

Transcription of Oral History Interview with

**SHERMAN G. BABCOCK**

June 30, 1998

This oral history interview is being conducted with Sherman G. Babcock at his Riverside home on Tuesday, June 30, 1998. Mr. Babcock is one of the early and continuing members of CUC, the Citizens University Committee.

My name is Jan Erickson. I work in Chancellor Raymond L. Orbach's office. He is the eighth chief administrative officer of the campus.

Erickson: Mr. Babcock, would you begin, please, by telling us where you were born and a little about your family?

Babcock: I am a second generation Riversider, born here in Riverside. My mother was born here. My parents were Gladys and Willard Babcock, who I think were civic minded and known around the town. I was born in Arlington, but my folks wanted me to go to school in Riverside, so when I was five years old, we moved here so that I could attend Bryant Grammar School.

I lived on Pine Street with my parents and my younger brother and sister until I went to college, actually, that was our home.

I went four years to Berkeley and then the war effort was in full swing, so I signed up for the Army Ordinance Procurement office in Los Angeles. That lasted until Pearl Harbor when I rushed down and enlisted in the Navy.

Erickson: May I ask you a question? The training that you received for the military. I should mention on the tape that you were kind enough to write up some biographical information so that I could read that before this interview, and that was very helpful. In that, you mentioned that you went to Harvard and Notre Dame and MIT for those different kinds of training. Was that typical?

Babcock: Well, it may have been. I certainly had no particular preparation for that. I went to Notre Dame to the Midshipman's school. I had a college degree so I didn't have to go to boot camp and after three months at Notre Dame, the Navy certified that I was a gentleman and able to be an officer. So I got my commission.

Then I got immediate orders to go to Harvard to the electrical engineering school because they needed people for the radar, radio program of the Navy. This wasn't learning to operate the equipment, you had to be able to repair it and understand how the equipment worked.

So I took the preliminary electrical engineering at Harvard and then transferred over to MIT, who operated a school on a Navy base. It wasn't on the campus. Harvard was on the campus, but I did not go to the MIT campus.

I think they called it electronics—they certainly do now. But I emerged from there able to start from scratch with a schematic diagram and build a working radio and a working radar set.

Erickson: My goodness.

Babcock: And then I was sent to the Pacific to put all this to use. I was assigned to an attack transport, which was a commercial cargo ship converted to a Navy ship. We could carry personnel or equipment, or both, or either.

Our job was to pick up sailors either at Pearl Harbor or at San Francisco and take them out to ... let's say to Tarawa and put them over the side where they attacked the beach. We had a big

sick bay, so if they were injured, they were brought back. And I spent the rest of the war doing this kind of thing.

My record is most of the Navy battles. I started with Kwajalein, did not do the Solomons, but was at Kwajalein and Saipan and Guam, the coast of New Guinea, the Philippines, Okinawa. This isn't chronological because I was at Iwo Jima *also*, but we were at each one of those battle sites so I saw a good piece of the war.

*I listed several of the battle sites where our ship was involved. I was concerned that I was not listing them in chronological order. Iwo Jima was not the first nor the last of the battles, nor does the list include all of the battles. My present concern is that I should not have said that Iwo Jima was first in any way.*

Erickson: You surely did.

Babcock: It's ironic that I had majored in agriculture. My degree is in Soils and Plant Nutrition at Berkeley, but they said I didn't have enough mathematics to go to weather school where I wanted to go. I thought it would be glamorous to be a weatherman on a carrier.

Erickson: Yes.

Babcock: And I did not have enough mathematics. But I did have enough mathematics to understand electrical engineering!

(laughter)

Erickson: Isn't that interesting.

Babcock: I think that the Navy was searching for excuses. They desperately needed electrical people and had a surplus of weathermen. So it was an interesting time.

Erickson: That's quite an education you got.

Babcock: Yes. I proudly had on my wall by my desk at my office my degree from Berkeley and then these certificates from Notre Dame, Harvard and MIT.

(laughter)

That incidentally overall took about a year and a half to do all of that preparation. So I didn't spend all that time in the Pacific. I spent half the time getting ready.

Erickson: Hmm. Goodness. Let's talk about Berkeley a little bit, too.

Babcock: Ok.

Erickson: What was the size then?

Babcock: I think the campus had around 15,000 total.

Erickson: Oh, even then?

Babcock: Yes, I think so. Looking back, I think there were around ... say 3,000 people in my graduating class. So it had to have been larger when I entered, because there is always the attrition as one goes along. But we had one campuswide graduation ceremony in the stadium.

Erickson: Outdoors?

Babcock: Outdoors, in the stadium, yes. And all 3,000 of us, plus those who got graduate degrees were all there.

Erickson: Did they call your name?

Babcock: They called our name, we walked up and President Sproul gave us our certificate. It was very well organized. I can still remember it. There were huge boards with pigeon holes, and when we reported in for the ceremony, they checked us off on the list so they would know whether we were there or not. But we got up and just walked in a line across and President Sproul stood there, put his hand over his right shoulder, came down

Babcock: with the certificate, handed it to us and shook hands. (That would have been his left hand, wouldn't it). But he was just this automaton, you know, reaching back for the certificate, handing it to us, shaking hands and saying congratulations. We just went by ... three thousand of us. And President Sproul did it, smiling at every one of us.

Erickson: Oh, that's wonderful. So it can certainly be done.

Babcock: Yes, yes, he did it. I was there!

(chuckle)

He was a remarkable man.

Erickson: He must have been.

Babcock: I don't know how far away from CUC we want to stray here ...

Erickson: That's ok.

Babcock: ... but I have one other thing that impressed me. My father went to Berkeley also, and he got a job in the administration building as an undergraduate. And so did President Sproul at the same time. The two of them worked in an office.

Erickson: What did they do?

Babcock: I don't have any idea. Clerical kinds of things in the office.

Erickson: Uh huh.

Babcock: Twenty five years later, I showed up as an entering freshman and President Sproul always had a reception. He stood in the center of the gym and as people like me arrived, we were greeted by a faculty member who shook our hand, pumped us vigorously for information, and by the time we got out to the middle of the gym, the faculty member could introduce you and give some of your background. President Sproul would say welcome and then let you go.

Babcock: I walked out there and the faculty member said, “President Sproul, I want you to meet Sherman Babcock from Riverside.” He interrupted and said, “Are you related to Willard Babcock?” And I said, “Yes.” He said, “Well, Willard and I worked in the ad building.”

Erickson: Oh, isn't that great.

Babcock: We had absolutely no contact for twenty five years, and he snapped just like that. He had the vision. I know I couldn't do that. I was impressed. My mouth popped open. But it was the kind of thing President Sproul did very well. So he was a good PR man.

Erickson: Um hmm.

Babcock: Excuse me. I am straying.

