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Mill Valley Library Association

Mill Valley Public Library
Mill Valley, California

THOMAS FREDERICK (FRED) BAGSHAW

An Interview Conducted By
Carl Mosher

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Mr. Thomas Frederick (Fred) Bagshaw

Born February 24, 1899 in Cardiff, Wales.

Resident of Mill Valley since 1904 or 1905.

Interviewed October 1975 at the Mill Valley
Public Library.

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FRED BAGSHAW

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THOMAS FREDERICK (FRED) BAGSHAW

Carl Mosher

This is October 3, 1975, and I'm talking with Fred Bagshaw. Fred, when and where were you born?

Fred Bagshaw

I was born in 1899, in Cardiff, Wales. I was thinking just the other day that I had the honor of having Victoria as my queen. Queen Victoria died in 1901, so she was queen when I was a child.

Mr. Mosher

That's quite a rarity nowadays. What about your family?

Mr. Bagshaw

My father and mother were both from Wales. My father was a seafaring man in his youth.

Mr. Mosher

How did the family happen to come to Mill Valley?

Mr. Bagshaw

We came here direct from England. My uncle, my father's brother, came to Mill Valley a few years earlier. He was in the building business, and he sent for us to come to America -- where everyone wanted to come, I guess. We landed here just after the turn of the century, so while I'm 76 years old I've been in Mill Valley about 72 of those years.

Mr. Mosher

Just the other day I saw a voter registration list for 1902 in which Frederick W. Bagshaw was on the voting register -- a man 31 years of age. Was this your father?

Mr. Bagshaw

No, that was my uncle, the man we came to stay with. My father's name was Thomas -- Thomas Henry. I'm Thomas Frederick.

Mr. Mosher

What year did you come to Mill Valley?

Mr. Bagshaw

Right after the turn of the century. We were in Mill Valley at the time of the earthquake in 1906, so we probably came in 1904 or 1905.

Mr. Mosher

What did your father do?

Mr. Bagshaw

He was a stonemason. There were many stone buildings in England. My father was a specialist, really, on cornices. He was a slight man, but apparently a very strong man. My uncle brought us here to get my father to work for him in the building business, and my father worked hard. He worked for a year or two without any money, to pay my uncle for his passage. My uncle was a tough man -- as most people from the Old Country were in those days. My father finally woke up to the fact that in America you get paid for what you do!

My uncle built the place on Buena Vista Avenue that was recently torn down, where the Catholic Church now is.¹ He later sold it to Elsie Quedens, and it was a boarding-house. He was a sort of wheeler and dealer, a real active fellow. He came to a bad end, mostly from drinking.

Mr. Mosher

Before we move on, let's talk about your mother. You say she was Welsh?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, she and my father were both from Cardiff. Her name was Jane Morgan, and she was a wonderful woman. She and my father were together 'til the end and really gave us four boys whatever we had -- not material worth, not money, but the decency in our background that has stood us all in good stead.

¹/17 Buena Vista Avenue.

My brothers are all still alive. Sam is here in Mill Valley. Sydney went to New York and went to work for Reader's Digest as a commercial artist. He's done very well. Jack is retired now and lives up at Temelec Forest.

Mr. Mosher

You have no sisters?

Mr. Bagshaw

No sisters.

My mother and father, particularly my mother, gave us whatever we have in the way of character -- honesty and decency, never getting into any trouble. As for money in banks, no! My mother was always careful about money, but she didn't have any to bank. If she got a letter from a bank, she was afraid to open it -- afraid they were going to take away her house or something.

Mr. Mosher

Your first memories, then, are of Mill Valley, almost as though you had been born here?

Mr. Bagshaw

For all intents and purposes, that's true.

We came from England to New York on the Steamer St. Paul, steerage. We then spent four days and four nights on the train -- sitting up, no Pullman. My mother told the story of arriving in Oakland and being told, "You have to get off the train here and take a boat." When she heard this she said, "I'm going back. No more boats for me."

We came right to Mill Valley, and we've been here ever since.

Mr. Mosher

What are your earliest memories of the town?

Mr. Bagshaw

Generally, Mill Valley is still the same. It seems to me to attract a certain type of person, someone who loves the outdoors, who loves a garden -- always interested in the schools, always ready to fight at a school board election to get better schools. I don't remember any really

pretentious homes or wealthy people -- nor do I remember any really poor people. I think we're a good, average, American community.

Mr. Mosher

Did you go to Summit School?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, I graduated from Summit School.

Mr. Mosher

Do you remember your classmates there?

Mr. Bagshaw

"Pud" Westerberg^{1/} I saw just the other day. He lives up on my hill; he's very old now. Pete Kantor was another. And Beth Seymour.

Mr. Mosher

Were Kent and Elliot Seymour there?

Mr. Bagshaw

No, they're a little younger.

That next September we were supposed to go down to Tamalpais High School and register. I didn't say anything, but when I got on the train (presumably to go down to the high school) I just stayed on and went to San Francisco. I don't know what made me do it, but I went in and got a job at the City of Paris.^{2/} I went right to work. I was twelve or thirteen at the time. My job was as a cash boy. A dollar a day; six dollars a week. I'll never forget. Out of that I had to pay for commuting and, of course, lunch.

When I came home that day and told my mother I'd gotten a job and wasn't going to go to school, she was angry -- but not too angry. Six dollars a week was a lot of money. I've worked ever since.

^{1/}Joshua F. Westerberg, 502 Hillside Avenue.

^{2/}San Francisco department store, located at the corner of Geary and Stockton.

Mr. Mosher

You mean that was the end of your formal schooling?

Mr. Bagshaw

That's right. But you must remember that if you got through grammar school in those days it was like getting through high school today. If you graduated from grammar school you'd accomplished something.

Mr. Mosher

What happened after you left City of Paris?

Mr. Bagshaw

I worked for Shreve & Company,¹ and I worked in the import business in San Francisco -- I didn't stop working until I retired recently. I now have a grandson who's sixteen, and school means nothing to him, nothing. I don't know whether he's better off than I was or not.

Mr. Mosher

Certainly the work we did was somewhat different than now.

Mr. Bagshaw

First of all, the pay was different. Out of my \$6.00 a week I had to pay \$3.50 or \$4.00 a month for commute and 10¢ or 15¢ a day for lunch. We didn't have much by today's standards, but my salary let my mother and father buy a house. It made the difference between them buying a house or not.

Mr. Mosher

What did people in Mill Valley do for pleasure and recreation in those days?

Mr. Bagshaw

I'd say the baseball games were our big outside interest.

Mr. Mosher

Did you play baseball?

