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ALBERT EDWARD BAGSHAW

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An interview conducted by

Harlan Soeten and Norman Ortman

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Albert Bagshaw

I was born in Mill Valley in a house on Blithedale Avenue, and what is now the corner of Sycamore, on April 7, 1902.

Norman Ortman

Well, we're almost up to your birthday -- the day after tomorrow.

B: My eighty-first birthday. My father migrated from Wales at about the age of 20 and settled in San Francisco where he met my mother, whose name was Marie Louise Campbell, and they got married. What attracted them to Mill Valley I do not know, but shortly after their marriage they moved to Mill Valley and settled in a house up near Summit Avenue, a rented house, where my sister, Rose Marie Bagshaw, now 85, but unfortunately very ill, was born. Shortly after her birth my mother and father purchased about two acres on Blithedale Avenue where my father built a small frame house and moved there to live.

My father was then in the contracting business as a bricklayer and plasterer. He was a tremendously energetic man, powerful -- short in stature but very powerful. He worked as hard as he also played. Wine, women and song in that order -- and he worked and prospered. For reasons I don't know, in 1905 he purchased some land at Alto Station, outside of Mill Valley, and built thereon a very substantial structure, a two-story wood frame building with verandas. It was known as the Alto Inn. It was a typical roadside inn with wide verandas covered with outdoor furniture and with the main steps leading up to the barroom.

Harlan Soeten

You said he built it. Was your father a carpenter, too?

B: No, my father did a lot of speculative building. He could do a great many things in the building trades but he had a crew

who worked with him. His master carpenter was a man named Santos who lived on the road to Tiburon. I believe his first name was Joe.

S: That sounds like a Latin.

B: Portuguese. To further identify him, his only child, his son Joe, a couple years older than myself, eventually built and operated a service station at the corner of Blithedale and the old Corte Madera grade. There is a service station there now. He lived there with his wife and children. He prospered and later bought the land and constructed the El Camino Motel on Lincoln Avenue in San Rafael. For many years it was the finest rooming place in Marin County. All the judges stayed there. I don't know if Joe Santos is still alive. He taught me how to use a B-B gun and many years later taught me how to hunt. That man could get ducks when no one else could.

O: He'd be an old man if he was still alive today.

B: Yes, he'd be an old man. I know that his son is still alive, selling insurance, because I recently heard of him. A fine family.

S: You're talking now about the son of the Santos who worked for your father.

B: That's right. In later years the Santos that worked for my father -- he and my father built 8 or 9 homes around Locust Avenue for speculation. Usually for rental purposes. But my father built and operated the Alto Inn and he moved the family out there when I was about 3 and we stayed there until I was 6 years of age. At that time Blithedale was extended underneath the railroad tracks up beyond the Alto Station, where it divided. One dirt road went over to Tiburon, substantially the same as today, the other parallelled the railroad tracks up towards the entrance to the railroad tunnel and there it separated, one branch going over the Corte Madera grade to serve Corte Madera and Ross Valley and the other going right over to where the present 101 goes over the hill to Greenbrae and thence to San Rafael. And these were dirt roads and the Alto Inn was suitably situated right at the intersection. It was a carriage house sort of thing. Traveling salesmen, cookie dispensers and the like would leave their teams there at night -- there were stables and stalls for the horses -- and take the train into San Francisco and then back in the morning and continue their route.

We stayed there until I became 6 years of age and needed schooling. My father then built, with the help of Joe Santos, a very substantial house on Locust Avenue, at what is now the corner of Locke Lane. It had 13 rooms, two stories, and a full basement. Of course, it had no central heat but it was a very

substantial building. It's in deplorable condition now, from what I can see of it. We maintained a horse who drew a buggy one day, a wagon the next, and a plow the next. And my father rented from the Deffebachs about 20 acres of land right behind our house. On that 20 acres was a substantial orchard with several stockpiles of adobe brick which had been taken from some adobe they had demolished. At the extreme westerly end of that piece of land there was the Indian burial ground -- it covered about three or four acres. We called it the "Rancheree." The material from that ground -- ashes and shell and bone, skeletons and the like -- was excellent for paving purposes, in those days concrete not being so prevalent. Tom Deffebach, Sr., who had a stable in Mill Valley proper, had a very profitable business selling this Rancheree, or shell mound.

S: Where would that be on the plat today?

B: It would be an extension of Sycamore.

O: It would be right about Amicita and Sycamore.

B: That's right. It's all built up now but in those days the burial ground was very substantial in size and was excavated by Deffebach. Deffebach lived on Sycamore, just a couple houses west of Locust.

S: The Deffebachs are heirs and descendents of John Reed.

B: That's right. They are descendents of the Reeds.

There were only two tennis courts in Mill Valley in those days and one was the tennis court on the old mountain railway between Eldridge and King Streets, and that was surfaced with this shell mound. It had to be swept before every game and relined with chalk. The other tennis court was John Finn's down on Miller Avenue and that was surfaced with some kind of blacktop. In any event we used to play cowboy and Indians on that shell mound with wooden rifles and of course we used to dig for artifacts and find many of them.

