



I cannot remember anything of any interest on most of those days. I say "days" because it took us 7 days to reach our destination in Southern France, while it should have taken 2 days at the most. Our train was traveling sometimes "back and forth". I remember seeing a scene, and 5 hours later I would see this same scene again. I told my mother that I was sure to have seen this scene before. We always had enough food. This incident I will remember always.

It was in the midst of a field; our train had stopped. The "porters" came through all compartments telling us that the train will "rest" in this spot for at least a half an hour.

My sister and I got off the train and sat outside on the grass. Many of the people had their dinner outside. My father told my mother that many men went to a nearby village to buy some food, or other necessary articles. Since the train would not leave for over a half hour, why not go and get something? In a few minutes I went back into our compartment. I asked my mother where my father was. She told me that he went away to get something. All of a sudden she told me that I should run after my father, and not to forget to buy some tea while he was in the village. Soon I was outside again, running away from our train on a road. I wanted to catch up with my father, so I ran very fast. I stopped for a while near crossroads. I saw some people far away so I imagined that it was the right way, and continued to run. After running a few hundred feet I began to think that I was on the wrong road. It was a terrible feeling. I turned my head in every direction to see if I saw any people. I am sure I would not have gotten mixed up if there were only 2 roads there, but I am sure that there was more than one road. There I was standing, turning my head in every direction. I didn't know what to do next. I began to climb a small tree, to see in case I might see our train farther away. As I turned around I saw two nuns on bicycles coming toward my direction. I turned around, crying, and they stopped and seemed to ask me what was the matter. I looked at them, but could not understand what they were saying, so meanwhile I thought I was wasting time there, and began to run back. All of a sudden I heard a train not too far away from me. I knew it was moving. At that moment I cannot explain how I felt. I began to think that my father would probably not have left without me. I ran around a large bush, hoping very much that I could see our train. Of course I really thought my train had left already. As I reached the other road, I began to look in both directions. You cannot imagine how my heart was at ease when I saw some men carrying bread, and a little farther down I could already see our train. I was so happy to see it again.



I hurried toward our compartment, where I found my sister Hilda, looking for me. My mother thought that I was with my father. I told her everything that had happened. In a few minutes my father came back with a few articles. I stayed outside with my sister. Then we heard "En Voiture, All Aboard! I had learned at least that much in French. The train was on its way again.

I was really glad that it was not our train that I had heard. Of course we didn't get the tea.

The next thing worth telling is when we were near the famous French Seaport of "Bordeaux". Now we knew we were deep in Southern France, far away from Germans. We went over the bridge over the Garonne River. In a few minutes were in the station of Bordeaux. Our train came to a stop. People were allowed to get off the train for a while, so my father and I took a stroll through the station. The station was very crowded. There were many soldiers, and I remember I saw a whole freight train filled with "black" soldiers. They were from Senegal, one of France's colonies in Africa. They all wore "Fез's" on their heads. My father bought me some candy. In 10 minutes we returned to our compartment.

There were "Red Cross" people distributing food to everyone on the train. We must remember that we were "refugees". We did not accept the cans of salmon and other things, but we did get some chocolate.

In 20 minutes we felt a "push". Our train was on its way again. The train pulled out of the station slowly. We travelled for the rest of the day, making many stops. My sister and I slept on the compartment floor on some blankets. We travelled all that time, making a few stops. Twelve was nearin. We were all so tired of trains, hoping never to have to ride in one again.

Today was our seventh day since we escaped from Belgium. I was spending most of my time, looking out of the compartment window. Outside everything seemed so peaceful, the fields with cattle on them. Suddenly we stopped. I looked outside, and all I could see was a small stone house, which was a station. My father knew very well where we were. Anyway, my father decided that we might as well get off the train here, since we did not head for any special place. My father took the large valise, and we took some of the small packages. I was glad to get off the train. We had all our belongings off the train. I looked around and all I saw was bushes, trees, tracks and telephone wires. Yes! and one stone building.