

## Steele and Walsh family [multiple media] – 1937-2004.



ACCESSION NUMBER	2017-2-12
MATERIAL FORMAT	multiple media
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION	45 cm of textual records and other material 230 photographs : sepia and b&w ; 23 x 30 cm and smaller 8 sound recordings (50 wav files; 1 microcassette) 1 artifact
DATE	1937-2004
SCOPE AND CONTENT	<p>Accession consists of textual records, photographs and audio recordings documenting the lives of Dick Steele, his wife Esther and friend Bill Walsh. The materials are mostly correspondences between Dick and Esther during his internment at the Don Jail and Ontario Reformatory in Guelph, and from Dick and Bill's military service overseas during the Second World War. They also include correspondences between Esther and Bill, Bill and Anne Walsh, "Jack" and Esther, and other family and friends. Some of the letters show evidence of being censored. There are news clippings in English and Yiddish about the family from various newspapers including the Canadian Tribune (a Communist Party paper). There is a letter Esther wrote to campaign for Dick's release from internment, part of women's activism in this period. There is also a photocopy of a memoir written by Moses Kosowatsky and Moses Wolofsky "From the Land of Despair to the Land of Promise" ca. 1930s. The photographs include Dick and Bill in the army during the Second World War, a signed picture of Tim Buck addressed to Esther and the twins and a photo of Dick delivering a speech related to the Steel Workers. Also included is a recording of edited sound clips of Bill and Esther talking about Dick, Esther speaking about the letters, (how she received letters and flowers from Dick after he had already been killed), Bill reading a letter Dick wrote to Esther that he left with friends in England to send her in the case that he was killed (which he was), recordings of "Bill Walsh Oral history" Vols.1 and 2 compiled by Leib Wolofsky's (Bill's nephew), and 5 audio recordings by Adrianna Steele-Card with her grandparents Bill and Esther. There is also a microcassette labelled "Joe Levitt." The accession also includes the stripe of a German corporal that Bill captured as a prisoner, peace stamps and an early copy of Cy Gonick's A Very Red Life: The Story of Bill Walsh, edited by Bill.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY	<p>Richard (Dick) Kennilworth Steele is the name adopted by Moses Kosowatsky. He was born in 1909 in Montreal to Samuel Kosowatsky and Fanny Held. He lived in a laneway off Clark Street below Sherbrooke where his father collected and recycled bottles. He grew up with his siblings Joseph, Mortimer, Matthew, Gertrude and Edward. Bill Walsh (Moishe Wolofsky) was born in 1910, to Sarah and Herschel Wolofsky, the Editor of the Keneder Adler (Montreal's prominent Yiddish newspaper). He attended Baron Byng and then Commercial High School where he met Dick Steele. Bill recalled that Dick denounced militarism in the school when a teacher tried to recruit students to be cadets. Bill moved to New York City in 1927. His brother, who was living there, helped him get a job as a messenger on Wall Street. He also worked in the drug department at Macy's while attending courses at Columbia University in the evening. Dick worked on a ship for a year and then joined Bill in New York City in 1928. Dick worked at a chemical plant called Linde Air Products while also studying in the evenings at Columbia University. In 1931 Dick and Bill boarded a ship together in New York bound for Copenhagen. Together they travelled across Europe, witnessed a Nazi demonstration in Breslau, Germany and found work in Minsk and Moscow, Russia. This trip inspired them to become Communists. In 1933 Bill's father was on a Canadian trade mission to Poland, which he left to "rescue" his son from</p>

the Bolsheviks. Bill agreed to return to Canada after being advised to do so by the Comintern. He then changed his name to Bill Walsh to protect his family. In 1934 Bill moved to Toronto. He worked as the Educational Director for the Industrial Union of Needle Trade Workers and the Communist Party where he met Esther Slominsky/Silver, the organization's office manager. Dick joined Bill in Toronto soon after. Bill introduced Dick and Esther who then married. In 1940, Esther gave birth to twin sons Michael and John Steele. Esther was born in Toronto in 1914 to Joseph Slominsky and Fanny (Blackersany?). Her siblings were Bella, Eileen, Morris and step-sister Eva. Her father Joseph was a cloak maker and Esther also worked in the garment industry. Her mother Fanny passed away in 1920 at the age of 26 from tuberculosis. Dick was a metal worker and became a union organizer in the east end of Toronto. He was the head organizer of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee of Canada (SWOC) until 1940 when he was dismissed for being a Communist. Bill helped organize Kitchener's rubber workers into an industrial union and was also an organizer for the United Auto Workers of Windsor, Ontario. Jack Steele, an alias for Dick's brother Mortimer, fought with the Mackenzie-Papineau Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. Jack Steele was recalled to Canada in October 1937 to rally support for the efforts in Spain, returned to the front in June 1938 and was killed in action in August. Some of Dick's letters to his wife Esther are signed "Salud, Jack" and were likely written in 1940 when the Communist Party (CP) was banned by the Canadian Government under the War Measures Act. In November 1941, after Mackenzie King's call for enlistment, Dick wrote to the Department of Justice to ask permission to join the army. He never received a reply. On 1 April 1942 Dick's home was raided and he was interned at the Don Jail until September 1942 when he was moved to the Ontario Reformatory in Guelph. Esther wrote a letter to Louis St. Laurent, Minister of Justice to appeal on his behalf. Major public campaigning by communists and the wartime alliance with the USSR after 1941 shifted public opinion toward the CP and the Canadian Government slowly began releasing internees in January 1942. Dick was released in October 1942 and enlisted at the end of the month. Dick died on August 17, 1944 in Normandy, France. He was a tank driver in the Canadian Army. Bill was similarly arrested in 1941, spending time in jail and then an internment camp with other members of the CP. He joined the Canadian army in 1943 and fought in Holland and Belgium. Bill was first married to Anne Weir who died of a brain hemorrhage in 1943 just before he enlisted. The family believes this may have been due to drinking unpasteurized milk. Encouraged by Dick Steele to take care of his family should he pass in the war, Bill married Esther Steele in 1946. They had a daughter named Sheri and were members of the United Jewish People's Order. For 20 years Walsh worked for the Hamilton region of the United Electrical Workers (UE). Bill remained a member of the CP until 1967 when he was expelled for criticizing another union leader. He died in 2004. Esther passed away in 2010 at age 96.

