

Remolif
and Shere

Charles Shere, for his grandchildren

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It took a lot of people before you to make you possible. I knew some of them, and heard about others, and I'll tell you what I know about them.

I'll start with Granddad because he was the oldest one I knew.

He wasn't really my grand-dad. He was my mother's grand-dad, but I called him that, because that's what she called him.

Grand-dad was born on his father's farm in Sonoma county near Santa Rosa. His father had come to California with his two brothers in 1850, when a lot of men came to hunt for gold in the California rivers and mountains.

The three Crane boys decided they liked farming better than digging for gold in the mud, and they settled on a beautiful piece of land that had hills, springs, wide flat meadows, and groves of oak trees. Back up in the hills there was a long valley that's still called Crane Canyon.

Each of the three brothers found a wife, and each of the three couples had lots of children. Grand-dad was one of them. They named him Charles, and he was the first of lots of Charleses to come.

Grand-dad farmed too, when he grew up. But he was also a teacher. By the time he was grown up he had so many brothers and sisters and cousins that most of them had to move off the Crane ranch. There just wasn't enough room for everybody.

So Grand-dad rode his horse a day's ride north to Geyserville. Here he taught school in a little one-room

schoolhouse, and here he found his wife. I don't know where she came from and I don't remember what her name is; you'll have to ask someone else about her.

Grand-dad and his wife had three boys: Clarence, Percy, and Charles Ellis. Then they had another baby, a girl this time, who they called Dorothy.

Charles Ellis was my grandfather, and I called him Gramp. Almost everyone else called him Ellis, because if they called him Charles he'd be mixed up with Grand-dad, who most people called Charles.

When Gramp was a little boy Grand-dad moved away from Geyserville. First he moved up to Oregon, where he tried farming in the dry country in the southeast corner.

If you go up there you won't find many farms. There are places where there's enough water in the ground for ducks and geese, but the soil isn't very good for farming. There are places where lots of antelopes and deer can find something to eat, but it doesn't grow enough grass for cows or even sheep.

So before long Grand-dad moved with his wife and the four children back to California. But you can tell they lived in Oregon for a while, because there's a town called Crane, and a Crane Mountain, and maybe even a Crane Creek.

When he was still a young boy Gramp's family moved back to California. Once again Grand-dad tried farming. This time he grew wheat and hay on the wide flat fields in Yolo county. Grand-dad liked farming but he also liked schools, and the University had an agricultural school nearby in the small town of Davis.

Gramp went to high school in Yolo county, but when it was time for him to go to college he decided he wasn't really much interested in farming. He liked science better, especially chemistry. So once again Grand-dad moved the household, this time to Berkeley.

By then uncle Percy was old enough to help Grand-dad in a new trade. Together they built a nice big house at the top of Cedar Street, and when it was finished they built a few more. One was right next door, on La Loma Street. Another was on Le Roy Avenue, a couple of blocks down the hill. Gramp helped build the houses too, and in the winter he made some money pulling out wagons and carts that got stuck in the mud on Cedar Street when the horses couldn't pull them up the steep hill. In those days the streets weren't yet paved!

Grand-dad and Percy went on building houses and Clarence became a teacher, I think, and little Dorothy went to school, and Gramp went to the University of California, which was just a few blocks away down Euclid Avenue.

At college Gramp studied carefully and worked hard. He was very lucky, for an important scientist from Italy had chosen the University as a place to do some special work. Enrico Fermi asked Gramp to help him with some of his experiments, and taught him how to recognize the purest kinds of material, the elements, by burning little bits and noticing the color they made.

Gramp continued to build things, too. Once he and another college boy got together and built a small house near the police station. Just after they began to work on it, a third boy went up to them and asked if he could help.

A few days later the three boys were sitting on the curb across the street eating their lunches and looking at the house they were building. "That house doesn't look right to me," Gramp said. "It isn't straight."

They checked and found that one side of the house was four inches higher than the other side. Gramp turned to the new boy. "When I asked you to make a mark when we began framing the house, did you mark the top side of the two-by-four?"

The boy admitted that he had. He'd never built a house before and didn't realize that Gramp was leveling the floor with a straightedge two-by-four. He should have marked the bottom on his side, for it was resting on the right height at the other end.

But it wasn't hard for them to jack up the low side of the house and put some blocks under it. I'm sure those blocks are still there, for I go by that house every Saturday on my way to the market.

Gramp didn't just build houses and help Professor Fermi. Sometimes he went to football games. One day, when Cal beat their enemy Stanford University, a number of boys got excited. They ran down to Telegraph Avenue, unhitched the horses from a streetcar, lifted it off the tracks, and dragged it and its surprised passengers wherever they liked.

Gramp used to take that streetcar out through the redwood forests to Mills College, a girls' college ten miles away in Oakland, because he liked one of the students who lived there. But he didn't have time to make the long trip very often, and before long he stopped seeing her.

When Gramp finished college he got a job teaching chemistry in a high school in Fresno, in the hot Central Valley of California. Here he met a girl named Jessie Maude Davis. When she was a little girl her father and mother moved to California from Appleton, Missouri, where she had been born. Jessie was a year or two older than Gramp, and very pretty. He married her and soon they had a baby of their own, a pretty little girl who looked much like her mother. They named her Olive.

Grand-dad lived alone now with his wife in the big house he had built at the top of Cedar Street. Clarence was

grown up and moved away now; so was Percy; finally even Dorothy grew up and moved away.

Gramp and Gram and baby Olive moved away too. Gram's mother was a nuisance and they decided they lived too close to her. Gramp said he would take a job somewhere else, and one day at church he heard about a school in China that needed chemistry teachers.

Gramp's father, Grand-dad, had left Geyserville and gone all the way to Oregon. His father had left Virginia and gone all the way to California. So now Gramp left Fresno and sailed on a boat all the way to China.

In China they lived in several different cities before they found a place they really liked. They finally settled in Shanghai where they lived in a big house. They already had a mahogany piano that had been Gram's wedding present, but in China Gramp bought Gram some nice furniture to fill the house. There's a Chinese cabinet in our bedroom that he bought for her.

They had servants to help keep the furniture polished, and to clean house, and cook, and take care of the children, for soon there was a new baby almost every year. Two years after Olive a little boy was born, and they named him Charles—the third Charles Crane. Then came six more babies: Marjorie, who was my mother; Clay, Mary, David, Barbara, and Robert.

Life in China was hard. It was hard to stay healthy, for one thing. All the children got sick from time to time. Peggy—that was Marjorie's nickname—had yellow fever, and tuberculosis, but she recovered nicely. When she was six years old she started school, going to a school for foreigners, not Chinese. The school was run by French people, and she had to learn French, and she learned to spell the English way, not the American.

Life was hard in China but it was interesting. The Great War was on, for one thing. When she was six or seven

years old Peggy and Charles danced in a special theatrical show to entertain soldiers who were stationed in Shanghai. They put on men's suits that were way too big for them, and they had mustaches drawn on their faces with makeup, and they wore big cotton gloves to make their hands look bigger. We have three photographs that were taken of the show and you can see that they danced exactly alike.

Before long, though, Charles couldn't dance any more. He had a terrible disease called creeping paralysis. First his feet were numb. Then his legs lost their feeling and he couldn't walk any more. But he was always a very cheerful little boy and handsome, with a nice round face and blond hair. There's a photograph of him in our dining room in Berkeley; it was taken when he was about six years old. I looked just like him when I was that old, and Henry looks just like him right now.

Because of the war, and because they missed their brothers and sisters and parents, and especially because Charles was so sick, Gramp and Gram wanted to return to the United States. And in 1921, when my mother Marjorie was eleven years old, Gram's mother died, and Gramp and Gram and all their children sailed back from China. They sailed from Shanghai to Yokohama, in Japan. Then they sailed to Seattle. And then they sailed down the coast, right through the Golden Gate and into the San Francisco Bay.

Grand-dad helped Gramp buy a big white house in Berkeley. It was torn down many years ago but I remember it and I lived in it for many months. Gramp and Gram and their eight children moved into the big house at 1817 Bancroft and soon they had another baby, the last one in the family, little Dorothy, who was named for Gramp's sister.

Soon after they settled in Berkeley there was a big fire in the hills. It came at the end of summer, on a day when it was very hot and there was no wind at first. The fire spread

quickly among the wooden houses and the wind came up and before long hundreds of houses were gone. Some were just shacks, but many were big beautiful houses, some with fine paintings and other nice things. I don't think anyone was hurt, but many people lost everything they had. The fire stopped just before it got to Grand-dad's house on Cedar Street, and the house on Scenic was saved too. Before long there was lots of work to do, building new houses to replace those that had burned.