Mr. Bagshaw

No, but we used to go and sit on a hill and watch them.

¹San Francisco jewelers.

There was a lot of drinking in those days, it seems to me. Not on the part of the boys, of course, but some of the young fellows would get too much to drink.

They had good semipro teams that played every Sunday. Players came here from the Army camp at Fort Baker --- soldiers. I'd say that was the big thing that we did. In the evenings I'd say visiting was our main interest, going from one house to another, maybe having music or dancing. It seems we had plenty to do, and maybe better than we do now.

Mr. Mosher

Let's back up a second and recall the earthquake. You would have been about six or seven years old then.

Mr. Bagshaw

I remember it very vividly. I remember waking up and feeling everything moving. We went to Sausalito and looked across the Bay, watching the city burn. A few days later we went over to San Francisco and saw all the destruction. I'll never forget that sight.

Immediately following the fire and earthquake there was a great influx of people to Marin County. I think that was the turning point. Up until then people used to come here for summers or weekends; this was a second home. After the earthquake, people who had cottages in Mill Valley came over and stayed, to get out of San Francisco. From then on Mill Valley became more than just a weekend place; it became permanent.

Yes, I remember the earthquake very clearly, lying in bed and seeing the room going around.

Mr. Mosher

How old were you when you married, Fred?

Mr. Bagshaw

I was thirty-five.

Mr. Mosher

Rather later than usual?

Mr. Bagshaw

I think maybe this was my mother's doings. She didn't plan it, but I had a good home and I loved my mother, so

something had to be pretty attractive to get me to change.

Mr. Mosher

You'd held quite a few jobs by then?

Mr. Bagshaw

Well, I just kept going from one place to another. At one time I was headed for the Orient. Do you remember Reagan Connolly? He was from Mill Valley -- used to be head of the Emporium. He was well-known to a lot of people in Mill Valley. He started with the Emporium as a grocery clerk and ended up heading the firm. He later went to Marshall Field in Chicago, I believe, as a merchant. He was a friend of mine, and he got me a job to go to the Orient as agent for a group of large department stores, including the Emporium and Capwell's. The Associated Merchandising Corporation was the name of it, and they were looking for someone to go to the Orient to represent them. Actually, they had a man there, but they weren't satisfied with him.

I was already in the import business in San Francisco, so I got the job and went back to New York to learn the ropes. After I got there, the company decided to do something else with me and send someone else to the Orient. I was kind of independent, so I quit!

The first night I was very depressed. My friends had had going-away parties for me and all that, and I hated to go back home and say I wasn't going anywhere. But the next morning I woke up and thought, "The heck with this!" I had some samples with me of my own things from the Orient that I had been selling, so I put my samples under my arm and went to see the merchants in New York. I came away with some big orders. So there I was -- in business on a bigger scale on my own behalf. I later went out to the Orient twice on buying trips for my own firm.

Mr. Mosher

What kind of a firm did you establish?

Mr. Bagshaw

General imports.

Mr. Mosher

How long did you operate it?

Mr. Bagshaw

Eight or ten years. I sold rugs, silk sportswear, novelties -- anything. Mostly from China and Japan, particularly Japan. I was running my own business in 1929 when the crash came. I hadn't really gotten established, so I had a hard time. I never did make big money out of it, but it was very interesting.

Mr. Mosher

Speaking of 1929, that was the year of the big fire here in Mill Valley. I understand a spark from an engine of the mountain railway started it.

Mr. Bagshaw

This has never been proven, but this was always believed.

Mr. Mosher

I suppose as a kid you probably enjoyed the mountain railway a lot.

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, and I helped fight the fire. That was a real shock to Mill Valley. It took about a hundred homes and did almost a million dollars worth of damage.

Mr. Mosher

You say you helped fight it? What did you do?

Mr. Bagshaw

Well, in those days everybody went to a fire -- even a house fire. If you could hook onto the back of the fire engine you did, and when you got there you were a volunteer fireman. In the 1929 fire, anybody could go to work. They were looking for men. They just handed you a shovel, and when it was all over you turned in your time and got paid.

Mr. Mosher

Who paid you?

Mr. Bagshaw

I'm not sure. The local fire department or the local government or somebody. Probably the local government.

They brought a lot of San Francisco equipment over here, as well as from other towns in the county. That was one thing they learned from the fire: When the out-of-town equipment got here, they found out they had a different size of hose than they did here, and they couldn't make the connections.

Mr. Mosher

What did you do when you couldn't use this equipment?

Mr. Bagshaw

We just did the best we could with shovels and with our own equipment -- but of course it wasn't enough.

The fire was headed down Middle Ridge, toward the business district, but on the evening of the second day the wind suddenly just changed direction and blew it back up the ridge. From then on they had it under control.

After that, Mill Valley got a new and modern fire department. We had one paid fireman and a chief. When the fire started, up near the Garden of Allah, Ralston White's place, there was a half-hour argument about whether this was inside the city limits and whether our fire department should or shouldn't go. In that half hour the fire burned out of control. There was no real criticism of anyone afterward, except that they weren't trained. But from that point on, Mill Valley revamped its whole fire department, with a paid chief and paid firemen. They had volunteers, too, but the basic firemen were paid. They also got better equipment.

Mr. Mosher

What part of town were you living in then?

Mr. Bagshaw

Right near the center of town, in¹/₂ back of where the Baskin-Robbins ice cream place is now.

Mr. Mosher

What businesses do you remember around Lytton Square at that time?

Mr. Bagshaw

My father was there, the Sunset Grocery. I don't

¹/₂ 29 Miller Avenue.

know whether this was during your time or not. There was a barbershop on the square, and the R & M (Rogers and Murphy) Style Shop. The bank was there. Mill Valley hasn't changed a whole lot since 1929. The O'Shaughnessy Block was there, where Si Weil is now. I remember M. M. O'Shaughnessy very well. Mike was a real character. He was city engineer for San Francisco, built Hetch Hetchy Dam. He had two or three daughters and a son, Francis, who went to school when I did. His sisters were older, I believe.

Mr. Mosher

You say Michael O'Shaughnessy was a character. What do you mean?

Mr. Bagshaw

He was a strong Irishman, very autocratic, an imperious sort of a fellow. I think he instilled in his kids that they were better than most of us. You should talk to Si Weil about the daughters, who still own that building, and what they have not done to the back of the property. It's a mess. They won't sell it, yet they won't improve it -- it's just there.

Mr. Mosher

You use the word autocratic. That probably describes him fairly well. He was obviously a strong-minded individual.

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, he ran the show.

