



United States Office: 45 East 65th Street • New York 21, New York

July, 1959

### GRADUATION DAY, 1959

By MICHAEL B. TRIMIS

Our view of graduation came in "takes", like the movies which were being taken on the "Big Day."

The weeks of preparation were smooth filming — not many interruptions. We would be walking down to get eggs as usual and would suddenly behold a church sitting in the game field on our left, apparently risen overnight. Then it was a whole village, with groups of blue-clad Farm School boys hammering and painting. Saturday, when the rehearsal music of the big brass band (recruited from a neighboring orphanage) was floating all over the School grounds, we could hardly wait to see what was going on.

#### CLOSE-UP SUNDAY MORNING

Mr. Litsas and Mr. Andreou perspiring over a temperamental microphone. (Ena, dio. One, two.) In the background, the completed sets for the village, which now include a tumble-down sheep pen, an old blacksmith shop and some other ancient buildings in the center. We, of course, have to go look on the back side of the sets to assure ourselves that they are really only sets and not real buildings. (Some of these can be seen in the picture of cinder block construction.)

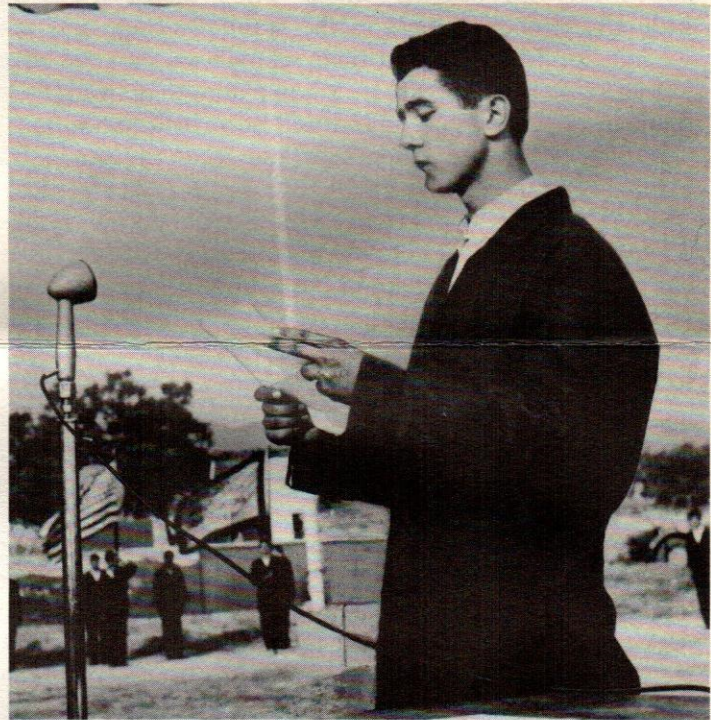
#### VIEW ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Crowds from Salonica and from the villages of Northern Greece pouring into the field and trying to settle themselves on the concrete bleachers and the thousands of rented chairs. Whole bus-loads of children and whole communities with their black-clad priests and their children.

This keeps up until there are 4,000 of us standing on the walls, the chairs, anywhere we can find to see the others coming and the village scene in front of us.

#### SOUND SET

The band strikes up as the Bishop of Salonica, then the consular corps, the Nomarch of Salonica Prefecture and the Mayor of Salonica enter. And again as the Minis-



Nicholas Papaconstantinou speaks for the Graduating Class.

ter of Northern Greece, who has been made an honorary Farm School graduate, enters.

It begins! We feel a surge of pride as the students in their blue uniforms parade across the field and stand with their classes to await the raising of the flags: The blue and white of Greece on our left and the Stars and Stripes on our right.

#### THE GRADUATES' FAREWELL

Nicholas Papaconstantinou, president of the graduating class, steps forth and gives his address.

"The depth of our gratitude cannot now be expressed. Rather it will be proved through our work as we leave the school. For as others have given us an opportunity through their help, it becomes our turn to help others by applying what we have learned on our farms, by showing others what we have learned, and by serving our village in its search for a better economic, social and spiritual future.

"We pray to Almighty God that He will give us the faith, the courage, and the strength to face the tremendous challenge that lies ahead to bring a better life to our homes and our families, to our communities and our beloved Greece."