That was good for Gramp, for he needed lots of work. He was still teaching, in a high school in San Francisco. But it takes lots of money to raise nine children, especially when one is almost completely paralyzed, and Gramp worked every Saturday, and during the long summer vacations when the school was closed. Gramp learned to paint and put up wallpaper. Many years later he put up the wallpaper in the living room of our house in Berkeley.

Every schoolday Gramp got up early and had breakfast and walked up to Grove Street. Things were changed since he was a boy. The streetcars didn't need horses any more; they ran on electricity that came in wires overhead. He rode the streetcar to the Bay. There he walked onto a ferry boat that sailed across the bay to San Francisco. Here he caught another streetcar that took him to his school where he taught all day. Then he went home, riding the streetcar and the ferry and the other streetcar and walking the block back to the big white house.

Soon Olive and Peggy and Clay were going to high school too, but not in San Francisco. They went to a special high school in Oakland, where the University trained new teachers, just as they had trained Gramp to teach chemistry. Poor Charles didn't go to high school. He could do nothing but play checkers, pushing his pieces with a pencil held in his teeth. He was almost completely paralyzed, and couldn't move anything else. Soon he died, unable even to breathe,

and Gramp and Gram and all the brothers and sisters were very sad.

In the meantime another Charles was growing up a very different place. This one was born in a tiny town in Oklahoma, a year after Peggy was born in Shanghai. This Charles was called Everett because his father was another Charles and people got confused if everyone were called the same name.

Peggy was my Mom and Everett was my Dad. When Dad was a little boy his father took Grandma—Dad's mother—and their two boys on a long trip from Oklahoma to Arizona. Grandma grew up on a farm in Oklahoma. She had gone there in a wagon when she was a little girl, moving from another farm in Indiana. Great-Grandma, who was Grandma's mother, stayed on the Oklahoma farm for many years. When I was a little boy she was there still. She drew her water from the well in a bucket on the end of a rope, and she smoked a corn-cob pipe, and she taught herself to read when she was an old lady.

Great-Grandma stayed on her Oklahoma farm, but Grandpa Charles took Grandma and their two little boys to Bisbee, Arizona. They were sad, because Grandpa and Grandma had another baby who died. Everett was born first and he was healthy, Alva came next and he was never quite healthy, then a little girl named Martha was born and she wasn't at all healthy and she died while still a baby.

Martha was Grandma's name too, but her nickname was Mattie. Her last name was Buckallev which is a nice old Irish name and my brother Timothy uses it for his middle name. Mattie and Grandpa Charles live in Bisbee which was a rough town in the mountains in Arizona, so far south it's almost in Mexico. They all lived in Bisbee because the Oklahoma farm wasn't big enough for another family, and I think because Great-Grandma didn't really like Grandpa Charles very much. Anyway pretty soon Grandpa didn't like Bisbee

any more, and he didn't like living with Grandma either, so he left.

Dad was only in the eighth grade but he quit school so he could get jobs and help his mother and his brother Alvie. Grandma learned how to be a nurse but there weren't many jobs. After a few years Grandma and Dad and Alvie went back to Oklahoma to live on Great-Grandma's farm, and before long Grandma married a nice man named George Henry LaDuke. Mr. LaDuke took care of Grandma and Alvie, but Dad didn't like Mr. LaDuke very much, and now he was old enough to leave home. One day he walked down to the railroad tracks and waited for a freight train to stop and when it did he jumped on a box car and rode it all the way to California.

By then Mom was finished with high school and had started working in a restaurant in Berkeley. Olive had a boy friend named George who worked in a factory in Gilroy where he helped make garlic salt. Clay was in Santa Rosa where he lived with relatives while he went to Santa Rosa Junior College. Mary and David and Barbara were still in school, and Bobbie and Dorothy, the youngest, were in school too.

When summer came Mom visited George and Olive in Watsonville, near Gilroy, and while she was there she went to Carmel, then a little town where lots of artists lived. Mom liked painting and pottery and she got two jobs, one waiting tables in a restaurant, the other carving cameos for rings. Dad had found his way to Carmel too, because he had two aunts who lived in the next town, Pacific Grove. Mabel and Gertrude were Grandpa Charles's sisters. Dad was a busboy and dishwasher in the restaurant where Mom worked, and that's how he met Mom. Soon they liked each other so much they got married, in Watsonville.

At first they kept working in Carmel. Before long, though, a baby was on the way, and they moved back to Berkeley to be near Gram and Gramp. And in August, 1935, the baby was born, and they named him Charles, of course. Not Charles Ellis, after Gramp, but Charles Everett, after Dad. And since Dad was already called Everett, and Gramp was called Ellis, and uncle Charles was dead, and Grandpa Charles was never seen (he was living in Grass Valley, where he died soon), they called the baby Charles, and that Charles was me.

(But they didn't always call me Charles. In fact they always called me Chuck, but I never liked it. Now that I'm almost an old man there's hardly anyone left who calls me Chuck, except my three brothers and my uncle David and my aunts Dorothy and Mary and sometimes, when they forget, some of my many cousins.)

I was born in Berkeley in a hospital not far from the big white house on Bancroft Way. Mom and Dad lived in a little house on Carleton Street. Dad was working in the coal and wood yard on University Avenue just below Grove Street, where he sewed up burlap sacks that were used for feed and coal. In those days there were still a few horses on the street, and many people had rabbits and chickens and some even kept goats and cows. Gramp and Gram had a pet goat for many years; it used to pull Barbara and Bobbie and Dorothy around in a special goat-cart.

After a while Dad went to night school to learn how to make stovepipes and rain-gutters and other things out of sheet metal, and he helped uncle Bobbie learn too, but Bobbie wasn't as good at it as Dad, because he wasn't as bright. Bobbie liked to go to parties and ride his motorcycle and he often drank too much and then went out on his motorcycle and had an accident. A lot of the time he was in bed in the big white

house with his leg or his arm in a cast and hanging from a rope over the bed.

In those days it was hard to find work, and no one we knew had very much money. There were no freeways, and it took a long time to drive anywhere. There was no television, but people liked to go visiting in the evenings after work. Aunt Mary and her boyfriend Joe and their friend Joe Baxley used to visit and play cards. Uncle Bobbie used to stop by for a beer.

When I was very little, about four years old, my aunts and uncles began to get married. Aunt Olive married uncle George, and we visited in their house up in the hills. There I remember reading my first book, *The Last Flower*, by James Thurber. Aunt Barbara married a handsome forester named Bob Sinclair. Uncle Clay was already married, to aunt Dot, and they lived in Berkeley. Uncle David married Aunt Billie, whose name was really Wilma but no one ever called her that. Aunt Mary married uncle Joe. Before long I had lots of cousins to play with: Joanne, Claudia, Ricky, Anne, Roxanne, and later Michael and Craig. I was the oldest of them all except for Joanne.

And when I was almost five years old I had a baby brother. He was born in the University hospital in San Francisco, because that was an inexpensive way to have a baby. Dad took me to see Mom and the baby, but I wasn't allowed to go inside. I had to wave to her from the sidewalk, and she waved out the window, far above. The baby was named James Ellis but we called him Jim or Jimmy. I looked like Dad, but Jim looked like Mom, and we made a nice family.

Mom and Dad still went to Carmel now and then to visit old friends and great-aunts Mabel and Gertrude. They lived in a little house by a big park. We visited a friend named Roscoe who had feet so big he could only wear tennis shoes.

We drove in a Model A with a rumble seat that I got to sit in, outside, when the weather was nice.

But usually I sat inside, and once I opened the door while the car was going, and Mom had to grab my arm to keep me from falling out onto the road! That was in Holy City, where Dad liked to stop so we could get out and stretch and look into the funny machines by the side of the road that had scenes from the Bible inside that lit up when you put a nickel in.

After a while they made enough money to buy a nicer house. We lived for a year in a country house in Lafayette, among lots of walnut trees, and here I did a very naughty thing one day. Dad had a trailer hitched to the back of his car, and that gave me an idea. I decided to play train. I put the wheelbarrow behind the trailer, and my wagon behind the trailer. Then I got a few of the kitchen chairs and put them behind the wagon so there would be room for lots of passengers.

I got in the car and pretended to be the engineer. I steered the train with the steering wheel, and finally I pushed on one of the pedals. Dad hadn't put the brake on, and had only parked in gear, using the engine to keep the car from moving.