Erickson: No, please. Anything. Any little anecdote you think of, please let's record it.

Babcock: Ok.

Erickson: You said your mother was from Riverside.

Babcock: Yes, she's the one who makes me a second generation. Her parents came from Massachusetts. Therein is another tale. They married in 1893 in Boston in a double ceremony with their best friends.

Erickson: Oh, how nice.

Babcock: They had saved enough money to go to the 1893 International Colombian Exposition in Chicago for their honeymoon. They went and in Chicago ... I don't know how they did it ... on a dare or what ... but they traded in their tickets home for tickets to California.

Babcock: They arrived in California in the depths of a depression year, stony broke. And know what? They always talked about home being Massachusetts. In all of their long lives, more than fifty years in California, they never went home, they never got back. I don't know how they wound up in Riverside, but Mother was born in Riverside.

Grandpa got a job with the city and wound up being Superintendent of the Light Department. (His boss was the Public Utilities Director), and he (*Grandpa*) held that job for twenty years, I guess, until retirement. So he knew everybody in town. He was a real born, gregarious politician.

*The thought I attempted to convey was that Grandpa held the position of Superintendent of the Light Department for 20 years. He was never Director of Public Utilities.*

Erickson: That's great. We'll talk later about your other grandfather. You said he was the one who established the company that you worked for?

Babcock: Yes.

Erickson: Well, let's go back and talk about your brother and sister.

Babcock: My sister went through school here also. Her only goal in life ever was to be a homemaker and mother. She admired her own mother, and we had a very happy, good family life. And she did. She went through Riverside Junior College-then, she married a CPA who was in business here and eventually moved to Hemet. He did most of his work there. But she learned enough to act as his office help; she could type and do all the rest of it. So both of them ran his CPA business. She had a family and passed away from emphysema recently.

My younger brother was ... the rest of us were behind the door when the family brains were passed out. He inherited them.

(laughter)

Babcock: He went through school here with straight A's, flying through everything, taking a lot of extra work. My parents refused to pass him. They said they didn't want him beyond his social peers, so that he did not advance grades. He graduated in the usual time, but he had written papers on insulin and diabetes, for instance, in junior high school—that kind of thing.

Erickson: My goodness.

Babcock: He was very interested in the out-of-doors and so it was natural that he followed his father and his brother in the College of Agriculture at Berkeley, majored in Soils and Plant Nutrition, and sailed through all the courses. He was very interested in chemistry and physics, too. He took those in the College of Chemistry, sailed through with a straight A average and graduated as Valedictorian and was awarded the university medal. He immediately signed up for graduate work and was permitted to bypass the Master's degree, took his Ph.D. in two years.

Erickson: I didn't realize you could do that.

Babcock: Well, I don't know if you can or could then, but the university didn't want to lose him so they were granting him all sorts of breaks. He covered himself with distinction, academically.

I think he principally enjoyed research, but he liked the students. I think he enjoyed teaching. I guess every professional staff member and member of the faculty has to accept the administrative jobs, and he went through the motions of being chairman of the department and director of admissions. I think he was Director of Admissions Berkeleywide for one year, but he just hated it. He spent his time talking to anxious parents trying to get favors for their children, so ... He managed to bypass that.

He earned a Guggenheim for a year in Greece and secured a position as advisor to their Department of Agriculture (of Greece government), enjoyed it very much. When he came back he managed to convince Berkeley that he wanted no more



Babcock: administrative duties. Unfortunately, he died of throat cancer at age 53.

Erickson: Oh, oh.

Babcock: That cut him down, but he's the family star. We love to talk about him.

Erickson: Right. The memories are there.

Babcock: Yes.

Erickson: Did you choose Berkeley because so many of your family had gone there?

Babcock: Well, that was obviously a factor, but I knew that I wanted to join my father in the family business, and really the only course in the whole western United States that was suitable was given at Berkeley.

Erickson: Hmm.

Babcock: At that time Davis was not a full campus; it was just the university farm, so to speak. And I don't think they could grant a B.S. at that time. So I went to Berkeley for agriculture. I spent time at Davis, but the course was what I wanted ...

I started off, of course, with chemistry in the Department of Chemistry and took enough to qualify for the professional chemistry fraternity, Alpha Chi Sigma. You have to have seventeen units before you can pledge.

And I took physics also up there, and it's interesting that the course I took was the course that the scientists take, not the general public. One term in that two year course was taught by none other than Ernest Orlando Lawrence. So I have had a Nobel Prize winner as a teacher.

Erickson: And what year would you have been then? An undergraduate?

Babcock: Yes, that was my freshman year. I think as much as Ray Orbach now teaches a class in physics,

Erickson: Yes, he does.

Babcock: Lawrence said the same. He needed to keep in touch with the students.

Erickson: That's great.

Babcock: That course had several professors, each teaching their own field. So Professor Lawrence taught the area in which he was familiar, which is the atomic physics. In fact, right outside the building where the classes and labs were was a little round shed and that was Professor Lawrence's cyclotron, the one he earned the Nobel Prize for.

Erickson: Oh, my.

Babcock: And at that time, there was no shielding, no protection. You wandered in and out while this high energy physics was going on inside, so I shudder to think what today they would think of that operation then. I don't know whether they were just not health conscious or didn't think about it or what. We got to go in and look around when it wasn't in operation. Professor Lawrence would take us in.

He was a remarkable guy. He had open office hours; if he was in his office, the door was always open, and you could wander in and talk to him if you had something to worry about. This guy was doing all these marvelous things and had the common touch.

Erickson: Now, did you meet your wife Margaret there?

Babcock: I met Margaret there. I was a junior and she was a freshman. My roommate was dating her sister, and so when she arrived from Idaho, a raw country girl, my roommate and Margaret's sister conspired to get us together.

Erickson: Excuse me for interrupting, but did you all live in dormitories or residence halls?

Babcock: No, I lived in an apartment. Margaret and her sister had an aunt who lived in Berkeley and they lived with her at her home.

Erickson: Oh, I see.

Babcock: They had their house and room and board taken care of. In my junior year, I joined Alpha Chi Sigma. By then I had enough chemistry and physics to qualify. But Margaret and I didn't think we were going to like this at all. You know, she said, "Somebody my sister is fixing me up with? The heck with that!"

(laughter)

But we struck it very quickly. We hit it right. It was obvious we were predestined, and there were never any regrets to my knowledge. We had a very good marriage.

Erickson: Did you marry there?

Babcock: No, we both agreed that she would get her degree. The world was unstable; you could see that the war was coming and so on.

Erickson: When would that have been?

Babcock: In 1939, is when I started dating her, and in '41 I graduated and came down here and then went into the Navy. She put in her four years in and in 1943 got her degree. Then we felt we were free to marry. I have no doubts about that either; it was a very smart move. If I had not come back, she had a basis for her life.