In the meantime my father used the rest of the acreage, which he rented, to plant oats, hay or potatoes, using our carriage horse. We kids would have to sit on the harrow to give it enough weight to break up the chunks of earth.

As I said, he was a very busy and hard working man. We moved there on Locust Avenue when I was 6. The Park School had not been built, so we had to enroll in the Homestead Valley Elementary School which, as I now recall, had grades through the Fifth. We attended there for about two years during which time Park School was built and we then entered into that school.

O: According to records I found Park School first opened in April of '09.

B: Well, that is when we entered. Park School at that time consisted of only four classrooms and hallways and the principal's office. A Miss Cormack was the principal and teacher of the Fifth Grade -- a wonderful woman, but with quite a temper and flashing eyes. We all learned to respect and obey her.

O: What was her name?

B: Cormack. That school only ran through the Fifth Grade. At the end of the Fifth Grade we had to transfer up to Summit School. One of the rewards of attending Park School and being a well-behaved student was getting to play the drums. The classes marched into school in the morning and after the recesses to the tune of a snare drum. The school maintained the drum and the student who had dusted enough erasers and blackboards was appointed the drummer. My brother and I were competitors and he played better than I did and also was older, so he played ahead of me and I got my turn later. We'd sit out on the stairs during recess and expose the drum to the sun because the sun would tighten the head and it would sound better. In the meantime we had a sort of income by letting the other kids beat the drum in return for rewards. The girls marched in from the front yard and the boys from the rear yard. Those were pleasant days.

Leaving there at the end of the Fifth Grade, my mother and father separated. My mother and the three children moved over to a small house on Elm Street until we finished at Park School and then we moved up to a house on the street that runs up alongside the Keystone block.

O: Bernard.

B: Yes, Bernard Street. We rented a small cottage and moved there. Money was a problem. The court had awarded to my mother the two acres of land down on Blithedale and Sycamore which was then rented out for a nominal sum and she was also awarded $25.00 a month for the support of three teenage children. It wasn't very adequate so my mother obtained employment at the Pacific Market, owned by Gus Oppenheimer. Gus Oppenheimer was a German-Jew who had come out from New York to San Francisco and then to Marin County. With a partner by the name of Hennicker he had operated a butcher shop on Blithedale Avenue across from where the Standard Oil station is now.

O: Was it called the Paloma?

B: I think it was the Paloma. There was a good store there and also a bar, next to Cavalli's. Then Gus and Hennicker moved their butcher shop up to Litton Square -- it wasn't called Litton Square then. They had a shop right next to the Mountain Railroad

entrance into the Square. And then Gus went off by himself, dissolved the partnership and opened the Pacific Market. In those days chain grocery stores were unknown. Automobiles were a rarity and most of the housewives of Mill Valley had the privilege of ordering their food over the telephone and having it delivered to their home on a credit basis. Gus operated such a store -- credit and service. When I look back on it, it's fantastic -- the man worked himself into an early grave. In that store he employed my mother as a bookkeeper and answering telephones, taking orders. He also employed two full-time butchers, a full-time grocer and a full-time vegetable man. He had three delivery boys, operated two trucks, two horses and wagons and a third one on Saturdays. In addition to employing my mother, he rented the right to use our two acres of land down on Blithedale Avenue as a pasture and a stable for his horses. His delivery boys would bring the horses down there, feed them and turn them loose, after the day's work. My brother and I would get them into the barn after dark and into their stalls. The delivery boys would take them out in the morning.

Eventually my mother and Gus Oppenheimer were married. I've never known a finer man. Never. Stern and strict.

O: How old were you at that time?

B: I must have been 14. And I did all the things that an average boy of that age would do . . . abuse the privileges given me and I was angry at Gus because he wouldn't let me use his automobile. I used to borrow his tools and never return them, never put them back, borrow his neckties and wear them until they were not worth wearing anymore. He tolerated this, but was always strict . . . and the older I grew the more I appreciated it.

O: How long did you live there?

B: I lived there until after I married in 1929. I married at age 27. We lived there until I was about 35. Then Gus built a nice home at Buena Vista and Hill for my mother.

O: It's a beautiful house today.

B: A beautiful house today -- yes, and I always regretted it when my mother sold it. But Gus died in that house and my mother lived there a couple years afterward but the memory was too much for her, so she sold it and moved up to San Rafael.

Getting back to myself: After graduating from grade school I went to Lick-Wilmerding for one year and then I went to work in San Francisco. I worked first for Shreve & Company. My cousin was working there and he got me a job. The huge salary

was $24.00 a month. The commute cost $4.00. I walked instead of riding streetcars from the Ferry Building. I only worked for Shreve & Company a few months and then went to work for Southern Pacific up in the old Flood Building. Sixty-five Market Street had not been built. They paid me the magnificent salary of $30.00 a month and I got my commute at half fare -- $2.00 a month.

O: What did you do?

B: I was in the motor power department at SP. I loved transportation. My job was to sort billings for repair service to the freight cars. To sort them by the names of the various railroads so they could be charged for the service to their own cars. I worked for Southern Pacific for about three years and then I wanted to go to sea. I got a berth on the steamship Sonoma, a vessel owned by a subsidiary of the Matson Navigation Company.

