

CLASSES IN SWEDEN

Hannah Norwood, '50 Prep, is studying handicraft in Sweden. At the request of the editor, she recounts her experiences at two famous craft schools. Hannah's address is Igelkottsvägen 4, Appelviken, Stockholm, Sweden.



Granted I am busy as a swarm of bees, but I do want to tell all of you at Ward-Belmont about my life in Sweden. After an exciting plane trip across the Atlantic, I arrived in Gothenburg, Sweden, safe and sound. Five hours later I reached Nääs, where I attended summer school.

Nääs is a famous craft school well over a hundred years old. Although I signed up for woodwork, the curriculum includes courses in metalwork, gymnastics, sewing, and knitting. During the two terms I was at Nääs, I lived in a small cabin at the school.

Most of the students at Nääs are between the ages of twenty and thirty. Once a week we had a big "fest" or party—a different kind every time but always with Swedish folk dances for entertainment. It was lots of fun although I didn't understand the directions in the beginning. I had to memorize the dances so I could do them correctly. At the end of the second course the boys said I danced just like a Swede.

Late in August I went to Stockholm by way of the well known Göta Canal—a small water belt which stretches clear across Sweden. The boats are not very large because in some places, the canal is so narrow. The trip, which is pleasant and restful as well as fantastically beautiful, takes about three days. We left rich farm land around Gothenburg and passed through thickly

wooded mountains just before reaching Stockholm.

When I arrived in Stockholm, I found the von Heland family waiting for me. The von Helands, the family with whom I live, have two girls. Ulla is sixteen and Madeleine, twelve. They are both very nice blonde-haired, blue-eyed Swedes. We live in a suburb of Stockholm called Appelviken.

Shortly after my arrival in Stockholm, I began my second Swedish school, Konstfackskolan, which is also famous and very old. Almost the entire student body is made up of young people between eighteen and twenty-five. There are many different branches here that one can follow such as textiles, woodwork, sculpture, interior decoration, ceramics, and metalwork. Each course takes about three or four years. I am interested especially in metalwork.

Each day I go to school by means of a späravn, which is literally a wagon that runs on tracks very similar to the old street cars. Classes meet every day except Sunday and a half day on Saturday.

Curious about language difficulties? When I arrived in Sweden I couldn't understand a word. To be sure, I had been tutored a few months two years ago by an exchange student who was attending the University of South Carolina. How much I had forgotten in that length of time! I kept my ears open day and night trying to comprehend what everyone was saying. After about a week I began to talk a little. I was determined to speak regardless of mistakes. Now, after four months, I can speak and understand very well so the Swedes tell me. Soon Mrs. von Heland is going to help me with written Swedish.

I plan to see Europe before I go home in the early part of July. Next fall will find me hard at work in a college back in the States with memories of a glorious year abroad and plans to return some day.

ARGENTINE TALE

At the request of the editor Mrs. Richard W. Black (Kathryn Isabelle Glasford, '28), who has lived in Argentina since 1945, gives us a sketch of life in a small Argentine "camp" or country town. Her husband is manager of the Argentine plant of the Corn Prod. Ref. Co. Their address is Gorriti 635, Baradero FCNGBM, Argentina.

For the past four years that we have been in Argentina we have lived in a "camp," or country town, about ninety miles northwest of Buenos Aires. Outside of certain resort sections, few casual visitors or foreign residents ever see much of this vast country. Their impressions are limited to Buenos Aires, which, like other world capitals is a cosmopolitan center with opera, theatres, clubs, restaurants, and shops that delight the tourist. The way of life in a small town here is not only different from that in a small town in the States, but is distinctly different from that in Buenos Aires. Because of the difficulty of transportation due to lack of paved roads (the Pan-American highway near here is just now being surfaced) many of the comforts of modern life to which we are commonly accustomed in the States have not yet become easily or economically available here.

All camp towns are similar in appearance. The houses of brick and cement are built in solid blocks—one against the other—with entrances direct from the tile sidewalks. This allows for windows usually only in front and rear. It is not uncommon to find houses with several rooms having no windows, only a skylight or a door opening onto a long gallery. In the rear, bounded by a high wall, is the patio partly paved with tiles or filled with innumerable, brick bordered flower beds. A lawn or any grassy expanse is seldom seen.

Central heating and hot water systems are unknown. It is even a struggle to get a landlord's permission to build a fireplace at one's own expense as they believe that heated houses are unhealthy and that a chimney not in use admits bad air. Therefore, only a queer foreigner would want one.

Although there are countless flies and mosquitoes, one must provide his own screens as these too are considered an unnecessary luxury. To combat the flies the houses are kept constantly darkened by closing the heavy shutters, which are standard equipment, and at night a special kind

of smoldering incense is burned to kill the mosquitoes.

Argentina is famous for its beef but the method of handling and cutting the meat in the camp is quite primitive. Because of the lack of refrigeration, meat is killed daily and it is often still warm when it is delivered. There are few recognizable cuts. In the shops the huge carcasses are suspended from hooks in the ceiling, and after the rib section and the tenderloin (the famous *bife de lomo*) are removed the remaining part is cut without plan as each customer arrives to buy.

Almost all other produce can be bought at one's door. In the morning the streets are filled with rattling carts and noisy vendors crying their wares. Vegetables, fruits, bread, fish, and milk are the regular items. There are any number of milk and meat deliveries daily as very few people own refrigerators. The milk is brought in an open cart in large cans from which it is poured into your own container at the door. Of course it must be strained and boiled.

In spite of these seemingly unsanitary methods of handling food, Argentina is one of the few places in South America where one can safely eat almost everything including raw fruits and vegetables.

When we arrived, neither my husband nor I could speak Spanish; but being the only Americans here, we learned it quite rapidly by seeing and hearing it constantly. Just as we in North America have an accent different from the English and use many words and expressions that vary within the States, so the Argentines have their own peculiarities of pronunciation and their own special words.

In spite of all the disadvantages that appear on the surface, life in a foreign country can be interesting if one tries to accept it without too much complaint. Every American resident of a foreign country can and should be an Ambassador of Good Will. And—there is nothing that can teach one more vividly to appreciate the true freedom and ease of life in the United States than to reside in a foreign land.