Mr. Mosher

I understand he laid out all the streets of Mill Valley.

Mr. Bagshaw

I think probably he did. An early building inspector was Harvey Klyce, who was a builder.

Mr. Mosher

Tell us about the Bagshaw grocery store.

Mr. Bagshaw

The Sunset Grocery. Wheeler Martin owned it. It may

✓ 67 Throckmorton.

have been where your shoe store is now.^{1/} My father bought it from Martin.

It was a one-man store. We kids used to help him. I remember one time when my father was in the hospital for a week, and my brother and I ran the business. I won't say which brother! We found out that broken eggs sold for half price, so we kept busy breaking eggs -- until we finally figured out this wasn't too smart.

In those days the grocer would phone to the housewife every morning. He would say, "We've got some nice artichokes," or something like that, and take her order. Then he would send it out to her by horse and cart. There were lots of charge accounts in those days, which was the bane of the business. We had people who would owe \$600 or \$700. They'd come in and pay \$50 and buy \$100 worth of groceries. We had a lot of loss that way.

Mr. Mosher

Your father worked as a stonemason when he first came to this country but then got into the grocery business?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, he was always busy no matter what his job was. Things were not good, of course, but my dad was always doing something. And he always paid his bills.

As I say, the grocery store was a one-man shop. Nothing like our new Safeway supermarket. Quite a difference!

Mr. Mosher

What do you remember about Mill Valley in the First World War?

Mr. Bagshaw

I remember the war very well. I was sixteen or more. I tried to get into the Navy with Ted Hansen, who's still here in Mill Valley. He's a year or two older than I am, and he made it; I didn't. We tried to enlist in the Navy when it became apparent that everyone was going.

Later I was drafted by the Army and told to report to the Presidio. The first rumors had begun to come back that the war was over. We hadn't been sworn in yet, and for three or four days we went over to the Presidio every morning.

Finally the real Armistice was declared, and some tough sergeant told us to get the hell out of there and go home. I was terribly disappointed! That's as close as I came to being in the service; by the time of the Second World War I was too old.

Mr. Mosher

Did you notice any particular impact on Mill Valley during the First World War?

Mr. Bagshaw

A lot of young fellows went. I was at the low end, you see. A couple of more years and I'd have been in. There were a lot of fellows that I knew who went. Lytton Barber, for whom Lytton Square is named, was the first one to die. He wasn't killed in battle but in an epidemic of some kind, of natural causes, but he was in the service.

I think you could say that the war had a real impact, because people all around you were going away -- and each one had to have a going-away party! The present to give in those days was a wristwatch. I think everyone who went into the service had a wristwatch.

The First World War was really -- well, I hate to say "a good war," because of course that's not true -- but it was a good war in that we all wanted to go; we really wanted to join up, to fight for our country. Even though war is terrible, there was a purpose. This is a good feeling to have.

Mr. Mosher

At least we knew who the good guys and bad guys were; it was all pretty clearly worked out.

Mr. Bagshaw

That's right, there was no monkey business. We all hated the Kaiser -- well, it was just a good war!

Mr. Mosher

Certainly it pulled everybody together.

Mr. Bagshaw

You might say we were in the right, so we won. I'm sure we were in the right.

Mr. Mosher

How did you say Lytton Square happened to be named?

Mr. Bagshaw

Lytton Barber was the first Mill Valley boy to die in the war, so the square was named for him.

Mr. Mosher

Did the area have a name before that?

Mr. Bagshaw

I don't recall that it did.

Mr. Mosher

Let's move up into the thirties. You were married in 1934, you say? Was your wife a native of Mill Valley?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, she was. Her father was Charlie Huntoon, the first manager of the Bank of Mill Valley. He was brought out here from New Hampshire to be the cashier. (The head man of a bank then was the cashier.) My wife worked in the bank, and later my daughter worked there, and my granddaughter's working there now.^V

Like everything else, banking has changed. In those days the cashier could lend you money -- or not lend you money -- based on his knowledge of your reputation. Either you were a good risk or you weren't. Now you have to fill out lengthy reports -- I often feel they're more concerned with what people write on their application than whether it's true or not. That doesn't seem to be important!

Mr. Mosher

You've had a long and interesting career of public service. When did you first start?

Mr. Bagshaw

I was first a planning commissioner, under Bill Nostrand. Do you remember Bill Nostrand? I think he built the Keystone Block; he certainly ran it for a good many years. I was a young man, probably in my early thirties, when he insisted I go on the Mill Valley Planning Commission.

^VNow the Bank of America, 60 Throckmorton Avenue.

This was when it first started; planning commissions were hardly known in those days. People thought it was ridiculous to try to tell people what they could do with their own property. "A man's home is his castle," you know, and he should be able to do what he wants with it.

The big issue in those days was whether the town should be wet or dry. The City Council issued liquor licenses. Mill Valley was never completely dry but was always very careful about drinking. We always had one saloon, down where the Wells Fargo Bank is now. That license went to Jack Brady, a good, old-time, qualified saloon man. I remember the family entrances, where the ladies used to go. I was a dry -- much more than I am now. When there was an opening on the City Council, I ran and won.

Mr. Mosher

This would have been in the thirties?

Mr. Bagshaw

I think so; I don't remember dates very well. Anyway, I served fourteen years as a City Councilman. I went all through the bus fight.

Mr. Mosher

This was when they were building Golden Gate Bridge, 1936 and '37?

Mr. Bagshaw

That's right, and the Southern Pacific Railroad (who owned the Greyhound bus line at the time) claimed it was losing money. The commute was \$3.50 a month, I think. Every time they'd want to increase it 50¢, people would raise the devil. So when the bridge was finished, the railroad people said, "No more trains; you're going to use busses."

I've always admired the spirit of Mill Valley. The people rose up and said, "The hell with that. They're not going to tell us what to do! If they insist on our having busses, we'll have our own municipal busses."

Ralph Tieman was on the council at that time. Bill Hamilton was on. Walter Johnson was on. Municipal busses became the big issue -- municipal versus private ownership. I can remember we had a public meeting in Old Mill School; the place was packed. I was on the stand representing the

City, and Greyhound had a representative there. They were riding pretty high then. Emil Pohli was on the side of Greyhound -- whether he had money involved, I don't know. But he believed municipal busses were wrong. Anyway, we were all on the platform, along with the Greyhound man. It was a friendly crowd; the people were all with us.

During the course of the debate, during questions from the floor, the Greyhound man made a statement to the effect, "We're coming in here whether you people like it or not." You could just feel that whole crowd rise up -- and that determined it! We had an election and passed a \$200,000 bond issue.

