

**Manuscripts Collections
South Caroliniana Library
University of South Carolina**

Havilah Babcock Papers

Contact Information:
South Caroliniana Library
University of South Carolina
Columbia SC 29208
803-777-3132
Email: scoref@mailbox.sc.edu

© 2018 University of South Carolina Libraries

**Havilah Babcock Papers,
1920-1964 (bulk 1940-1963)**

Extent: 2 cartons

Location: Annex

Materials stored offsite; advance notice required.

Scope and Content Notes

Educator, author, and outdoorsman, Havilah Babcock was born on March 6, 1898 in Appomattox, Virginia, a son of H.C. and Blanche Moore Babcock. He married Alice Hudson Cheatham in 1919. They had one son, Hudson Homer Havilah. He received a Bachelor of Arts in 1918 and a Bachelor of Philosophy in 1919 from Elon College in North Carolina. His Master of Arts was from the University of Virginia. Babcock received his Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina in 1927. Prior to that he had served as professor and head of the department of English at Elon College and associate professor and head of the department of Journalism at the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

Babcock came to USC in 1926 on a year's leave of absence from William and Mary College and, he said, he found the hunting and fishing so good in South Carolina that he decided to stay. At the University, he served as associate professor of English (1927-29), Director of Extension (1927-37), professor of English (1929-64), head of the Division of English Literature (1935-39) and head of the department of English until his retirement (1939-64).

His interest in the profession of journalism always remained keen, and despite the pressures of teaching and other various activities, he continued as an editorial writer for the *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, *The State*, and the *Columbia Record*. He always believed that the University's educational opportunities should not be limited to the on-campus instructional programs. In 1927 he was appointed Director of Extension and continued in that role for a decade. With very limited resources, he sustained the life of a service which later was to become one of the University's major enterprises.

Under Babcock's unconventional but effective leadership as the head of the English department, it was for twenty-seven years one of the strongest in the University. As an educator, his primary concern was excellence in writing and teaching, and he expected nothing but the best from his staff. His own course in vocabulary and semantics became one of the most sought-after courses at USC.

Whether in good health or bad, Babcock could not resist the pleasures of hunting, fishing and gardening, which occasionally came into conflict with his teaching duties. During one hunting season, Babcock's enterprising and fore-sighted secretary posted on the bulletin board, "Dr. Babcock will be sick all next week." This great love of outdoors provided the inspiration for many of his essays and short stories. He also sought to improve and conserve the state's fish and game resources through his service as President of the South Carolina Fish and Game Association, President of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, and as National Director of the Izaak Walton League.

As a writer of essays and short stories, his last ten years were among his most productive, and he retained his prowess as a writer and as a teacher up to within a few weeks of the end of his life.

For many years, his works were constantly featured in newspapers and magazines. Among his major publications are the following books: *My Health is Better in November*, *Tales of Quails 'N Such*, *I Don't Want to Shoot an Elephant*, *The Education of Pretty Boy*, and *Jaybirds Go to Hell on Friday*. Published in 1964, *Jaybirds* was his final work. He died on December 10, 1964.

The papers of Havilah Babcock consist primarily of materials relating to his publishing endeavors. The bulk of the material dates from the 1940s to the 1960s and contains fan letters, book orders, manuscripts, and typescripts.

Description of Series

General Correspondence:

Chronologically arranged, this series is the primary location for correspondence and materials regarding family matters.

Magazines:

31 issues of various outdoor magazines, 1933-63, each with at least one Babcock contribution, some with his mailing label. Periodicals represented include *Sports Afield*, *Outdoor Life*, *The Carolina Sportsman*, *Field and Stream*, and *Outdoor Nebraska*. Arranged alphabetically.

Manuscripts:

This series contains 8 manuscripts, 7 of which are Babcock's. The eighth is written about Babcock by a former student. Included are two working typescripts for the important story "I Don't Want to Shoot an Elephant." Detailed descriptions are given in the file key for each manuscript. Arranged alphabetically.

Newspaper Clippings:

Large file of newspaper clippings, mostly reviews of Babcock's books or articles about him.

Short Stories, completed:

17 typescripts for stories, a few with minor manuscript corrections and additions.

Short Stories, considered for book:

11 typescripts for short stories; all are among the 44 titles on an accompanying list headed "Stories that are to be copied for possible use in new book." These are clean typescripts with only a couple of minor ink corrections; four bear the notation "Suggest reject. H.B." in Babcock's hand at the head of the first page. Arranged in the order on Babcock's list.

