIRLS TOO ATTEND FARM SCHOOL – TRAINING RECEIVED WILL HELP GREEK ECONOMY

By ALTA ANN PARKINS

Physically it is a large white building set in the midst of fields which are usually either plowed or planted in wheat. From its front windows the view is across the fields toward Thessaloniki Bay and Mount Olympus. On the clear days when the mountain shows itself and the afternoon sun is reflected in the water, the sight and site are extraordinarily impressive. But this is not really the Girls School—that is more a picture of young girls hard at work. A photograph taken anywhere in the school during the time of their classes would show a scene of great industry: sewing and weaving, canning and knitting, or embroidering.

In the fall they began canning and preserving the various foods which are at present on the shelves at the Self-service Store operated over at the Farm School. Customers, from the town as well as from the School, have enjoyed peppers, tomato juice and catsup canned from Farm School vegetables. They have purchased peanut butter (a rarity in Greece) made by the girls from peanuts which the school bought from one of their parents. Now oranges are in the market and the school is filled with the fresh pungent odor of peeled oranges as the girls get them ready for marmalade. From the School's olives the students have prepared enough for use at their tables during the school year. The unglazed earthenware crocks filled with brine and olives on the tiled floor of the kitchen are this year's crop. They are no different in appearance, however, from olives prepared in similar vessels over two thousand years ago here in Greece.

When the students left for their homes at Christmas time, the second-year girls wore sweaters which they had made on knitting machines at the school. Their relatives and friends in the village were amazed. Before Christmas

some of the English-teaching staff (who give classes at the Girls School three times per week) began wearing heavy, warm, soft, winter sweaters. Now the girls are making knit articles to order and soon even some of the small set at the Farm School will be appearing in Girls School children's knits. And the proceeds from the sale of these items are used to further the school's program—a true investment in learning.

But, before you get the idea that the program for the girls is nothing but hard work, you should know that on Saturday afternoons there are lessons in dancing and singing. The girls have a singing group which takes part in Saturday and Sunday evening programs and in the singing at the church service on Sunday morning.

Work or learning, however, is the main business here. The looms and weaving equipment are in constant use and the girls have made simple as well as intricately complex rugs. They have even filled an order for a stair carpet given by one of the Trustees living at the School. They have also woven and sold *flocata* rugs (a woven floor covering typical of Macedonia which looks like sheep's wool after the long strands knotted into the fabric become softened as the entire rug is washed and beaten).

One of the girls was given money by her family so that she could buy a new coat, but ready-made clothes are expensive in Greece; prices do not seem much different from those of comparable garments in the United States, while incomes are vastly different. After some convincing suggestions the student decided to buy yarn with her money and to weave the material for her coat. At Christmas time

(Continued on page 2)



Rug Making



Barnyard Chores





## TRIANDAFILIA KITI

### — A TYPICAL STUDENT AT THE GIRLS SCHOOL

There is no road and no bus to my village of Koupa in Macedonia. It is the last village before the Yugoslavian border. Once a week a truck takes people to Axioupolis, the nearest town. Koupa has 50 houses, a church, a store and a coffee house. The village telephone is in the coffee house. On August 15, Assumption Day, our church has its holy day, but there is no celebration. The people go to church, nothing else. The village is too poor to do more.

Our house has two rooms and a little kitchen. There is an outdoor oven in the courtyard where we bake our bread. Afterwards, while the coals are hot, we sometimes bake potatoes.

The richer people have sheep or cows. We have a goat. We also have two mules to help with the heavy work, and five chickens. Our farm is ten stremmas (2½ acres), but they are not all in one place. And they are not flat, but go straight up the sides of the mountains. Koupa, the name of the village, means cup. It is like a cup set in a valley with mountains all around. Many forests surround us. They give a lot of shade. On our land we grow oats for the animals and potatoes and beans for the family. When I go home in summer I will help dig potatoes.

Everyone wants to leave our village to study. But it is difficult to go. One girl is studying in Axioupolis. She was selected by the bishop because she did very well in school. There are not so many girls who are of school age, but they would all go to school if they could. In the village there is just nothing to learn. My father wanted me to leave so that I could learn something and be clever.

When I first heard of the Farm School I wanted to go right away, but I was too young; so my father arranged it so that I could stay with my grandmother and aunt and uncle in Axioupolis. My father wanted me to begin to learn some kind of work. (My uncle owns a tractor. They have a little more money than we do.) I stayed there for seven months, working as an apprentice in a beauty parlor. Now I have my own scissors and cut some of the girls' hair. But in summer I can't do this work; in Axioupolis they do not need assistants and in my village the women do not want their hair cut or set because most of them wear braids.

I first heard about the Girls School at the American Farm School from a girl who lives near me. She is married now and has two children, but she studied for a year at the Girls School. Even though she stayed only a year she knows much more than others here. She tells me that I must come back for the second year. Of course, I want to come back. What can I learn in Koupa? I want very much to learn all I can at the School—everything we do is interesting. I think I like weaving and rug making the best.

