Guide to the Armwood family papers, 1866-1991

Descriptive Summary

Title: Armwood family papers
Creator: Armwood
Dates: 1866-1991
ID Number: A18
Size: 14 boxes
Language(s): English

Repository: Special & Digital Collections
University of South Florida Tampa Library
4202 East Fowler Ave., LIB122
Tampa, Florida 33620
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Administrative Summary

Provenance: Armwood
Acquisition Information: Donation
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Processing History: Complete
Preferred Citation: Armwood Family papers, Special Collections Department, Tampa Library, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida.
Related Material: Armwood, John, Oral History Cassette Tape and Transcript, USF Department of Anthropology African Americans in Florida Project, Special Collections Department, Tampa Library, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida. https://www.lib.usf.edu/archon/?p=collections/findingaid&id=58&q=&rootcontentid=5943#82. Information about related materials is available at https://www.lib.usf.edu/archon/?p=collections/findingaid&id=58&q=&rootcontentid=5943#82.

Biographical Note

In 1866, the Armwood family settled near the Alafia River in Seffner, FL. Over the years, the family played a major role in the social and political development of Hillsborough County, especially as related to the area's African American community. In 1878, family patriarch Levin N. Armwood, Jr. (1854 - 1936) married Margaret Holloman (1862 - 1936), the daughter of Hillsborough County pioneer Adam Holloman. Levin and Margaret Armwood had five children: Walter Adam (1879 - 1944), Idella (1881 - 1968), James (1883 - 1889), Henry (1884 - 1885), and Blanche (1890 - 1939). A citrus-grower by trade, Levin Armwood, Jr. served as Hillsborough County's first African-American deputy sheriff, Supervisor of County Roads, and Postmaster; he was also the first African-American police officer for the city of Tampa. In 1914, along with his son Walter, Levin Armwood opened the Gem Drugstore on Central Avenue- the first African-American owned drugstore in Tampa. One of the most widely recognized members of the Armwood family, Blanche, is regarded as one of Hillsborough County's most prominent women of the early 20th century. An educator and speaker who rose to national heights, Blanche Armwood began her professional career as a teacher for Tampa's African-American schools. In 1914, the same year that her family opened the Gem, Blanche was contacted by the Tampa Gas Company to serve as a demonstrator. Later that year, Armwood established the Tampa School of Household Arts, where African-American women and girls learned domestic science skills. She served as principal, instructor and course developer for the school and eventually established a sister school, the New Orleans School of Domestic Science, in Louisiana. Based on Armwood's success, other domestic science schools were established in Georgia, Virginia and South Carolina. Other significant accomplishments of Blanche Armwood include appointment as Supervisor of Negro Schools for Hillsborough County (1926 - 1934) and co-founder and first executive secretary of the Tampa Urban League. In 1985, Armwood Senior High School was dedicated in her honor.

Scope Note

The collection provides a general overview of the Armwood family's numerous accomplishments and professional and personal activities. Birth, marriage, and death certificates are included as well as photographs, correspondences, legal documents, military service records, newspaper clippings, brochures and other printed materials, diaries, manuscripts, and speeches.

Arrangement Note: Record groups. The collection is divided into the following record groups: (1) Armwood Family papers; (2) Armwood Family photographs. Record Group (1) is further subdivided into 3 sub-groups: (1) General Family papers; (2)
Blanche Armwood papers; (3) Walter Armwood. Within each subgroup, items are arranged alphabetically by name, type of material or chronologically.

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**Subject Headings**

**Corporate Names:** Tampa School of Household Arts
Tampa Urban League (Tampa, Fla.)

**Personal Names:** Armwood, Blanche
Armwood, Walter
Armwood, Walter -- Correspondence

**Family Names:** Armwood family
Armwood family -- Correspondence
Armwood family -- Genealogy

**Geographic Names:** Florida -- Genealogy -- Periodicals
Tampa (Fla.)
Tampa (Fla.) -- Politics and government

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Record Group : Armwood Family papers

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  - FOLDER 8 : Armwood, Levin Winfred, (1906-1966)
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ITEM: Certificate - Blanche Armwood Washington - Notary Public, 1933
ITEM: Certificate - Blanche Armwood Beatty - Sociedad "La Union Marti-Maceo" Miembro de Honor
ITEM: Certificate - Hazel Phillips
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ITEM: Certificate - Tampa School of Household Arts - Certificate of Proficiency
ITEM: Class Picture - Saint Cecilia's Academy - Class of 1969, 1969
ITEM: Newspaper Clipping - "Armwood papers preserve Tampa area's past" - Tampa Tribune, 1991
ITEM: Newspaper Clipping - "The School Messenger", January 24, 1927
ITEM: Proclamation - The Board of County Commissioners, County of Hillsborough, 1991
ITEM: Proclamation - City of Tampa - "Blanche Armwood Family Revival Day"
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BOX 8: Oversized Materials

ITEM: Book - "In Memoriam" - Hattie V. Armwood
ITEM: Oversized Legal Documents

Record Group: Armwood Family Photographs

BOX 9: Photographs 1~179

Scope/Content: Box 1 contains photographs 1 through 179. Please refer to print finding aid for more detailed information regarding photographs.

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Scope/Content: Box 2 contains photographs 180 through 329. Please refer to print finding aid for more detailed information regarding photographs.

Scope/Content: Reburial of John Armwood

Scope/Content: Box 3 contains photographs 330 through 381, plus miscellaneous photographs and photographic reproductions. For more detailed information, please refer to print finding aid.

Scope/Content: Reburial of John Armwood

Scope/Content: Miscellaneous photographs

Scope/Content: Armwood Family

Scope/Content: Reproductions

Scope/Content: Reproductions – Blanche Armwood

Scope/Content: Miscellaneous Photographs

Scope/Content: Oversized Photographs

Scope/Content: Oversized Photographs

Scope/Content: Oversized Materials


Scope/Content: Blanche Armwood
ITEM: Photograph of unknown man in military uniform (Kelvin?)
ITEM: “God Bless Our Family” – Armwood Family Tree (incomplete)
ITEM: Portrait of unknown man (Levin Armwood, II, Blanche’s father)?
ITEM: Portrait of Owen Armwood
ITEM: Portrait of Sarah Armwood
ITEM: Portrait of unknown woman (Idella Armwood?)
ITEM: Portrait of Ellen Armwood
ITEM: Portrait of Yulee Armwood

ITEM: Oversized Portrait of Blanche Armwood (young)

ITEM: Oversized Portrait of Blanche Armwood (later years)

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