

**WALTER KELLER PAPERS, 1909-1974**  
**2004.64.1**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126  
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**Descriptive summary**

Title: Walter Keller papers

Dates: 1909-1974

Accession number: 2004.64.1

Creator: Keller, Walter, 1904-1985

Extent: 1.1 linear feet (2 boxes, 1 book enclosure)

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW,  
Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Walter Keller papers contain biographical materials, correspondence, immigration papers, a personal narrative, and photographs documenting Walter and Caroline Keller, their lives in prewar Germany, their immigration to the United States, and the reestablishment of their medical and nursing careers.

Languages: German, English

**Administrative Information**

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Walter Keller papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Sharon Roesch, Walter Keller's stepdaughter, donated Walter Keller papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives in 2004.

Related materials: Sharon Roesch also donated one of Walter Keller's luggage tags, his dog tags, three captain bars, a World War II victory medal ribbon bar, and an American campaign medal ribbon bar. She also donated four 1938 issues of the *Jüdisches Gemeindeblatt für den Verband der Kultusgemeinden in Bayern*, which are held by the library.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed. See archives catalog at [collections.ushmm.org](https://collections.ushmm.org) for further information.

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, November 2016

### **Biographical note**

Walter Keller (1904-1985) was a doctor born in Augsburg to hat maker Ludwig (1875-?) and Ida Keller (1883-?). His first wife, Caroline Keller (1904-1973), was born Karoline Hansel Oppenheimer in Würzburg to Arnold (1878-1946) and Alice Oppenheimer (1876-1957). Walter and Caroline immigrated to the United States in 1938. Caroline's sister Julie Eleanore (1911-2009) also immigrated to the United States before the war. Their parents fled to England in 1939 and immigrated to the United States in 1946. Walter's parents and sister Elisabeth (Liesel, 1921-?) perished in the Holocaust. Walter Keller's second wife was Onnolee Keller (1916-2009).

### **Scope and content of collection**

The Walter Keller papers contain biographical materials, correspondence, immigration papers, a personal narrative, and photographs documenting Walter and Caroline Keller, their lives in prewar Germany, their immigration to the United States, and the reestablishment of their medical and nursing careers. The papers also include four 1938 issues of the *Jüdisches Gemeindeblatt für den Verband der Kultusgemeinden in Bayern*.

Biographical materials include student, employment, and military records documenting Walter's medical training and practice in Germany, the establishment of his medical career in the United States, and his military service during World War II, as well as Caroline Keller's nursing career. This series also includes a homemade booklet of poems celebrating Arnold Wolf on his birthday.

Correspondence primarily consists of wartime illustrated letters Walter addressed Caroline during his World War II military service. This series also includes a condolence letter from Maria Racek on Walter's death and three letters from Eva Prager reminiscing on her shared childhood with Walter.

Immigration material includes correspondence, forms, and certificates documenting Walter and Caroline Keller's immigration to the United States in 1938 and their efforts to help other family members immigrate.

Walter Keller's memoir describes his childhood in Augsburg, attending medical school in Germany during Hitler's beer hall putsch, his early medical career, his brief arrest and the loss of his employment after Hitler came to power, finding work at the Jewish Hospital in Leipzig, meeting and marrying Caroline, practicing medicine in Würzburg, immigrating to the United States, reestablishing his medical career, his military training and stateside service, and his naturalization.

Photographic materials consist of two photograph albums and several dozen loose photographs depicting Walter and Caroline Keller and their family members and friends at home in Germany and on vacation in Germany and Austria.

### **System of arrangement**

The Walter Keller papers are arranged as five series:

- Series 1: Biographical materials, 1909-1960
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1943-1995
- Series 3: Immigration materials, 1937-1952
- Series 4: Personal narrative, approximately 1974
- Series 5: Photographic materials, 1917-1972

### **Indexing terms**

Jews--Germany--Augsburg.

Jews--Germany--Würzburg.

Jewish physicians.

Jewish nurses.

Jewish refugees--New York (State).

Augsburg (Germany)

Würzburg (Germany)

Germany--Emigration and immigration--History--1933-1945.

United States--Emigration and immigration--History--20<sup>th</sup> century.

Photographs.

## **CONTAINER LIST**

### **Series 1: Biographical materials, 1909-1960**

<b>Box/Folder</b>	
1.1	Keller, Caroline Oppenheimer, 1909-approximately 1938
1.2	Keller, Walter, Establishment of medical credentials in the United States, 1938-1948
1.3	Keller, Walter, Military service, 1946-1960
1.4-1.9	Keller, Walter, Professional development and credentials, 1925-1938 (6 folders)
1.10-1.12	Keller, Walter, Student records, 1914-1929 (3 folders)
1.13	Wolf, Arnold, 1945

### **Series 2: Correspondence, 1943-1995**

<b>Box/Folder</b>	
1.14	Keller, Walter, to Caroline (Hansel) Keller, 1943-1946
1.15	Prager, Eva, to Onnolee Keller, 1994-1995

1.16	Racek, Maria, 1986
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**Series 3: Immigration material, 1937-1952**

Box/Folder	
1.17	Keller, Walter and Caroline, 1937-1948
1.18	Efforts to help family members, 1938-1940, 1952

**Series 4: Personal narrative, approximately 1974**

Box/Folder	
1.19	<i>Memoirs of Dr. Walter Keller</i> , approximately 1974

**Series 5: Photographic materials, 1917-1972**

Box/Folder	
2.1	Brown album, 1917-1932
1.20	Brown album, loose photographs, approximately 1922-1932
BE 1	Striped album, 1931-1938
1.21	Striped album, loose photographs, approximately 1931-1972
1.22	Loose photographs, approximately 1920-1962