

# AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL • THESSALONICA, GREECE

NEW YORK OFFICE: 17 EAST 42nd STREET, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

## *News-Letter*

OCTOBER - 1947

**BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES** - The harvest, except for wheat, surpassed our hopes,

after the long drought during the growing season and high winds later on, which blew out a good deal of grain. The School will be short about 35 tons of wheat needed for bread during the coming year. The boys have been asked to bring wheat instead of money in part payment for their board, although this will be difficult for some whose families have been forced to move from village to village several times because of the fighting, so that they have not been able to harvest their grain.

**TRAVELS WITH A JEEP** - Part of the process of selecting new students consists

of visiting their homes. Mrs. House writes: "We found the father of Demetrios on the roof of the lower part of the house, plastering the walls of the second story. Mrs. Vlahakis, with her full long skirts tucked up, was at the foot of the ladder, making the plaster of mud and straw and passing it up to her husband. The lower floor of the house is used for storing farm produce, and we went up a narrow circular staircase to the balcony where one of the daughters was sitting at her loom, weaving a bright-colored blanket from their own wool which she had spun and dyed. Demetrios was found down near the lake with the horse and cart, cutting grass for the animals. He's a little fellow, but sturdy; so shy that, after greeting me, he slipped out to the balcony, but kept peeping around the door and listening to us.

"Sotiri, one of our graduates, is in the army now, but his father took us to the house, and we sat in the garden for some time while the daughters and Sotiri's fiancée showed us some beautiful hand-woven costumes made and worn by their mothers. We noticed with admiration a pear tree in the garden with fine large pears, looking much like big quinces, and were told with pride that Sotiri had learned to graft and bud at the School, and that he had grafted many wild fruit trees.

"Michael's home is on the edge of the cliff, close to the sea, a most lovely spot. Michael was a little way along the beach, fishing, but within easy calling distance, and he came running, flushed and out of breath, up the cliff. We asked him why he wanted to come to the Farm School, and he said that his class had come here for a picnic, and that he had gone around the place and decided that he wanted to come. He showed us his garden and black pig, a descendant of the School's Large Blacks.

**BETWEEN THE HEADLINES** - "We were told that Michael and his older brother were

on the beach together when his brother stepped on a mine. Michael saw him blown to pieces close to him and the shock still remains; his parents are eager for him to get away from the village into a happy environment.

"On the way home we passed the school in the village of Liti, which is full of refugees from villages that have been evacuated by the army. Families had brought with them some bedding, pots and pans and some pigs, chickens and one or two calves, all tied in the school yard. Families were crowded together, and although the village said they gave food to the children, they all looked pretty peaked and very ragged and dirty. It is nearly time for schools to open, but there seems to be no other place for such families unless they are permitted to go back home, and so, many schools are not opening."

The mother of an entering boy writes: "We are deported from our village, and are living in some barracks, which means no pasture for our cow, the pig and the horse; no garden for vegetables and fruit; no wood-cutting or any other means to make our living. To make the situation still worse, Pavlos (my son) is sick and my son-in-law mobilized and sent to Corinth. Although I am used to hardships, having to work hard as a widow to raise my three children left orphans at their very early age, this time I feel myself hopeless and desolate, having nowhere to look for any help except God."

BRUCE LANSDALE, brought up in Salonica where his father, Herbert Lansdale,

was head of the YMCA (and is now in Athens as relief adviser under the U.S. Foreign Relief Program) has just returned after eight months at the School. His work, now completed, was on the books, to make an inventory and prepare a balance sheet. He is full of enthusiasm for the School. He was a prime favorite with the boys, whose language he of course speaks fluently, and was of great assistance to Mr. House, not only in his work on the books, but in the practical work of the Farm.

IT IS GOOD NEWS that, in spite of the upheavals in Macedonia, classes opened

at the Farm School on October 1st, later than usual, so that the boys could help at home with the fall ploughing and planting. There are 150 boys in the School, 50 of them new, making three classes. All was ready for them.

OUT OF THIS NETTLE, DANGER, we pluck this flower" - the youth of Greece -

eager, strong, courageous, and hopeful, and give them not only the knowledge and skills which will make them better farmers, but beyond that, the experience of living in an atmosphere of friendship and good faith, with fear banished.

#### SOMETHING YOU CAN DO

As the School grows, so must the number of its friends and supporters grow. We are in great need of new names to add to our mailing list. If you will PRINT on the inside of the envelope, enclosed for your convenience, the names and addresses of persons you think might become interested, and mail it to us, we shall write to them without using your name. In this way you would render a real service to the School.

*Elizabeth Alsup Shepard*  
Mrs. Lawrence H. Shepard  
Executive Secretary