

# **Oral history interview with Arthur Rock (Beckman Heritage Project)**

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Arthur Rock begins the interview with a discussion of his family and educational background. In 1944, Rock joined the United States Army. After World War II, Rock attended Syracuse University, and then continued on to Harvard Business School. After his schooling, Rock began to work on Wall Street and discovered that he had an interest and affinity for business in technology. At Hayden Stone and Company he worked in the corporate department to establish technological companies such as General Transistor. In the late 1950s, Rock received a letter from Eugene Kleiner that sparked his interest. He met the “Traitorous Eight,” from Shockley Semiconductor and the wheels of venture capitalism were set in motion. Rock's ambitions for the group were so radical that thirty-five companies declined them financial backing before Sherman Fairchild invested what was needed to start Fairchild Semiconductor. Afterwards, in 1961, Rock moved from his home in New York to San Francisco, where he formed Davis & Rock, a firm that lasted for seven years, with Thomas Davis. This pioneering venture capital firm met with great success, creating other semiconductor firms, such as Teledyne Technologies, Inc. Rock reflects on the growing connection between semiconductors and computers and then the decision of Robert N. Noyce and Gordon E. Moore to leave Fairchild in order to form Intel Corporation, of which he was the first chairman of the board of directors. Rock concludes the interview by reflecting on his own innovations.

## **Access this interview**

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