There was a long, bitter fight in City Hall. At the start, three of us were in favor of municipal busses. Ralph Tieman was one, I was another. Bill Hamilton and Walter Johnson were on the other side. Ed Woods, who worked for PG&E, finally swung the ballot three-to-two against busses -- I guess because of the tie-up with a corporation. Anyhow, we had already passed the bond issue in Mill Valley to buy twelve busses. We had had the busses designed, and we had ordered them. Some of them had already been delivered when the vote on the City Council changed to three-to-two against busses. So the busses were sold to Greyhound.

It was a hot fight. People said, "So what if the busses lose money? That's all right; we don't care. We're not going to have Southern Pacific tell us what to do. We're going to have our own busses." We went that far. I often wonder if we might not have been doing the right thing.

Mr. Mosher

But that split in City Hall eventually killed the proposal.

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, there were three-to-two in favor of it all along -- until the end, when Woods went to the other side and it became three-to-two against it. Finally Greyhound came in, of course. I wish I had kept some of the ads that they ran in the newspapers about how good Greyhound service was compared to municipal busses.

I was still on the City Council later when Greyhound

offered.... Fred Ackerman, who has since died, was head of Greyhound then. He invited me over to his office in San Francisco and said, "Here -- take the busses. Take everything! Just run them yourselves." I thought that was a pretty good deal, but it didn't work.

Mr. Mosher

Well, I believe the municipal bus system in San Francisco is conceded to be a rather poor thing. Maybe it would have been the same here.

Mr. Bagshaw

It might have been, except for one thing. The people were for it. Of course, people are funny. If we had started running the busses and were actually losing money they might have had a change of heart. In any event, this is an example of Mill Valley. There's a good spirit in Mill Valley, right or wrong!

It's the same with the schools. We've always had good fights here about who's going to be on the board of trustees; I guess we still have them. But we have good schools.

Mr. Durbrow was head counsel at the Southern Pacific at one time. He was a small man (in fact, he was somewhat deformed) but he was a brilliant man. He lived in Mill Valley. One year he wanted to change the makeup of the school board. He and his crowd had a candidate, but they kept him under wraps. Nobody knew who he was, and his backers didn't say a word.

The day of the election, Durbrow, being with the Southern Pacific, arranged for a man to jump overboard off the 5:15 ferry coming from San Francisco with all the Mill Valley commuters -- people who planned to vote before they went home that night. The man jumped overboard, the alarm sounded, they lowered the boat, and by the time they got the man back on board and arrived in Mill Valley it was too late to vote. So of course Durbrow's candidate won. This is a true story.

This spirit of being interested, no matter which side you're on, is a good thing.

I came onto the City Council during the days of the WPA. Mill Valley needed a new City Hall, but the idea wasn't getting anywhere, so when I became mayor I took on the task. There was an architect named Mooser who had

a son with the WPA. Mooser came to me and said, "I can get this through the federal government for you." I didn't promise, and he didn't ask, but the assumption was that his son would get the job. By golly, we got \$45,000 from the federal government for a city hall, which is about all it cost. So we went ahead and built it. A man by the name of Falk, I think, was chosen as the architect. We opened the design for competitive bidding, and he presented a picture of the hall as it now is. We found out later he had picked it out of an architects' magazine.

Mr. Mosher

It's a handsome building and has been a great ornament to the city.

I'm holding in my hand your copy of the July 31, 1936 Mill Valley Record. On the front page is a picture of the new city hall and some councilmen -- with a very young-looking Fred Bagshaw, who was the mayor. It talks about the dedication program. The American Legion raised the colors, the band played the Star-Spangled Banner, and then Reverend Murray gave the invocation. Do you remember him?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, he was the Episcopal minister. He was here a long time.

Incidentally, we had trouble with the Musicians' Union about the music. We wanted a band to play just the national anthem, but the union wouldn't let us have one unless we paid the musicians. So we used a phonograph record. The program says "band," but we used a record.

Mr. Mosher

The paper says that Mayor Thomas Frederick Bagshaw introduced the speakers. I see "Remarks by F. F. Bostwick." That's a well-known old name in the area.

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, he was the first president of the Mill Valley Bank. Frank Bostwick. I don't suppose you could call him a rich man, but he was better off than most people. A very nice fellow.

Mr. Mosher

I see he was the first mayor of Mill Valley. The paper also mentions Frederick Thompson, Supervisor Third District.

Walter Falch.

Mr. Bagshaw

Kathleen Norris's brother. He was one of my great supporters. He was the one who got me into a lot of these things. There was divided opinion about Fred, but I thought he was a great man. He was on the Board of Supervisors for a short time, and I succeeded him on the board when he quit.

The whole Thompson family was unique, starting with Kathleen. There was Joe Thompson, the man with one arm. Jimmy Thompson was a younger brother. Fred Thompson was in the ship-building business during the war and made a lot of money. He was a very imperious gentleman, but a great guy. For some reason he took a liking to me. He used to take me to the Bohemian Club for lunch.

He got on the Board of Supervisors, but he just couldn't last. He always said what he thought -- and what he thought wasn't always popular. I remember he was very much against the Catholic Church, from family history that goes way back to Mexico. Some matter involving the church came up before the Board of Supervisors. A priest came to the meeting, representing the church. Fred Thompson said openly that he had voted against the measure, whatever it was. "I voted against it," he said, "and I'll stay here all night and continue to vote against it." Well, you don't do this in politics! At least you didn't in those days. He didn't belong in politics because he couldn't compromise or give and take. So after a short period on the board he decided to retire.

One day he took me to lunch and said, "I'm going to quit as supervisor, and I want you to take my place." I said, "That's fine. How am I going to get the job?" He said, "We'll see the governor." I said, "That's fine, but how do we know the governor will do what you want?" "We'll go up to Sacramento and see him," Fred said.

He made an appointment by phone with Governor Frank Merriam, and he said to me, "Okay, we're going on Thursday." We went to Sacramento and went into the governor's office. Merriam put his arm around Fred, and everything seemed to be fine. He told Fred he had heard a lot about him and he was a great guy -- and in a few minutes we were out and all through. Fred said, "Well, what do you think?" I said, "It was a very nice meeting, but he didn't say he'd vote for me." Fred said, "You just don't understand these things."

So Fred quit the job and waited for me to get the appointment. Who got the appointment? Rudy Pettersen, a big deck-hand from Sausalito!

Mr. Mosher

Was this while you were still mayor?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, I was still mayor.

