

INTERVIEW WITH ETHEL ROSENBAUM PAILET
AND HER SISTER THELMA, CONDUCTED
BY HOWARD PRINCE

Although the appointment had been made with Mrs. Paillet, her sister was present at the time and both joined in the interview.

There were three children from the Rosenbaum family who entered the Home together, Ethel, aged 12; Dorothy, aged 8½; Thelma, aged 7. This was in 1921. Their parents were divorced and the girls lived with their mother. When the mother was injured as a result of being hit by a motorcycle, she was unable to continue to care for the girls and placed them.

The sisters recalled that they were put into Isolation for two weeks upon first arriving. One remembered that they were in a single room with an adjoining bath and that the nurse was a Mrs. Joe Wavse.

Dr. Vollmer was the superintendent when they first went into the Home. They recalled that at that time the children slept in dormitories, two each for boys and another two for the girls. It seemed to the girls that there must have been about 350 children there at the time. (Actually there never were that many children resident at any one time.) They remembered that the children gathered together for prayers conducted by Rabbi Vollmer, and they also remembered that if one were naughty, Dr. Vollmer spanked with a hair brush. Every child had a number, and one's clothes were marked with that number.

After Mr. Vollmer left, Mr. Ginsburg came and he divided the dormitories into bedrooms. After that there was more mingling in play between boys and girls.

They remembered that every Friday night they had baked red fish for dinner with oranges and cinammon balls for dessert. They commented that the Home did not keep kosher. After Mr. Ginsburg came, they could invite a friend over for Friday night dinner. They also recalled that every Monday there was red beans and rice for dinner. The children were not permitted to drink coffee, but had hot chocolate. They sat seven to a table, mixed boys and girls, with a matron at each table. Sometimes the dietician would take five or six girls to the grocery to buy food, which she taught them to cook and which they then ate.

They remembered the Red, White and Blue Golden City cards, which were given for "good deeds." A red card meant a reward of five cents, a white card meant two or three cents, and a blue card was a promise of some future privilege. They recalled that there was a "candy store" in the Home where children could spend their allowance or the money they got for good deeds.

They remembered that on Sundays the alumni boys would come over and play a ball game against the boys who were in the Home. Sometimes Mr. Ginsburg would take the children to Audubon Park to go swimming.

A Mr. Worman would come to the Home from Werleins to give music lessons to some of the children. Every six months they had medical examinations.

As for routines, the sisters remembered that all children had some chores. They had to bathe before dinner, each group by age having a different time to go to the showers. After dinner they had study hall. Children went to bed at different times, by age groups.

INTERVIEW BY HOWARD PRINCE OF
ETHEL ROSENBAUM PAILET AND HER SISTER

When they first came to the Home boys and girls went to camp separately, but later the whole place went together. They recalled this fondly. They had good food at camp. They said that at camp they used newspapers for sheets. They recalled special trips to Henderson Point. They remembered going to camp by train.

They remembered movies on Friday night and the once a year anniversary party. The children would put on a play for the anniversary to show their accomplishments. If you had no demerits, you could work to earn points up to a number which would permit you to get a ticket to see a play at the Strand Theater.

They got amused recalling how they used to boost a girl over the wall in back so she could go to a nearby store to buy them sandwiches.

Although they went to different temples on Friday night and Saturday morning, confirmations took place in the Home chapel. They got present of a bible for confirmation. Ethel was married in the chapel at the Home. She also received a dowry from the Home.

They remembered that their mother would come often to visit them.

Ethel left the Home when she was about 16. Thelma remained till she was 18. Ethel recalled that when she left the Home, they gave her assistance in the amount of \$6 per month, and she had to account for how she had spent it before another sum would be given.

When asked about the things that had not been liked by them, they recalled that Mrs. Baumer would examine them every day to make sure that they were dressed right and clean. They also disliked Thursday night, because that was when the girls had to darn boys' socks.

They thought it was a policy that children could not be adopted from the Home. Children had to be under 12 years of age to be eligible to enter. Parents contributed what they could afford for the child's care.

Of the people at the Home when they were there they recalled Louis Peters, Max and Millie Tobias, Roger Perlis, Sam and Emanuel Pulitzer, Jack Turanski.

Both sisters spoke of what a fine experience it had been. One described it as "living in a fine boarding home." They recalled that Mr. Ginsburg was good to the children.

Thelma was the first girl who permitted to go out on a date.