Following Nick's speech, two hundred boys explode in song. We know what is coming next when we glance

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*Michael Trimis is American born and educated. She is the wife of Antonias B. Trimis, coordinator of the Community Development Program at the School. This June she witnessed for the first time the graduation exercises and the preceding preparations.*

*Accustomed as she was to the conventional commencements of American educational institutions, the ceremonies made a vivid impression upon her, as they do on all Americans.*

*Space limitations prevent the printing of her story of the occasion and its effect upon the spectators, in its entirety. All who have read her story agree that Mrs. Trimis has captured the flavor and color of this unique event.*

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at the program, and so we move in order to get the best possible view of the passing of the reins to the junior class. When we have settled ourselves, we see the seniors are already wearing the farmers' hats that signify their right to the title of Farmer. Enter a cart pulled by two horses and filled with smiling seniors. Their mothers, fathers, little sisters and brothers in the front rows applaud and we join in. The juniors in their schoolboys' hats are passing into their last year at School, and they watch the graduating class with admiration and a little envy.

The School's director rises and faces the graduates. He speaks in Greek.

"When Dr. John Henry House founded our School 55 years ago, he did it not only to educate good technicians, but what is more important, to educate young men to serve their villages and their country. I hope that your four years of studies taught you to be good technicians, to repair your machinery, to build better constructions, to increase the productivity of your land, to improve the quality of your produce. But, most important still, I hope that you have learned that your life has bigger value than the increase of your material wealth."

We decide to leave the game field and to climb up to the second floor of Princeton Hall in order to see the whole panorama. Some 20 people have gotten the idea first, but someone has placed a chair in front of us and we discover ourselves in the window with a perfect view of the parade of farm machinery and livestock.

### THE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE

The sound track has been recording applause and village music all this time, but it is working up to its big moment. Before our eyes appear the students, demonstrating all their practical training. Over there they are building a house of concrete blocks they've made themselves, and over there they're making a modern pen for animals, with the pigs looking on, waiting to enter; and doing a million other things. It's like a 16-ring circus, and we can't decide what to watch.

Our eyes fall on center ring just as a tiled wall goes up. A tank made from an old oil barrel is fitted into place; then another. Then a tub and some basins, a mirror. The boys light a fire under one tank, and we behold a modern bathroom with hot shower, toilet, sink. The boys wash their hands in the sink and turn on the shower.

At this point we have to turn down the volume of the applause to save our sound track. The clapping is tremendous. Many of those watching can't believe their eyes. Is this Greece? Can our villages really have things like that in the future?

### THE VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

We see the modern pen and the animals, the bathroom and the cement mixer, the electrical panels and the other demonstrations carried away, and the panels of a white picket fence are removed, showing our village.

We are introduced to the primary figures of the village, as played by Farm School students. The priest comes

from the church, the teacher from the school; the village president from the old tumble-down community house. The other villagers come from their various walks and go about their work; the women draw water from the old well and the sheep in their pen baa-baa.

We hear the Greek folk music in the background; our eyes take in the school, the church, the coffee shop, the community hall, and a blacksmith shop located next to a stable in the middle of the village. The music becomes softer and we hear:

**"In front of us we have a village gifted with beauty by nature as are most Greek villages. However, it has many needs and the life of the villagers is very hard and tiresome. These villagers, though, are very active and hardworking; they love their place because it has given them many joys. The bad thing, however, is that many times they do not demonstrate the proper interest in the solution of their problems and they always expect the government to do so."**

**"Community progress and prosperity require the cooperation and action of all the people in a community. The person or the persons who will be able to stimulate the interest and initiative of the villagers and to make them act and cooperate for the common good are called leaders. These are the people who will materialize the dreams and hopes of the community."**

We see the able community president, the community board, the secretary, the priest, the teacher, the doctor, the police chief, the president of the cooperative storage and other heads of the various committees of the village talk together about their village.

### COOPERATION BRINGS TRANSFORMATION

At this point, we accidentally drop our pencil. When we sit back up, we see the community president shaking the hand of the shepherd and the pen and the sheep have disappeared from the village square. The church steeple is repaired; sand is dumped onto the roads; the old buildings and the smithy's shack disappear; a garden, flowers and a crowd of joyfully leap-frogging children surround the school. The cemetery is fenced.

The old well is replaced by a modern fountain; a monument to war heroes appears in the center of the village square and at our right a whole 4-H building appears. A wall is lifted and we see the youth of the village inside, holding a club meeting. We see an exhibit of their various projects.

Poles and wires for electricity are put up. The boys and girls of the village leave their "volta" (stroll), pass the church and join in the round dance "kalamatiano;" the whole village surrounds the monument as the young ones place a wreath on its base.

