

**J. Awdry Armstrong Collection, 1922-1982**

**Ontario City Library  
Robert E. Ellingwood Model  
Colony History Room**



**Ontario, California**

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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** J. Awdry Armstrong Collection, 1922-1982

**Creator:** J. Awdry Armstrong

**Extent: Number of containers:** 5

**Linear feet:** 7.5

## **Administrative History/Biographical Note**

J. Awdry Armstrong was born in Ontario on January 24, 1899 to John S. Armstrong, founder of Armstrong Nurseries, and Charlotte Armstrong. One of six children, Awdry, as he was known, was the only son of the Armstrong's to survive past the age of 26. Awdry attended Chaffey High School, graduating in 1917, then attended UC Berkeley and was a member of the Alpha Zeta agricultural fraternity. After graduating from UC Berkeley in 1922, Awdry went to work for Armstrong Nurseries, becoming General Manager in 1928 and Executive Vice President in 1932 when Armstrong Nurseries incorporated, and he established the research department at Armstrong Nurseries that same year. He became president of the company in 1957 after his father stepped down.

Awdry was one of the founding members of the All-America Rose Selections and served as its first president, from 1940 to 1945. He was actively involved in scoring and selecting annual rose selections for the organization for many years. He was also on the board of directors for the American Association of Nurserymen and served as its president in 1947-48, as well as for the California Association of Nurserymen, in which he served as president in 1929-30 and again in 1933-34. He was the executive chairman of the California International Flower Show from 1956 to 1958 and was chairman of the agricultural committee for the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce from 1959 through 1962. He was active in the Ontario Host Lions Club, served on the board of San Antonio Community Hospital, and served on the Ontario City Library board of trustees, and was active in many other local organizations. Awdry recorded an oral history with the library in 1978. The recording and transcript of the interview can be found here:

[http://ontariocitylibrary-montage.auto-graphics.com/#/item-details/entities\\_422](http://ontariocitylibrary-montage.auto-graphics.com/#/item-details/entities_422)

Awdry married Ruth Harrison in 1923 and the couple had three children, David, John Jr., and Janetha. John A. Armstrong, Jr. took over as president of Armstrong Nurseries after Awdry's retirement in 1967. David worked for a time in the research department of Armstrong Nurseries, but left to pursue his dream of become a physician. The family lived for many years at 307 West Sixth Street in Ontario, and Awdry and Ruth moved to Mt. San Antonio Gardens after Awdry retired from the business. He served on the board of directors for Mt. San Antonio Gardens for several years. Ruth Harrison Armstrong died in 1987 and J. Awdry Armstrong died in 1989 at the age of 90.

## **Abstract**

The J. Awdry Armstrong collection contains three series: Corporate, professional, and personal. The corporate series consist of financial statements, correspondence, product lists, and various other documents relating to the business of Armstrong Nurseries during Mr. Armstrong's

tenure as president. The professional series focuses primarily on Mr. Armstrong's involvement in All-America Rose Selections, from its inception in 1939 through 1974. The personal series contains minutes and financial statements for Congregational Homes, the parent company of Mt. San Antonio Gardens, a retirement community in Pomona where Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong lived after his retirement from Armstrong Nurseries, in which Mr. Armstrong served on the board. Also included in this series are estate records for Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong and his parents, John S. Armstrong and Charlotte Armstrong, as well as income tax returns for Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Access**

Collection is open for research during the operating hours of the Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, or by appointment.

### **Preferred Citation**

J. Awdry Armstrong Collection, 1922-1982. Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library.

### **Acquisitions Information**

This collection was donated by Adelaide Butler, granddaughter of J. Awdry Armstrong, in 2015.

### **Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains financial and budget reports and records, booklets, catalogs and magazines, estate reports, individual income tax returns with receipts and other records, a few photographs, miscellaneous ephemera, correspondence, meeting minutes, scoring sheets for roses, and manuscripts of talks and columns written by Mr. Armstrong. The folder titles created by Mr. Armstrong were used to label archive folders whenever possible.

