
Archives

California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, California

Contact Information:

Archives
California Institute of Technology
1200 East California Blvd.
Mail Code 015A-74
Pasadena, CA 91125
Phone: (626) 395-2704
Fax: (626) 793-8756
Email: archives@caltech.edu
URL: http://archives.caltech.edu

Processed by:
Jennifer K. Stine
Date Completed:
May 8, 1996
Encoded by:
Brooke Dykman Dockter

© 1998 California Institute of Technology. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Title: Henry Borsook Papers,
Date (inclusive): 1958-1983
Creator: Borsook, Henry
Extent: Linear feet: 2.5
Repository: California Institute of Technology. Archives.
Pasadena, California 91125
Language: English.
Access
Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Copyright has not been assigned to the California Institute of Technology Archives. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Head of the Archives. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the California Institute of Technology Archives as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the reader.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item, Box and file number], Henry Borsook Papers, Archives, California Institute of Technology.

Biography

Henry Borsook, 1897-1984, was a Professor of Biochemistry at Caltech from 1929 to 1968. His major contributions were in the areas of protein synthesis and nutrition. At Caltech, Borsook was twice chairman of the faculty, chaired the student health committee for many years, and sponsored the Anaximandrian Society at his home. Borsook's interest in proteins led him, in the early 1930s, to a new theory about their metabolism. At that time, scientists believed the proteins were probably very stable; Borsook demonstrated there was a continual interchange of proteins. His 1940 book, Vitamins: What They Are and What They Will Do for You, was among the first to present contemporary nutritional ideas to a popular audience. Borsook showed that a good diet consisted not of "food" but of certain amounts of specific nutrients such as
proteins, vitamins, calories, and the like. During World War II he served on the Food and Nutrition Board, and helped to
draw up the table of Recommended Daily Allowances. At this time he also developed multipurpose food (MPF), an enriched
meal based on soybeans. The Meals for Millions Foundation, of which Borsook was a co-founder and long-time trustee,
distributed MPF first to post-war Europe and later to underdeveloped areas. Throughout his lifetime, Borsook championed
the idea that a good diet was not tied to eating specific foods, but could be scientifically manufactured. After retiring from
Caltech in 1968, Henry Borsook moved his laboratory to U.C. Berkeley where he continued working until the late 1970s.

**Scope and Content**

The Henry Borsook Papers cover the years 1958 to 1983, but significant gaps are present. Section 1 is incoming and
outgoing correspondence primarily covering the years 1960 to 1965. It illustrates several facets of Borsook’s career,
including his relationships with colleagues, graduate students, and the food and vitamin industry, most notably with the
American Institute of Baking and Miles Laboratories. Section 2 provides manuscripts and notes, including notes for talks
given in the 1970s on food and international development. It shows the breadth of Borsook’s interests and contains his
book reviews and writings on medical history and on art history. Section 3 contains papers from the late 1970s and early
1980s related to the Meals for Millions Foundation. At the end of the collection is a small amount of biographical material,
some reprints, slides, and several books on food and nutrition with annotations made by Borsook.

This collection came to the Archives in two parts. The correspondence files from the 1960s were found on campus by
Professor Ray Owen and deposited in 1989. The manuscripts, Meals for Millions Foundation materials, books, slides and
later materials were a gift from Eve Borsook made in 1990.

For further information related to Borsook’s life see his oral history and the Papers of the Anaximandrian Society

**Title:** The Proceedings of the Anaximandrian Society,

**Date:** 1935-1945

**Books of Henry Borsook**

Some of the books that were given to Caltech in the Borsook collection have been merged with the Archives’ landmark
book collection. Items may be located through CLAS, the Caltech Libraries’ automated catalogue.

  Borsook)
  (signed Henry Borsook)
  Henry Borsook)
  The New York Academy of Sciences, 1968. (notes and underlined passages by Borsook)
  University Press, 1971. (signed H. Borsook)

**SECTION I: CORRESPONDENCE**

**PART A: GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 1.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correspondence, 1959-66</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Institute of Baking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biology faculty</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>courses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>grants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION I: CORRESPONDENCE

PART A: GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Folder 1.13 I
Folder 1.14 J
Folder 1.15 Jehle, Herbert
Folder 1.16 K
Folder 1.17 L
Folder 1.18 M

Box 2, Folder 2.1 Miles Laboratories
Folder 2.2 N
Folder 2.3 O
Folder 2.4 P-Q
Folder 2.5 R
Folder 2.6 S
Folder 2.7 student health
Folder 2.8 T
Folder 2.9 U-V
Folder 2.10 W
Folder 2.11 X-Y-Z
Folder 2.12 Correspondence, 1979-83

PART B: CHRONOLOGICAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES

Box 2, Folder 2.13 1960
Folder 2.14 1961
Folder 2.15 1962
Box 3, Folder 3.1 1963
Folder 3.2 1964

SECTION II: TALKS, MANUSCRIPTS, NOTES

Box 3, Folder 3.3 "Baroque"
Folder 3.4 "Erythroporesis," 1977
Folder 3.5 "Food," 1978
Folder 3.6 "Giotto"
Folder 3.7 "The Humanities in Medicine"
Folder 3.8 "Introductions to Book"
Folder 3.9 Japan
Folder 3.10 "Loomis Colloquium" [c. 1964]
Folder 3.11 Manuscripts, pre- 1967
Folder 3.12 Misc. technical notes
Folder 3.13 "Ultra Goes to War" -- final copy
Folder 3.14 "Understanding China's Socialist Revolution" 2/2/79
Folder 3.15 "U. S. Food Situation" [c. 1969]
Box 4, Folder 4.1 Wonseong County, Korea, 1979-81
Folder 4.2 "World Food" 1973
Folder 4.3 "World Food" 1976
Folder 4.4 "World Food" 1977
Folder 4.5 "The World Will Need to Feed Itself"

SECTION III: MEALS FOR MILLIONS

Box 4, Folder 4.6 Operations, By-Laws, Plans
Folder 4.7 Correspondence, 1978-82
Folder 4.8 Lists of trustees, staff, 1977-81
Folder 4.9 Misc. notes

SECTION IV: MISCELLANEOUS

Box 4, Folder 4.10 Biographical
Folder 4.11 List of Publications, 1947-59
Folder 4.12 Reprints--other


4
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 5</th>
<th>Miscellaneous books:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Child Nutrition in Developing Countries</em>, U. S. Dept. of State, 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Focus on Food Additives</em>, General Mills, n.d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Teaching Nutrition in Developing Countries</em>, Meals for Millions Foundation, 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Food and Your Future</em>, by Ruth Bennett White,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Overcoming World Hunger</em>, Presidential Commission on World Hunger, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slides (2 boxes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>