Again we hear the folk music and a voice over the sound system says:

**"Community development means progress and prosperity."**

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**"Democracy is based upon the belief that man should and is able to govern himself. Upon this fundamental principle community development lies.**

**"With educated people community development is created; in order to have such people we should begin by educating youth."**

All this is still with us as we walk down the steps of Princeton Hall, the school song and the national anthem ringing in our ears. In the crowd which is pouring out of the arena, we pick out the secretary of the village of Agia Paraskevi and many familiar faces. They have just seen in an hour something toward which their villages have been working for over a year, a view which may make all their efforts seem more real by showing what they may eventually lead to.

Do we just imagine it, or are their eyes shining with plans of what they'll do with what they've seen when they reach the village? Are we only dreaming when we picture not only the thirty-nine graduates of 1959 returning, but all the 4,000 who have witnessed this graduation going back to their villages and towns and telling their compatriots that maybe THEY can do something like the model village? Are we being falsely optimistic when we see the work of many months (and condensed into a two hours' program) spreading over the whole of Greece?

It was a full day. We watched a mother in a long brown skirt and a brown kerchief over her braids; saw other mothers and other small brothers. With misty eyes we saw the graduates of 1959, intent, just beginning their lives, well-equipped in learning, to return to their homes and improve their lot. We thought of the boys who have gone before them and those who will come after.

## FOLSOM AWARD WINNER

Christos Loussas, selected by the School staff as the winner of the award of Consul General and Mrs. Robert S. Folsom, poses hastily with his prize, a Guernsey calf.

Selected as the hardest worker of the graduating class, his comment when requested to pose for this photograph is characteristic, and explains the staff's unanimous choice.

"I don't know if I'll have time," he pleaded. "We're awfully busy in the field today."

Christos and his prize have returned to his village of Karridia in Edessa, northwestern Macedonia. He has joined his three brothers and two sisters on the family farm, slightly more than six acres, planted to wheat. The calf has joined the two working bulls and one cow in the Loussas shed.

## BROILER PROJECT GETS UNDER WAY

Three hundred chicks, the first of a new breed developed at the School, were shipped to purchasers throughout Northern Greece during the week of June 22nd. This marked the first step in the School's project for the practical application of broiler poultry management in northern Greece.

The project, which was financed by a grant from The Rockefeller Foundation in June, 1958, has a two-fold objective: to increase the demand through better quality, and to lower costs and prices through improved methods.

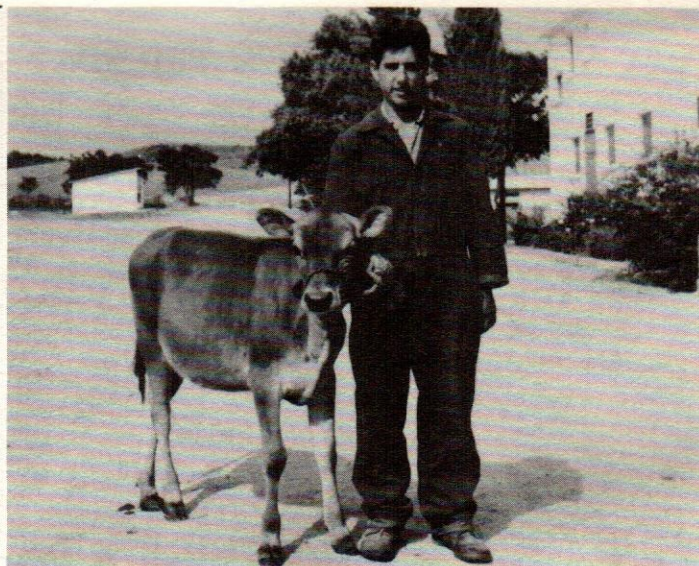
In Greece, where poultry is one of the most popular items of the national diet despite the poor quality and high prices, this should be good news to both farmer and producer.

The chicks, a cross of the project's 170 White Rock females and 25 Peterson Cornish males, have been purchased by School graduates. They left the farm five days old, inoculated against Newcastle disease to insure survival.