When I first came to the Farm School I didn't know any of the girls. They were from villages all over Macedonia and I didn't know what to say to them. Now we are all friends, we're like a big family.

## GIRLS TOO ATTEND FARM SCHOOL

*(Continued from page 1)*

she was so happy with the completed fabric that she asked to be allowed to take it to show her family. Miss Helen McCune, Director of the Girls School, fearing that the girl might be too eager to have the coat finished, made it quite clear that the cloth must not be given to the village dressmaker, that the project was only half complete until the girl herself made the garment. So the proud weaver carried her fine wool fabric home to the village and returned with it still uncut. Now she has begun to work on the cutting, sewing and tailoring. The color is a soft orange-tan and it will be a most becoming garment soon.

The goal of the school is to train the girls in homemaking skills and to send each graduate home with one skill so well learned that she will be able to use it to gain additional income for the family. The girls who come to the school have oftentimes been out of school for three or four years. It is not easy for them to learn or remember how to comply with a tight schedule, how to remember what is told them, how to study. Yes, study—for the girls do have an academic program. It is not as ambitious as the one given the boys at the Farm School, but they study geography, history, arithmetic, English, Greek and religion.

The school's Director, Miss Helen McCune, is well pleased with the progress the girls and the program have made this year. But perhaps the more important progress has been in the acceptance of the school by the villagers and parents of prospective students. One mother has offered to sell the family's only cow so that her daughter might return to the school next year.

### WALTER G. HILDEBRANT — ELECTED HONORARY TRUSTEE

At its meeting on March 19, the Board of Trustees voted to accept Walter Hildebrant's resignation from the Board after 28 years of service. And in recognition of his many years of devoted service, they elected him an Honorary Trustee—a position held previously only by Mrs. Charles L. House.

Mr. Hildebrant was Charles L. House's classmate in the Princeton Class '09, and was, before he retired, president of Gotham Advertising Company in New York City. Throughout his term of office as a Trustee, Mr. Hildebrant gave most generously of his time and advice, particularly in the fields of fund raising and financial management, serving on both the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee. One of his most effective talents utilized by the Board was his ability to get others—personal friends, Trustees and staff—to work harder for the School. He is credited with generating an enthusiasm among members of the Board for fund raising which has resulted in a substantial increase in annual contributions to the school.





## 2700 GREEK FARMERS ATTEND FARM SCHOOL SHORT COURSES IN 1967

What is a short course? A visitor asked this question last month and was taken on a tour to see what was going on. Out in front, there were about 15 tractors of various varieties lined up and a group of men was parking a monstrous combine. Down the hall another farmer was working with a cut-away model of an engine explaining what a four-stroke cycle is. At the end of the hall in the big classroom, 40 dairy farmers were listening to Mr. Andreou trying to make them understand why clean milk is important. Upstairs in the little classroom, village girls and women were cooking chicken in six different ways—chickens that they were learning how to feed and care for. Chubby Georgia, the cleaning woman, came out of one of the bedrooms having just finished making one of the 110 beds which she keeps changing regularly as new groups come and go every few days. And behind the scenes flitting from group to group was Demetrius Pantazis the helper-coordinator whose job it is to make everyone feel at home and see to it that all the classes meet with their instructors.

The tractors were lined up in front of the School while their nervous owners were taking tests to get their licenses which also involve knowledge of maintenance and repair. The combine was arriving to be used along with the School's new Cleys Combine, the gift of New Holland, in a short course starting the next day. The man explaining about the four-stroke cycle was a graduate of the School receiving training so that he could go out to set up short courses in the villages in tractor maintenance and operation. The girls upstairs were part of a poultry short course learning how to raise better poultry in their village and how to use it to provide a better balanced diet for the family. The dairy



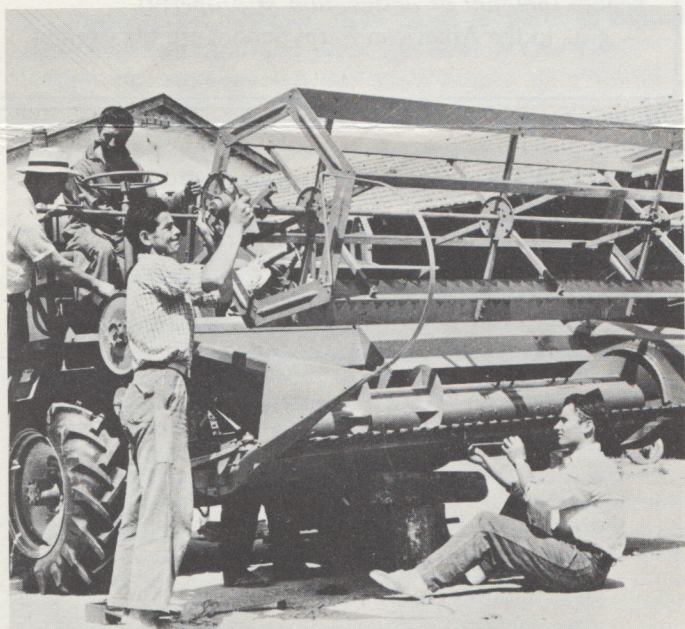
### New Methods of Beekeeping

farmers came from villages throughout northern Greece to receive training in improved management practices with particular emphasis on better feeding and cleaner milk which has been one of Greece's major farm problems.