#### USE CONDITIONS

Partially closed. Researchers must receive permission from the OJA Director prior to accessing some of the records.

#### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

RELATED MATERIAL NOTE: Library and Archives Canada has the William Walsh fonds and MG 28, ser. I 268, USWA, vol.4, SWOC Correspondence, has various letters from Dick Steele ca. 1938. Museum of Jewish Montreal has an oral history with Leila Mustachi (daughter of Max Wolofsky, Bill's brother) where she speaks about Bill, Dick and Esther. USE CONDITION NOTES: For "Bill Walsh Oral history" Vols.1 and 2, some contributors stipulate that recordings are restricted to personal use only and must not be used for any commercial purpose.

SUBJECTS

World War, 1939-1945  
Politics and government  
Labour and unions

NAME ACCESS

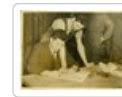
Steele, Michael  
Steele, Dick  
Walsh, Bill  
Walsh, Esther Steele

PLACES

Guelph, Ont.  
Toronto, Ont.  
Hamilton, Ont.  
Oshawa, Ont.  
Ottawa, Ont.  
Montreal, Que.  
Fort William/Thunder Bay, Ont.  
Germany  
England  
Holland

SOURCE

Archival Accessions





**Harvey Freeman [graphic material, textual record] – 1891-2013.**



ACCESSION NUMBER

2018-4-4

MATERIAL FORMAT

graphic material  
textual record

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

1 folder of textual records  
ca. 35 photographs : b&w and col. ; 33 x 27 cm or smaller

DATE

1891-2013

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Accession consists of material documenting members of Harvey Freeman's family, several of whom served in the armed forces. Included are: family photographs, a Krugel family tree, a copy of Itzik Kriegel (Harvey's grandfather)'s army discharge, an attestation

paper for Louis Krugel (Harvey's uncle), a signed program for a "stag whoopee dinner and night of blissful freedom" in honour of Lou Krugel's approaching marriage, and printed images of Harvey's daughter Tamar Freeman in Afghanistan. One of the photographs depicts Louis Krugel with professional wrestler and actor Tor Johnson, aka the Swedish Angel.

Photo Caption (001): Wellesley Public School, [ca. 1915]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (002): Louis Krugel. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (003): Buba Sluva with Sara, Moe, Lou, and Harry, 1909. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (004): Berel Krugel in front of 22 Gerard Street West, Toronto, [ca. 1919]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (005): Wedding, 28 September 1926. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (006): Louis Krugel. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (007): Baba Tzluva with Harry, [189-?]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (008): Louis Krugel. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (009): Shabbat dinner, [ca. 1940]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (010): Norman, Buba Sluva, and Bert, [ca. 1922]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (011): Family portrait, 1909. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (012): Harry and Sara, 1916. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (013): Louis Krugel, [192-?]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (014): Louis Krugel and unknown man posing with boxing gloves, [1918?]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (015): Louis Krugel, 1918. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (016): Harvey Freeman at Camp Borden, 1945. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (017): Unknown. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (018): Louis Krugel and unknown man, 1918. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (019): Louis Krugel with Tor Johnson, aka the Swedish Angel, [194-]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (020): Signed portrait of Louis Krugel. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

Photo Caption (021): Louis Krugel, [192-]. Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre, accession 2018-4-4.

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

Harvey Freeman was born on May 22, 1928. As a youth, he attended Harbord Collegiate and went on to join the militia, where he was the lone Canadian Jewish bagpiper. Harvey made his living in business, working in different areas including furniture manufacturing and property management. As part of a change in lifestyle, he took up marathons in his early seventies. Harvey has four children.

USE CONDITIONS

Partially closed. Researchers must receive permission from the OJA Director prior to accessing some of the records.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

ASSOCIATED MATERIALS: Records for Harvey's daughter Tamar can be found in Accession 2013-7-8.

SUBJECTS

Afghan War, 2001---Participation, Canadian Families  
Soldiers--Canada

NAME ACCESS

Freeman, Harvey  
Freeman, Tamar  
Johnson, Tor, 1903-1971

PLACES

Afghanistan  
Toronto (Ont.)

SOURCE

Archival Accessions