## Container List

Box 1 – Corporate  
Armstrong Nurseries  
Armstrong Products

Folder 1	Descriptions – Rose varieties grown by Armstrong Nurseries, 1976-1977
Folder 2	Wholesale order forms and new roses, 1976-1977
Folder 3	Plant hardiness zone map
Folder 4	Booklet: Plant Patents with Common Names, 1931-1962
Folder 5	Booklet: Plant Patents Common Introductory Names, 1931-1956 Supplements 1957-1960; 1966; 1967
Folder 6	Booklet: Plant Patents with Common Names, 1963-1968
Folder 7	Foreign licenses, March 1973
Folder 8	IBM Magnabelt dictation tape (contents unknown)
Folder 9	Salesyard inspection November 10, 1959
Folder 10	Seedlings, 1960-1963
Folder 11	Surr & Hellyer – Shelton
Folder 12	Surr & Hellyer – Cranston
Folder 13	Armstrong office items
Folder 14	Fruit descriptions, varieties for sale 1968-1969
Folder 15	Patents and licenses, 1942-1969
Folder 16	The American Rose magazine, February 1972 Roses by Fred Edmunds catalog, 1971-1972
Folder 17	Firm data
Folder 18	California International Flower Show, 1957
Folder 19	California International Flower Show, 1958
Folder 20	Commonwealth Club
Folder 21	Portions of the Horticultural Trade Directory, 1928
Folder 22	California Association of Nurserymen, 1977
Folder 23	Rose Classification by J. Awdry Armstrong, June 17, 1963
Folder 24	Rose show programs and name badges, 1971 Miscellaneous rose booklets
Folder 25	Memos from JAA
Folder 26	New roses for 1965-1966
Folder 27	Board of directors meeting, 1973 Shareholders proxy
Folder 28	Nursery notes
Folder 29	C.A.N. Past Presidents' Club
Folder 30	Review of Armstrong Nurseries, 1964
Folder 31	By-laws, Armstrong Nurseries, 1965 Board of directors meeting, July 2, 1970
Folder 32	Economics
Folder 33	Saratoga Horticultural Foundation
Folder 34	Chamber of Commerce (Ontario) Award of Merit, 1946
Folder 35	University of California Agricultural Advisory Council, 1957-1957
Folder 36	Report: Armstrong Nurseries' Future, not dated, signed E. K. C.

Folder 37	Corporate (reports, correspondence, notes) 1968-1971
Folder 38	Fruit Descriptive List
Folder 39	Bank of America Branch Advisory Boards Rules & Regulations
Folder 40	Armstrong Nurseries Financial Statements, September 30, 1959
Folder 41	1960-1961 financial summary
Folder 42	1961-1962 financial summary
Folder 43	1962-1963 financial summary
Folder 44	1963-1964 financial summary
Folder 45	1964-1965 financial summary
Folder 46	Armstrong Nurseries financial statements, 1962-1964
Folder 47	Armstrong Nurseries comparative financial statements fiscal years 1964-1965 through 1968-1968
Folder 48	Armstrong Nurseries financial statements, 1965-1970
Folder 49	Armstrong Nurseries monthly budget reports, 1964-1971 Budget comments, 1963-1964
Folder 50	Armstrong Nurseries board of directors, 1971-1972 Notes, minutes, correspondence
Folder 51	Armstrong Products financial statements, 1953-1962 (incomplete)
Folder 52	Armstrong Products comparative financial statements, fiscal years 1964-1965 through 1968-1969
Folder 53	Armstrong Products balance sheets, 1954-1957 and 1969-1970
Folder 54	Armstrong Products audit reports, 1954 and 1957
Folder 55	Rose and plant information including budding lists, correspondence, complaints and memos from JAA to Jjr. (John Armstrong, Jr.)
Folder 56	Draft employment agreement between Armstrong Nurseries and Don. L. Rogers, 1973-1975
Folder 57	Stationery, Armstrong Nurseries
Folder 58	Various corporate notes including 1969 rose budding list
Folder 59	Keatinge and Sterling; Keatinge, Libott, Bates & Loo
Folder 60	Chamber of Commerce (Los Angeles) Agricultural Committee Roster, 1962 and 1971

## Box 2 – Professional

### All-America Rose Selections

Folder 1	AARS by-laws; old correspondence
Folder 2	AARS by-laws, rules and regulations
Folder 3	AARS privileged file
Folder 4	AARS financial reports
Folder 5	AARS trustees, judges, members, and committees
Folder 6	AARS minutes-board of directors, 1940-1964 AARS articles of incorporation [draft], 1929
Folder 7	AARS members meetings minutes, 1939-1945
Folder 8	AARS members meetings minutes, 1946-1950
Folder 9	AARS members meeting minutes, 1951-1955
Folder 10	AARS members meeting minutes, 1956-1959
Folder 11	AARS members meeting minutes, 1960-1964
Folder 12	AARS members meeting minutes, 1966-1969
Folder 13	AARS members meeting minutes, 1970-1971

Folder 14	The American Rose (magazine), July 1973
Folder 15	AARS judge's seminar, 1960 & 1965
Folder 16	AARS judge's seminar, 1970
Folder 17	AARS judge's seminar, 1974
Folder 18	AARS, Chicago, January 12, 1957
Folder 19	AARS list of winners, 1940-1954
Folder 20	Rose fragrance and parentage JAA's ratings in AARS trials
Folder 21	1947 AARS entries
Folder 22	1948 AARS entries
Folder 23	1951 AARS entries
Folder 24	1952 AARS entries
Folder 25	1953 AARS entries
Folder 26	1954 AARS entries
Folder 27	1955 AARS entries
Folder 28	1956 AARS entries
Folder 29	1957 AARS entries

