



Left: Dora at the Langham colony.  
Right: Dora today with her son Tubal.



# My life

My name is Teodora (Dora) Bueno. I was on the Habana that day in 1937 when we arrived in Southampton. A little girl of six uprooted from her parents, I was sent to the colony at Langham near Colchester with my two brothers Cesareo and Carlos and my older sister Herminia.

Time slowly erased the memory of those years. In 1940 I was "adopted" by an English family who lived in Dagenham. They were very kind to me and I loved them very much.

It is during these years that my heart transferred to England. In spite of the fact that it was the war, I remember those years as the best ones in my life. But at the end of the war a new and terrible test awaited me: I was claimed by my Spanish family who were exiled in France and was once again uprooted. I had forgotten my mother, didn't speak Spanish or French, only English. It was very difficult for me.

The years passed. The birth of my mentally handicapped son and the economically precarious living conditions cut me off from my English connections. In spite of many attempts, I never succeeded in finding traces of my past. Last summer I went with my eldest son to Dagenham to try

to find members of the Ransom family, and an article was published in the local newspaper "The Post" but brought no response. Then by chance, my son found the website of your Association and we got in touch with Natalia. Such a coincidence – her mother had been at Langham, and my sister Herminia helped look after Natalia when she was a baby! Natalia sent me many photographs and newspaper articles about the colony and little by little I started to reconstitute the puzzle of these years. But I am still looking for the Ransom family – my family... Perhaps one day I will be lucky again...

I sincerely hope to meet some of you *niños de Langham* at the meal in May 2005.

## 'Help the Basque Children' stamps



by Natalia Benjamin

In 1938, the Basque Children's Committee brought out a series of stamps labelled "Help the Basque Children". Such stamps are known as "Cinderellas", a term used in philately for anything that may look like a postage stamp but is either not valid to carry any mail or not issued by an official postal authority. They include charity stamps, Christmas seals and advertisements.

Three vignettes were printed. The first one, in blue, showing a picture of a young boy, came out in September 1938. The boy was Jose María

Puertas from the colony in Street. The other two stamps, in green and red, bearing the picture of a young girl, came out in December 1938. Sold as part of the BCC fundraising campaign, they were accompanied by the following explanatory leaflet: "1,000 Basque children refugees are still enjoying the quiet peace and security that Great Britain has afforded them. They want to go on living here till the Spanish War is over and they can once more be united with their mothers and fathers, nearly all of whom are at present either political prisoners or refugees themselves. But it costs money to keep them and so they are asking you to help by buying

some of these stamps to stick on your correspondence.

*A sheet of 24 stamps costs only 6d. It is very little, but if 100,000 people join together to help in this way, just think of what it will mean."*

We have some indication of how they sold from a note in the September 1939 issue of *Spanish Relief* (bulletin no. 15 of the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief): "The Basque Children's Stamp continues to enjoy a steady sale. To date it has brought us in a profit of more than a hundred pounds."

At the beginning of 1939, the Peace Pledge Union, who sponsored The Oaks, a colony in Langham (Colchester), brought out its own stamp, again with the object of raising funds and labelled "In England Still". The stamps were distributed free, but with an appeal for donations. We know from an article in *Peace News* (30 June, 1939) that the child pictured was six years old, the youngest in the colony, and that her name was Esperanza Careaga.

● A stamp dealer in New Zealand whom I contacted on the internet has kindly donated originals of the Help the Basque Children stamps. If anyone has any of the "In England Still" stamps, or knows of their whereabouts, we would be very grateful for them for our archives.