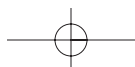
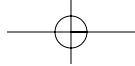


Introduction

In a lecture at the University of Pennsylvania, a professor from the English Department once pointed out:

Every person in the world, without exception, has the potential to write at least one good novel, the story of his or her own life. No matter what the subject matter, the locale, era, characters, or point of view, what finally determines its resulting merit is how well it is told.





This idea, lingering in our minds over the years, finally inspired us to write these memoirs.

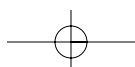
Every family has its own stories. Most of these eventually get lost as they come down orally through the generations. We wanted to avoid this happening to our own family remembrances. So much of what has happened to us, to our children, and our ancestors has been especially dear to our hearts. We want to perpetuate these stories, anecdotes, and events, hoping they will serve as a reflection of the time, era, and milieu in which they occurred. We would also like these volumes to form a link between the past and the future, so that through them our children, grandchildren, and future generations of the family can get to know and remember us across the years. We hope this account will give them an additional reference source for research into their own personal heritage.

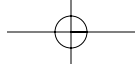
Sometimes during the writing we felt almost like spectators observing an array of colorful characters who have touched our lives in a variety of ways, some meaningful, others fleetingly, still others who made it more vivid just by passing through. As in Volume 1, both José and Josy were involved in the writing and editing. For this reason we chose to tell our story in the third person, as narrative rather than autobiography. It is not an attempt to write an accurate history, but rather, an account of Josy's background and growing up, the events, people, and places in her life as she recalls them.

Mainly the anecdotes are based on personal memories and word-of-mouth narratives, reconstituted from various snippets of information, reflection, and conversation. They reflect our own interpretation and point of view. In presenting them this way we seem to have given them a life of their own or, more accurately, a new life reflecting scenes from the past transposed into a kaleidoscope of the present. As such they are less an accurate account than a view of how we regard these past occurrences. As has been said, "The past often gets reshaped by the present." We hope that our references to certain well-known historical events can help the reader see them in a different, more subjective way.

This writing incurred much sentiment and nostalgia. The very act of recalling these experiences enriched our memories. Surprisingly we found that several names and anecdotes arose unbidden from our subconscious, reactivated, no doubt, by probing and searching into the past. The actual writing process turned into what felt like a reconnection with people long gone and a reliving of the events described.

This is a work of fiction. It represents events as we saw and remembered them. As such, details may differ from the perspective of others who may have witnessed and





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recalled these same events. We have only a few documents to back up the stories we tell. These include photo albums with hurried inscriptions under some of the pictures, a year-book of Gratz High School's Class of 27-42, some old letters, an immigration document obtained through the Mormons (records from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints), a couple of old notebooks containing poems Josy wrote while growing up, and a genealogical chart of Malvina's family based on one constructed by Josy's father Jacques in 1954.

We need to mention that with the exception of Ben Margolius (the brother of Josy's mother Malvina), his wife Liba, and their daughters Mary and Leah, the spelling of the surname Margolius may have actually been "Margules" or a different variant. This holds especially true for the earlier generations of the family. Nevertheless we kept to the spelling "Margolius" in all cases because our written source (the family tree that Josy's father made in 1954) used this form. What remains certain, though, is that Ben's brother Stashek, and his direct descendants spelled the name as "Margules".

* * * * *

We wish to express our gratitude to the numerous people who helped us arrive at this current version, both directly and indirectly. They helped us in many ways: by reading early drafts, searching for information, providing suggestions and resource materials, supplying details and personal interpretations, and stimulating our recollections with questions, ideas, and accounts of their own. Our special thanks go to our son Marty and his wife Madeline for their countless re-readings, suggestions, and editing that helped us view our own writing more objectively.

We hope that the reader will accept this chronicle in the spirit in which it was written, and enjoy reliving with us these memories that we hold so dear.

