Basil Athanassion, ’10

THOSE who remember Basil Athanassion, ’10, one of our foreign alumni, will be interested in the following letter, which the Ames Forester received from his niece in Roumania, in answer to the Alumni Questionnaire:

Bessarabia, Roumania,
Jan. 26, 1934.

To the Society of Ames Foresters:

I have the honor to communicate to you some information concerning the fate of your former member and

my uncle—Mr. Basil Athanassion.

Unfortunately I must begin by saying that for a long time we have known nothing definite at all about my uncle! In October, 1917, at the beginning of the Russian Revolution, he left here for the Government of Lamara, in Russia, where he possessed an estate which he administered himself. From there he wrote to his mother that he had found his house deserted and his property pillaged. The last letter to my father, written in the beginning of December of the same year, said that he felt himself in danger and wished to escape to the
Cossacks of the Ural and that all was ready for his departure.

Since then no one has heard anything more from him. Was he shot by the Bolsheviki as representative of a class which they have exterminated? It is very probable! My father has had private information from one of our relatives in Moscow that he was indeed shot at Dergatchi, a large village not far from his estate.

On the other hand there have been rumors that my uncle was seen on the banks of the Dniester (the river which separates Russia from Bessarabia), wishing to cross the frontier to reenter his native country.

Unfortunately neither of these versions can be verified. But if the latter is true, my uncle not having arrived since, it is probable that he was killed upon his attempt to cross the river—perhaps by the Roumanian soldiers, perhaps by the Bolsheviki.

This is everything that we have been able to gather. It is not much, and there is nothing absolutely certain in all of it. In any case, not receiving a speck of news, nor any letters from him for so many years, we believe him to be dead.

I wish you the best of success for your fine organization, and I regret infinitely that your old comrade will be able no more to join with you.

Olga Athanassion.