

Hungarian Refugees Find Home in Solvang

SOLVANG, April 14—The population of this Danish-American community has been increased by five with the arrival of the Karoly (Charles) Illes family, who are among the first Hungarian refugees to reach Santa Barbara County.

The Odyssey of the Illeses, Karoly, 29; his wife Eva, 29, and their three children, Charles, 8, Eva, 7, and Csaba, 3, from their native country behind the Iron Curtain to freedom in America has ended with their coming to Solvang. This was due to the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Messer of Solvang who answered an appeal last November in which they agreed to sponsor a Hungarian refugee family.

Flee From Hungary

Fearful of "spending the winter in Siberia," Illes said he and his family fled from their home town of Ajka, about 105 miles from Budapest, the middle of November, about three weeks after the Hungarian revolt started.

The refugees reported they were warmly welcomed in Austria and in January they were flown to this country.

Complications set in at the reception center at Camp Kilmer where Illes was befriended by a Hungarian-American of Franklin, N.J. Illes had his new friend "sign out" for the family, and thus obviated the government's responsibility to provide their transportation to California.

He wrote Mrs. Messer explaining his plight and Mrs. Messer answered saying she would drive to the East Coast and call for the family.

Locates Family

After a three-day search, she was able to locate the Illeses in Franklin.

Mrs. Messer said it was a memorable return trip. She spoke no Hungarian and the Hungarians no English. Both

Mrs. Messer and the Illeses surmounted the word barrier with the aid of Hungarian-English pocket dictionaries.

Pick First Oranges

The Illeses enjoyed a panoramic view of America, the youngsters tasted their first ice cream, drank their first bottled soft drink, and saw for the first time real Indians and cowboys in the great Southwest.

One of the family's big moments after arriving on the Pacific Coast was the picking of their first oranges from a tree in Santa Barbara.