When I pushed on the clutch I took the engine out of gear, and the car started to move backward! I heard some horrible noises as the trailer and then the car backed over the wheelbarrow, my wagon, and the chairs. The door flew open and caught on a walnut tree. The door was ruined but it stopped the car and I got out. I got quite a spanking that day when Dad came home!

Then we moved back to Berkeley for a while, and I started kindergarten at Washington school, across the street from Gramp's big white house on Bancroft. But then I skipped into the first grade, and all I remember about that is a little girl named Roberta who hit me on the head with a milk

bottle on the playground during recess. And I remember taking piano lessons in the basement of the church on the other corner across the street from Gramp's.

There was a model A in Milwaukee Wisconsin, too, but instead of black it was painted white with lots of huge polka dots, red, blue, and lots of other colors. This car was driven by a handsome young man from the state of Washington who had gone all the way to Milwaukee to go to engineering school.

It wasn't his first long trip. When he was only six years old Roberto Medardo Alberto Remolif had sailed from Italy to New York all alone, and from New York he had taken a train clear across the United States to Black Diamond, Washington, where his mother and father and sister and three brothers were waiting for him.

We call Roberto "Babbo" because that's the way you say "daddy" in Italian, but his name, now, is Robert A. Remolif, and he is Lindsey's father, and my father-in-law. Babbo was born in Chiomonte, a nice little town in the mountains in Italy, very near the French border. In fact a few years before Babbo was born Chiomonte was in France, but its valley was traded to Italy in return for Nice, a sunny city on the Mediterranean Sea.

In Italy Babbo's father was a villager who did a little bit of everything to make a living. His mother, Luigia, was a wet-nurse. After their first baby was born, a little boy they named Vittorio, Luigia went on the train, through the tunnel, across France to Paris, a long trip in those days. There she got a job working for a rich lady. Her job was to nurse the rich woman's baby, because in those days upper-class ladies didn't like to nurse their own babies.

After two years, Luigia returned to Chiomonte to see her husband and have another baby, a beautiful little girl they

named Vittoria. The King's name was Vittorio, and they liked him, so they named their first two babies after him. In Italian, boys usually get names ending in "o," and girls get names ending in "a".

Then she went back to Paris again. She stayed there another two years and then went back to Italy to have another baby. This one was Babbo. She kept working this way, leaving her own babies with aunts and sisters, until two more babies had come. By then many Italians had left their own country because there wasn't enough work and the farms and villages were too small for all the new children that had been born.

Many of them went to Black Diamond, where a big company had started digging coal out of the ground. The company had started near San Francisco Bay, on the north shoulder of Mount Diablo, but there wasn't much coal there. There was much more in Black Diamond, so much that people came from many countries to dig it up. There were Irish, Poles, Hungarians, Welshmen, and of course Italians; and there were black people from the American South as well.

Babbo's father worked in the coal mines, but he didn't want his own sons to do such dangerous work. Babbo's mother ran a boarding house where unmarried miners lived, and she cooked their breakfasts and dinners, but she didn't want Vittoria to have to work so hard. Babbo's mother and father were immigrants, people who had come to this country from another country. Their children were immigrants too, but would grow up as Americans.

Babbo's mother and father and sister and brothers were in Black Diamond, but Babbo was still in Chiomonte. I don't know why he was left behind, but some people think it was because the priest there wanted him to study to be a priest. When he was a little he was an altar-boy, helping the priest say Mass in the old stone church in the middle of town.

Babbo lived with his grandmother and his aunt in an old stone house near the church. Most of the houses in Chiomonte are made of stone; even the roofs are covered with flagstones. Many people kept animals on the ground floor of their homes. People used donkeys for hauling grapes home from the vineyards and hay home from the hayfields. In the summer, Babbo rode a donkey from Chiomonte up to the pastures where the cows grazed. A man named Tommasetto lived with the cows in the summer, milking and making the good tomme cheeses, and Babbo was an errand boy.

After a year, though, it was time for Babbo to leave Italy and join his family in the United States. Some things were still the same. Most families had a cow. The cooking was much the same. In the winter it still snowed. But some things were different, and Babbo learned to be an American like his brothers and sister. They learned to play baseball as well as soccer, and to speak and read English, and they changed their names to American ones: Victoria, Victor, Robert, Jerry, Henry.

Life in Black Diamond was hard for the miners but fun for the children. They played games, helped their mother, went to school, and explored the woods. There were lots of berries to pick in the summer, but you had to look out for the bears! Sometimes there were movies, and Babbo loved to think about the electricity that made them work, and made lights go on and off. The Great War was on in Europe, and some of the older kids left Black Diamond when they grew up and joined the army and fought the war. But Babbo and his brothers were too young, and his father was too old, so they stayed in Black Diamond.

But, like Dad, and Gramp, and Grand-dad, and Grandpa Charles, Babbo traveled far away from home as soon as he was old enough to. He went to Milwaukee to learn to be an electrical engineer.

There he stayed in a rooming house. One day he parked his car behind the rooming house, and when he came back the car wasn't there. Someone had pushed it out onto the street. The man who did it was Othmar Mischo, because the parking place was his. But Babbo and Othmar became friends.

"Othmar" may seem to be a funny name, and so may "Mischo," but that's because they're German names. Othmar's father was born in Strasbourg, a city whose people are famous cooks and painters, and who like to eat roast goose and sauerkraut and drink good white wine, and who learn to speak both German and French because sometimes Strasbourg is in Germany and sometimes it is in France, depending on who won the most recent war.

"Othmar" was hard for people to say, so he went by his nickname, "Rip." He was a painter, studying painting at art school and for work he painted houses. Everyone in the rooming house was a painter except Babbo. Babbo worked at a restaurant while he went to school. Then after a while Babbo and Rip found a job working for the streetcar company. Babbo didn't drive streetcars, he counted them. He stood on the sidewalk and waited for them to go by, and wrote down what time it went by, and how many passengers were on it. Then he gave that information to the streetcar company. If a streetcar was late the driver would get bawled out. If too many streetcars were too empty, the company would wait longer before sending the next one out.

Rip didn't have any brothers, but he did have five sisters. They were Ermelinda, Mercedes, Donata, Agnes, and Dorothy. They were born in Wabeno, a little town in the north Wisconsin woods. Their father ran the town's post office, and they lived in a big ten-room apartment above the post office, and there was a bakery next door to the post office. Across the street was the town library, housed in a log cabin, and next to the library was the commons, where they played

on the grass in the summer and the snow in the winter, and down the street was the school.

Their father was born in Wisconsin, too, but his father was born in Strasbourg. Sometimes Strasbourg was in Germany, and sometimes Strasbourg was in France. Not because they kept moving the city, of course, but because sometimes after a war Germany would be a little bit bigger, and sometimes after another war France would be.

Othmar's grandfather did a lot of things in Strasbourg, and one of the things he did was make paintings. He especially made paintings in churches. And Othmar's dad did a lot of things too, and one of them was run the post office. And Othmar did a few things, and at first he wanted to be a painter like his grandfather, so he went to art school, but then he went to work for the streetcar company.

Othmar and his sisters Ermelinda, Mercedes, Donata, Agnes, and Dorothy were given their fancy names by their Aunt Adeline. Aunt Adeline liked to read a lot to take her mind off her twelve children. She found fancy names in the books she read, but everyone thought she ran out of names after Donata and gave the two littlest girls, Agnes and Dorothy, plain old Saints' names. But of course all the other kids had nicknames. Othmar was called "Rip," Mercedes and Donata were called "Swede" and "Toots," and Ermelinda's name was shortened to "Erm."

There were lots of hillsides, and in the winter Rip and his sisters could slide down them in sleds, for it snowed every year. And in the springtime when the snows melted there were wide green lawns to play on. The rich families who lived on top of the hills had big lawns of their own, but Rip and the girls could play in the fields on weekends and in the long summer days, unless it was a rainy day, or there was a thunderstorm.

After a while there wasn't as much money in Wabeno any more, and Mr. Mischo moved his family to the city, to the

biggest city in Wisconsin, Milwaukee. He bought a rooming house, a big house with enough rooms for his own family and a few more rooms to rent out to other people, and one of the people who rented a room was Babbo.