S: That would be the Oceanic Steamship Company.

B: That's right, the Oceanic Steamship Company. The job was as a storekeeper on the Sonoma but before I ever went to sea I got employment with the Mitsue Company, import and export and banking -- you name it and they did it. They operated a fleet of freighters into San Francisco. My job was on the waterfront and in the railroad yards. Boarding the steamers as they came in. I loved it. They bought me the first automobile I ever drove and I worked outside all the time. I worked there for about three years and I think I spent too much time on the waterfront and in the parks because they let me go. I then went to work for a wholesale silk company. I worked there until I lost my two-weeks salary to the assistant manager in a crap game. Then I went out and enrolled in St. Ignatius Law School but continued to work at the silk company. At that time, St. Ignatius was probably the oldest institution of learning in California.

S: How old were you when you entered college?

B: Well, St. Ignatius 1922, that would make me 20. I took a room with an elderly couple on Oak Street. I can't remember their name but they were most kind to me. I think I paid $10 a month for my room. I didn't have a private bath and I went home on weekends. With that schedule I didn't have much time for recreation. Saturdays we had to work a half day at the silk house and I'd beat hell out of the little Jewish boys if they laid down on the job and didn't get the orders out because I had to spend Saturday afternoon at the Law Library. Then I decided to study to be a secretary so I could get employment in a law office and earn a living. I went to a secretarial school for four months and with the help of the old maids who operated

it -- God love 'em -- they got me a job as secretary to the U.S. Marshall. I was his secretary and did some work transporting prisoners at night. There I met Ed Bonner who was the agent in charge of the Department of Justice in the Northern District of California. We became friendly and when Mr. Bonner was appointed Prohibition Administrator for Northern California/Nevada in 1926 he offered me a job in his legal department as a junior attorney. It was a Civil Service job and it was contingent on my passing the next bar examination. I took the job -- the Civil Service examination was easy and I passed it. I held the job for three years and Mr. Bonner and I got along exceedingly well. I became very active; I was the liaison man between the Department, which was located in the old Custom House in San Francisco, and the U.S. Courts, so I spent a great deal of time in court. I prepared all applications for search warrants. I disposed of all seized property -- we had as many as 100 automobiles and trucks under seizure at one time. The metals from demolished stills -- brass and copper -- I would sell them to the Federal Metals Company in San Francisco to be melted down. I became somewhat of an expert on the law of search and seizure and Mr. Bonner used me for all kinds of critical jobs -- emergency jobs. For example, once he sent me over to Nevada with only a pair of socks as luggage to relieve the Deputy Administrator whom he suspected of being dishonest --and he was right in his suspicions. I had charge of prohibition enforcement in Nevada for a period of about a week -- I was 25 or 26 years of age. That was no place for a kid of that age as inexperienced as I was, but I proceeded to close all the famous roadhouses around Reno and had to leave Nevada in a hurry . . . ha, ha. But in any event, after three years in the Prohibition Department I was in the Federal Courthouse one day and George Hatfield, who was U.S. Attorney at the time, stopped me in the corridor and said, "Would you like to be in my office as a deputy?"

Those jobs were political plums so I was amazed at that offer. He said that the Anti-Saloon League and the state law enforcement people were breathing down his neck because his deputies who were in charge of prohibition prosecutions were too liberal -- they gave the book away. He said he wanted to placate them and he thought I would be an appointment that would please them.

So he appointed me, and it was the most arduous assignment in the office. We handled about six cases every day. It gave me time for nothing else -- there would be cases of bootlegging, rumrunning, distillery operations, and that sort of thing. I once tied up the entire Coast Guard for 35 days of trial over Johnny Moreno and his associates in a conspiracy involving rumrunning -- the operation of a mother ship and the landing of

rumrunners along the coast. In that indictment I prosecuted the directors of a big corporation -- now a legitimate corporation, I think it was the Liquor Dealers of Canada, Seagrams. I prosecuted that case for 35 days and I think I must have cost the government millions of dollars. I had all the Coast Guard vessels tied up . . .

S: Why would they be tied up?

B: Well, they had ticketed these rumrunners off the coast as they had illegal radio transmitters to communicate between the boats and land stations. The rumrunners would arrange for a landing at a given station by radio, and we had an outfit known as the Special Agents Department of Justice, all career men, and they would break the codes that they used. One of these special agents was an ex-minister who had been a code breaker in the Army during World War I. In order to break the codes he had to have constant reports from the Coast Guard cutters. For example: That they were following the rumrunner Hurry Home in a dense fog and that Hurry Home evaded them at such and such location at such a time. We'd get a message coming over an illicit radio with about the same information being reported to their shore station in code and that would enable us to break the code.

S: But why were the Coast Guard boats tied up?

B: The officers had to testify at the trials. I have pictures here which illustrate what I have in mind. The rumrunners would anchor a ship off Ensenada, Mexico, and load the booze on to a smaller boat to take it in. This picture is of the Hurry Home, she was one of the well known rumrunners. She had a center engine which was a diesel cruising engine and they also had Hall-Scott gasoline motors in each wing for high speed.