Erickson: Right, uh huh.

Babcock: We married the year I got my certificate at Notre Dame and was (pause) what is it? ... commissioned. So I was going to come back that summer and marry her in Berkeley, and she had a beautiful garden wedding fixed up, but the Navy said to

Babcock: proceed immediately to Boston. So I went to Boston. I wired her saying, "I'm sorry, I can't get married." But I landed in Boston, got an address and phone number, and she called right away and said, "May I come there?" I said, "You bet." So ...

Erickson: Ohhh.

Babcock: She came west on a troop train. She was the only woman on a troop train, on the whole train.

(chuckle)

Erickson: Oh, my goodness, the whole train.

Babcock: She said she had never had so much attention paid to her in her whole life.

(laughter)

But she arrived and I had an apartment selected, went down to Old South Church, got married and honeymooned in Cambridge.

Erickson: Well that sounds all right, too.

Babcock: Yes. It worked fine. There were other young wives whose husbands were going through the school I was in, so she found company with them. It turned out to be a delightful year in Boston.

Erickson: Umm. That's a nice story. How many children did you and Margaret have?

Babcock: We had three. My father used to say three children, one of each.

(laughter)

That's from Victor Borge. We had two boys and a girl with the girl in the middle. Ed went to the university at Davis, Christie

Babcock: went to Berkeley, and Jim went to UCLA. So we kept it in the family.

Erickson: You really are a UC family.

Babcock: Oh, yes, yes, yes. When Christie registered at Berkeley that was a centennial year, 1968, the University's one hundredth. At any rate, they asked if she had immediate family that had been to Berkeley, and she ran out of space on the questionnaire writing names!

(laughter)

All of my uncles, several of my aunts, cousins ... and in my children's generation the same thing. The family is just well represented at Berkeley.

Erickson: I'll say.

Babcock: Tradition.

Erickson: Well, let's see. Let's get you back to Riverside. After the war you came back here and Margaret was living here?

Babcock: Margaret had spent the war with her aunt in Berkeley.

Erickson: Oh, she stayed at Berkeley.

Babcock: She stayed at Berkeley. When the Navy ship came into San Francisco harbor to discharge passengers, equipment and so on, I had enough points to get out. The captain didn't want me to, 'cause there was no one else on the staff who had my particular background. But I told him I had points and my wife was right across the bay, and this is it!

Erickson: How many points did you need?

Babcock: I don't remember. There was a point system for how many years or how many months in the service and the kind of service and so on. Whatever it amounted to I had enough

Babcock: points to qualify. I had a reserve commission, so that you didn't get discharged. You had to resign your commission. I held on to it for a while, but fortunately just before the Korean War, I resigned my commission.

Erickson: Well, my goodness, you had done your share.

Babcock: It turned out that again there was a great shortage of electronic officers. They had enlisted men, but they needed officers who understood all of this. They wrote to me and said, "We know you resigned your commission, but would you consider coming back? We need you." But I figured I had done my bit.

Erickson: You did.

Babcock: I was enjoying my life at home, married life with the children, so ... I declined without much conscience.

Erickson: Sure. Let's talk about what you did then. How did you get established here in Riverside?

Babcock: My grandfather ... It's tied up with ... can I bring this up?

Erickson: Oh, please.

Babcock: My paternal grandfather arrived in Riverside in 1906 expecting to be a professor at Pomona College. He thought he had been accepted, but when he arrived in Pomona, they said, "No, we talked, but we don't have an opening yet."

Erickson: Ohhh.

Babcock: Grandpa's field was science. Believe it or not, he was a Professor of Science at Alfred University in New York, and that's what he expected to teach. Well, there was a lot of mining around, so he opened a mining assay office.

Erickson: What kind of mining were they doing?

Babcock: Surprisingly, a great variety. Not just gold. There's a tin mine in Temescal Canyon right now, for instance. It's not being worked now, but most of it has been. Most of the metals: there's lead, gold, silver. And they all have to be assayed.

So Grandpa had an assay office that was a going concern. When Dad and his brother Roy came back from Berkeley after the war (World War I), they both had noticed agriculture and liked to grow things, so they joined their father in the business and it became Edward S. Babcock and Sons. They immediately offered the scientific farming advice, consulting, laboratory service to the farmers in the area and it caught on and did very well.

When I got out of the Navy and came back, I knew that's what I wanted to do because I had selected a preparatory course to fit this. So I just moved in and went to work, and Dad and Roy had been working very hard, and they could hardly wait to dump it on me. So it was a matter of really being welcomed.

In 1964, they sold out to me, and I took over the business. My job was cut out for me when I went to Berkeley as a freshman. I knew where I would wind up, and I never have regretted any of that.

Erickson: The Citrus Experiment Station was going strongly then. You were talking about 1947?

Babcock: The Station was established in what? 1907. And in the 1930s it was at its present location and starting out at in its present form, activities and so on. By the time I got here in the '40s, and '50s in particular, they were well established and world famous and just such a natural place for me to get information.

Erickson: That's what I was getting at. Did you work directly with the faculty?

Babcock: No, I would go out there with a problem and they would very generously spend time and recommend sources of information if they couldn't give it.

Erickson: And how did you do that? Did you just go to the office and say, “I have a problem with such and such?”

Babcock: I think I need to say this, too, about the Station. They were, the faculty and the others—the total staff were just a part of the community. It’s as though that was a place to work but they lived here and this was their town. I ran across them ... Homer Chapman, for instance, was a very good friend. Everybody called Homer friend; he was excellent. But Al Boyce, too. If I had entomological problems, I just called Al, and he’d sit down and talk about it. They were friends, not pros. I didn’t walk out there a stranger. I didn’t go through the office. I knew who to go to with a particular problem.

Erickson: I see.

Babcock: I would just get on the phone and find when it would be convenient to them. I worked there summers while I was at Berkeley. They take care of their own, and so I was a field laborer, but I worked for people at the Station.

Erickson: Oh, so you came home every summer?

Babcock: Every summer. Yes, I came home summers and spent my summers working at the Station. It was an excellent background; that’s why I knew where to go again. It was just so easy to use, and there wasn’t a finer source of information in the world.

Erickson: Did they do experiments for you?

Babcock: Yes.

Erickson: Did they do some research in whatever problems you were having?

Babcock: Well, no, not directly. They have to be careful, too. They are a state entity ... They can’t give favors to individuals as such, but if I had a problem that I needed an immediate answer to, they



Babcock: generally found a reason to run that test, that experiment, or look into that. Meanwhile, I got all the information I needed. It was absolutely tremendous, and I suppose I see life through rose-colored glasses. I have been very fortunate, but they were just an outstanding bunch of people. That's all there was to it. I can't say enough for the guys that were there.