Short Stories, fragments:

50+ typescripts (some fragments) for stories ???(about 325 pages, quarto and folio) mostly typed but some pages in manuscript, almost all bearing heavy manuscript revisions, additions, and corrections.

Speeches:

Babcock's reputation for humorous stories put him in high demand as a speaker. This series contains 15 typescripts (some fragments) for several speeches.

Topical:

This series consists of fan letters, book requests, correspondence with publishers and writers for outdoor magazines, materials regarding Babcock's honey farm and his collection of postmarked cards from towns with unusual names.

Extent: 1.5 linear ft. Location:

Annex

Container List

General Correspondence: Box 1

Magazines: Box 1

Manuscripts: Box 1

Newspaper Clippings: Box 1

Short Stories, completed: Box 1

Short Stories, considered for book: Box 1

Short Stories, fragments: Box 2

Speeches: Box 2

Topical: Box 2

Box 1

General Correspondence:

1920-59

1960-64 and n.d.

Magazines:

The Carolina Sportsman

March 1961

April 1961

Field and Stream

June 1934

Nov. 1935

Dec. 1935

Sept. 1937

March 1942

Field and Stream

June 1942
Oct. 1945
May 1948
Feb. 1953

Field and Stream
Jan. 1955
May 1955 Dec. 1958
Jan. 1959
June 1959

Field and Stream
April 1960
July 1960
April 1962
Feb. 1963
April 1964

Outdoor Life
Aug. 1933
Jan. 1934
Sept. 1934

Outdoor Nebraska
Sept. 1960
Feb. 1961
March 1961

Sports Afield
Sept. 1946
Aug. 1951
April 1958
Feb. 1959
Feb. 1960

Manuscripts

“The Affair at King’s Elbow.” Incomplete typescript: 135 pages (numbered consecutively), several chapter's numbered by Babcock in ink but otherwise unmarked for revision; with 9 pages of reworked passages to follow, marked with some revisions and corrections in ink. Folio, double-spaced. Accompanied by a rejection letter (28 January 1960) from his editor Beulah Harris at Henry Holt.

“The Affair at King’s Elbow.” Incomplete typescript: 105 pages (numbered 55-154, with six pages from another version interleaved), numerous manuscript changes and additions by Babcock, primarily changing the names of the characters; including a rough finished version of the final 20 pages (lacking in other version above).

“His Health is Better in November.” Typescript of Irene LaBorde Neuffer's article "His Health Is Better in November," about Babcock, with her signed presentation card attached.

"I Don't Want to Shoot an Elephant" Two working typescripts for one of Babcock's most popular stories.

- A. 5-page incomplete typescript (about two thirds of the story) bearing manuscript corrections and additions and long passages in manuscript on the verso of three pages.
- B. 8-page typescript with many manuscript corrections and one passage in manuscript on the verso of page 1.

"Mark! Mark! Mark! A Dove Shoot in South Carolina." Signed typescript for the story with manuscript corrections.

"A One Man Dog." Signed typescript for the story with manuscript corrections throughout.

Working Manuscript, untitled. 75-page typescript, both quarto and folio, bearing manuscript corrections and additions, with five pages entirely in manuscript; apparently a novel or novella in progress, centering around a high school algebra teacher, Miss Bossie (also spelled Bossy). Several of the leaves, with differing text, are either headed "Chapter One" or are numbered "1."

Newspaper Clippings

1947-1950 and n.d.

Short Stories:

Completed, 1-11:

1. As I Grow Older
2. The Barmecide Feast
3. The Explorers
4. In Defense of Bob
5. Jay Birds Go to Hell on Friday
6. Marchy Lilies
7. The Mock Wedding
8. Oh You Lucky Dog!
9. On Behalf of the Management
10. Peter and the Colonel/Indian Summer rewrite
11. Sandy Brown

Completed, 12-17:

- Something of a Ladiesman untitled
- #1(dog story) untitled
- #2(dog story) untitled
- #3(dog story) A Very Exclusive Club
- You Can't Afford to Encourage a Cat

Considered for book:

- I'm in Favor of Terra Firma Knee-Deep! Knee-Deep!
- One-Man Dog
- Quail Hunting in the Old Dominion
- Shirt Tail
- Three Legs
- Three Stings for a Bite
- Tramp Had a Specialty

Twilight Bass
What I Learned from a Cow
What This Country Needs (was "I Posted My Land Because")

Box 2

Fragments
Dog Stories
Fish Stories
Miscellaneous

Speeches

Topical:

Fan Letters/Book Requests 1948-1959

Fan Letters/Book Requests 1960-1964

Honey Farm 1946-1961

Post Cards 1935

Publishing 1937-1963

University-related