Rip went to Milwaukee to go to art school, and then he began to work for the streetcar company when he got out of school. Ermalinda stayed in Wabeno with her husband. Swede went to Rippon and learned to work at a printing machine at the newspaper, and then she went back to Wabeno to work in its newspaper. Swede was always quiet but very smart. When the Mischo kids were little she always washed the dishes and Agnes and Dorothy dried the dishes and Swede always recited poetry while she washed the dishes, and when she was a schoolgirl she won the state declamatory contest. Toots married a barber named Myron and they lived in Milwaukee. Agnes and Dorothy went to Milwaukee too, and they went to high school.

Agnes got terrible aches in her sides when she was a girl, and once had to spend a whole week in bed. She wasn't very strong, and the doctor said she had to have a special diet, and drink beer every day. And then she got stronger, and she was pretty and liked to have fun. Babbo was smart and handsome, and they liked each other a lot. When he was through with engineering school Babbo got a job in the steel mill in Chicago and he and Agnes got married, and in a few years, when they had enough money, they had a baby girl. Agnes was reading a book and there was someone in it named Lindsey. They liked the name so they gave it to their little girl. And very soon they had another little girl, Patricia Louise. Her nickname was Sis, partly because she was the baby sister, and partly because the newspapers had lots of stories about President Roosevelt's new baby granddaughter whose name was Sisty.

Everything I've told you about happened a long time ago. Then, almost sixty years ago, everything changed. There was

another Great War, even worse than the one that had happened earlier. Germany, invaded many neighboring countries, and for a while Italy helped her. Soon all of Europe was at war. And so was all of Asia, for Japan had invaded Korea, and began to fight with China, and even attacked the United States.

The war was terrible, destroying many cities and killing many people. But in the United States there was finally enough work for everyone. Babbo did well at the steel mill, and soon he and Nanna were able to buy a house from the Sears, Roebuck catalogue. They bought a nice double lot among the oak trees in Munster, Indiana, and hired two Dutch carpenters to help them assemble the house. And there they had two more babies, both girls, and they named them Susan Marie and Penelope Ann.

None of Babbo's brothers had to fight in the war. Victor was a barber in the army, and I don't know what Jerry and Henry did. Babbo's mother and father had gone back to Italy before the war and they couldn't get away to come back to the United states. Babbo's poor father was too old to fight, and often had to hide from German soldiers, sometimes in the haystacks. If they found him they would have taken him to Germany and made him work in the factories.

Uncle Clay was caught in the war, too. Like so many boys in our family he had gone far away when he grew up, to the Philippine Islands. He flew there in a big beautiful white Flying Clipper one bright sunny day. I remember the blue sky and the blue water of the San Francisco Bay, because the airplane left from Treasure Island, where I played violin in a children's orchestra when I was five years old. Uncle Clay wore a white suit and a white straw hat and was very handsome.

But soon after he landed in Manila the Japanese invaded the country. Poor uncle Clay was sent to a prison camp. He never had enough to eat, and several times he was

almost killed. The head of the prison liked him, though, because he was a good painter. He made pictures of the prison guards and that helped save his life.

Uncle Clay had left aunt Dot and cousins Joanne and Claudia behind in Berkeley, so they were apart all through the four long years of war. Olive and George stayed in Berkeley; George had an important job in a steel mill in South San Francisco. David was too young to fight and went to Santa Rosa where he played basketball and learned to be a banker. Then he and aunt Billie bought a little house and lived in Santa Rosa until the war was over.

Aunt Mary went to Boston to study nursing, and aunt Barbara lived with uncle Bob in the mountains because his forestry job was important and he didn't have to go to war. Aunt Dorothy learned to be a telephone operator. She married a handsome young soldier named Lester Bielen, and when he had to go to England she stayed home in the big white house on Bancroft Way. And Mom and Dad bought a little house in Richmond, because Dad was working there before the war, in a factory that made Pullman cars for the railroad, and when the war started he and Mom both went to work in the shipyard making freighters that were needed to supply our troops in the Pacific.

One day in Richmond I decided to run away from home. I was in the second grade and I didn't like school and I was mad at Mom and Dad because they had promised to take me to the circus but instead they drove to the hospital and there a nurse had put me to sleep by putting something over my nose and when I woke up my throat hurt because they had taken my tonsils out. I got to eat ice cream but I never got to go to the circus so I was mad at everyone.

So I walked out of the house and walked up Macdonald Avenue for several blocks until I came to Nicholl Park where there was a big cage for birds and lots of peacocks with long beautiful tails and a smaller cage for monkeys. And I

played there for a long time and then Dad came and found me and took me home.

Then we moved again, this time back to Berkeley. We lived in a big house at 1517 North Street, with a small chickenyard behind, and a big apricot tree, and I went to Whittier School. We lived just two blocks from Aunt Dot and Joanne and Claudia so I played with them a lot. And sometimes, in the summer, we drove up with Gramp and Gram to Santa Rosa to see uncle Dave and aunt Billie and cousin Rickie, and sometimes we even drove out to the Russian River where Dave had a cabin. I even remember driving along Eastside Road once, because for a while uncle Percy was selling houses and farms, and lived in one of them for a few weeks.

Aunt Victoria married uncle Mido which is short for Armido; he was another Italian immigrant from Black Diamond. Uncle Vic was a barber in San Francisco; Henry who everyone called Sunny because he was so cheerful also worked in San Francisco; Jerry lived in Seattle with his mother. And Babbo and Nanna and their four girls lived in Munster in their new Sears, Roebuck house. Gramp and Gram lived in the big white house in Berkeley.

And the war dragged on. Many of the children I had played with at Washington School were gone because their parents were Japanese immigrants. Japan had attacked us and many people were afraid of Japanese immigrants so they were all put in prison camps, just like uncle Clay in the Philippines, though we didn't kill any of our prisoners as the Japanese did.

Mom and Dad kept working at the shipyard and I went to Whittier School and one day Jim decided to run away from home. He was only three years old and couldn't go very fast, and he decided to drag a heavy sledge hammer with him, so it wasn't hard to catch up with him. Mom picked him up

on Grant Street and carried him home and I carried the sledge hammer.

The war years were strange because everything looked different. At night it was dark because the streetlamps were painted black on top so airplanes couldn't see them. There were big soft balloons as big as busses hanging in the sky over the Bay. Some blocks had big wire fences around them with soldiers guarding them and you couldn't go in. And the big new theater at Berkeley High School, which had been started before the war, was standing unfinished all that time, because there wasn't any material to finish it with; everything was being used for the war.

Shoes and tires and gasoline were hard to buy because the army and navy needed it all. The government gave everybody a few ration stamps for such things, but you needed to save them carefully because it took a lot to buy things.

There was a can of pineapple on the top shelf of the little corner grocery and it stayed there all through the war. Joanne and Claudia and I used to look at it and wish we could taste it but nobody had enough ration stamps to buy it. You couldn't buy butter either, and we churned it at home from the cream at the top of the milk bottles, and sometimes we ate margarine instead, which had to be colored with yellow powder mixed in with a fork.

One day terrible news came in a letter from Grandma. Mr. LaDuke had been driving a tractor fixing the county road in Welch and it turned over on top of him. He never regained consciousness. After a month in the hospital he died. Dad and Mom decided to go back to Oklahoma to help Grandma.

We piled everything in the station wagon—boxes, suitcases, Jim and our dog Shep. There was a little soft place on top of some blankets by the rear window for me. And we drove to Oklahoma. It took almost a week to get there, because during the war you couldn't drive faster than 35 miles

an hour. It took all day to drive across the Mojave Desert, and we had a flat tire, and we camped out by the side of the Colorado River in Needles. Then we drove across Arizona, through a little snowstorm near Kingman, and we had another flat tire, and we crossed half of New Mexico and then camped again, by the Rio Grande River this time, near the small town of Albuquerque.

Then we drove the rest of the way across New Mexico and we stopped in a town in the mountains for lunch and then drove on another forty miles when we noticed Shep was missing. So we drove all the way back and found him. He had been fighting with some Indian dogs and was all bitten and bloody and we cleaned him up and started out again.

But the car made a terrible racket. The differential had given out. Dad had to fix it, and it took two days. Dad was mad when we found Shep was missing, but later he was glad. If we hadn't driven back forty miles for Shep, the car would have broken down in the middle of the desert, and we would have had to walk forty miles for help.

We finally got to Welch and moved in with Grandma. She lived in another big white house, but this one was on the edge of a small town. She had a barn and a cowshed and a chicken-house. It was my job to take her cow out to the pasture next door every morning and bring her back every night.