*In referring to information received from the CES, I want to say plainly that I got no information or service that wasn't generally available to any who had a genuine need. I got no special treatment whatever.*

Erickson: You mentioned Homer Chapman and Dr. Boyce. Do you remember any other names?

Babcock: Oh, dear. Paul DeBach and Louie Riehl were Entomologists, and they were active with me in the Alumni Association affairs, the scholarship thing. I particularly remember them. Dr. Haas, Howard Frost. We used him for going to the right nurserymen to get the right buds that we needed for the trees that we planted. He was a Geneticist. Oh, dear.

Erickson: Oh, that's ok. I just ...

Babcock: If one could find a history, I could run down the list. Oh, yes, I know him ....

Erickson: Oh, yes. No, I forgot something like that.

Babcock: Right.

Erickson: Let's talk about the formation of the campus at Riverside. First, let's tell us about your association and your continuing association with the alumni group.

Babcock: When I came back in December, 1945, in effect, 1946, Harold Butterfield. ... Incidentally, in the written material I provided I mistakenly said Harold Backstrand in one place but it should have been Harold Butterfield. Harold Backstrand had lived

Babcock: across the street from us, so I knew Harold really well, but in this instance, it was Harold Butterfield I succeeded.

Harold was in the Berkeley Alumni Association, not the University, but the Alumni Association at Berkeley, was the local representative for Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Their principal functions at the time were scholarships. He conducted local fundraising activities, and with the moneys raised, interviewed high school seniors in the area for scholarships with the idea that they could go to Berkeley when they might have some other ideas. This was an enticement to get outstanding students to Berkeley, and it was quite active. It was well done.

I don't know when ... I don't think it was during the war, but it might have been, President Sproul conceived the idea of taking some of the Berkeley staff who were outstanding in their fields. And, incidentally, all of them were relaxed and good speakers and friendly; they were good for public relations.

Erickson: Uh huh.

Babcock: But he would go to different places around the state with these people. The local people would organize a dinner or banquet and Dr. Sproul would provide the entertainment so to speak. That caught on early in Riverside, because the Station was here already and it was a base of operations.

So that when I joined this ... My wife and I as Berkeley grads ... joined this group, both of those programs were under way.

When Harold Butterfield was transferred or elected to go to a job in Sacramento, he asked me to take over the program. It seems to me I did ... whatever the timing was at the start, I am sure I did it clear through the fifties. I think it was almost 1961 when I retired from that, because I enjoyed it.

Babcock: But again, our activities were hosting President Sproul when he came – his associates called it the “Traveling Academic Circus.” I don’t know whether he was aware of it or not.

(laughter)

But they were very pleasant associations. When I got back also I found out, because Riverside is essentially a small town, and it wasn’t long before I realized that a Chamber of Commerce was trying very hard to get an undergraduate campus here. I didn’t pay too close attention; I was busy with getting my own affairs in order and enjoying civilian life again.

But gradually, and I don’t think there was any one time, the Berkeley alumni just quit what they were doing and started in working for CUC and the UCR program. But some of us switched earlier than others. It was a gradual transfer. I may have stopped doing that because the program stopped in 1962, the scholarship program.

For a while, being President Sproul’s traveling circus, we started celebrating Charter Days instead. Charter Day took the place of President Sproul’s visits. Some of his professors came to the Charter Day, but by the time we had a definite UCR organization, it was to be this campus and not Berkeley. I am a little hazy about how that switch occurred. I was very active in the early Charter Day committee, however.

The picture that’s in John Gabbert’s history—his little article on history—I am on that because I was the UC Berkeley Alumni representative there. In fact, I had been doing all this anyway.

I was the one that got stuck for getting tickets printed and making arrangements for the dinner at the Inn and so on. That was my contribution then, so it was kind of a segue. That’s how I got involved in CUC in any event.

I think I mentioned, too, that when Harold first invited me to come with him, I thought, “Gee, this is great.” And then I got there and here’s all the town’s leaders. The youngest of them

Babcock: was at least ten years older than I. Their activities were well underway; they were contacting congressmen and testifying before Sacramento politicians and all the rest of it. My thought was, “My goodness, what am I doing here?” But they found things for me to do.

Erickson: What were some of those things? Do you remember?

Babcock: The kind of things that I was doing for the alumni association, making contacts. It all boiled up to being PR. I went to service clubs and talked to them to try to stir up interest. I also had the sort of organization already in place for when they wanted to have a banquet or a dinner or something like that. I did it.

Erickson: Was there immediate support when you went to a service group?

Babcock: Yes. People were very interested. The Chamber of Commerce had done a very good job of selling the community on the idea that this would be a most desirable business to have. The Station (Citrus Experiment Station) and its people being “leaven” in the town so to speak, there just wasn’t ... it wasn’t a hard sell at all. People in town were talking about their friends. I talked mostly with my friends among the professional staff. But they had to have people that worked in the fields, too, you know that did more or less manual labor. And they had a corresponding influence on that level, that strata of society. It was a natural all the way; it just wasn’t difficult. The station had made a favorable impression and the idea of having a school here, I think, was pretty well accepted.

Erickson: When the Strayer Committee came to Riverside, were you involved in any of those events?

Babcock: No, I was not. I was aware of it, and may even have been invited. In those days, I was going every six ways from Sunday.

Erickson: Busy.

Babcock: For whatever the reason, I was aware of them and was either invited and chose not to go or I wasn't even invited. But I was not part of the appearance with the Strayer Committee. They didn't need a lot of people, except warm bodies to make an impression. The leaders, the politicians were the ones that knew what to say and how to affect them; they were skilled in this sort of thing.

Erickson: It was Dilworth who was the Senator, right?

Babcock: Nelson Dilworth was the State Senator. And incidentally, Nelson Dilworth was a customer of ours.

Erickson: Oh, really.

Babcock: He was a farmer in Hemet and used us regularly. So I had met him. I wouldn't say we were buddies, but he knew me by first name. A very quiet man, a very tall man. He was a big, imposing person, but he came across as a country hick.

(chuckle)

More than one person has been stung by that impression, because he was as sharp a man as I knew and very gentlemanly, you know. He'd scratch his head and his mustache and he'd look like some of our movie comedians that try to be a country person. He'd walk in slowly, you know, but he was capable and sharp. I can't say enough to commend him. A very friendly person, a very good man to have on this.

Erickson: He was the first of the legislators ...

Babcock: Yes.

Erickson: Weren't there others? Wasn't John Babbage ...

Babcock: Well, Nelson Dilworth was our Senator and Lee Backstrand. Lee Backstrand was an older brother I am sure of John Harold Backstrand that did all this. Lee was the Assemblyman at the time, and so in the initial stages, it was Lee. Lee ran an

Babcock: electrical business here. He rewound motors and that kind of thing. He, too, was really sharp, but he came across as kind of a rube. You know, he had no fancy manners. He didn't talk like I talk—neither did Nelson.