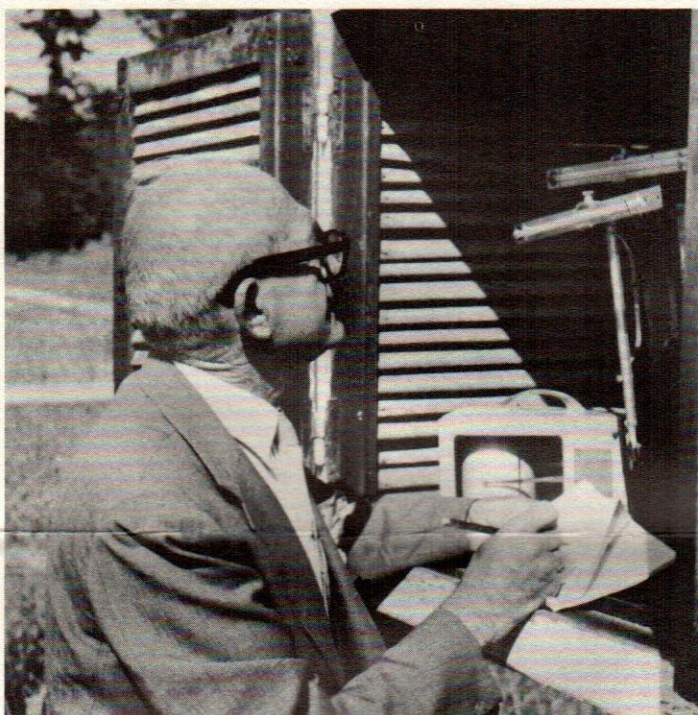
Fifty of the School's graduates are the purchasers, and a new batch will be shipped to them every five days until their orders have been filled: some have bought as many as 1200 of the newly developed breed.

The purchasers have constructed model broiler houses from plans furnished by the School to provide the most advantageous growing conditions for the chicks.

Demeter Hadjis, Director of Studies, who is in charge of the project, estimates that the new breed should produce one pound of chicken for every three pounds of feed in a ten week period. With complete confidence in the practical skill of his graduate purchasers, he is confidently looking forward to an even better ratio from most of them.







## BELOVED TEACHER RETIRES

John Bodouroglou records meteorological data. As one of his many extra-curricular activities he conducted the State Meteorological Station on the campus, from 1935 until June, 1959 — carrying on imperturbably throughout World War II and the occupation.

Mr. Bodouroglou retired this June, concluding thirty years of dedicated service. The Board of Trustees, in recognition of his many contributions, adopted the following resolution:

"RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees extend to Mr. John Bodouroglou its deep appreciation for his long years of devoted service to The American Farm School. Since 1930 he has diligently performed his duties as teacher. Perhaps even more important has been his influence, because of his fine spirit and wonderful capacity for friendship, on all connected with the School — students, staff and visitors. Upon his retirement, the Board wishes for him a life that will be as full of joy as that which he has brought to so many."

Mr. and Mrs. Bodouroglou and their daughter Julia will retire to an apartment in Athens. Their son John, member of the class of '59, will enter an American college this fall.

His beloved students, with characteristic Grecian humor, presented him with an electric fan, a thoughtful gift, since the Athenian climate is somewhat warmer than the breeze-cooled campus.

## TRUSTEE MCGHEE REVISITS GREECE

### Draper Committee Member Notes Significant Improvements

The Honorable George C. McGhee was appointed last year by President Eisenhower to serve on the Special Committee to Advise the President on Military Assistance Programs.

Mr. McGhee, long-time member of our board of trustees, and a former Assistant Secretary of State, served as United States Ambassador to Turkey from 1951 to 1953. His familiarity with Greece and her problems was obtained first-hand as Coordinator for Aid to Greece and Turkey.

On his departure from Athens for Istanbul he said, "I have just completed three days of interesting and useful conversations with Greek and American officials here, as part of my current assignment as a member of a committee which will report to President Eisenhower on American military and related economic assistance. The talks have been useful because they have provided me with the facts I will need for the report that our committee, of which Ambassador Draper is chairman, will submit to the President. They have been interesting for me personally because they have given me insight into the dramatic progress that has been made in Greece in recent years. I have also had the opportunity to learn something about the problems which Greece faces today.

"As one who had some responsibilities a dozen years ago in helping to organize the original programs of American assistance to Greece I am aware of the distance the Greek nation has travelled since the dark days of 1947. Although we are pleased that the efforts of American assistance have played a part in this development, full credit for the great improvement which has been made on so many fronts here in Greece should go to the heroic Greek army and to the Greek people. I leave Greece with renewed faith in her role as a bulwark of strength in the free world."