It was also my job to pump the water. There wasn't any plumbing in the house. The pump was out behind the house, and I pumped buckets of water to bring into the kitchen. On Saturday nights we heated big pots of water on the stove to put in the big round tin tub to take baths in. I took the first bath, and Jim got the water next. It wasn't fair because I was generally dirtier than Jim.

One day it was very hot and when I was out watching the cow I decided to go swimming. I took off most of my clothes and jumped into the neighbor's pond. Suddenly I saw a snake. It was a water moccasin, and they are poisonous, so I

got scared. I jumped out of the pond and ran all the way home. The neighbor's wife saw me running home in my underpants and she got mad because it was Sunday and she was the minister's wife and she thought people shouldn't go swimming on Sunday. I got another spanking. I should have known better, because I was almost nine years old.

In Welch I skipped a half grade. Either I was going to have to repeat half of the third grade, or skip half of it, and I went right into the fourth grade. I didn't like school very much and don't remember anything about it except learning a song about Oklahoma. But I do remember a small airplane, a Piper Cub, that landed on the road next to Grandma's house. I remember watching baseball games. I remember Great-Grandma's farm, and playing in her haymow with my cousins Betty and Donna, who were uncle Alvie's and aunt Fae's girls.

And I remember terrible thunderstorms. Once the lightning rolled into a ball and went rolling all around Grandma's lawn, and the next day we could see its tracks where it had burned the lawn. And on one terrible stormy day the news came that President Roosevelt had died, and my mother said she had to go to the hospital, and Dad took her to the nearest big town, Miami, and there my next brother was born the next day, on Friday the Thirteenth of April, 1945. I wanted to name him Jonathan Edward, but Mom and Dad decided John Frederick was a better name.

And then the war was over in Germany, and that summer when I was ten years old Mom and Jim and John and I got on a Greyhound bus and went back to Berkeley. Dad stayed behind in Welch to finish working on Grandma's house. He put in plumbing for her, and electricity, so she would be comfortable even if we weren't living with her to help her.

We stayed with Gramp and Gram for a few months while we waited for Dad, who drove back in the Ford station wagon with Shep. Then we stayed a few weeks more while

Mom and Dad looked for a new place to live. They found an old house on seven acres south of Sebastopol, back in Sonoma county, and next to it there was another ten acres without a house, so they bought both and we quickly moved in.

Dad found a job in a stove factory south of Sebastopol, and on weekends and at night he worked on the house. We all helped. At first it was only four rooms: kitchen, living room, and two little bedrooms, with a little bathroom.

There was plumbing, because we had a windmill and a water tower with a nice redwood tank up three flights of stairs. But the electricity came from a generator, and the generator didn't work, so for two or three years we just used kerosene lamps. We didn't have television, and we didn't need a radio. Dad played the accordion or the harmonica, and we sang, and we read books aloud to each other.

The worst times were in the winter, when our road was so muddy you couldn't drive on it. We had to walk in from the county road. It had a funny name: it was called Blank Road, and it was three-quarters of a mile away. We had to carry everything on our backs. We had a horse and a mule and a cow and several pigs, so we had to carry their food as well as ours.

Mom had to cook everything on a wood-burning stove, and I had to split the wood and carry it in and stack it. I helped with the animals, too, feeding the ducks and rabbits and chickens and pigs. Sometimes Dad would kill a pig and I would help him butcher it. Mom didn't like to kill rabbits and chickens, so Dad did that too.

Dad did most of the milking, but I helped, and I ran the cream separator, turning the crank until the machine played a steady F-sharp, and watching the skim milk come out one spout, and the thick cream come out another. It was very thick and yellow because we had a nice Jersey named Goldie.

Dad tried to farm with the horse and the mule, but they didn't get along well together. The mule didn't do any work if he could get the horse to work, and the horse was old and tired. So Mom and Dad gardened with shovels and forks and a little garden tractor.

By now I was in the sixth grade. I walked to Eucalyptus School in a little village called Hessel, three miles from home. There were two rooms in the schoolhouse, one for the little kids and another for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Our teacher was very strict. I spent most of my time reading books, but I remember the singing lessons, and listening to the Standard School Hour every week.

What I didn't like was lunchtime. My mother made our bread, and it was usually very flat. She made fried egg sandwiches with it, or peanut butter and honey. They looked terrible and I was ashamed when the other kids saw them. Sometimes I hid when I ate my sandwiches, and sometimes I just threw the lunch away on my way to school.

There were some exciting moments. One day little John fell off the stairs going up the water tower. He fell one flight of stairs and landed on his head, but he wasn't hurt, just dazed. I got hurt much worse one day, when I saw something burning inside an old apple drying shed that I walked past on my way home from school. I went inside and found a fire burning in some yellow sulfur used to dry apples.

I tried to stamp out the fire but it was slippery and I fell into it. The burning sulfur stuck to my right hand and the left sleeve of my flannel shirt. I wiped it off my hand quickly but couldn't get it out of my shirt. I ran to the nearest house, about a half mile away, and they smothered the fire with wet cloth and took me to the hospital. I was in the hospital for quite a while and the doctor had to cut little pieces of skin off my leg and graft them to my arm to replace the skin that had burned.

After we were on the farm for two years Mom had another baby boy. He was very small and Dad decided his name should be Timothy for tiny and Buckallew for his mother. He was born small but he grew to be just about as big as Jim. We used to sing “Chuck, Jim; John, Tim,” because John looked like me and Dad, and Tim looked like Jim and Mom.

Soon after Tim was born Jim began to feel weak and tired. We took him to Doctor Sharrocks, who had helped me when I was burned, and he said Jim had tuberculosis. No one else had it, and the cow didn’t have it, so we didn’t know how he got it, but he did. There was some fear that I might get it, and since Jim had to have a bedroom of his own now there wasn’t room left for me. So I was sent down to Berkeley to live with Gram and Gramp.

They had sold the old white house on Bancroft Way because they didn’t need such a big house any more. All their children were grown and married and had children of their own. But soon after I arrived I heard Gram crying aloud. Aunt Barbara had telephoned to tell her that uncle Bob had been taken to the hospital with a cerebral hemorrhage and had died suddenly.

Aunt Barbara came to Berkeley with her two children, my cousins Ann and Craig, and we all lived together in a nice stucco house at 1232 Glen Avenue. Gramp and Gram had a big bedroom on the top floor, Ann and Craig had another, I had a third small one, and Barbara had her own room half-way up the stairs. Downstairs was a nice big living room with Gram’s wedding-present piano and the dining room, and in the hall was a big closet that was full of old copies of the National Geographic going back to 1921.

It was hard going from a two-room school to a big-city Junior High School, and it was hard getting used to electric lights and television and telephones and busy streets. It was

hard getting used to Ann and Craig, too. And it was hard getting used to Gramp and Gram, who had very different ideas than Mom and Dad.

Mom and Dad smoked cigarettes, and Gram thought that was wrong. (She put up with Gramp's cigars. He smoked one White Owl every night after dinner.) Mom and Dad drank beer and sometimes wine, and both Gram and Gramp thought that was wrong, very wrong. And Dad swore a lot, and Gram and Gramp didn't like that. And while I went to Sunday School a few times in the country, now I had to go every Sunday, and to church after Sunday School, and to church suppers every Wednesday night.

Every Saturday I polished all the family fancy shoes. We never polished shoes in the country; we just oiled them a few times in the winter. And I had to help clean house, and we never did much of that in the country either.

On the other hand I didn't have to split wood, or feed pigs, or turn a cream separator, or walk three miles to school and three miles back, usually in the mud. And I could ride streetcars, and sometimes aunt Barbara took me swimming along with Ann and Craig. And after a while Gramp bought a television set, and the neighbors used to come to watch it on Saturday nights, and I was the only one who could make the programs come in just right. There was one program I especially liked, a fifteen-minute concert that came on once a week.

After the war uncle Dave and aunt Billie had moved to Samoa in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, because all the Crane boys liked to go to distant countries. There uncle Dave worked in the Bank of America, and Rickie learned to swim and to sail, and there his little brother Steven began to go to school. Uncle Clay had come home from prison camp after the war, but he was so weak and badly fed that he never really got better, and he died before I met Lindsey. He was a character. When I lived with Gram and Gramp he used to drive me

up to Blank Road sometimes to see Mom and Dad. He always paid the ferryboat toll with a hundred-dollar bill, and then he would stop at a bank in San Rafael and change his money back into another hundred-dollar bill for the return trip. And sometimes he would pick up a lady friend, and I would have to ride in the back seat, and one time he asked me to find a bottle for him that he kept under the seat.