But we were very well represented by those two people, and I think more than once the initial appraisal of this person turned out to be embarrassingly wrong, because they had what it took to get the job done.

I don't know why Lee Backstrand resigned or did not run again, but he gave plenty of notice that he would not be there. And John Babbage was a prominent local attorney, immensely capable and agreed to run, 'cause Riverside wanted someone who could fill in for Lee as well.

So for a while the team was Nelson Dilworth and John Babbage, and they were a good team, too. John was very skillful; he knew his way about in the legal field and was a good representative.

Erickson: I don't want to go out of order here from your information, but

Babcock: Oh, no, go ....

Erickson: Tell me about Phil Boyd, too. Was he living in Riverside?

Babcock: No, I think he was in Palm Springs, but he had a residence here. I don't know just when it happened, but he built a beautiful home. Of course, it's still there on the base of Little Mt. Rubidoux. Actually a gorgeous home. I met Phil, of course, through the CUC, but it wasn't too long before he had a dinner party and invited Margaret and me. Again, we were years younger than anyone else there ...

(chuckle)

and I think the others there were kind of looking, "Well, surprise. What are they doing here?" But we were met by a doorman or a butler or someone at the door.

Erickson: Is that right!

Babcock: We were invited into the drawing room for what would now be cocktails or whatever, and then dinner was announced. We took our ladies on our arms and walked into the dining room where there were no place cards, but people just said, “Would you sit here, please?”

Erickson: Oh, very formal.

Babcock: Oh, yes. Tuxedo.

Erickson: Oh, you wore a tux. What did Margaret wear, do you remember? A long dress?

Babcock: A long dress, yes. As a short aside, I was also active in the Masons, and their ceremonials required a tux, so I had a tux.

Erickson: Thank goodness.

Babcock: Thank goodness I had a tux. But we walked in and sat down. The service was not silver, it was gold.

Erickson: Oh.

Babcock: The flatware and the plates and all with the crystal goblets—the whole works, you know. We went through a whole multi-course dinner all formally served. Afterward, the men retired to the library for cigars and the ladies went wherever the ladies go at those times. Then we rejoined them in the living room for the final part of the evening. I had never seen anything like that before.

Erickson: Well, perhaps ... I am conjecturing here, but Dorothy Boyd ... was it her grandfather who was in the automotive business, so maybe that's where all the opulence came from.

Babcock: Yes. I never inquired, but they were such gentle people. I really don't know. That is true, I think. Whether Phil had his, too, or whether he made it all through her, I don't know.

Erickson: That could be, sure.

Babcock: Phil was immensely capable and moved in high circles. He was very good to me, and I just didn't ask embarrassing questions. I figured it was better if I didn't know.

Erickson: Well, it was a very pleasant evening.

Babcock: It was very pleasant evening, but every association I had with Phil was pleasant. I am prejudiced. I was impressed from the very moment I saw him. He kind of remained in the background, but he didn't keep quiet.

In his soft voice, he would direct the way the conversations were going and the business was going. If he had an interest to put forth, it was put forth with no ambiguity.

I just think that for all the time he was able, from those very earliest days until he had to retire for health reasons, that he performed that kind of role. I think he directed it more than people realized. He would make suggestions, never directions or even requests. He would just say, "Well, now it appears to me that the situation looks this way. Do you think it would be wise to perhaps do this?" And it would be done. I don't mean to detract from any of the others, but this was Phil's baby.

Erickson: He was just a natural leader.

Babcock: A natural leader. When I was there, by the time I got here, it must have been 1948 when the decision was made to organize formally and the group that was there thought Phil should do it. He declined, firmly.

So O.K. Morton was an excellent choice because he was an outgoing person. He was known all over town as a Superior Court Judge, into everything, and he was a detail man. So



Babcock: everything that was done, he followed up, he had his finger on all of it. At that stage with the kind of lackadaisical organization, perhaps he was the best man for the job, because he saw that things were organized and worked together and got done. He didn't mind being in that kind of position. I think he was there for five years and then decided that he'd better get out. At that time, Phil Boyd, I know, had a succession in mind right down the line.

(laughter)

But the group said, "No, Phil, you have put us off long enough. You are the next Chairman." And he took it for two years, and then said two years is long enough for anyone. The next obvious choice was John Gabbert, and I am sure John was the third President of that.

Erickson: Is that right?

Babcock: I'd better be careful ...

Erickson: No, no, that's all right.

Babcock: But John was another one who had been in it from the start and kept track of everything. He knew what buttons to push for everything.

Erickson: He's a good detail person, too.

Babcock: Yes. Yes. And he was a natural one to follow. So after that I begin to lose track.

Erickson: Well, now fortunately at the University Club in one of those side rooms, there are photographs of all the presidents.

Babcock: I think they are all there.

Erickson: Now, you have served in CUC all these years. Was it always as Treasurer? When did you assume that position?

Babcock: The original Treasurer was a banker, Richard Schultz. He had a high position in the local Citizens Bank. Then when they became Security Bank, I am sure he was still with them then. He was Treasurer at the start, set up the books, and I inherited them (pause) I can't tell you just when that was. I am sure I have that somewhere in my own records, but when Dick retired, I took it. But it was after I had been ... (pause) I was the Chairman in ... '60? What did I say ... When did Ivan ?

Erickson: '64.

Babcock: Ok. I was already Chairman. I was Chairman like everybody else, for two years. Phil Boyd set that pattern. I was Chairman for the two years during which Herman Spieth retired and Ivan became Chancellor. So I was Chairman in '64, and Dick Schultz was still Treasurer. In fact, he wasn't the original.

I think Glenn Gurtner was the original Treasurer back in the early '40s—'45, '46, '47—in that area, whenever they first organized. He was the first Treasurer, Glenn Gurtner. Somewhere after a very few years, Dick Schultz took over. He lasted until I got it, but I have ... what ... something like 1970.

I have been it since. I have a standing offer each time the administration changes each two years, my resignation is in. So I keep thinking someone new, and you should involve new people, and this is a way to do this.

Erickson: It hasn't ever been accepted.

Babcock: It hasn't been accepted.

(laughter)

Erickson: That's a really nice compliment to you.

Babcock: Yes. Part of my reason for doing that too, was Donna's health was failing. I withdrew from most everything in town. This

Babcock: one organization (and Rotary Club is the other) that I have not withdrawn from.

Erickson: Let's talk about Donna.

Babcock: Ok.

Erickson: When did you meet her?

Babcock: In 1946, when we came back to Riverside and Margaret came from Berkeley. Margaret expected me to be known all around town and her social life would be set. But I had been gone for ten years, and my friends weren't back yet, and we walked into a social desert as far as she was concerned.

