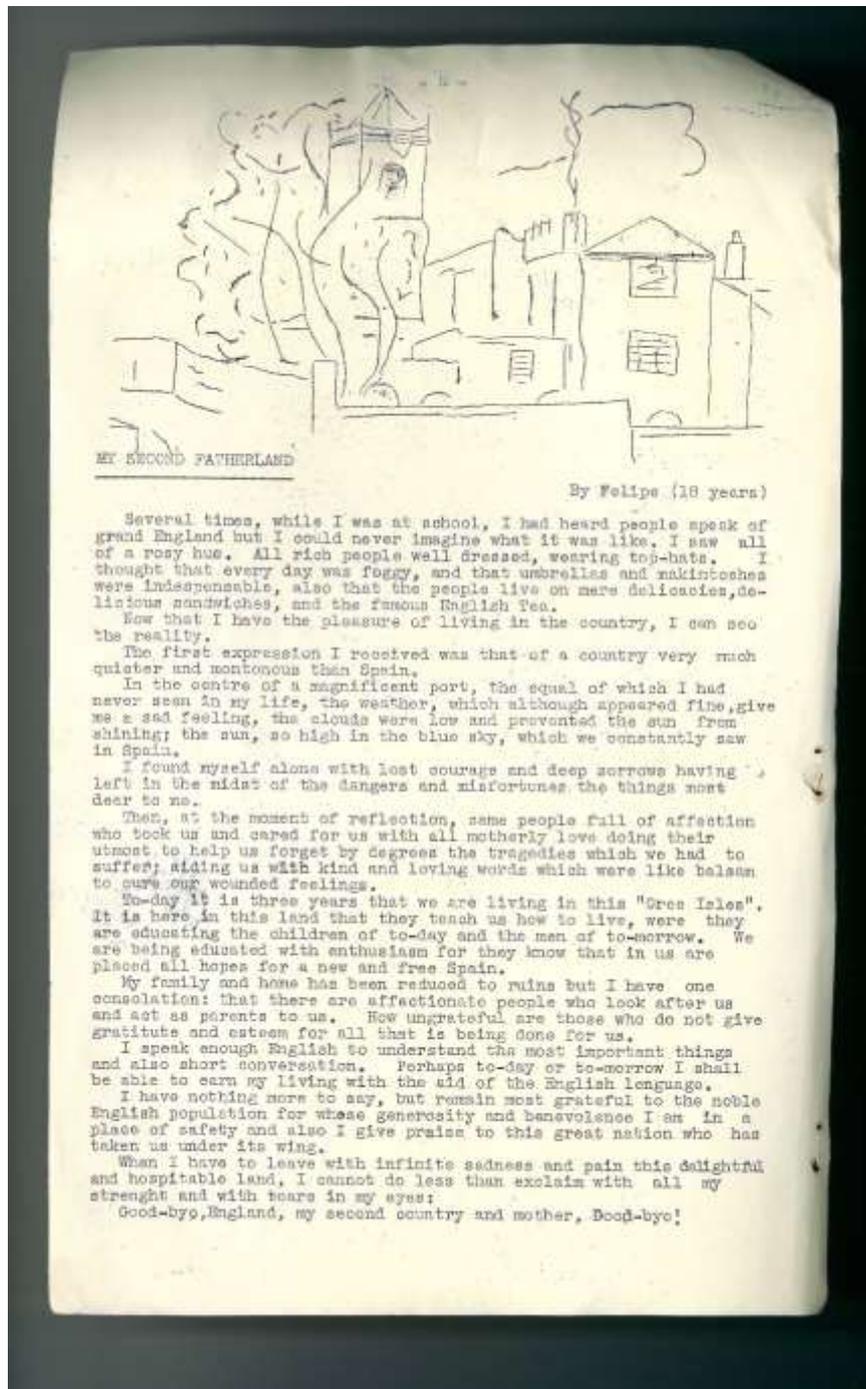


**Telling our stories – writings of the Basque child refugees:
 (7d) “My second fatherland” by Felipe aged 18 years, in the
Periodico de los chicos espanoles en Inglaterra (Magazine of the
 Spanish boys in England) No 1, 23 May 1940**



“Several times, while I was at school, I had heard people speak of grand England but I could never imagine what it was like. I saw all of a rosy hue. All rich people well dressed, wearing top-hats. I thought that every day was foggy, and that umbrellas and

makintoshes were indispensable, also that the people live on mere delicacies, delicious sandwiches, and the famous English Tea.

Now that I have the pleasure of living in the country, I can see the reality. The first expression I received was that of a country very much quieter and monotonous than Spain.

In the centre of a magnificent port, the equal of which I had never seen in my life, the weather, which although appeared fine, give me a sad feeling, the clouds were low and prevented the sun from shining; the sun, so high in the blue sky, which we constantly saw in Spain.

I found myself alone with lost courage and deep sorrows having left in the midst of the dangers and misfortunes the things most dear to me.

Then, at the moment of reflection, came people full of affection who took us and cared for us with all motherly doing their utmost to help us forget by degrees the tragedies which we had to suffer; aiding us with kind and loving words which were like balsam to cure our wounded feelings.

Today it is three years that we are living in this "Gree Isles". It is here in this land that they teach us how to live, were they are educating the children of to-day and the men of tomorrow. We are being educated with enthusiasm for they know that in us are placed all hopes for a new and free Spain.

My family and home has been reduced to ruins but I have one consolation: that there are affectionate people who look after us and act as parents to us. How ungrateful are those who do not give gratitude and esteem for all that is being done for us.

I speak enough English to understand the most important things and also short conversation. Perhaps today or tomorrow I shall be able to earn my living with the aid of the English language.

I have nothing more to say, but remain most grateful to the noble English population for whose generosity and benevolence I am in a place of safety and also I give praise to this great nation who has taken us under its wing.

When I have to leave with infinite sadness and pain this delightful and hospitable land, I cannot do less that exclaim with all my strength and with tears in my eyes:

Good-bye, England my second country and mother, Good-bye!"