Before the trial started, the son of a U.S. senator came to me and said I want you to let Johnny so-and-so off. Johnny so-and-so was Johnny Moreno. He owned Folly II and Folly III, luxurious yachts down in the San Francisco yacht harbor, and a big home facing the yacht harbor. He said, "I want him spun out of this." I said, "No chance, he is the head of it." I said we had tapped his telephone; we followed his orders when he was delivering liquor; we had him dead to rights.

S: This is rumrunning.

B: Running rum, yes. So I told him nothing doing. He said, "What judge is he before?" I told him -- there were three U.S. District Judges at the time -- and he said, "Say no more about it."

I tried the case for six weeks and of all the cases I have ever seen, this was the strongest. Before they put on any defense, they made a motion for a directed verdict of not guilty and the judge granted the motion and continued the trial as to the other defendants. The jury asked the judge what he would do if they refused to take his direction and he said he would hold them in contenpt and grant a new trial anyway. I met Johnny Moreno in a bar on B Street, and he told me how much it cost him!

But to get away from that. I had three or four very happy years in the U.S. Attorney's office when Judge Frank Kerrigan, Senior District Judge, took a liking to me -- I think I reminded him of his son who had left home and disgraced him -- ha, ha, I don't know why, frankly, but he recommended my admission to the Bar. Eventually he asked George Hatfield to assign me to his courtroom's trial deputy, and that, of course, took me out of the prohibition field. Then I tried cases before Frank Kerrigan who treated me as if I was his son. I remember he eulogized me the day my first child was born, and adjourned court that night in honor of the child. He used to take my wife and myself whenever we traveled to the court in Eureka or Sacramento, he'd always take us out for the night, dinner, theatre, and the like . . . a wonderful man. Well, in any event that lasted for three years and then the Hoover administration was defeated for reelection and I was a Republican appointee, so, together with the entire staff of the U.S. Attorney's office, I had to leave -- then the Democrats took over.

For one year I had no money, no reserve, and my one child, my daughter Diane. Another attorney and myself opened a law office at 333 Montgomery Street where the Bank of America building is now, and strangely enough we had plenty of practice -- mostly federal and criminal practice because we were both fresh out of the U.S. Attorney's office. I practiced there for one year and during that year I not only earned a living and a little nest egg, but I also had the money to run for District Attorney of my native Marin County. So, I ran for that office against three opponents, including the incumbent, Henry Greer, who had held the office for 17 years. I didn't win in the primaries, I had to run in the finals, and there was another Mill Valley man there, Tom Nelson -- You probably heard of him.

O: Yes, I knew his son. Young Tom was my age.

B: Well, Tom ran. Tom was a better attorney than he was a politician. He came in fourth. And then in the general election I was fortunate; an easy winner.

O: But that was not a partisan election.

B: No, non-partisan. By that time I had moved over to Corte Madera in a rented house, and I had my one child, a daughter. Seven days after I assumed office as District Attorney, I accompanied Edmund Blum, known as Bob Blum, formerly of Mill Valley, who was undersheriff, to court in Tomales to prosecute some kids who were stripping automobiles. I went with him in his old Dodge and we tried one of those youths before the justice of the peace and he had just been found guilty when Blum was called to the phone to be told that there had been a major break from San Quentin.

The warden had been killed and the members of the parole board had been kidnapped and they were supposed to be on their way to our area in two cars. They were supposed to be armed with machine guns. We . . , we released the kid we had just convicted of stripping cars and Blum and I and the undersheriff, Jack Bones, who was the constable up at Tomales, went to the outskirts of Tomales. Just as we arrived and pulled to the side of the road we saw a car coming around the bend, which Blum identified as the warden's car at San Quentin, a seven-passenger Studebaker. A guard was driving it in uniform, and as he approached he waved his arm out of the window indicating, I presume, don't shoot. In the meantime, Blum had his revolver and I appropriated a sawed-off shotgum from Blum's car and Jack Bones had a deer rifle and as the car approached we could see it was heavily laden. I pointed that double-barrelled shotgun at the car and pulled the trigger, but there were no shells in it . . . it was empty. As the car swept by us, I shouted, "Pick off a tire," and Bones did just that. He picked off the right rear tire with the first shot and we then followed the warden's car all the way to Valley Ford -- a distance of 10 to 12 miles. We could have overtaken them at any time because of the flat tire but we thought they had machine guns.

During this pursuit, Blum and Bones fired several times at the car, the prison car, and later found out we had shot Joe Stephens, a banker from Sacramento, in the hip, and a San Francisco Police Commissioner in the backsides and creased one of the convicts -- a part in his hair right down the middle.

We followed the car on as it went out of Tomales when the guard who was driving opened the door with his elbow and rolled out onto the street. One of the convicts grabbed the steering wheel and they continued on. They got mixed up in the roads -- he told us later they were trying to get to Canada -- but they turned left at Valley Ford and went over the hill and down a hollow where an old creamery building was at the bottom on the left side. Their tire was completely burned off so as they went by this creamery building they drove the car into a bunkhouse where it stopped.