So Margaret joined the AAUW, and they had a bridge group. They have special groups of interest, and one of them was a bridge group, so she joined and made very good friends that we still have. They wound up to be about ten of them that played bridge. The survivors are still playing.

I met Donna because she was one of that original group. They played round robin each Thursday night at each other's houses. So once every ten weeks Donna came to see us. We hit it off then. Donna and Margaret were as close friends as any in the group. And Donna never married; she was a career woman. So when Margaret died in 1964, Donna was very attentive and I appreciated it, and it was a natural.

Erickson: Oh, that's nice.

Babcock: She got out of UCLA during the war. She was one of those who took her four years in three years by going year round, summers and everything. She, too, covered herself with glory. She didn't get the University medal, but she came close. She was a match for Ken. She came back to Riverside thinking to be a teacher. She had taken poly sci and history as her majors, a dual major and had a teaching credential to boot.

Babcock: But she found an opening in the tax office, the County Tax Office. She was known around town, too, a native Riversider. Everybody knew her and what her capacities were, and she had no problem going to work at the tax office; she knew all the people there anyway.

She worked her way up through the ranks; she became Chief Assistant Tax Collector and when Miss Hyde retired, she ran for office. I think there were half a dozen people in the race, and she got more than 50% of the vote, so she was elected and ran for five more times. She served six terms before her health forced her out. Never again did she get less than 70% of the vote.

Erickson: My.

Babcock: That's just amazing. She was extremely capable and she enjoyed her work. My favorite story about her illustrates lots of things. She became very active in the state of California's County Tax Collector's Association.

Each tax collector in the fifty eight counties is a member of this volunteer group. They band together to help one another and to lobby for their position in Sacramento.

The most important committee they have is their legislative committee. It wasn't long before Donna was on the legislative committee in her first term, and by her second term, she was chairman. She took it seriously and went up there and learned the code and everything else and was as well known in Sacramento as she was in Riverside.

Well, one time (laughter) ... it's funny. When the Stringfellow Quarry was having its problems, she as tax collector foreclosed on it for the county. So she as tax collector, owned the Stringfellow Quarry for a few hours until the title was transferred to the state for delinquent taxes.

(laughter)

Babcock: But they discovered this, the attorneys did. In one of the lawsuits, they asked her to testify. She was subpoenaed, and the guy got out the tax code and said, "Well, now under the tax code ... this is thus and so. Are you aware of this?" And she said, "I ought to be; I wrote it. That's Tax Code #. so and so." It turned out that the legislators had asked her for suggestions, so she wrote down what she thought the code should be. The Legislature adopted it.

Erickson: Oh, my. That's great.

Babcock: So that was my Donna.

Erickson: Quite a lady.

Babcock: A take charge person. As far as I am concerned, and I'm prejudiced, but she was well liked. All the voters said so.

Erickson: Oh, she must have been.

Babcock: So she made a career, and I was her first husband. She, of course, had no children, so she adopted my children. They were hers as much as mine.

Erickson: Oh, that's nice.

Babcock: It was with some misgivings again. You never know, but the kids just took to her like duck to water. And they had known her; she had been in the house when they were little kids growing up. It was a nice affair.

Erickson: That's good. Well, let's see. I am not sure where we are.

Babcock: Yes. We bounced around. No problem.

Erickson: Let's talk about the time when the UCR liberal arts college was formed.

Babcock: Yes.

Erickson: How was that accepted?

Babcock: Uh, I think at the first, with misgivings. The Citrus Experiment Station was a proud entity and they weren't sure about this. They didn't really oppose it, but there was a lot of uncertainty and suspicion and that sort of thing. So those of us who were looking at this whole thing from the Experiment Station's point of view because of our experience, we kind of had to share a little bit of the same.

But I don't recall that it persisted very long. It became very obvious that they were not going to be incompatible but could help each other. It was a good symbiotic effect, so that in my circles and those with whom I dealt, those wonders, suspicions, worries kind of melted away. It resolved itself very well.

Al Boyce was a strong figure I think in making it work. He was well respected professionally and liked immensely as a person. I think he was one of the major reasons it went as well as it did. But I would guess that two or three years later, there was no lingering doubt to my knowledge. Other people who lived through that may have a different view, but ...

Erickson: But you have the perspective of the CUC and your friends at the Station.

Babcock: Yes. There was discussion and talk about it. It was one of the major items to be discussed around town about this new set up. But I was so enthusiastic about having it happen, I thought it was great. I was just so pleased we could have that here. I think most people came around to that point of view. So any initial rough times, we got through.

Erickson: Well, it was a liberal arts college for a few years and then they changed to a general campus. How was that viewed, in your opinion?

Babcock: That probably had as much feeling, if not more so, than the Citrus Experiment Station's being made part of it, because Gordon Watkins said strongly that we were going to have the "Swarthmore of the west," and this was to be that sort of thing. That was a harder sell than the other.

It went on for quite a while and I think smoothed out only when the proponents of the small college faded from view, either from age or just lack of interest. There was just lots of thinking. The intelligencia, ... I hate to classify people, but ...that kind of person was so thrilled to have a liberal arts college here—not only here but in the University system—this was something we needed, and it was sold on that basis.

When they changed, that meant changing a major course, and it was a hard sell. I think most people like me are pragmatists and knew this had to be. It was ridiculous to think that the other could prosper, exist and go.

Erickson: And why do you say that, Sherm?

Babcock: I don't think the general population would support it. I don't think they supported the idea as much as the movers and shakers did and the people who were thrilled about the liberal arts college. They are in the minority, there aren't that many kinds of people around. How many people in Riverside want to send their child to Swarthmore?

And a lot of people thought of the economics of it. You know, that's an expensive thing; it's only serving a small portion of the community. I can argue my point of view fairly well, but other people may have different points of view to sell.

It's the same thing ... Well, I am jumping the gun.

Erickson: No, please. Go ahead.

Babcock: I was just thinking the same thing now. There's lots of talk about the present thrust of growth and everything. We had to have change when we brought the campus here in the first

Babcock: place. We had to have change when we switched to a general campus. And it's all worked out. I think if this campus is to prosper into the future, they've got to change, too. We have to move with the times. I am not exactly a mover myself, but I appreciate the need for it, and when someone will do it well, then I am all for it. I just think it needs to be done.

Erickson: Um. In the information you wrote out, you talked about Tim Hays and the relationship of the newspaper, The Press-Enterprise, with the city and with the university. Would you just speak a little about that, please?

Babcock: For a little bit of background, in one of your other subjects or questions, there was, to continuity, what has allowed the Citizens University Committee to be? I would pick three people. I would pick Phil Boyd, John Gabbert and Tim Hays.