On his return from Greece, he commented on the work of The American Farm School and the role it has played in strengthening American-Greek friendship by training young Greek agriculturists in modern farming methods. He stated: "One of the principal problems of Greece is the difficulties faced by the farmer. These young men going back into various farming communities not only assist the communities to make the most of their opportunities, but present to them the democratic and American viewpoint as an antidote to the Communist pressures."



# GRADUATION DAY -- 1959



The Class of 1959,  
39 strong,  
stands at attention.



Students demonstrate dairy processes,  
from producer to consumer.



Straw hats identify graduates in dem-  
onstration of modern gardening.



Students build complete modern bathroom  
from low-cost equipment. (Discarded oil  
container becomes hot water tank.)



Graduate proudly drives tractor and New Hol-  
land windrower in field crops demonstration.



**The Hon. Augoustos Theologitis, Minister  
of Northern Greece,** becomes honorary  
graduate and receives Farm School hat  
with congratulations.



Jersey bull, the gift of Heifer Project,  
Inc., marches smartly in livestock parade.



Cinder blocks for building con-  
struction are manufactured before  
the spectators' eyes. (In the back-  
ground, Community Develop-  
ment program sets.)



**The Bishop of  
Salonica** is  
accompanied to  
his seat by  
**Director Lansdale.**



## THAYER PRAISES FARM SCHOOL

### State Department Adviser Comments on School's Value To Both Greece and U. S.

"The American Farm School in Salonica, under the energetic and dedicated leadership of Bruce Lansdale, is an institution in which all Americans can take justifiable pride. Here, only a few score miles from the Iron Curtain, America's technical knowledge, administered with hearty doses of genuine friendship and understanding, is combining with Greek skills and eagerness to learn to create an enterprise of great and lasting value to both Greece and the United States.

"In my work in the Department of State where I have responsibilities for international cultural relations, I have been struck by the many moving tributes to the Farm School that I have heard from Greeks, both private citizens and government officials. I have been equally impressed by the enthusiasm evinced for the School by our own foreign service officers who have served in Greece and seen its splendid achievement at first hand."

So wrote Robert H. Thayer, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, after a visit to Greece this spring, during an extensive tour of those countries included in our program of mutual assistance. As special adviser to the State Department on Education, Mr. Thayer's primary concern is with the official role of our country in this field and of the work of American-sponsored institutions in friendly nations. He is currently engaged in writing an extensive memorandum on his observations and conclusions on the problem of American education abroad.

These forceful words, from one of Mr. Thayer's wide experience and extensive knowledge, are especially significant.

### A NOTE TO OUR NEW FRIENDS

For many of you, this will be your first copy of our Newsletter. We hope you will enjoy it and, after reading of the School, that you will wish to become an active supporter, as well as a friend.

Checks may be made payable to: The American Farm School, and mailed to our United States office, 45 E. 65 Street, New York City 21. Your contribution is, of course, tax deductible.

May we say that we shall be grateful for whatever amount, large or small, you may send us.

Sincerely yours,

CRAIG R. SMITH,  
*President.*



This holiday group of picnickers from the village of Plagiari listen attentively as their teacher reads the inscription on the stone in Memorial Grove.

"ON BEHALF OF FRIENDS TREES HAVE BEEN PLANTED IN VARIOUS GROVES AS MEMORIALS FOR THOSE WHOSE NAMES HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN THE SCHOOL'S BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE."

### TREE IN MEMORIAL GROVE COMMEMORATES GOLDEN WEDDING

Many years ago a gracious lady, then a member of the School's board of trustees, conceived the idea of commemorating the memory of departed friends with a tree, to be planted on the School campus in Salonica.

She knew the importance of forestation in the conservation of Macedonian soil and, from experience, the cool comfort of shade in the hot Macedonian summer sun. The bereaved family, she believed, would welcome her choice of an evergreen memorial over the more conventional shortlived floral tribute.

Ascertaining the cost of planting, she sent in her check, with instructions, to the School, and thus initiated a custom which has since been adopted by hundreds. Today not only the original grove on the campus but still another, on a hillside in the rear of the School, honor the memory of departed Americans — friends of the School and of the School's friends.

And all summer long groups of children such as the one pictured above — and of grown-ups, too — spend pleasant hours away from the city's heat and turmoil.

This year for the first time, a tree has been planted to commemorate a golden wedding anniversary. The donors had remembered their departed friends in this manner for years. Now, it seemed only fitting, they said in their departure from established practice, to honor the living with a living tribute.