The prisoners, who had exchanged clothing with their hostages at San Quentin, all ran into the creamery building. The hostages were all fat businessmen who had all those thin prisoners' clothes. None of the clothes closed in front, you know. But we recognized them and didn't shoot at them. The prisoners took refuse in the creamery building; we heard shots in there and we found out later that they herded all the creamery crew into the big refrigerator room. I ran down the hill towards the left rear corner of the creamery building. Blum and Bones took refuge behind rocks further up the hill, and somebody yelled after me, "Come back, you damned fool." I felt like a fool but I didn't dare go back because I would be exposed to some of the upper windows in the creamery building looking right down over the hill I wouldhave to go. So I hugged the side of the building and tried to act like a mouse. I was doing that when Blum yelled, "Look out behind you," and I whirled quickly around and saw this human figure in a pile of refuse -- milk cans and the like -- huddled in there. He was crouched and had a .48 caliber pistol raised along the side of his head. Frankly, my impression was that he was trying to get courage to put it in his mouth to commit suicide.

In the meantime I had borrowed a couple of shells for the sawed-off shotgun and quickly fired one shot blasting the man with the gun. He fell -- died before they could get him to the hospital. He was a fellow by the name of Street -- the leader of the herd, Rudolph Street. My big old shotgun must have sounded like a cannon inside of the sheetmetal creamery building. The perforations are still there -- there must have been fifty of them -- and I let out a shout, I got one of them," and a moment later a male voice from inside said, "We want to negotiate. We'll surrender if you promise there won't be any abuse, no beatings."

So I said there would be no abuse and to throw their guns out the rear door so we could see them and then come out with raised hands. They did this, those .48 caliber automatic pistols came out, and then the three convicts with their hands raised. By that time the pursuit had caught up with us -- hundreds of cars arrived, all the law enforcement people, the deputies, the prison people, the newspapers who had been on the radio for hours, they all caught up with us. At the time there was only one telephone there but it was impossible to get to it. But somehow they got an ambulance for Street, but he died enroute to the prison. I finally got one of the reporters to tell his office to call my wife at home and tell her I was safe.

But to bring the story to a close: The three surviving prisoners were McKay, Christie and Landers. Investigation developed that Landers had been taken into the escape plan at

the last minute to replace some other prisoner who had been transferred to Folsom. It also developed that when Rudolph Street, whom I killed, was in the process of beating the warden to death, this prisoner Landers had interceded and tried to stop him. So when we got into trial I had them indicted under the Lindbergh Kidnapping Law which provided either the death penalty or life without possibility of parole if convicted of kidnapping for purposes of ransom and during such kidnapping injury was sustained by the hostages. Now literally it applied to my case, but it was never intended to cover such a case. The three prisoners were represented by the now-famous Melvin Belli, then just an upstart kid. He was representing them free, trying to get a reputation, and he was just impossible . . . I mean difficult.

Belli contended,with some degree of rightfulness, that there was no kidnapping for purpose of ransom or reward, and that any injuries sustained by the officers were inflicted by the pursuers. I took the position that ransom or reward meant anything of value. They took the hostages' clothing and pocketbooks and they thereafter used them as hostages, as shields, to protect them from the pursuers' bullets so they inflicted injury just as much as if pushed into an oncoming train. Well, Melvin Belli made a state matter of it; in fact, an international matter of it. One of the prisoners, Christie, was a subject of Great Britain even though he had been in our jails about all his adult life. But Belli succeeded in getting the British press to intercede with our State Department, saying we were abusing the victim, using the Lindbergh Law against a British subject.

I was interviewed by the newspapers about it and I popped off; we were taught in law school to believe that British justice was more certain, positive and unemotional than ours, and also more prompt. I said that this Christie had been a problem of the United States ever since he was four years old, had served time in all of our jails and I didn't think it was Britain's problem, I thought it was ours. That's the way I was quoted, and the next thing I knew I had a letter signed by the Boyle Heights Gang . . .

S: There is a Boyle Heights jail in Los Angeles.

B: I had a letter from the Boyle Heights Gang; they described my home in San Rafael, ground floor, many windows on the ground level; they described my daughter, age 5, where she went to school; and they said if Landers, McKay and Christie are executed your daughter will be the price to pay. So I sent it up to Sacramento to see if they could get fingerprints from it. They couldn't. But again, it got to the press and they made much ado about it. So for a couple of months I wore a shoulder holster and a gun and I had a special night guard at my house

and my daughter didn't go to school.

But it all blew over. Because Landers had saved the warden's life we let him plead guilty to kidnapping without personal injury. He got life with the possibility of parole. McKay and Christie stood jury trial. Belli represented them. They were convicted and the jury recommended execution by hanging. They were hung within a year's time. It was the last execution by hanging in California. Belli stopped at my office enroute to the execution to deliver to me a special invitation to attend -- I've never witnessed one nor would I want to -- and he brought me a letter from the prisoners afterwards referring to me as all sorts of bad things. They said that I should come over and watch real men die. Well, so much for that. That was perhaps the most exciting time of my life.