The reason I picked Tim Hays is that the newspaper is, I think, an excellent newspaper and most of Riverside thinks so, and they accept what's in it fairly well. They respect its point of view. It has developed a reputation for integrity as well as excellence. So when the paper takes a point of view, they listen, the people listen.

Through all of this, from the very start, The Press-Enterprise has strongly supported the university, especially the local campus. This has been of inestimable value to the continued growth and maturing of the campus. And it's pretty much Tim Hays, for almost all of that time, who called the shots. His father was around when we were getting started, but Tim was taking over. And Tim, too, was an independent person.

You just don't buy him for anything, so that his support is most acceptable and has been continuous right down the line.

Tim flew in the face of local industrialists and so on when he came out so strongly in favor of the smog installation here. People still regard smog as a nuisance, a problem they have to work around, and Tim took the other point of view. To the community's benefit, their health and everything, we should be



Babcock: doing something about the smog—and the university proposed to do it.

I think his influence and help and support were largely responsible for the location of the statewide smog thing on this campus (Statewide Air Pollution Research Center).

That's the kind of thing in many, many fields that Tim and the paper have done. So I have a great admiration for the paper and I have a great admiration for the position it's taken with respect to the university. That was what was behind all that. I don't know if I've left out something.

Erickson: No, I don't think so. It's such a wonderful tribute to The Press-Enterprise and Tim that you have written ...

Babcock: You know, I have traveled a lot and lived in Boston for a year and four years in the Bay area. I have never seen any paper of any size that is its equal. It covers the news objectively and in good style. A lot of people in Riverside really don't share that view, 'cause they have their own points that they object to.

I remember when my mother (incidentally, this is a new thing). Mother served, I think, twenty eight years, seven terms, on the Riverside Unified School District board. She was clerk of the board for almost all those years.

I think it was the second or third reelection she was up for, and the newspaper came out saying that Gladys Babcock has really done a fine job, but we think maybe it's time for new blood on the board. And they endorsed someone else.

Erickson: Oh.

Babcock: And that was a hard lesson. Mother won anyway. But we never really understood what was behind the editorial that opposed her, because every other time they had been for her. But that kind of thing happens. It's the independence the press has. Nobody ever has the press in his pocket, and I admire that.

Erickson: Let's talk a little about education. You mentioned your parents wanted to move from Arlington to Riverside. Was there a distinct difference, do you think?

Babcock: It was all the same school district, and I really don't know what was in their minds. They told their friends they wanted me to be in a downtown school, and so we moved to a much nicer home than the little thing we were in in Arlington. For instance, two doors from us was the Hays' home. So I grew up ...

Erickson: Oh, I know where you mean.

Babcock: Dan Hays ... Tim is older, and Dan is my age. But we played together. I walked to school with Dan Hays. Dan lives right over here now (referring to the area just beyond an orange grove) incidentally. But it was that kind of neighborhood. Tom Gore lived in the neighborhood, Earl Collins lived in the neighborhood—all town leaders. It was a much better neighborhood, and I am sure I was in a much better grade of school.

I am a strong public school supporter. I shouldn't say things like this, but I have a hunch I got a better challenge from the other students at Bryant School than I would have got from the school in Arlington. Arlington was still kind of rural and ... I feel terrible ... the lower class. You don't say those kinds of things, because I don't really believe in it. And yet, I would not have been challenged by the other students at Arlington, and I was here.

I think that's the kind of thing they had in mind. Furthermore, Dad had worked here in town. The office and his lab was on First Street near Main, and he had to travel in from Arlington, and that was a long commute in those days.

When they first married, my folks lived in Arlington, because that's where mother lived.

Babcock: Another family story: When they were in high school, dad lived downtown and mother lived in Arlington. In those times, there were two telephone firms in town. Dad's family had one of them and Mother's had the other, so they couldn't converse.

(laughter)

So Dad had to go across the street and down some houses to find somebody on Mother's telephone so they could talk.

Erickson: Oh, gosh.

Babcock: They had dates each Saturday night. Dad would get on the streetcar and ride clear out and pick up Mother. They'd come back to town, take in a movie, have a soda, he would take her home, and he would come home. The bill came to \$.60 for the whole thing.

(laughter)

Erickson: Oh, my!

Babcock: He loved to tell that story.

Erickson: That's cute.

(more laughter)

Babcock: No, I think it was a good move to come down. I could ride a bike to Central. I was one of the first classes to go to Central; it was a brand new school, and then across the street to Poly. So it was convenient.

Erickson: Am I correct that you have known each of the chancellors?

Babcock: Yes, I think well enough that all of them would naturally call me by my first name. But I have known some much better than others. This is ticklish territory. I don't want to pass judgment on the chancellors. They are more able people than I. I can

Babcock: make some observations, but I am not going to say whether they were good or bad.

Erickson: Oh, no. But observations would be nice.

Babcock: Gordon Watkins was, I think, the right man at the right place at the right time. He was very gregarious, made friends with everybody.

Erickson: He came before the campus was actually started. They had probably started construction of the buildings – or not, because there was a holdover because of the war.

Babcock: Yes, he was here before the construction started even.

Erickson: So what kind of interaction did he have with the Citizens University group?

Babcock: I think he made a point of getting to know them very well. One reason I know him is that he learned quickly that the Berkeley alumni were active in town, and he saw to it that he had them in his sight, too. Very active. I think John Gabbert calls him the Peppy Welshman.

Erickson: Yes, I've heard that.

Babcock: He seemed to have limitless energy, always a smile, just a great guy. He was also very active in the Congregational church, my church. So I probably got to know him there better than through the university at that time. But he just made friends everywhere, he got done what had to be done. One of his favorite stories when he would be asked to speak was to tell his experience in selecting his lieutenants as he met each one. Oh ... I'll try to think of their names now, ... Ed Coman, the librarian, was the first, then Tom Broadbent, Bob Nisbet ... oh dear.

Erickson: Arthur Turner.

Babcock: Yes, Arthur Turner. Arthur Turner's name is Arthur C. Turner. My grandfather was Arthur C. Turner.

Erickson: Interesting. I didn't know that.

Babcock: And the funny part is that the Arthur Turner out there is a Scotsman all the way. My grandfather was Welsh and proud of it.

Erickson: Oh.

Babcock: He traced his ancestors back to Wales. I couldn't decide whether Turner was a Welsh name or a Scotch name after that. But they never met.

Erickson: Quite a coincidence.

Babcock: Anyway, those stories of how Gordon contacted them and persuaded them to come in his inimitable style—he was a great story teller. It was just great entertainment, people loved to hear it even when they had heard it before.

Erickson: Really.

Babcock: Also, all the chancellors have been excellent keeping their fingers on everything. I don't think anything went to pot on their watch.

