

George Demeter, *parliamentary law expert*

George Demeter, leader in Boston's Greek community for four decades, former member of the General Court, noted parliamentarian, and founder and editor of *The Hellenic World*, which ceased publication when he went into the service in World War II, died Monday at Old Soldiers Home, Chelsea. He was 90.

The founder and first president of Boston's Athens Chapter, Ahepa, he was the second supreme president of the order and a leader in its inception in 1922 in Atlanta.

Born March 13, 1893 at Arcadia, Greece, son of the late Constantine and Nicolette Demeter, he had an impact in the Greater Boston Greek community far greater than his role as journalist. He was a lawyer and a parliamentarian and he was always promoting the image of Hellenism. This resulted in 1937 in his decoration by the Greek king with the Cross of the Saviour.

Mr. Demeter was the originator of the tradition of crowning the Boston Athletic Association marathon winners with laurel wreaths, borrowing it from the ancient tribute to the winner of the original marathons over the route from Olympia to Marathon. He placed the wreath on the BAA marathon winner's head each year from 1931 to 1947.

He was also an authority on parliamentary law, authoring "Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law," serving as parliamentarian for the Boston Teachers Union and for a number of organizations, including Ahepa.

Mr. Demeter was a member and officer of numerous organizations, including the American Legion, of which he was a past post commander and judge advocate; of the VFW, serving as lecturer and parliamentary procedure instructor. He was the first instructor of the American Legion's Boys' State and Girls' State

in the area of parliamentary procedure. He was the lecturer in parliamentary procedure for officers training institute of the VFW

He was a member and held office in the Elks, Masons, Shriner, Knights of Pythias, Ancient and Honorable Artillery Co.

Besides serving as a Bay State legislator from 1933 to 1937, he was instructor of each incoming legislature in parliamentary procedure and law from 1937 to 1947.

In the August, 1940, issue of his *Hellenic World*, Mr. Demeter was quoted as having urged the United States to support Great Britain in its war against Germany and of having urged this country to declare war against Nazi Germany. This was prior to the invasion of Greece by Fascist Italy. Ironically, at this time, cooperation between Turkey and Greece in the event of an Italian invasion was being endorsed. The *Hellenic World* made its appearance in late 1938, the second edition hitting the streets on Jan. 7, 1939, and noting that Prime Minister John Metaxas has full control of Greek education.

Always a firm believer in the American ideal, Mr. Demeter ran an item in his October, 1940, edition of the *World* informing draftees that the paper would publish names of Greek draftees, with pleasure, without charge and listing their addresses. This was the edition which announced the invasion of Greece by the forces of Mussolini.

At Mr. Demeter's request, services were private. Burial was in Mt. Hope Cemetery. Hasiotis Funeral Home handled arrangements. Memorial contributions by American friends were to the Catholic Archdiocese School of Industrial Relations, 761 Harrison Ave., Boston, where Mr. Demeter taught parliamentary procedure for 20 years, and by his Greek friends, to the Annunciation Cathedral, 514 Parker St. Mr. Demeter was a past president of the cathedral.