

Valparaiso 1906

A deep and thunderous rumbling in the middle of the night
Woke us all from sleeping and gave us such a fright
It sounded like an angry giant from a distant time
Who had come to take revenge for a truly dreadful crime

Then the cracking and the crashing from the buildings all around
As they wavered, as they swayed and some fell to the ground
The children started crying, their fear they could not hide
We gathered some belongings and made our way outside

When daylight came the damage was a dreadful thing to see
The rubble and the ruin of our city by the sea
But we were very lucky, we all came out alive
There were many others who alas did not survive

We wrote to tell my family, back in rural Devon
That all of us were safe and well, not at the gates of Heaven
My brother at his blacksmith's forge, smiled and spread the news
Of his sister out in Chile, not a life that he would choose

A century and more has passed since that dreadful night
But family history research has brought it all to light
The blacksmith, my great grandfather, is how I am connected
To survivors of an earthquake, altogether unexpected.