### Box 3 – Professional

#### All-America Rose Selections

Folder 1	1958 AARS entries
Folder 2	1959 AARS entries
Folder 3	1960 AARS entries
Folder 4	1961 AARS entries
Folder 5	1962 AARS entries
Folder 6	1963 AARS entries
Folder 7	1964 AARS entries
Folder 8	1965 AARS entries
Folder 9	1966 AARS entries
Folder 10	1967 AARS entries
Folder 11	1968 AARS entries
Folder 12	1969 AARS entries
Folder 13	1970 AARS entries
Folder 14	1971 AARS entries
Folder 15	1972 AARS entries
Folder 16	1973 AARS entries
Folder 17	1974 AARS entries
Folder 18	1940 AARS scoring
Folder 19	1941 AARS scoring
Folder 20	1942 AARS scoring
Folder 21	1943 AARS scoring
Folder 22	1944 AARS scoring
Folder 23	1945 AARS scoring
Folder 24	1946 AARS scoring
Folder 25	1949 AARS scoring
Folder 26	1950 AARS scoring
Folder 27	1955 AARS entries, special scoring

Folder 28	1960 AARS scoring
Folder 29	1961 AARS scoring
Folder 30	1962 AARS scoring
Folder 31	1963 AARS scoring
Folder 32	1964 AARS scoring
Folder 33	1965 AARS scoring
Folder 34	1966 AARS scoring
Folder 35	1967 AARS scoring
Folder 36	1968 AARS scoring
Folder 37	1969 AARS scoring
Folder 38	1972 AARS scoring
Folder 39	1973 AARS scoring
Folder 40	1974 AARS scoring
Folder 41	1939 AARS selections

#### Box 4 – Personal

Folder 1	John S. Armstrong-Armstrong Trust
Folder 2	Family data and biography
Folder 3	Charlotte Armstrong Estate
Folder 4	John S. Armstrong Estate
Folder 5	John S. Armstrong-Freeman Trust
Folder 6	Charlotte Armstrong-Freeman Trust
Folder 7	Charlotte Armstrong-Armstrong Children's Trust
Folder 8	Family estate correspondence (JAA) Wills, stock info, correspondence
Folder 9	Estate report, J. Awdry and Ruth Armstrong
Folder 10	JAA insurance valuation report, April 14, 1954 307 West Sixth Street
Folder 11	Inheritance tax affidavit and inventory of estate of Charlotte Armstrong December 29, 1948
Folder 12	Gifts, donations, contributions, 1981-1983
Folder 13	Rheingold Corporation
Folder 14	O'Melveny & Meyers invoice for legal services rendered to Armstrong Nurseries September 14, 1971
Folder 15	Mt. San Antonio Gardens, Congregational Homes, 1974
Folder 16	Congregational Homes, trustee minutes, 1974
Folder 17	Congregational Homes, financial reports, 1975
Folder 18	Mt. San Antonio Gardens, Congregational Homes, finance committee 1975-1978
Folder 19	Congregational Homes, finance committee
Folder 20	Congregational Homes, future finance suggestions
Folder 21	Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, 1962 directors & staff executives
Folder 22	California Association of Nurserymen, membership books 1970-1971 and 1972-1973
Folder 23	Ontario Host Lions Club
Folder 24	American Association of Nurserymen, 1969 event photographs
Folder 25	Alpha Zeta fraternity

Folder 26	Unusual letters
Folder 27	Talks by JAA
Folder 28	Talks by JAA
Folder 29	Column written by JAA 1937-1938, published in various newspapers and magazines
Folder 30	Personal correspondence
Folder 31	Writing guides and notes
Folder 32	American Rose Society, accredited rose judge certification, 1971
Folder 33	Booklets: Tact, writing, and courtesy
Folder 34	Personal stationery, J. Awdry and Ruth

#### Box 5 – Personal

Folder 1	JAA income tax return, 1922
Folder 2	1947 income tax return
Folder 3	1953 income tax return
Folder 4	1957 income tax return
Folder 5	1958 income tax return
Folder 6	1959 income tax return
Folder 7	1960 income tax return
Folder 8	1961 income tax return
Folder 9	1964 income tax return
Folder 10	1965 income tax return
Folder 11	1966 income tax return
Folder 12	1967 income tax return
Folder 13	1968 income tax return
Folder 14	1969 income tax return
Folder 15	1970 income tax return
Folder 16	1971 income tax return
Folder 17	1972 income tax return
Folder 18	1973 income tax return
Folder 19	1981 income tax return
Folder 20	1982 income tax return
Folder 21	Payroll records, Essie J. Hill (domestic), 1974
Folder 22	Payroll records, Essie J. Hill (domestic), 1975
Folder 23	Payroll records, Essie J. Hill (domestic), 1976
Folder 24	Payroll records, Essie J. Hill (domestic), 1977
Folder 25	Payroll records, Essie J. Hill (domestic), 1978