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Winter was nearing. It was beginning to snow. We went to school every day. The school was in Brout-Vernet. We walked in a long line for almost one mile 4 times a day. In the morning going to school, then at 12 going home for lunch, and back to school and home again. There was always a teacher with us. In school we learned French. Most of the children already knew French, since they were born in Paris but we were Belgians, and spoke Flemish. We caught on to the French language rapidly. We were in one classroom together with the peasant children. I remember some of my school (peasant) buddies. "Daniel Chene", Roger Piccard. Now I could speak French very well. Summer was nearing. In the evening when all the teachers were away we used to have pillow fights until midnight. It was a good life for children. Every Wednesday was mail writing day. We wrote letters to our parents. Now we were together with many children our age, but in Varennes we didn't even go to school. We went on hikes in the fields, singing songs. I have a booklet full of French songs we learned. Every evening after supper one of the teachers chose 2 boys to go to get the milk for the Chateau. I always liked to go, because we would get back late at night, and get some extra food. We went to "Trois Ormeaux" the name of the farmers land. There we went inside his house. He brought a bucket and left with us into the stalls where he milked the cows. It was already dark when we arrived with the little cart in which was our milk. As the other boy and I arrived home we went to the kitchen where we would eat something and then go to our dortoirs. When the time for us to leave came we hated to part from all the boys and girls we had been together with for over one year.

The principal of the chateau, a woman, called my sister and I in her office one day and told us that we were on the list to go to the United States. We hated the idea, but...when it was the day before we were to leave, one of my boyfriends told me to be happy and gay, because "maybe it is much better for you to leave France". There had already been a few transports of children from Lisbon, Portugal to New York. One of the men teachers called all of us who were leaving for America into a room, where he talked to us. There were about 10 of us. It was a warm morning. The tables were set for our "last meal" here. Many of us were given souvenirs from our friends, and we gave them some. Finally the bus arrived. Once more we waved good-bye. It wasn't hard for us to cry. As we left the grounds, we waved at them until out of sight. The bus took us to GANNAT-a nearby town, where we went into the station. The train arrived and we boarded it. On the train we ate chocolate and food of course. In a little while we reached the station of ROANNE, halfway to LYON, 2nd largest French city, after Paris. The train pulled out of the station, and was on its way to LYON on the Rhone River. We reached the large city after a short while. Then we continued our journey. The train went alongside the Rhone River. We travelled all through that day. In the morning we reached AVIGNON, old French town. Later we passed TARASCON. One could still see the mist or fog. We were now in the vicinity of MARSEILLES. We went through mountain tunnels. Then we arrived at the busy railroad station of MARSEILLES.



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We descended and went into a restaurant in the station. Of course we had one of the teachers with us. She knew Marseilles very well. We waited until some other persons came. Then we left for a synagogue. There were other children there. Somehow we got news to come back to Brout-Vernet. That meant for us to make the trip all over again. Anyway we were happy to find ourselves with our friends in Chateau-des-Morelles again. I really don't know why we returned. Maybe because of some trouble with the Customs or with our papers. We did not stay in Brout-Vernet long. Once more we left for Gannat, where we took a train to Limoges. On the way we stopped at Montlucon. Finally we arrived at Limoges. We were taken to a home again. In a week or so we continued our trip to the south toward MONTAUBAN and then TOULOUSE. We were in Toulouse again, "without our parents". I was thinking that if we stayed in Toulouse awhile, I could go to the bus station and take a bus to Villemur, and see my parents, but of course that didn't work. We ate in one of the restaurants by the station. At about 11 o'clock we were to leave to the South. Our train soon came. After it pulled out of the station we began to get ready to go to sleep. There were no beds. The next thing I remember is in the morning. I remember I saw the town of CARCASSONNE- (An old town dating back to the time of Julius Caesar). It was very interesting to see, with its ancient towers, and moats. It was out of sight soon. In a short while we reached NARBONNE, then BEZIERS, and finally MONTPELLIER near the coast. We stayed in the station for a little while. Then the train pulled out again. We stopped once at NIMES: In a few hours we would be at Marseilles again. As we arrived at Marseilles we took a tram to the Synagogue again. There we got some information. We soon left with our teacher. We boarded a train for a place called MAZARGUES, near Marseilles. I still remember the numbers of the trams. "Numero 1 and 2" takes us to Marseilles. We all walked a short while on a winding road, until we reached a clinic. It was near the coast. No one occupied this clinic besides us. It was a clean and pleasant place. I remember near the road was a small house operated by 2 Indo-Chinese boys. They used to talk to us. We stayed in Mazargues for at least a month, believe it or not, but we once more returned to Brout-Vernet. It was so tiresome going back and forth. I don't know what was the matter. We couldn't remain in Marseilles all the time so we returned. When we reached Lyon, we got off the train and went to a hotel. There were about 7 of us now. In the morning we boarded the train for Gannat, As we arrived there once more, we were met by Monsieur Cogan who was sort of the manager of the Chateau. Again we returned to "Le Chateau Des Morelles". Some children had already left from there. We didn't remain there long this time. Now we left for Marseilles for the last time. This time we were accompanied by one of the men teachers. Monsieur Dibnitz. We left Gannat for the last time. The train took us to Lyon. The next day we reached Marseilles. There we were met by the woman who had been with us before. We took a tram and left for the outskirts of Marseilles again. It was near the ocean (Mediterranean Sea). It was called "La Vieille Chapelle" (The Old Chapel). There we met some of the other children who were to leave with us.