Rudy was a great big Scandinavian, with hams for hands. He was a wonderful guy but a real ignoramus. His great contribution to Frank Merriam's campaign was that he shinnied up a flagpole in the park in Sausalito and put a Merriam banner on it. He could do this because he was a seafaring man. That was his service -- and he got the appointment.

Two years later I ran against him and defeated him. We were always good friends, but it's a good thing I beat him, because he would have gone to jail. He wasn't a crook, but he ~~did~~ 't everything wrong.

Fred Thompson was a great man, but he didn't fit into public life.

Mr. Mosher

Was Fred involved in the Pacific Electric Company that his brother Joe founded?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, and during the war he had something to do with shipbuilding. I don't remember the name of his company. He was a very dynamic fellow.

Mr. Mosher

You ran for the Board of Supervisors, then, when you finished your stint as mayor of Mill Valley? This was about 1938?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, but I was two things at once. I was mayor and supervisor at the same time. Also a director of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Mr. Mosher

I didn't know you could be both a mayor and a supervisor.

Mr. Bagshaw

You could at that time -- until my cousin, Al Bagshaw,

became district attorney. He concluded there was a conflict of interest. We're good friends now, but he took me to court on that issue and defeated me. The court said, "You've got to be one or the other; you can't be both mayor and supervisor." So I gave up being mayor. And bridge director. To show you how politics works -- nowadays you have to be a supervisor to be a bridge director. In those days it was just the reverse.

Mr. Mosher

What do you remember about your election to the Board of Supervisors when you ran against Rudy Pettersen?

Mr. Bagshaw

As I remember it, I always won easily. I can't remember ever working too hard. Nor do I remember winning overwhelmingly -- I got by.

Rudy and I went all around the county, making speeches before improvement clubs and things of that sort. We had a lot of fun. Actually, it wasn't fair. I wasn't too smart, but poor Rudy was so dumb it was terrible!

Mr. Mosher

As I recall you were on the Board of Supervisors for a long time.

Mr. Bagshaw

I think it was fourteen years.

Mr. Mosher

You were a supervisor during the Second World War, weren't you?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes. At one time during the war we heard of a scheme to build an ammunition loading facility at Marin Point -- is that what it's called? Right across the bay from San Quentin, on the Marin side? This was just after the big explosion at Port Chicago that wiped out the whole town. The war was going strong, and everything was set to build a facility nearer to San Francisco, so the officers could live in Marin County. The Army chose the location, drove the piles down, and put in some tracks. They spent about \$13 million. All the people in that area were moved out of their houses, and the Army just moved in, like they do in wartime, and took over everything.

I got involved in it as a supervisor and finally went to Washington, at the County's expense. Clarence Lea was our congressman at the time. He was a fine congressman with a lot of seniority and could have been a lot of help, but he wasn't. The County hired an engineer, and he and I went to Washington for a hearing before the joint Army-Navy Board, all top brass. We presented our arguments against the facility being in Marin. We asked for a congressional hearing.

The Santa Fe Railroad was getting most of the haul to Port Chicago. If the traffic came into Marin County, Southern Pacific would get the last thirty miles -- out of 3,000 miles. They would haul it and get a cut in it. A young fellow lobbying in Washington for the Santa Fe was attending the hearing. When we got through with our plea to the board, he took me aside and said, "You're not going to get anywhere here. What you need is a congressional hearing." I said, "How do you get a congressional hearing?" He said, "Be here tomorrow morning, and we'll go see Congressman Thomas." Thomas was head of the Military Affairs Committee. He was later convicted of bribery and served time in jail.

This young lobbyist took us first to the head of Naval Affairs, who said, "You've got a good case there, but you've got to somehow get to the head of the Armed Services Committee." I said, "How do you do that?" So he phoned Congressman Thomas and said, "I'm sending a fellow over to see you."

We went over to Thomas's office, and the people there listened to us politely. They were all being nice to us because of Clarence Lea, who was well liked in Washington. After a while I could see we weren't getting anywhere. I got madder and madder, and finally I said, "We've always supported Clarence Lea in Marin County, although he's a Democrat and we're a Republican county. We've never asked for anything -- but this is it. He's either got to produce for us this time, or it could mean the election."

Thomas stuttered and stammered and said, "Wh-wh-what? Say that again." I knew I'd hit something, so I repeated myself. He said, "Well, we can't let anything happen to dear old Clarence. We'll get busy right away," and he picked up the phone.

Mr. Mosher

That's quite a blueprint of how politics works.

Mr. Bagshaw

The net result was that they sent out a staff man from the Monongahela. He was a political appointment, too. He came out to make an investigation. I met him when he got here and stayed with him day and night -- practically slept with him. I found out he liked beer, so every night we'd go out and drink beer. One night we went to the Top of the Mark -- and he ordered a bottle of beer!

Every night we'd have dinner together, and he'd say, "What shall I put in my report today?" I'd say, "Well, we saw that banker in San Rafael." He'd say, "Yeah, that's a good point," and he'd write about that. We studied the routes of railroads in Marin and showed him how they'd have to bring loaded trains of ammunition right through the main street of San Rafael, and he'd say, "Yes, this is dangerous."

Well, we got our hearing -- in the courthouse in San Rafael. They sent out a congressional committee to hear the matter. The Army and the Navy were there, particularly the Army, all generals. The congressmen, of course, were making political hay out of this -- roasting each other. The generals would just turn to some sergeant and say, "What about this?"

It was a long, drawn-out hearing. Meanwhile the project was going ahead, even though the war seemed to be coming to a close. The committee finally handed down its decision: "Go ahead with the project. As long as there's a war on, the important thing is to win it. But as soon as it's over, get that thing the hell out of Marin County and leave these people alone. They're good people, and their homes are here." The war was over not long after that. The piles at Marin Point were pulled up out of the Bay, and now there's nothing left.

Mr. Mosher

You mean if the war had continued they would have been bringing loaded ammunition trains through Marin County?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, in another six months. A thing that could be talked about then, which couldn't now, is that there would have been colored troops unloading the ammunition, and this wasn't thought to be desirable. It would have changed the atmosphere of that whole area. It would have been an Army camp, like the Presidio.

Mr. Mosher

That's interesting. I had never heard that chapter in Marin County history.

Mr. Bagshaw

It was a real fight, but we got our way. We wanted to win the war, of course, but once the war was over we wanted to be left alone to develop our county in our own way -- and that was what we got.

Mr. Mosher

Is there anything in particular that comes to mind in connection with your years on the Golden Gate Bridge board?

Mr. Bagshaw

When I first went on the board it was really rough. It's rough now in a lot of ways, but it's a lot better.