S: Was Landers eventually paroled?

B: Landers was paroled very soon afterwards. Years later I was in the Superior Courtroom in San Rafael -- it was a night proceeding -- and they had bought some new furniture from San Quentin Prison where they had manufactured. Landers was one of the moving men. He came up to me and made himself known; he had been paroled and had violated and was again sentenced to San Quentin. He was moved from San Quentin to Folsom because of his conduct and was shot and killed in an attempted escape from Folsom. So the entire bunch was gone.

I continued on for sixteen years as District Attorney, a very active time in my life. I seem to have the ability to get into all kinds of scrapes and manage to get out of them quite well. During the war, in 1943, I took leave of absence as District Attorney and took a commission in the Coast Guard as a Lt. Commander assigned to Intelligence. Frankly, I found it very unintelligent -- it was a misnomer. I spent two years in that, and when the Germans surrendered immediately asked for a hardship discharge and received it. And so went back to District Attorney.

S: Where did you spend the war?

B: In San Francisco. I was second in charge of Intelligence. They needed Intelligence not at all. We did nothing that was intelligent. Frankly, I was ashamed to be wasting time and money during the war. We became a haven of refuge for the political influential who wanted to avoid the draft. They came in as investigators, but we investigated nothing of importance, so I was happy to get out of it, disillusioned by the service.

So I went back to being District Attorney but frankly, my eyes were always on a judgeship. About four years later, Judge

Bunder, who had become a friend of mine, retired, and I filed for judge. Unfortunately for me, my opponent was Tom Keating who was the son of the previous sheriff, and Tom had been a state senator for about 12 years. A very well-liked man. And, frankly, I was unpopular with the lawyers. They campaigned against me as not being of a judicial frame of mind -- I was too much the prosecutor. They gave me the doubtful compliment that I was a tremendous prosecutor who should remain as D.A. as I did not have the judicial temperament. Perhaps they were right. In any event, they defeated me, so I went into private practice.

I had $400 in the bank. I had two daughters, one just ready to go to college. I owned my own home and my automobile was paid for because I never believed in charge accounts. I had no office equipment, no law library, no office. I practiced out of my home for the first few months, did my own secretarial work and took criminal defense work which I detested. Then I opened up my own office and my practice grew. I took in associates and now they still pay me the honor of keeping my name as senior partner of Bagshaw, Martinelli, Corrigan & Jordan, and they employ four other attorneys, a staff of twelve. They are unquestionably one of the biggest and finest in Marin County. I am exceedingly proud and very fond of these individuals. One of them is Lee Jordan, City Attorney for Mill Valley, also for Sausalito. He's a very fine gentleman.

As soon as I was financially able to refuse criminal defense work, I refused it. I didn't like criminal defense work. I did most of the civil trial work for the firm and it was prosperous and pleasant. In 1967 I lost my wife due to a tragic accident. I had my two daughters, both married with their own families, and I was 65 and thought my life was over. I wanted to avoid paying inheritance taxes, so I started to give everything to my children, tax exempt, and started traveling extensively. I was on a ship of the American President Line, President Roosevelt, bound for Hong Kong, and I met this Swiss young lady. She had been in the U.S., had gone to Harvard studying English, and had become a U.S. citizen. She was on her way back to Switzerland and intended to continue there the rest of her life. We liked each other, got along well on the trip and corresponded after that and the following fall I went over to Switzerland to visit her and meet her parents. They approved of our marriage despite the fact that I was 65 and she was 34. We were married and she came over the following December. She loved to travel and thereafter we went around the world several times and once went on a four months' cruise. Once we went by freighter for six or seven weeks and we made five or six trips to Europe -- we have a lovely life together.

Ten years ago, because San Rafael became too crowded and also because I wanted my wife to have a home of her own selection, we moved to Sonoma where we now live. At age 81, I have my health problems -- still have them -- but I am blessed with the finest wife that one could want. She takes good care of me, drives me, does my typing, and so I am happily waiting for the grim reaper.

S: You are a very fortunate man.

B: I think so. I'm completely ready for death. I feel that God has been good to me. I'm still enjoying life. I've had cancer, now arrested by radiation therapy, of the prostate which has badly affected other of my organs. Also, due to glaucoma, I am blind in one eye and nearly blind in the other. But I still do a bit of gardening, which I enjoy as a hobby, and I repeat that I have a happy and good-natured wife.

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B: Of interest to old-timers in Mill Valley: Where we lived at Blithedale near what later became Sycamore, that was considered the outskirts of town. Old Charlie Dowd, who had Dowd's stable and was my godfather, he had twin daughters -- very lovely daughters -- who were a couple years older than I was -- about the age of my sister. They used to ride Charlie's saddle horses and they were wonderful riders. They told me recently that they rode down as far as our place, the Bagshaw place. They were getting out of town then and they would turn around and ride back. Horses and wagons were plentiful in Mill Valley, and every time a horse died -- or while he could still toddle -- they would try and get him down to the garbage dump by the marsh. But often they couldn't make it there and they would drag them down Blithedale behind the garbage truck, the dead horse on the ground behind the truck. My brother and I had a saying to anybody who was misbehaving: "If you don't behave, they'll take you down to the dump and shoot you." That is what they did to the old horses.