Aunt Mary and uncle Joe lived in Pleasanton where he taught school and she was a school nurse. They had a big family, four boys and a girl, Michael and Brian and Peter and Paul and Mary Jo who was named for both her parents, and we didn't see them very often because it was hard to go driving with that many kids. Anyway Michael was a lot younger, about Craig's age, and the others were even littler, and I had friends at school to play with, so I didn't see my cousins very much.

While I was getting settled in the city, after living two years in the country, Lindsey and her sisters and Babbo and Nanna were getting settled in the country, after living so long in the small town of Munster. Babbo decided he wanted to go back to the West to be near his own relatives. live in the country again.

Uncle Vic was a barber in San Francisco, and uncle Sunny worked there too doing something, and they heard about a farm for sale in Sonoma county. So all the brothers, Babbo and Victor and Jerry and Sunny, and their sister Victoria and her husband, all got together and bought a farm on Eastside Road.

It was half prune orchard and half apple orchard. There was a big house that was really two identical houses built right next to each other, and there were a couple of smaller houses. There were sheds and barns. There were hills and flat fields. There were wild woods and carefully tended orchards. And there was the Russian River right be-

hind the farm, but the farm was so big you had to walk fifteen minutes to get to it.

In 1947, about the time Tim was being born, all the Remolifs moved onto the farm. They took out the apple orchards and planted grapevines, and later they took out the grapevines and planted pastures for cows. There was a big dairy barn to milk the cows in, and to chill and hold their milk until the big milk truck could pick it up, which it did twice a day.

And they fixed up the houses. Aunt Victoria and uncle Mido lived in the front house, near Eastside Road, with their two boys Lawrence and Louis. Babbo and Nanna and their four girls lived in the big house. Uncle Vic still lived in San Francisco where he was a barber but he came up most weekends, often with cheese and bread and wine and other good things he could buy there. Uncle Henry and aunt Naila came up most weekends too. And after two years Nanna had another baby, and another little girl, Sandra Jane.

Lindsey had a lot of work to do on the farm, especially when the new baby came. She helped with a lot of the housework, because Babbo liked the house to be very neat and clean. (He wasn't at all like Dad. Dad didn't care if the floors needed sweeping, or the furniture was dusty.)

Lindsey helped Nanna cook, too. Nanna made wonderful soups and roasts, but Lindsey liked to bake cakes and cookies.

What Lindsey did not like to do was pick up prunes. Every year the prune trees had to be shaken and the prunes had to be picked up and carted to the dipper where they were dipped in water with lye mixed in it. Then they were put on trays and stacked on funny little railroad cars and sent into the prune drier, a sort of big oven that burned natural gas and dried out the prunes.

Another thing Lindsey wasn't sure she liked was the idea of her grandmother living with them. Babbo's father had

died in Italy after the war, and Babbo's mother was old and tired, and she came to live in the United States. First she lived in San Francisco with uncle Sunny and Aunt Naila, but she was alone all day, because they both had to go to work.

Then she moved to the ranch. First she stayed in the front house where Aunt Victoria and Uncle Mido lived before they went back up to Seattle, but after a while Babbo's mother Luigia couldn't live alone, and she moved in with Babbo and Nanna, taking the front bedroom. She didn't speak English, and she was very old and a little strange to Lindsey, and everything seemed different in the family after she arrived. But she only stayed for a little while.

At first Lindsey and Sis and Susan and Penny went to Sotoyome School. It looked just like Eucalyptus School: a big square building with a bell-tower for the bell that warned the neighboring farms that it was time for school to begin. It was only a little way from the Remolif ranch, so Lindsey and her sisters didn't mind the walk. After a while, though, it was time for Lindsey to go to another school for older children, and she rode the school bus to the high school in Healdsburg. Here she especially liked to read, and to learn French. And she went on Sundays to church in Healdsburg, where she liked to sing in the choir.

Life on the farm was hard, and not everybody liked it. Victoria and uncle Mido left and took their two boys Lawrence and Louis back to Seattle. Babbo's mother Luigia went to Seattle a few months later because she was growing older and weaker and one day she died there. Babbo and Nanna couldn't afford to buy their share of the farm, and uncle Vic didn't want to, neither did Sunny or Jerry, so they all had to sell the ranch to someone else.

But Mr. Preston, who bought the ranch, knew that Babbo knew a lot about farming and worked hard. Mr. Preston bought the farm when Babbo agreed to continue to live and work on it. So Babbo and Nanna and their five girls were

able to stay in the country, though the two handsome cousins Lawrence and Louis were gone. Too bad, because they were a lot of fun.

I got to stay in the country too, because about the time I graduated from Junior High, in 1949, Jim was cured of tuberculosis. I was sent back up to Blank Road, and Dad started making the house bigger. First he fixed up the odd extra rooms that someone before had nailed onto the sides of the cabin.

Then he had a funny idea. We went up on the roof and took it apart along the ridge. Then we folded the two sides of the roof straight up to make walls, and we put a new roof on top of them.

While we were doing this John was playing on where the roof used to be. He didn't see a big hole and he fell down into the bathroom below, landing in the bathtub. Fortunately he didn't hit his head this time, and fortunately no one was taking a bath. (We still only did that on Saturday nights.)

Mom fixed John up, and Dad cut holes in the new walls for windows. Then he built a staircase. There were two big rooms upstairs, one for Jim, one for John. Between them, I had a little room which was just the way I liked it. Dad built a fireplace downstairs. He moved the kitchen to the room Jim used to have. And while I was in Berkeley they had got electricity, so we were practically living in a new house.

I walked down our dirt road every schoolday to wait for the school bus, because now I was going to Analy Union High School in Sebastopol. It was only seven miles away, but it took half an hour to get there because the bus had lots of stops to make. I still didn't like school a lot. I didn't like math and I didn't like history.

I especially didn't like English because my English teacher at Garfield was mean and made me read *A Tale of Two Cities* which was boring. And my English teacher at

Analy the next year was her identical twin, and made me read the same book all over again. So I never took another English class in high school.

But I did like music. I played in the band and learned to play every instrument they had except for two, the flute and the trombone. And every time I took a new instrument home, Dad could pick it up and play a scale on it, even though he had never seen one before.

School wasn't much fun, outside of band, but it was better than home a lot of the time. We didn't take vacations, and we didn't go to movies, and we didn't visit anyone very often, except for trips sometimes to Berkeley to see Gram and Gramp. We spent a lot of time cutting wood for the fireplace and the stove. One day our drag saw turned over on top of Dad and began scratching his back, and I had to pull it off him. We spent a lot of time fixing cars, or getting them out of the mud.

Mom and Dad weren't very happy. Mom had another baby in 1952, a little girl we named Martha after Dad's dead sister, and that might have been bad luck, for she died before she ever came home from the hospital. There was something wrong with her breathing. She was what they called a Blue Baby because her skin was all blue because she couldn't breathe well.

There were nice times. Once when I was sick with the flu Dad went to a concert for me and listened to two pianists play with the Santa Rosa Symphony and got them to sign a record he'd bought for me. Mom made nice shirts for me. And I had two special friends at Analy High, Merton Tyrell who played oboe and Dick Brodt who played horn, and once I went with my band teacher and his wife to San Diego where I played bassoon in a special band of the best high school musicians in the four western states. But mostly I just worked and read and grew and waited until I would be old enough to leave home.

I think Lindsey had a better time at Healdsburg High. She earned a block letter in the GAA (the Girls' Athletic Association), and she sang in special choruses in the summers, and once she got to go to Mr. Preston's mountain cabin in the Sierra for a vacation. But she worked hard too, at home, and Babbo was always at work or sleeping on the couch after dinner, and Nanna had her hands full with the littler kids, and Lindsey was glad when it was time for her to leave home and go to college.

She didn't have to go very far. She went to Santa Rosa Junior College, where uncle Dave had played basketball ten years earlier. She moved into the girls' dormitory where she shared a room with several friends, especially Bette Dominichelli and Gaye Notley, and she studied Home Economics and French and art, and she played softball in Physical Ed. Once she tried to slide into third base, and she broke her knee and had to keep her whole leg in a cast for six weeks. And she kept singing in the chorus.

When I went to college I went much farther away. First I spent the summer with Gram and Gramp, helping Gramp and uncle Percy build a new house. Gram had a lot of trouble with her legs and couldn't handle the stairs in the old house, so they built a new one that wouldn't have any. It was across the street from the old house, at 1245 Glen Avenue. Gramp and Percy had already built three other houses next door, one for aunt Dorothy and uncle Lester, one for aunt Barbara, and another for Dorothy and Lester when they decided to sell the first one.