Over 2,700 farmers and their wives and children attended the Farm School Short-course Center last year in courses sponsored either by the Ministry of Agriculture or the U.S. Feed Grains Council. Some of them paid something toward their maintenance, and they all paid for their transportation regardless of what part of Greece they came from. Courses vary from a few days to a month and cover 32 different subjects. Some of the teachers are Farm School staff members, others are sent by the Greek Government.

Any one day is about like any other in the short-course center with different groups coming and going, different instructors teaching, and an ever-changing scene of visual aids from beehives to tractors and fruit trees to irrigation pumps filling the three classrooms. The graduates of these courses take the same pride in their training as the graduates of the four-year course and go back to their villages not only to apply what they have learned, but to share it with their neighbors throughout the area.

Each course has an opening ceremony where they have a reading of a Bible passage. This is followed by a talk on the responsibility of the trainees not only to learn, but to learn enough so that they can go out and teach others as local leaders in the extension service. As is pointed out to them, if each one will undertake to share his newly acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes with 20 relatives and friends, the total impact of the center can reach over 50,000 Greek farmers in one year.



### Operate and Maintain Farm Machinery



## WHO ARE THE TEACHERS?

### A View of One

Crew cut and plaid shirt, tall frame and lank carriage give him the appearance of an American and it would please him were someone to make this mistake. He is, however, very proud of being Greek; his love for America grew when he was a student there. Athanasios Pantazides has recently returned to the Farm School with his family after spending four years (1964-1968) at the University of Arkansas where he earned his degree as a Bachelor of Science, Agriculture, specializing in animal husbandry.

Mr. Pantazides had great admiration for his grandfather who was a teacher for 60 years in the family village near Kastoria. In fact, this man must have inspired a dedication to teaching for not only is Athanasios a teacher but his sister, Miss Louda Pantazidou, instructs and assists the director at the Girls School.

The first trip to the United States for Mr. Pantazides was in 1954 after many years of work for the Farm School from which he graduated in 1936. He visited American farms and agricultural stations on an I.C.A. travel grant. It was his first glimpse of our vast farms and of methods and ways of organization different from those in his own country, and he knew then that he wanted to come again to the States to study.

His chance came in 1958 when he met Dr. Stephenson of the University of Arkansas at the Thessaloniki Trade Fair. Dr. Stephenson was able to assure his admittance to the university for a year's study in 1960. On his return he was made head of the Small Livestock Department and he thought that his days as a student were finally over. But the Farm School wanted him to get his degree.

Now the degree is a reality and he is again at the Farm School heading the Small Livestock Department and teaching. He is determined that his students will know not only the old answers but will think of new solutions. All his life Athanasios Pantazides has been interested in the *why?* If he can encourage this curiosity in his students he says that he will have reached one of his most important goals.

## MISS RUTH HOUSE DIES

Most of her life was given to the devoted care of her parents and working with the boys and families of the American Farm School in Thessaloniki, Greece—the school which her father founded over sixty years ago.

After graduation from college in the U.S.A., Ruth returned to Greece and the newly founded Farm School. She was matron, nurse, teacher; she made out programs of study and practical work for the boys, darned their socks, mended their clothes, entertained guests. Her brother, Charles House, said of her, "Father and Mother could not possibly have done the work they did, had Ruth not cared for them and for the boys so devotedly."

One of her boys, now an instructor at the School, wrote of her, "I shall always think of her as my beloved teacher and guide, who gave me self-confidence and taught me self-respect and love for my fellow men."

In the April number of *The Upper Room*, "A Thought for the Day" describes her life in a few words: "Christian concern is love that reached out a hand to help."

Friends of Ruth and the Farm School are sending contributions to the School in her memory. These will be used to establish some appropriate memorial to her loving devotion to the School and its boys.

### YOUR GIFT TO THE FARM SCHOOL — WILL IT LIVE ON?

It can. A bequest, large or small, can help carry on the work you have made possible by your contributions, and can associate your name with the Farm School program forever.

You need only to insert in your will:

I give, devise and bequeath to the American Farm School (*amount or designation of property*).  
— gifts to the American Farm School are tax exempt.

# The Sower

FROM

## The American Farm School

Thessaloniki, Greece  
ΑΜΕΡΙΚΑΝΙΚΗ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΚΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ

Office of the Trustees  
36 East 61st Street - New York, N. Y. 10021

Return Requested