One thing you may not have heard about was the big spread the board put on at Christmastime. We'd have two spreads -- one for the directors and their cronies and another for the staff. Tables in the headquarters were loaded with turkey and everything you can imagine. All this was paid for out of bridge tolls, of course! It should never have been allowed, and later on it was stopped.

There were some good men on the bridge board, and there were some real bad ones. Some of them would have stolen the bridge if they could have lifted it! One of the San Francisco directors was terribly crooked -- getting kickbacks on paint purchases and all that stuff. He's dead now.

Lee Kaiser -- you may have heard of him -- was in the stocks and bonds business in San Francisco. When the bridge bonds were sold, they were to start being paid off in, say, fifteen years. The bonds were prime; they sold at a very good rate of interest. Lee Kaiser came into a board meeting one day and proposed that we extend the period of time before the bonds would start to be paid off. I'm not sure of my figures, but say the bonds were to start coming due in fifteen years -- he wanted to stretch it to twenty-five years. He said, "You'd better hurry up, because the government is going to take off the tax-exempt feature of municipal bonds. If you don't do it soon,

it'll be too late. I'll be in again on Tuesday. We should do this in a private meeting, not in public."

After the meeting, the more I thought about it the more rotten it sounded. I think public business should be done in public. So I wrote a letter to Hugo Newhouse, board president, and said I didn't like the smell of the whole thing and that, come Tuesday, I was going to move immediately that we go into public session. I served notice that if we didn't, I was going to walk out and I was going to talk.

Another director was a fellow by the name of A. R. O'Brien from Ukiah. He published the paper up there. He was a crook, a real crook. Everywhere he had ever lived he never could go back, because the sheriff was waiting for him! He fought Newhouse, who was a monied man but a good man. O'Brien was out to get him.

For some reason O'Brien took a liking to me, so I went up to see him on this matter of the bridge bonds. He was in favor of extending the time. I can remember using the phrase, "You just want to extend the honeymoon another ten years."

On Tuesday we all met in the board room. As soon as we sat down, I moved that we go into public session, open session. I knew that if I got it into public debate we would win -- and we did. Lee Kaiser was a friend of mine, but I couldn't go along with him on this scheme. He would have made a lot of money on the additional interest that would be paid during the ten years -- I forget how many millions of dollars. He didn't have all the bonds sewed up, but there was a block of about three and a half million that would have been extended.

Mr. Mosher

They hadn't been sold?

Mr. Bagshaw

They were in the hands of holders, a favored few. I said to Kaiser, "How about the widow who has a \$1,000 bond?" "We're not taking anything away from her," he said. "Well, you're not giving her the advantage that you're giving the Bank of America, who has a large block," I said.

The discussion went on for weeks and weeks. Finally the proposal was defeated. It was never necessary; we had

the money to pay for the bonds before they were due. If they had been extended, I think it would have amounted to about \$10 million more in interest for those large holders.

Mr. Mosher

Did you have a lot of closed sessions before you won your point to have open sessions?

Mr. Bagshaw

Not a lot but too many. That was a lesson to me: Get a thing in the open and you're all right. You can't lose, really. When it's debated long enough....By and large, I think the trouble with the bridge board is that it has been petty. There's been too much time and energy spent on small things.

Mr. Mosher

You have a better knowledge than most people because of your connection with the state highway system, which is an important part of your career. This was after your time on the Board of Supervisors. Who was governor when you went with the highways?

Mr. Bagshaw

Earl Warren put me in. He was a great guy.

Mr. Mosher

How did you happen to meet him?

Mr. Bagshaw

I campaigned for him. I was a delegate to the 1948 convention in Philadelphia when he was chosen as the vice presidential candidate under Dewey. I think it was '48. I knew one of his secretaries, Pop Small. He's a good friend of mine. I went to the convention as an alternate and was in a room with Pop Small, adjoining the room of Governor Warren and his wife. Pop Small and I were the staff. We went to the convention supporting Warren to be the presidential candidate. We had been told all the way back east that we were going to win first place or nothing, and we believed this in our hearts. When Warren accepted the offer to run for vice president, we sat down and cried.

The ticket was Dewey and Warren. Dewey was a terrible candidate. I think they could have won the election if they had just reversed the ticket. But Warren was from the

west, and nobody listened to him.

Mr. Mosher

I imagine you met Dewey?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, I met him and saw him in action at the convention. Everything was mechanical with him, everything was planned, nothing was natural.

Mr. Mosher

He sounds like Nixon in some ways.

Mr. Bagshaw

Well, in some ways. I don't think Dewey was a crook, but he was a cold fish, calculating. His attitude was, "Why promise anything? We've got the election sewed up; we're going to win."

Mr. Mosher

You'd known Warren when he was district attorney for Alameda County? And you thought pretty highly of him?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, and I still do.

Mr. Mosher

Of course he went on to an illustrious career with the Supreme Court.

Mr. Bagshaw

I think no one can say they bought him. He was all right.

Mr. Mosher

Let's get back to your career with the Highway Department.

Mr. Bagshaw

I quit the Board of Supervisors when I ran against Jack McCarthy and was defeated. I think this was in '53. Warren sent word that if I was in Sacramento he wished I'd come in and see him. So of course I soon had something to do in Sacramento! When I saw him he said, "I've got a spot for you. It's in the Department of Public Works.

Frank Durkee is the director, and he needs a lot of help. I want you to go in as his assistant. You go over and tell Frank I said for him to put you on. Right now."

Durkee is a wonderful guy, but he didn't like this way of doing it. He didn't oppose me, but he didn't like it. He said, "Well, you'll have to make your own job." I said, "Okay." It wasn't long before I was very close to him, and I'm sure I helped him. So I was Assistant Director of Public Works.

Mr. Mosher

You were in the administrative end, then?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, and I did public relations. I think I made a great change in the department. It was a big organization; we had 11,000 people at that time. I had been a county supervisor and knew all the supervisors in the state. I knew city managers; I knew everyone. Whenever they had a problem involving highways they'd phone me. I'd say, "If I were you I'd go down to the district and see so-and-so. Tell him your problem; he'll understand." They'd do it, and very often it would work out. People throughout the state began to feel there was someone up there in Sacramento they could talk to who would give them the right pitch. That's how it worked.

It was a great Highway Department. The greatest in the country. They spent millions of dollars. But now! I keep reading about this job and that job that needs to be done and they have no money. That's not true. They have all the money they need -- money from gasoline taxes. But now the money is going to mass transit. You and I, the motorists, are paying the taxes and not getting anything for them. I forget the figures for BART,¹ but it seems to me that for every dollar they spend, they need four. It's just out of this world.