It was my job to help nail all the shingles on the walls and all the shakes on the roof, and Percy taught me to use a hatchet. But it was very boring work and I was glad when the time came to go to Los Angeles. Gramp and Gram decided I should go to a church college there, Chapman College, be-

cause it had a good music department, and because I would live in the dormitory where I would have to behave.

I did study music and religion, and I took tennis lessons, and I continued to read a lot. I stopped playing bassoon because I didn't have one. I played French horn a little because the college had one, and I played triangle and cymbals in the orchestra concert because they got better horn players for their concert.

And I didn't behave very well. I thought it was fun to be different from most of the other students, and my best friends were a little strange. Dan Rich spent all his time building electronic things, and Charles Ridgely spent most of his time playing the violin. I got thrown out of the dormitory because I was caught selling whisky to other students, and I moved into a furnished room nearby.

My landlord worked in the post office and read every night from a strange book called *Finnegans Wake*. His wife made wonderful roast beef that she marinated for a week and then cut into tiny pieces for us to eat like candy. I worked nights in a hospital where my job was making sure all the money that came in went to the right department. I met a girl named Pat who had grown up in Richmond and whose father played the French horn and worked in the post office, and before long we got married, even though I was only eighteen years old.

Mom and Dad didn't like that idea at all and before long they drove down to Los Angeles and got me and Pat and drove us back up to the farm on Blank Road. But Pat didn't like living there at all and she moved away. A few months after she left she had a baby boy. She named him Leslie Clare and he grew up with her near Los Angeles. I never saw him until he was thirty years old and then I was surprised to see that he looked just like Dad.

After Pat left I stayed with Mom and Dad for a while and then I moved to Santa Rosa to go to Junior College and

there I met Gaye LeBaron, but her name then was Gaye Notley because she hadn't got married yet, and we were good friends because we both liked books.

Then I was finished with Junior College and it was time to go to another college. I decided to go to San Francisco State because it was good for both literature and music, and I moved back to Berkeley where I lived in Gramp's basement. One day I walked a few blocks away to visit Gaye, who had finished with Junior College and was going to Cal, where Gramp had gone fifty years before. Gaye had three roommates: Sharon James, Bette Dominichelli, and Lindsey Remolif. Lindsey was studying French at Cal.

I had decided I would never get married again unless I found a girl who was exactly right. She had to be pretty and smart and sassy and fun; she had to like music and books; she had to like cooking and eating. Lindsey was exactly right in every respect, and before long we were going out, and then we got married. I quit school and got a job in Richmond at the railroad yard, Lindsey finished college and did baby-sitting, and we lived in a little apartment on Grove Street, not far from Garfield Junior High School. After a while, just a week before Christmas on December 19, 1957, we had a baby girl with curly blond hair and I decided she should have a French name because Lindsey liked French so much, so we called her Thérèse Hélène.

Then I wanted to go back to school at San Francisco State, so we moved to Sharp Park, on the foggy coast south of San Francisco, and I got a job with the Post Office at the San Francisco Airport. For a while Sis lived with us because she went to State too. But it was too foggy in Sharp Park, and I wanted to live in Berkeley, so after a year we moved back, to a nice little house on Channing Way.

The house was really small, but there was a shed in the back yard, and one day I dragged it over to the house and nailed it on and we used it for a dining room and we put our

washing machine in it. When Lindsey washed clothes the machine shook so hard the whole shed wiggled, and I had to sit on the machine to weight it down.

The house was just big enough for the three of us but after a while we had another baby, a boy this time. He came just after Washington's Birthday, on February 23, 1960. I had a very good friend named Paul then. It was Paul who got me interested in working at the post office. And because Babbo was born in Italy I thought it would be nice to give our new baby an Italian name, and we called him Paolo for Paul Roberto for Babbo.

And now the house was really too small again, so we moved once more, to an apartment on Francisco Street. I finally finished college, and I got a job working for the city. I helped break up old sidewalks and put down new ones. And I kept studying music, taking classes at Mills College and at the Conservatory in San Francisco. And I taught recorder lessons to old ladies, and I did odd jobs like painting the insides of people's houses as Gramp had taught me to do, and gardening as Mom had taught me to do on the farm.

For a while Lindsey worked too, in an office, but then we had another baby. She was another holiday baby because she was born on January 1, 1963. I still liked Italian names but we weren't sure what to call this one. Lindsey brought the baby home from the hospital without a name. The nurse came every week to weigh the baby and make sure she was growing and she asked what her name was and we never knew. Finally the nurse said we had to make up our minds and we did and we called her Giovanna Maddalena, for no reason except that we liked the sound, and she looked like a Giovanna.

We stayed on Francisco Street for a long time. Mom and Dad stopped living together and Mom moved to Berkeley where Gramp helped her buy a house. Jim and John and Tim lived with her and so after a while did uncle Bobby. Gram

had got weaker and more tired and finally died in 1959, just before Paolo was born, but Aunt Barbara and Ann and Craig stayed with Gramp. Aunt Dorothy and uncle Lester moved away from Berkeley to Grass Valley where they bought a place in the country.

Lindsey and I visited Nanna and Babbo almost every month, driving up to the ranch for the weekend. We saw uncle Victor a lot, because he still lived in San Francisco and often took the Greyhound bus up to Healdsburg to visit Babbo and Nanna. But we didn't see aunt Victoria or uncle Jerry because they lived in Seattle and we didn't have enough money or time to travel that far. We didn't see uncle Sunny or aunt Naila because they lived in Las Vegas. And we didn't see uncle Rip because he lived in Washington D.C., though once Jim and I hitchhiked to New York because I wanted to hear a concert there, and on the way back we stopped in Washington to see uncle Rip.

I made a program about that concert for a radio station in Berkeley, and then I got a job at the radio station where I worked very hard, and then a few years later at a television station, and then at a newspaper, the Oakland Tribune, where I wrote about art and music.

And we had a friend who lived at the other end of the block, David Goines, and he lived with Alice Waters. She liked to make crêpes, and we used to go to their apartment for crêpes and salad, and then we'd all go back to our house for dessert because Lindsey liked to make desserts. One day Alice decided to open a restaurant and she asked Lindsey to be the dessert chef, and that was the beginning of Chez Panisse.

Thérèse and Paolo and Giovanna went to school at Whittier, where I had gone to the third grade, and at Longfellow, at at Garfield, where I had gone to the eighth and ninth grades, and they went on to Berkeley High. When they were

through there Thérèse and Giovanna went to Europe for a year, Thérèse to Holland to live with the Elfrings and Giovanna to Denmark to live on a dairy farm. Paolo didn't want to do that; in fact he didn't want to finish high school, so he joined the Coast Guard instead.

Lindsey and I had enough money to take vacations now, and we went to Europe and visited Thérèse and Giovanna there. And we drove up to Seattle where I finally met aunt Victoria who was a sweet woman who loved to garden and to cook and to eat and to drink black coffee with a little whiskey in it.

When we came back from our first vacation in Europe I learned that Dad had been killed. He was crossing the street in Oakland on his way home from the grocery store and he was hit by a car. Uncle Bobby had died a few years before in the house he finally bought in Richmond. Ann and Craig had grown up and moved away. Rickie had a job piloting big ships for Matson Lines because he always liked the sea.

Sis had gone to France for a year and then settled in New York where she married a handsome Englishman named Michael Edwards. Before long they moved to California and they had two children, Livia and Kieron. Susan learned to be a teacher and married Barry Cave, another Englishman but not really because he was a little boy when he came to the United States. Susan and Barry moved to Gallup, New Mexico, where they taught school, and where Susan finally moved into the school administration.

Penny went to Florida for a while and to Washington to live with uncle Rip but then she came back and married Gary Brown, who had grown up in Willits, and after a while they moved up to Oregon, and they had a baby they named Schuyler.

Jim married a girl named Dixie who worked for a newspaper in Napa county but they didn't stay married very

long. Then he married another woman named Barbara and they had a baby they named Dylan, because Jim liked Dylan Thomas's poetry and Bob Dylan's songs. Then they separated and Jim married a third time, this time a woman from Pennsylvania named Marie, and this marriage worked and they had three children: Lila, David, and Christa Marie, and they lived for a while in Petaluma, and then moved to Sonoma.