Erickson: No, I am sure not.  
You talked a little about how you feel about the university of today. Are you in favor of things such as professional schools?

Babcock: Yes, I am all for building it up. I think if we have the opportunity to have a first-rate campus in all of these places I am for it. I just think we should take advantage of our opportunity here to develop that.

I am a strong proponent of what they are doing with the professional schools in the university. Even if we eventually

Babcock: lose all agriculture here, just as UCLA did, that's the way the ball bounces.

Erickson: And you go on to a different focus.

Babcock: Absolutely. I think you need to see what the times ask for and meet them. We are a public university operating ... "We are" ... How about that?

Erickson: Well, you are.

Babcock: A public university operating with public funds and must serve the public as best we can. I think most people out there have that feeling of that kind of obligation to serve. I think the most traditional setting in the world is a university setting, and so these kind of changes go against that grain, but it has to be done. You have fond memories, enjoy them and go with the times.

Erickson: In your view, how does the university impact the community?

Babcock: I, of course, look at it the way the Experiment Station originally did. They are people, they have a job, they live among us and they circulate among us. I think that's the major kind of influence they have. If you see a general policy or something happening, you don't associate that with the people that are your friends—it's with somebody in Berkeley making adverse decisions or something.

The local chancellors have had some difficult problems, but I think generally speaking Riverside is progressive. It's not a reactionary town. When we had the racial problems and that sort of thing, there is enough reservoir sympathy to accept what the problems are and what happened.

Erickson: That made me think of the unrest period. From the community perspective, how did you view that time?

Babcock: No different than it happening anywhere else. The town is divided. We have plenty of traditionalists. My friends, my

Babcock: circle of friends, are among the faculty out there, and I see the other side of it.

I am a registered Republican, but I am very progressive socially. I guess I am a financial conservative and a social liberal. But it didn't cause me any pain at all.

I'm the kind of person, however, that when this first came up, The Press-Enterprise started a program saying publicly, "Sign this statement, would you please?" To the effect that "you wouldn't mind if a minority person moved next door to you." My name was right there at the start. I know a lot of my friends said, "I didn't know you were like that." I felt that strongly and I still do.

So from my point of view, it has been all right. I think it had to be discussed, there had to be confrontations, there had to be give and take. It wound up the way that I am glad it did, and I have no regrets personally.

But I think there are a lot of people who think as I do, and I am aware that there are a lot of people who do not. Perhaps those who do not are also the people who wanted to stay a small liberal arts college. I send my children to the public schools, too, and they don't.

Erickson: Sherm, is there anything else that you would like to talk about that I missed 'cause we did skip over some material?

Babcock: No. As I indicated at the start, I tend to run off. And then when I hear it, I think, "Goodness did I say that?"

(laughter)

Erickson: When did you retire from your business?

Babcock: In the mid '80s. I incorporated the business. I discovered that's the only way I could pass things along.

Babcock: When Grandpa wanted to retire, he just walked off, and his boys owned the business. There was no paperwork, no nothing. I don't know how they did the deed on the property, but that was it.

When I took over from my father and my Uncle Roy, I had a formal sales agreement and gave them a note about it with the property as backing. But we registered the sale and that was done.

Now you worry about tax and transfers, so in the mid 1980s, I incorporated the business and executed a buy/sell agreement for the stock with my son and people who are presently his partners. They still pay a little on it, but it's theirs.

Erickson: Oh?

Babcock: Yes, I am out.

Erickson: And is it still in the same location?

Babcock: When I bought ... everything happened in 1964. I am amazed that I could be Chairman of CUC, but that was the year Margaret died. And I married Donna later. But I bought the building and the business and immediately sold it and put a new building on Chicago Avenue. Again, I can't get through anything without little anecdotes.

We had a long-time employee, a young pert blond, a very attractive young woman, who insisted on wearing high heels 'cause she was short. And one day she came to work and her heel went through the floor, it was so rotten.

Erickson: Oh, gosh.

Babcock: She said, "I'm not going to work here any more unless we do something." And so I said, "Mary, we are going to move." Just then, it was decided. So Mary and Margaret and I sat down and made the plans for the new place.



Erickson: Did you build it?

Babcock: Yes, I built it. We were still there in the '80s when I had executed the buy/sell agreement with the kids. They no more than owned it, then they sold the place and built the new place up on Box Springs, the frontage road for Box Springs ... what is that?

Erickson: Um.

Babcock: Anyway, it's in the same general area where the DMV is. It's still in the city, but you look out the window across the ravine, you are looking at Moreno Valley. So we are right on the city borders.

Erickson: Now you mentioned how the business had changed from the time your grandfather established it with the assay business. Has it changed again?

Babcock: With the new building, the reason they moved is they were into the environmental field, and it requires really difficult equipment. You just have to have the services that would handle all that power requirement and everything else. So there was no way that they could make a go and be competitive down at the old lab on Chicago Avenue.

Chicago Avenue is now a flag shop, John's Flag Shop. I would dearly love to have you come and see (you and Jim) the lab up the hill. I am proud of it. I had nothing to do with it, but ... It's now an environmental lab.

*We still have contracts with the cities and other water suppliers, to test drinking water to be sure that it meets official health requirements. Any person or agency that spreads wastes of any kind on the ground or into river channels, must get a permit from pollution control authorities. The permits require continuous testing by an approved lab.*

*Agencies such as sewer plant operators, to protect themselves, require that all industries etc., which put wastes into the sewer*

*Babcock: system, provide continual tests to show that they won't foul up the treatment plant.*

*It all adds up to testing, testing, testing, and consultations about the results reported. That is part of what an environmental lab is up to.*

That's what they are up to. They have around forty employees now.

Erickson: How many did you have?

Babcock: At the height, all of us—me and Jim ... there were six people, including the owners.

Erickson: Well, thank you very much for allowing me to conduct this interview. It was really, really interesting.

Babcock: I love to talk.

(laughter)

Erickson: We love to listen.  
Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

Text Printed in *Italics* has been Edited by Mr. Babcock.

*Addendum by Mr. Babcock:*

*(not recorded)*

*I would also like to comment that to the best of my memory, the CUC has had just three treasurers. Glenn Gurtner was the first to hold the office. I think that he was succeeded by Richard Schultz on a date unknown to me. Dick was an officer in the loan department of Citizens National Bank in Riverside and continued in that capacity until his retirement from Security Pacific National Bank.*

*In 1977, I relieved Dick and have served as treasurer since that time. Since the work of the treasurer is largely done by staff at the University, it must be admitted that the position of treasurer of the CUC is largely symbolic and no special credit can be claimed for the office holders.*

*I think that I would like to be on the record as saying that I expect that if the CUC is to continue in an effective support role in the affairs of the University, it will have to change with the times also. I have no idea what will be required, but I hope that we will remain flexible.*