The Fire Department was at the present site of the City Hall. It was a two-story building, painted yellow. Downstairs was the stable and the carriage house for the fire horses. They had two horses, grays, I think. Upstairs was the City Hall and when the city fathers had a meeting the stench there was intolerable. Behind where the city fathers sat was a recreation room for volunteer firemen; the fire department was all volunteer then.

A man by the name of Freitas, William Freitas, lived up on Lovell Avenue someplace; he was employed to work on the streets and he drove the fire truck. When a fire was reported, someone at the firehouse would ring the ding-dong bell and Freitas would hear it up in the hills and immediately unhitch

the horses from the dirt wagon, or whatever, and straddle one of them and race down to hitch up to the firewagon to go to the fire. By that time all of the volunteers, and many who were not volunteers, would rush to the fire. I remember when the Boyle house caught on fire and Dick Lenhare (sp?) -- he lived down there near Park Station. I recall him being on the roof of that Boyle house and I was afraid it would collapse with him. But in addition to the firewagon they had a hose cart. They were located at strategic places throughout Mill Valley. There were sheds that housed the carts and the carts contained several lengths of hose on a reel, and also nozzles. They were drawn by persons; they had competitive teams belonging to the various fire departments. My father was head of the team in the Locust area. When there was a fire in that area, a certain signal was given on the bell and the members of that district rushed to their hose cart and pulled it to the fire. On the Fourth of July and other holidays, Sausalito was a central point for celebrations and they would have competitive races of these hose cart teams on Bridgeway. They would drag the hose carts a distance of maybe a mile, down there where the old yacht club used to be, and then they had to attach it to the hydrant.

O: By Ondine's?

B: Yes, and get it playing into the bay -- in the meantime there was much drinking and festivities.

O: I saw that the name of the early fire chief was Clay Budah's father.

B: Yes, he was captain from 1912 - 1915, somewhere in there.

O: You referred to Charles Spur's garage on the corner of Blithedale and Throckmorton. In the '20s he was down near where Brady's saloon would be.

B: That's the only place I remember Spur's garage. He took over Charlie White's stable which was down at that location. Spur opened a garage there. His son Smokey was a mechanic and his daughter Mary was a gracious and lovely girl who went to college as kids did in those days.

O: He operated in 1916 at the corner of Blithedale and Throck-morton.

B: I didn't know that. An interesting incident: When Spur had that garage at Charlie White's location down on Miller, the Hub Theatre was originally right next to that -- an old barn of a place where they showed old time silent movies. Now and then they would have a vaudeville act, The Cannonball Catcher -- and his name was Holtum, who built the Holtum Building at the corner of Blithedale and Throckmorton.

O: Is that the one right on the corner . . . that was the Everready Garage?

B: The one where the El Paseo is now, that's right -- a two-story white building. The amusing incident was that this fellow Holtum was all theatre. They had an old-fashioned cannon and they loaded it with a cannonball and Holtum would stay across the stage supposedly to catch it. There was so little velocity to it that the spectators could see the cannonball coming. But one time it had more velocity than usual and Holtum missed it and it went through Charlie White's stable and into Perini's saloon. Ha, ha. They forbade the act after that.

O: Do you remember when the Everready Garage was built?

B: I remember the building; it was built in about 1918.

(Several sentences garbled on tape.)

O: Carl Kaths (sp?), he was a butcher who died in 1913. Was he associated with Gus Oppenheimer?

B: No, never ; they were competitors. His place was next door to the florist.

O: Down where the El Marin is?

B: Yes, Gus bought the El Marin building later on. My mother inherited it and I bought it from her. That building was then a drygoods store. Carl Kaths had the place next door, a two-story place. Sam Bagshaw worked for him as a delivery boy for awhile and Tom Bagshaw, the father of Sam and Fred, worked for him as a butcher. He (Kaths) had three daughters: Bertha and Elizabeth (Elizabeth was the youngest), I forget the eldest.

(Several sentences garbled on tape.)

O: What was originally where the Scout Hall is?

B: There was a laundry there. I think it was called the American French Laundry. It was the first laundry in Mill Valley that was mechanized.

O: I found the history of two French laundries. The French Laundry on Blithedale that was operated by Bedecarrax, and the one which had a Miller Street address that was right below Spur's garage.

B: There was a place there called Taylor's Toy Store, a little ramshackle place that sold nothing but toys. Behind them there

was the open-air Fireman's Dance Hall and the French Laundry. What was its name?

O: It changed hands; I picked up several names but I don't have them now. I found ads for Bedecarrax in the Record in 1907.

B: They were among my favorite people. When my mother was having such a tough time, Jean Bedecarrax had no hesitancy about loaning her money. It was always repaid. In later years we always patronized them. Later his daughter married Leon Felton; his son Ed became the golf pro at the Meadow Club. Somebody told me he recently passed away.

O: Al just passed away.

B: I believe it was Al, an elderly man.

