Descriptive Summary
Title: Clair A. Weast collection
Dates: 1931-1996
Collection number: MSS 292
Creator: Weast, Dr. Clair A.
Collection Size: .5 linear feet
Repository: University of the Pacific. Library. Holt-Atherton Dept. of Special Collections
Stockton, California 95211
Abstract: The collection consists of Weast biographical material and a significant assortment of photos and slides that
document Tillie Lewis Foods and Weast's interest in Spanish Missions.
Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the library's online catalog.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
Collection open for research.
Publication Rights
Permission for publication is given on behalf of Special Collections 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 researcher.
Preferred Citation
Clair A. Weast collection. MSS 292. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library.

Biography / Administrative History
Dr. Weast and his wife Elsie are credited with developing and patenting low-calorie and low-sugar diet foods in the early
1950s while working for Tillie Lewis Foods. They pioneered canned diabetic foods, low salt vegetables, low cholesterol eggs,
low cholesterol pancake mix, low calorie carbonated beverages, and new processes for canning.

Dr. Weast was born in 1913 in Modesto, California, grew up in Big Oak Flat near Yosemite National Park and attended high
school in Sonora. He met Elsie Orr while attending Modesto Junior College in 1933 and they were married seven years later
while pursuing graduate degrees in nutrition and agricultural chemistry at the University of California at Berkeley.

In 1946, Weast joined Flotill Products Inc., which changed its name to Tillie Lewis Foods in 1961, and was purchased by
Ogden Corporation in 1965. Tillie Lewis built her first tomato cannery in Stockton in 1935 and eventually controlled a 100
million dollar a year business. Lewis had a special lab built in the attic of the Weast's home in Manteca so Elsie could
develop diet foods and still take care of their two daughters. Dr. Weast was sent by Lewis to Australia and Paraguay to help
those operations in the southern hemisphere. He had served as plant manager, Vice President Technical Director for
Lewis's plants in Stockton, but spent most of his tenure in the laboratory developing new foods. Weast retired in 1978.

Dr. Weast briefly assisted with the College of Pacific food science program in the late 1940s.

The Weast family vacations frequently took them to the historic Spanish missions from the tip of Baja California in Mexico
to the San Francisco Solano Mission in Sonoma, California. Dr. Weast documented the missions through his extensive slide
photography collection.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The collection consists of Weast biographical material and a significant assortment of photos and slides that document Tillie Lewis Foods and Weast’s interest in Spanish Missions. The biographical materials shed light on Weast’s career and include some of his published work and a bibliography of his articles. Many of the diet plans that the Weasts developed are also available in this collection. The photography documents the work and conditions at the canning factories in the Valley and in Australia and Paraguay. The balance of the collection contains dozens of slides taken in the 1950s and 1960s of the Spanish Missions of Baja California, Mexico and California. These mission images provide a snapshot of building conditions and interpretation that may be useful for historic preservation.

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog:

- Tillie Lewis Foods, Inc.
- Missions - California - Pictorial works
- Canning and preserving - United States - California
- Canned foods industry - California - San Joaquin County

**Related Material**

The Far-Westerner Volume 38, Number 1-2 includes a history of Tillie Lewis and mentions of Weast’s role in her success.

---

**Box 1**

1.1: Biographical Material, 1931-1996
1.3: Patents, Diet Plans, Articles, and Lesson Plans, c.1955
1.4: Photographs, 1950s, 1960s, c.1995

*Scope and Content Note*


1.5.1-5: Slide show of Tillie Lewis Foods, c.1955 – c.1975

*Scope and Content Note*

Original show designed to show foods from crops to canning. Includes images of Flotill Inc plants, food processing, Paraguay and Australia operations.

1.6.1-3: California Missions slides, c.1955 - c.1975

*Scope and Content Note*

Includes images of Spanish missions throughout California and Baja California, Mexico (Bautista, Capistrano, Carmel, Dolores, Gabriel, Inez, San Antonio de Pala, Purisima, San Antonio, San Fernando, San Jose, San Luis Obispo, San Luis Ray, San Raphael, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Soledad, Sonoma, Ventura, Descanso, Guadalupe, San Miguel, Santa Domingo, Santa Tomas, San Vincente).