John joined the navy and after he got out traveled around the world. While he was doing that he met a girl named Melva who was born in Australia. They got married in Germany and then came to Berkeley where they had a baby named Jennifer Jessica. But Mel didn't like Berkeley, especially when there were riots in 1972, and she and John and Jenny moved to Australia where they still live. There they had two more girls they named Yasmin and Anatheia, and finally a boy they named Sequoyah after the Indian chief, and then another girl, Elizabeth Grace.

My youngest brother Tim never married. He went to college for a while, and worked for a while, but he was upset when he was in high school, and ran away from Mom and lived for a year with a family who taught Sunday School. From then on he was really too nervous to work or study or live with close family, so he lives alone in a nice big hotel in Oakland, and we see him every week and go for walks and have dinner, and sometimes he comes to visit us in Healdsburg.

Sandy was the youngest of our brothers and sisters and the last to marry. She played the clarinet and painted at Healdsburg High and then she went to Santa Rosa Junior College and studied physical education and Spanish and played a lot of volleyball. She worked as a waitress just as my Mom had so many years before. Then she met Craig Hoddy who liked volleyball a lot and they married and built a house

in Grass Valley, and there they met Rickie and his wife Carolyn who lived near aunt Dorothy and uncle Lester. Sandy and Craig had two boys, Cale and Liam. Some day I'm going to visit them and while I'm there I'm going to look for my Grandpa Charles's grave, because he was buried in Grass Valley.

Gramp lived to be very old, 97 years old, and twice he marched at the University ceremony because he was the oldest living graduate of the University. Once Thérèse marched with him because she went to Cal too, as Lindsey and I had. But finally he was too old to keep on living and he died. Not long afterward Mom and aunt Barbara came home from a trip to Egypt and Mom was very sick. I took her to the hospital and they operated on her for breast cancer but she only lived another few months.

That was a terrible year because while Mom was in the hospital my cousin Ann was murdered along with her daughter Katherine. Poor Barbara had lost her husband to a cerebral hemorrhage just after Craig was born and now she had lost her daughter and her granddaughter. But Ann had had two sons, and Craig was married and had children, so Barbara still had some grandchildren to comfort her.

Babbo and Nanna decided to stop being married a long time ago, when Giovanna was a baby. Nanna moved away from the ranch, first to a cabin a mile away on Windsor River Road, then to a big farmhouse on Pleasant Avenue where uncle Vic lived with her for a while, and then to the house she has now on Eastside Road, right next to the old ranch. Babbo stayed on the ranch for a few years until he retired, and then he bought a little vineyard with a house right next to the other side of the old ranch.

Uncle Vic got very old. After a while he moved away from Nanna to an apartment in Santa Rosa, and one day he died there. Aunt Victoria got very old too and had to move to a residence for old people who needed special care. Lawrence

and Louis and their wives visited her often, and Lawrence's three boys, and Louis's three girls and his boy. She lived there for two years, but she had some strokes and died.

Uncle Henry died in Las Vegas. Even though he was the youngest of all the Remolif children he was the first to die. And before long aunt Naila died too. So now of the oldest living generation there are very few, Babbo who is 91, Nanna who is 84, and uncle Jerry who is almost 90. Lindsey and I are already 60 years old. The time has gone by very fast. We used to be the children, and now we are the grandparents.

And we have six grandchildren, and soon we'll have seven. Eve Antonia was the first; she was born July 8 1983, just while Thérèse and Eric and Lindsey and I were buying our house and property on Eastside Road. Thérèse wanted her to be born at home in the house she shared with Eric and Bob Waks and Katherine Gledhill but the birth was difficult and she had to be born at Kaiser Hospital in Oakland, and soon after that she needed an operation on her skull in Redwood City, and she's been healthy and happy ever since and lives where she grew up on Eastside Road.

Then came Grace Renata. She was born April 3, 1987, in Hayward where Giovanna and Pavel lived in a little apartment after they were married. But soon all three moved to Portland, Oregon, where they bought a nice two-storey house and there Simon Frederick was born on July 10, 1989. Simon wasn't born in a hospital but at home, and Giovanna had a midwife named Rhonda, and Lindsey helped too.

For a while we all wondered if Thérèse would have another baby. Once we saw Eve dragging a stick up the driveway, and we asked why she was dragging the stick, and she said "it's not a stick, it's my little brother." But for a long time she didn't have a little brother or a little sister. But then

Eric and Thérèse did have another baby, another girl, this one named Emma Clare. And she is growing up on Eastside Road just as Eve did.

Then in 1992, almost on Thanksgiving, on November 24, Giovanna and Pavel had a third baby, this time another girl, Francesca Maude, and the name Maude made me very happy because it was Gram's middle name, and it was aunt Barbara's middle name too. And then Paolo and Meadow had a baby. Paolo and his first wife Kelcey had always wanted a baby but never had one, and then they decided not to be married any more, and Paolo lived with Meadow. Meadow grew up in Berkeley where she danced on Nut Hill, and she lived in India when she was a baby, but when Paolo met her she lived on a mountain above Alexander Valley, and that's where they live now. Meadow and Paolo had a little boy very soon after Franny was born, on February 19, 1993, almost on Paolo's birthday. His name is Henry Elias and he looks just like me when I was a baby and like my uncle Charles.

And then came a wonderful surprise: Kelcey had a little girl of her own, almost exactly a year after Henry was born, and she called her Cameron, and they live in Geyserville so we can see them when we want to.

And now it's your turn. I've told you a lot about me, because that's who I know best. I've tried to tell you a lot about other people in my family and yours. You know some of them; you met some but don't remember them; others you never met because they died long before you were born.

I've probably made a lot of mistakes, because it isn't easy to get stories straight, especially when they're about things that happened a long time ago, or far away. I don't know much about what Italy was like a hundred years ago, and I don't know anything about what China was like. But maybe you can get better information about this from other people in the family, or at school, or at the library.

I haven't said anything about Eric Monrad, or Pavel Zivny, or Meadow Sowle, and they're just as important in your family as I am, but they can tell you about themselves. And there are a lot of other people in your family who I haven't said anything about, and some I haven't even mentioned. I know some of them, but you know them better. Others I haven't even met, and maybe never will, because they live far away, or don't live any more at all. You'll have to ask someone else about them, and I hope you will.

And I hope you'll think about all these people, and all the things they did in their lives, most of them long and interesting lives. I hope you'll ask questions about them, and think about them, and think about the things you'll do in your life. Maybe some day you'll feel like writing a book like this for your grandchildren. I can tell you they'll be glad you did. And so will you.

—Charles Shere, for his grandchildren
Berkeley, December 1995

And now it is eight years since I wrote all that down and many things have changed. Some of the changes have been sad, for another generation is gone: Nanna died in her sleep early in December in 1997, a few months after moving into a new house; and a little over a year later Babbo died, on St. Patrick's Day in 1999. He was ninety-six years old, and the last time I saw him he was grafting the pear trees down alongside our road.

But two new grandchildren have come to take their places. One of them, Henry's sister Isabel Rose, was born in 1996, a few months after I finished writing this little book, and the other, her little brother Ivo Theodore, was born in January 2003.

And there have been some movings since nine years ago. Ivo and Isabel and Henry live with their mother and father in a house Paolo is building in the country up near Laytonville where they have a feed store. And Lindsey and I have sold our house in Berkeley and we spend all our time in the country up the hill from Thérèse and Eric and Emma, unless we are walking across Holland, or visiting friends in Italy or France.

Or unless we're visiting Eve. Because Eve is grown up now, and she lives in Seville, in Spain, where she studies flamenco.

None of us could ever have guessed, eight years ago, that Eve would be living in Seville, or that Paolo would have a feed store, or that Pavel would be flying to Japan and China

and Europe as much as he does. None of us can ever guess what will happen next. But we are sure of one thing: we are lucky, all of us, to be part of a wonderful family. The older we get — and we will be seventy before very long! — the more sure we are that our family is the most important part of our life, and the more grateful we are for them. And I hope that will always be true of all of you.

— Healdsburg, February 2004

Eight more years! Here's another thing we might never have guessed would happen: Eve met Shawn in Seville, and they've bought a house in Milwaukee not far from the one Mr. Mischo bought so many years ago, and there they live with their little girl, Malena Sevilla, who arrived April 15, 2011 — the newest member of this constantly growing family, and the first in a new generation. I started this nearly fifty pages ago with my own great-grandfather, and now I'm a great-grandfather myself!

— Healdsburg, February 2012