Mr. Mosher

As far as money goes, they appear to be a bottomless pit.

Mr. Bagshaw

Dale Luehring at the Golden Gate Bridge is the same way. They're buying eighty busses -- a hundred busses -- three ferry boats. They've broken down a law which was

¹Bay Area Rapid Transit.

in effect for a long time: that highway revenues go for highways. You could see what you were getting for your gas taxes. Now you're paying, but you're not getting anything. Luehring is getting a lot of money from the federal government.

Mr. Mosher

How long were you a member of the Highway Department?

Mr. Bagshaw

Seventeen years.

Mr. Mosher

What was your position when you retired?

Mr. Bagshaw

I was secretary of the Highway Commission. I was director for a while, until Pat Brown came in! He was all right, though. Sort of a bumbling guy, but a good man. I don't know about his son.¹

Mr. Mosher

When did you retire?

Mr. Bagshaw

Three or four years ago.

Mr. Mosher

You went past 65, then?

Mr. Bagshaw

I went past 70. I was almost 72.

Mr. Mosher

Isn't there some kind of law concerning that?

Mr. Bagshaw

A special law was passed to permit me to work after 70.

Mr. Mosher

That was quite a compliment.

¹Edmund G. Brown, Jr., elected governor of California in 1974.

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes it was, although looking back I don't think it was such a good thing. There ought to be a time for a fellow to leave. But yes, it was a great compliment. I have a letter from Ronald Reagan and the pen he signed the bill with. Not that I have any respect for Ronald Reagan! How he can be accepted nationwide as a serious contender for the presidency is beyond me.

Mr. Mosher

I doubt that he has much chance. He's not of the right stature.

Mr. Bagshaw

No, he just doesn't have anything. He looked on state employees as second-rate, always. A lot of them are -- bureaucrats are not good. But the Highway Department, particularly, had good people, good men. Most of the engineers come out of college and go to work for the State until they retire, and they really give value for their money. They get paid well, but they're there for more than the money. They're there as dedicated people. We built a fine Highway Department.

Mr. Mosher

They took pride in their accomplishments.

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, and now that's all gone. The department has no money, and those people are being fired.

About ten years ago I made a tour of the New England states, calling on universities and interviewing graduating students for jobs with the Highway Department. I went as far north as Bangor, Maine. Everything was scheduled ahead of time, and it was a very interesting trip. I spent all day interviewing young fellows who would graduate that year and who might be interested in coming to California. The Highway Department was hiring about five hundred students a year from the various universities.

Mr. Mosher

What were you looking for in particular?

Mr. Bagshaw

If some young fellow would say, "I'm second in a class of two hundred," I would say, "Why do you want to come to

California? The answers were all different. One might ask how close Sacramento was to the nearest ski area. I'd know he didn't really have it! Another might say, "I want to learn. I've seen your magazine, and I know you're doing a good job." Others might take the attitude, "What do you have to give me?" -- not "What am I going to give you?" It was very interesting.

The department had four or five recruiters. I went to the New England states, others went to the south. There are a lot of fellows now with the State that I recruited in that one year. You'd meet men from private corporations who were doing the same thing -- looking for the top graduating students. Of course that's all gone now.

Mr. Mosher

Let's go back for a moment to your fourteen years with the Board of Supervisors, Fred. What are your most prominent memories of that period? How long were you chairman of the board?

Mr. Bagshaw

I was chairman for fourteen years, which has never happened since.

Mr. Mosher

I didn't know anybody could be chairman for that long.

Mr. Bagshaw

They can't now.

Mr. Mosher

You were elected chairman by your fellow supervisors, and they just kept electing you?

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, every year. After Bill Fusselman came on the board, every year he would say, "By golly, Fred, I think we ought to rotate the chairmanship." I'd say, "I think so too, Bill. I'll vote for you -- get one more and you're in." This was kind of dishonest of me, because I knew he never would get another vote -- and he never did while I was there. He tried every year.

Bill was a bully. I say this with some respect for

him, but he would stand up and bully you -- except that I never would be bullied by him. He had the wrong notion of what the chairman should be. Bill thought he was bigger than the other four. This isn't true; you just sort of keep things going.

Mr. Mosher

One of my memories during those years, as a newspaper reader and a nonparticipant, was^{1/} the continual battle going on between Bobbie Schultz and Bill Fusselman. Did you sit in on any of these?

Mr. Bagshaw

No, Bobbie came after I did. Bill would bully her because she's a woman and he could talk louder than she could. But he never got anywhere with it.

James Kehoe was from Point Reyes. He was a good friend of mine, and I always supported him. Not that he always supported me! But we got along well together. He didn't want to be chairman. Really, I wasn't too anxious to be chairman all the time; I really thought it should be changed. But when the thing came up, nobody else wanted the job, so that was it.

Do you remember "Pop" Barr?^{2/} He was from San Rafael -- ran a service station. He used to say, "Oh, have Bagshaw do it. He's always prepared." This was true; I took the time, and I worked at it. I never led them wrong. I was always aboveboard with them. This was easier for them and easier all around.

Mr. Mosher

I know you had a reputation that was above reproach -- with both parties, which is a nice thing to think back on.

Mr. Bagshaw

We didn't always agree, but they trusted me. I didn't fool them.

Mr. Mosher

You must take great pleasure in looking back on that and knowing it's true.

^{1/}Vera Schultz, who served on the Marin County Board of Supervisors from 1953 to 1961.

^{2/}William Barr.

Mr. Bagshaw

You know, Carl, things are changing. They say things always change for the better, but I don't know. This business with the State Highway Department bothers me. I think some day, maybe ten years from now, we're going to come back to highways. I think the automobile is here to stay. I don't think you're going to give up your automobile. I'm not going to give up mine!

Mr. Mosher

Our whole society seems geared to the automobile, and it would be pretty hard to give it up. Maybe it could be subordinated.

Mr. Bagshaw

When I left the Highway Department I went to work for the State Chamber of Commerce, a private group, to keep alive the interest in highways. But now that's all gone. Everything is rapid transit.

Mr. Mosher

What we need is something that's already starting to happen -- and that is smaller, more sensible cars that will use less fuel. This is probably a more practical and reasonable approach. Maybe pretty soon they'll come out with electric cars and other things that involve very little fossil fuel. Maybe this will turn things around again.

Mr. Bagshaw

I think we'll come back to the point where a lot of these highways will have to be completed. Maybe the highway people did go overboard, but I don't think so. They spent a lot of money, but the modern highway is still...

