

Greek Scenery, Peculiar Food Customs Delight Reed On Athenian Visit

By NELSON REED

Athens, April 6 (The other night at dinner my wife asked the waiter why there was never any lamb on the menu. "Ah madam," he replied, "it is because the government has forbidden the sale of lamb for two weeks so there will be enough lamb on Easter when all good Greeks celebrate Easter with roast lamb, wine and songs, and everyone is welcome to join the feast."

Meanwhile during Lent we learned that really good Orthodox Greek Catholics are not allowed by the church to eat anything but caviar, lobster or shrimp, no other fish or meat. At the price of caviar and lobster we suspect that most either go hungry or decide they are not such good Catholics. Yesterday we climbed up the steep streets and endless steps to tiny St. George's Chapel which perches on the highest rocky pinnacle in Athens. We peered inside at the great tall brass candlesticks beside the altar and wondered how there was room for a priest with his long black beard and black gown to say nothing of any worshippers.

The view from the terrace outside the chapel was magnificent. Spread out below us was the whole Athenian plain that is now Athens, with the sea off in the distance and the Acropolis and Parthenon across the city below us. While we stood there admiring the view a flight of perhaps 50 bombers flew over us in a beautiful formation that spelled NATO. They were celebrating the anniversary day of the founding of NATO, we learned later.

Coming down from St. George's we walked along a broad avenue past the royal palace with its dressy royal guard standing stiffly at attention in colorful Greek uniforms with the bright pompons on their shoes.

The palace itself is not as impressive as some others we have seen but the grounds are very fine. Opposite is a large public park through which we walked, admiring some very tall pine trees of a kind we had never seen before, and listening to the raucous

racket of some silly guinea hens that were being chased by small children.

Having developed a thirst we sat at a small table drinking good Greek beer while we had our shoes shined. All around us were young mothers drinking coffee and gossiping while their children romped with each other. An occasional grandfather kept a watchful eye on a toddler who scampered off whenever his head was turned. It brought back fond memories of our own.

Athens has as many kinds of cars as there are tourists. German, French, English, Italian and American. Most of the latter are older models of makes that in their year were not so popular at home, disposed of over here at a loss we presume, for a new American car here would sell about twice the price at home because of the tax.

All over town there are kiosks on the sidewalks that sell not only newspapers and magazines, but candy, nuts and sunglasses, for which there must be a great demand judging from the number displayed. Attached to each kiosk is a public dial phone, generally in use. There are many small shops full of all manner of trinkets and cheap tourist bait but we have seen very few that displayed high class quality merchandise. Greece has not enjoyed prosperity long enough to create a market for luxury goods.

Athens, April 7 Today we took the 200-mile round trip drive from Athens to Delphi with an English speaking guide who knew the country and its history. Some of the trip was on a new state highway that runs from Athens to Salonika. Most of it was a narrow mountain road that reminded us of the Green Springs only it was far more crooked, had very few guard rails and in places scared me popeyed

for I much prefer to drive such rough black capes leaning on their staffs or lying asleep out of the wind. Lower down the slopes there were small bands of sheep, white, brown and black with very long wool. Here and there on the hillsides were herders' shelters and wattle sheep pens to run to when winter storms strike. Once we saw a great hulking shepherd in his rough cloak, holding a tiny black and white goat in his arms. He could have stepped right out of the Old Testament.

Before we came to Thebes some of the mountainsides were covered with newly planted Cyprus trees. We were told that the Greek government planted them to replace the Cyprus forests destroyed by the Germans during the occupation. Later we passed through a small village where all the houses were new. Our guide told us that the Germans had

killed every man in it because a German officer had been murdered there by a villager. Thebes, which in antiquity was a famous Greek city, is now just a poverty stricken looking small town, nothing at all like Athens. After what seemed like endless miles of crooked, dangerous mountain road with breathtaking scenery, we reached Delphi. We had lunch at a modern hotel and restaurant perched on a cliff overlooking a valley with a stream running through it a good mile below.

Then with a guide who spouted Greek mythology we took off up the mountainside of Mt. Parnassus to hear all about the Oracle of Delphi. In general we gathered that it was a wonderful racket developed by the priests. The pilgrims, those wanting to know what the future held in store

for them, and that included most of the famous leaders of that age, came from all over Greece and Asia Minor to consult the oracle. Down the mountainside below where the oracle dwelt the visitors were detained by the priests of the oracle so they could make the proper sacrifices and also the spies of the oracle could mingle with them and learn what was on their minds so the oracle could come up with the proper mysterious dual meaning answers.

Then the visitors were finally allowed to consult the oracle herself though they never got to see her, only the priests who attended her. From such hocus-pocus as the way the entrails of the sacrifices wiggled, or the leaves on the sacred myrtle trees twisted, or the vapors from the sulphur well smelled, the oracle would foretell their fortunes. While it may

sound silly to us today the great decisions of Greek antiquity were based on it. Sometimes we wonder if our own State Department doesn't use some such system.

Having heard how it was done we climbed up the mountain through endless ruins from which all the gold and bronze and marble statues that once adorned it had been stolen or destroyed over the years. But from all the ancient writings scholars have reconstructed it in their minds. And so can the guide for you, but alas it was far too much for me to remember and to tell you.

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Malin Legion Auxiliary Votes For Donations

MALIN — Mrs. John McCulley, president of the American Legion Auxiliary, presided over the business meeting Wednesday evening, April 3, in the Malin Community Hall.

Mrs. A. L. Schmidt, Pan American chairman, gave her monthly report. It was voted to send \$5 to CARE to assist Dominican School funds and \$5 to Capital Funds for the Capital Grounds program. Members also voted to donate one pair of glasses to the school, if needed, with the cost not to exceed \$30.

Results of the junior division poppy contest were announced and the winners are Judy McCulley, first; Margaret Ann Blohm, second; and Janet Victorin, third. Senior division winners are Joan Cacka, first; Linda Elzner, second; and Jeanne Stastny, third.

Americanism essay winners are Kelley Wilson, first; Danny Tofell, second; and Jeanne Stastny, third.

Norman McCormick, honorable mention, junior division; and Mary McAuliffe, first; Linda Reber, second; Tom Brown, third; Andy Oliver, honorable mention, senior division.

The auxiliary recently gave the Malin Library the book, "History of the American Flag," and a monthly magazine, "The Firing Line."

Post Resigned

DUNSMUIR — The resignation of Glade Patterson was accepted by the Dunsmuir Recreation Commission at its April meeting. Patterson has been a member of the board for several years.

He said business demands made his resignation necessary. Indications are the commission will become a five-man board under new legislation instead of a seven-man board, so no replacement for Patterson is planned at this time.

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