O: Al, if he were alive today would be under 70, maybe 67. There was a younger one, Tee. Maybe that's the one who was the golf pro, because he lives in Fairfax.

B: No . . . Ed was the oldest son of Jean and became the first golf pro in Marin.

O: They were close to my age, Al and Tee. I forget what Tee stands for. That's not his name. He is still alive and lives in Fairfax and I talked to Al's daughter who lives on Forest Street in Mill Valley. She was going to see if she could get some pictures of the old laundry.

B: I remember they built their home next door to it. First they lived upstairs in a little house between their laundry and another house. Mildred Vail has converted that house to offices. Is the old Hansen house still there?

O: Yes, butyou remember Dr. Goddard remodeled it and moved it right out on the corner and it's now the Peck, Stanton, Hockett Insurance offices. And Ted Hansen, he is a little older than you, I talked to him the other day. He has a picture of himself sitting on his father's bar. Ted will be 88 this year.

B: That's the son. That's the one I knew. It was his father that had the saloon where Peck, Stanton, Hackett is now.

O: It was right there on the corner.

B: I remember the house; it was built right up to the sidewalk and there was a narrow porch along the front of it. I remember Ted Hansen and his sister Mildred on that porch talking to us.

O: In its earlier days it was a bar, or saloon.

B: By the structure, it never looked like a residence.

O: And Dr. Goddard in about 1935 or '38 converted it into offices.

B: That would be about the time Goddard became more established in Marin. Is he alive, still?

O: Yes, but Tom Goddard is not. He was younger than the doctor. Wilson lives out in Bolinas or Stinson Beach. I was telling my sister about when I visited with you in Sonoma and she said you should remember her. She came to you for a divorce -- that would have been 20 or 25 years ago. They straightened out their problems and they are the happiest two people in the world; they've had a very delightful marriage.

S: I assume you were never in partisan politics.

B: I detested politics, as a life or as a career. My first attempt at politics was to become District Attorney. It was a non-partisan office. I was always a Republican. My father had been a Republican and hence I was a Republican. And when I went into the U.S. Attorney's office it was during a Republican administration and Gus Oppenheimer was a Republican and a member of the Central Committee and I favored the Republican side. After the prison break I got a great deal of favorable publicity and I was solicited by a Republican committee to run for Congress. The one who approached me was a Superior Court judge from Lake County. I believe it was after the war. I spoke to George Hatfield about running for Congress and he said don't do it; you have to be reelected every two years, you also have to keep your political fences up and spend most of your time away from your family. You will have to maintain two houses and that would be expensive and you would lose your law practice because you can't practice in Marin County and in Washington also. So forget it.

S: Here's one that's not pertinent to this conversation, but do you think that Deukmejian is doing any better than anyone else in the crime field?

B: I was a little discouraged in Deukmejian. Frankly, I voted for him only because I vote Republican and I couldn't stand Jerry. I was particularly upset when Deukmejian sponsored legislation which is still pending, to split the Buck Foundation money among five Bay Area counties. It was opposed in Marin.

Here is a picture (showing a newspaper clipping) of George Hatfield who was U.S. Attorney, Louis B. Mayer, the head of the movie empire and Louis Lurie, whose son now owns the San Francisco Giants. I was one of those who flew to that big

dinner to celebrate Hatfield's birthday. They had just come back from a trip to Alaska and that was when I was in my heyday.

O: While the tape is still available you might tell us a little of your brother's success as an artist. You were showing us some of his work.

B: That was my cousin. My father, after he came over from Wales and prospered, sent for his younger brother, Tom. Tom had two children when he arrived here; Fred who later became mayor of Mill Valley and a supervisor, and Sam who is still alive and lives in Mill Valley. Then there was Sidney and Jack, the youngest, who lives up where I do in Sonoma. This story is about Sidney, next to the youngest.

Sidney is two years younger than I am. We became very friendly, we loved the same things -- loved to dance, loved to play, but he was a miserable student. They had trouble getting him out of the elementary grades, and he never went to high school. But he had a definite ability as an artist. After he got out of grammar school he started working for various commercial artists and went to the University of California Art School. Then he set up his own practice in San Francisco and did very well. He established a studio in the Montgomery Block building and lived in the studio, too. In my last year of St. Ignatius Law School I moved in with him. The Montgomery Block art studio was not a proper place for my law studies, I'm afraid, but I managed. Sidney later went back to New York to work in the art department of Cosmopolitan Magazine and ultimately he became art director of the Readers Digest magazine, a position he held for years. Later he retired from Readers Digest and conducted a commercial business right across the street from the Pennsylvania Depot in Manhattan.

He lived in Connecticut and prospered. But he didn't like to make the long commute so he closed his practice in Manhattan and had his showplace in Connecticut that he had acquired when he was with Readers Digest, an old mill which he had made into a showplace -- a parklike place. Later he sold that and moved down to the island of St. Lucia in the Caribbean in the West Indies. The government of that island changed hands from the French to British, I think seventeen times. It is now independent. When Sidney went down there he was offered tax exemption if he would employ three natives full time. So he moved down there, bought an old fortress, and established an art school.

End Of Interview