



14225 VENTURA BOULEVARD • SHERMAN OAKS, CALIFORNIA 91423
 PHONE: (213) 981-2395 • TELEX: 65-1395 • CABLE: HERVICORP

I enjoyed our stay at Vieille Chapelle very much. The weather was very hot. Every day, all the children who wanted to go swimming walked a short distance to the "plage" or seashore. There we swam or played around for a few hours. The water is very salty there. It was the Mediterranean Sea we were swimming in. Then right across from the shore was a stadium, where we sometimes saw horse races. Every once in a while we would go to nearby Marseilles by tram. It was an enjoyable ride through the "Prado" a beautiful Boulevard which leads into the heart of Marseilles. We often went mountain climbing. It was really a rocky hill. When on top of it we could see the whole city of Marseilles, and part of the Mediterranean harbor. As we sat in the mess hall looking out of the window, we could see ships passing by in the distance. We knew we'll be in one of them soon. While we were there we got news that our parents were in a concentration camp. We took this news very badly. A few times we made a trip to the American Consulate of Marseilles in order to arrange our papers. About half of us, had everything necessary arranged. Some of us, including us, were not able to leave, because of some "paper" trouble. Anyway, most of the children were allowed to visit their parents, or the parents to visit them before they left. Everything was arranged for my sister and I to visit our parents before leaving. Our teacher arranged everything for us. We waited near the "Plac Castellane" for our tram, which took us to the "Gare St. Charles". When we arrived we said goodbye to the teacher, and soon were out of the station. We were supposed to meet a man at the Gare Matabiau in Toulouse. Next morning we arrived and waited until 11 o'clock. No one showed up, so since my sister and I knew Toulouse a little we went to the office where we knew we'll get some information. As we arrived there, a small street near the "Allee Lafayette" we waited for a woman who was to take care of us. At that time there were 2 men in her office, they heard that we didn't have any place to stay for the night, because we couldn't go to our parents' camp which was a few miles out of Toulouse. Anyway, the bus didn't run until the next day. One of them said he'll take me, and the other my sister. We took a tram to their homes. My sister came with me, since we were going to eat supper at one man's house. He was really kind, so was his wife and son, who was a little older than I. We had a swell supper, and then we talked together. Later I played with their boy. My sister went over to the other man's house where she slept. Then in the morning came over to us. We knew which bus to take. Soon we could see what surely looked to us like the place. It was called RECEBEDOU. It was a little muddy out. We walked down one section of the camp until we reached the main office. There a man told us where we would find our parents. My heart seemed to beat faster, because I knew in a minute I'll see them. We saw some French guards. Then we went inside the barrack. We walked to one end, and there we saw our mother and father. We embraced and soon began to talk. My sister gave my mother a few pounds of sugar which we had saved up, at the Vieille Chapelle in Marseilles. It was Wednesday. We were going to stay until Thursday. Soon our brother Armand, whom I had not seen since we left Antwerp came. You can't imagine how glad we were. He was so tall, I didn't recognize him at first. Right away he took me outside and walked me around the camp.



14225 VENTURA BOULEVARD • SHERMAN OAKS, CALIFORNIA 91423
 PHONE: (213) 981-2395 • TELEX: 65-1395 • CABLE: HERVICORP

where I met his boyfriends. We went into the eating hall. It was bad to see how much food the people received. Right away mother, my sister and I walked over to a bench and sat down, to talk. She said "soon you will be in America, and we'll join you then". I was really excited. They told us they weren't bad off here. I was glad to hear that. Then we received bad news. A man came into our barrack and told my parents and a few other friends in there to begin to pack their things. This camp was for older people, in other words, sick people. My parents and a few other families were not sick at all. Therefore they were to be transferred to another camp, this time it was a real concentration camp. Anyway, that meant we couldn't stay till tomorrow. So we had to catch the last bus that would return to Toulouse. It was the afternoon. We remained together for the last few hours. Then our parents and brother accompanied us to the highway. It's a bad moment we went through. There we were seeing our parents in front of us, but in another few minutes we'll be on our way, far away from them; then later, we'll be even still farther away. Our parents made us promise to write letters as soon as we can. Of course we would do that. There, we saw the bus coming in the distance. It's a strange feeling I got. The bus was getting nearer. We waved at our parents in excitement. We boarded the bus and moved toward the rear, where we looked back. Three "figures" were becoming smaller every time. It was our father, mother and brother. We see them waving still. Finally we were out of sight. I began to think of crying, but we encouraged each other. We reached Toulouse, where we returned to our friends. We ate breakfast. The boy gave me some French coins and a small toy for a souvenir. It was time to leave now. We thanked them, not just a "plain" thanks. They accompanied us to the station where we boarded a train for Marseilles. We reached Marseilles that evening. Waiting for us was the teacher (I call her teacher, but she took care of all of us) We took a tram to the Vieille Chapelle. We arrived there late in the evening. We had already made a few trips to the American Red Cross. There we met about 25 Spanish children. They were going together with us on the ship. By now we knew we would be on our way very soon, but we didn't know exactly when. We spent about another couple weeks at Vieille Chapelle. Then one day we received news to start packing. It was exciting because we knew where we were going now. I should have mentioned that a part of the children had already left a week before us, because our papers were not all arranged. They told us that they were going by way of the Mediterranean Sea, toward Gibraltar. I was hoping that we'll also go this way. Then came the "day of departure". We told our friends to watch the window at about 12 o'clock, and maybe they'll see the ship.

At about 6 A.M. that morning came an "American Red Cross" Bus. I was glad to see the large American Flag painted on its sides. We waved goodbye to our friends for the last time. In a few minutes the bus reached the American Red Cross Building. There, all of the Spanish children got on the bus. and we continued toward the "Nouveau Port" of Marseilles. In a few minutes we arrived at the docks. It was busy and noisy there.