The basic point I always make is that we're taxed by the federal government every time we buy a gallon of gas. The rule was that this money was to be used for highways. This has gradually been eaten away. They've changed the rules, and now it's all going for rapid transit -- BART and so on. Bill Stokes is the fellow responsible for that. I say, "I don't care; maybe BART's fine. But don't stick the highway user for the money! Get the money somewhere else."

Mr. Mosher

A lot of things are in a state of flux, and this is certainly one of them.

Do you recall any important issues that came up during your years as supervisor?

Mr. Bagshaw

I don't think any was as far-reaching as the plan to build an ammunition loading facility.

I might mention one thing: At the time I succeeded Rudy Pettersen, every year the five supervisors would take the "pot" of highway money (say \$250,000 for Marin County) and apportion it: "You get \$40,000; you get \$60,000." They'd fight and bleed once a year to get all they could. Then that was your money; the \$40,000 was your money to spend on roads in your district.

So you hired a crew of five or six men; you bought a truck; you bought a compressor. You went your way and spent your money. As I remember, there were five compressors in the county for highway purposes. Each one was used, at the most, one month out of the year. I would never lend mine to the guy in Point Reyes; he'd never lend his to me. Everything was separate.

So one thing we did -- well, it was done statewide -- first we hired a qualified engineer as a Road Commissioner, and he looked at the county as a whole. He laid out the work and did it wherever it was needed, no matter how much it cost -- depending, of course, on how much money he had. Then we had one compressor instead of five, and so on down the line. This was all an improvement.

Then there was the Civic Center. I wasn't there then, but I would have been against the Civic Center.

Mr. Mosher

What do you think of it now?

Mr. Bagshaw

Well, I don't know. If I had been on the board when they voted to build it, I would have made the best of it. Bobbie Schultz was for it, of course. But I still think of my mother keeping her tax money in the teapot, saving every month to pay the taxes.

Mr. Mosher

As I recall, they had an account built up before they started construction.

Mr. Bagshaw

Yes, this started when I was there. I think they had

\$500,000 earmarked to build "a new courthouse." No mention had ever been made of where it was to be. I can remember saying, one time when we were working on the budget, "We'd better start building up some money for a new courthouse, because we're going to need a bigger one." So we put \$200,000 away.

Frank Lloyd Wright came into the picture after I had left the board. I was in Sacramento then. He came to Sacramento, and they had a luncheon for him. The governor was there. Did you ever meet Frank Lloyd Wright?

Mr. Mosher

I heard him speak once.

Mr. Bagshaw

He's kind of a nut!

Mr. Mosher

He is rather an eccentric fellow, but he did a lot of interesting things.

Mr. Bagshaw

Wright was so extreme. He wanted to destroy all bridge designs and start over. He had a "butterfly" bridge that he was going to build between San Rafael and Richmond. No rhyme nor reason, no cost estimates or anything. I guess the Civic Center is a wonderful place, but I would never have been for it.

Mr. Mosher

It's turning into kind of a showplace. People visit it from all over the world, Grey Line tours and that sort of thing.

Mr. Bagshaw

Is it a supervisor's job to build a showplace, or to build a good place to do business?

Mr. Mosher

There's an argument on both sides, I grant you. At first I didn't like it, but I've grown to sort of appreciate the lines. I understand from people who work there that it isn't terribly efficient.

Mr. Bagshaw

It's there, and we have to make the best of it.

Humboldt County was also building a courthouse at the time, and they built something that I would have built -- a good building, plenty of room, room for growth -- but not a showplace.

Mr. Mosher

With all your experience in government, and having been in Marin County so long, what do you see ahead, two or three decades from now?

Mr. Bagshaw

I think growth is going to be pretty well controlled. At times I think it's too well controlled. We should have some industry in Marin County. Property values are out of this world; I don't understand what's happening. My place on Hillside is worth \$100,000, and it's not a big place at all.

Mr. Mosher

How long have you lived there, by the way?

Mr. Bagshaw

Thirty-five or forty years. It's a wonderful site, but the house is old. I don't see how ordinary people are going to continue to live here in Marin County. I can remember when \$6,000 bought a very nice house and lot.

Mr. Mosher

Those of us who came here thirty or forty years ago and bought our homes at those prices are getting along pretty well, but to come in and buy now is something else.

We're all pretty lucky to have found Mill Valley to live in. It's hard to conceive of a nicer spot.

Mr. Bagshaw

I can't think of one. We've never had any desire to go anywhere else. Even if property values have gone out of sight.

Across the street from me, on Hillside, the lots are steep. When we moved up there I don't think anyone ever thought of building on them. Now there are three houses. Right opposite my place is a really steep 50-foot lot. When I first moved up there I had a man bring in a load of road oil and spread it about half a mile along the street, which was unsurfaced at that time, to keep the

dust down. I wrote to the property owners on both sides of the street and told them what I was doing. I told them it cost me \$300 and asked if they wanted to put in \$25. I didn't want a bond and all that; I just went ahead and did it and paid for it.

A schoolteacher in Hillsborough owned the steep lot across from us. When she got my letter she wrote back and said, "I've owned that lot for a long time, and I don't think I'm going to build on it. If you'll send me a check for \$25, I'll send you a deed to the land."

Not long ago I sold it for \$10,000. I divided it into two 25-foot lots and sold to the owners on either side -- \$5,000 apiece. This gives them protection for their own places, and I wasn't anxious to see anyone build on it.

Mr. Mosher

By the way, have you ever gone back to Wales?

Mr. Bagshaw

No, I haven't. I used to think about taking my mother back, but I didn't. I would go now, but my wife is not well. I think if I was free to travel I would go to England, but she can't travel.

Mr. Mosher

Maybe you'll do it yet.

Mr. Bagshaw

I might. I wouldn't be too interested in seeing France or the rest of the continent, but I would like to go to England, just because of my background. My brother Sam went a few years ago. He found the place where he was born, got friendly with the people who live there now, and still corresponds with them. I wouldn't go to that trouble, but this is what Sam likes to do.

Mr. Mosher

Is he younger or older than you?

Mr. Bagshaw

He's a couple of years younger. He was born while the family lived in London. The whole family was there for a short time before coming to Mill Valley.

Mr. Mosher

You mentioned that you have grandchildren. You have just the one daughter, Barbara?

Mr. Bagshaw

And three grandchildren -- two girls and a boy.

Mr. Mosher

Where is Barbara now?

Mr. Bagshaw

She lives in a little cottage that I have on our property. She and her husband aren't together.

Young people nowadays are crazy. When I think of my mother and father -- when they got married, they were married. They had their troubles; they didn't always get along. But they fought it out, and when the chips were down they were together. It isn't the same today.