

## **URSULA KLAU PAPERS, approximately 1867-2006 2006.410.2**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126  
Tel. (202) 479-9717  
e-mail: [reference@ushmm.org](mailto:reference@ushmm.org)

### **Descriptive summary**

Title: Ursula Klau papers

Dates: approximately 1867-2006

Accession number: 2006.410.2

Creator: Klau, Ursula, 1932-2007

Extent: 2.1 linear feet (2 boxes, 2 oversize boxes, 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: The Ursula Klau papers contain biographical materials, correspondence, estate, reparations, and restitution records, photographic materials, song lyrics, a calendar, and two prayer books. The records document Ursula Klau's family; their experiences in Nazi Germany, Nazi-occupied Netherlands, the Westerbork transit camp, the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, and the so-called "Lost Transport"; and Ursula's liberation and recuperation in Davos, Switzerland, immigration to the United States, and efforts to liquidate and distribute her parents' estate and to receive restitution and reparations for her family's experiences.

Languages: German, English, Dutch

### **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), Ursula Klau papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

**Acquisition information:** The Ursula Klau papers were donated in 2006 by Ursula Klau and in 2008 by the Estate of Ursula Klau. Accessions previously cataloged as 2006.410.1, 2008.115.1, and 2008.115.2 have been incorporated into this collection.

**Related archival materials:** The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum also holds a prayer book donated by Ursula Klau in 1992, which she kept with her throughout her time at Bergen-Belsen. The Estate of Ursula Klau also donated two prayer books and a calendar book that will be cataloged as 2008.115.3, 2008.115.4, and 2008.115.5 or transferred to 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, June 2012, revised July 2018

### **Biographical note**

Ursula Klau (1932-2007) was born in Frankfurt, Germany to lawyer Dr. Oscar (Oskar) Klau (1889-1944) and Therese (Resa) Klau-Alzheimer (1896-1945). Her older sister was Helga Simon (1921-1998). In 1934 the family fled to Switzerland. They returned to Germany in 1935 so that Dr. Klau could liquidate his business before the family relocated to Amsterdam in 1936. Helga was sent to the Westerbork transit camp in July 1942. Ursula and her parents were sent to Westerbork in March 1943 and then deported to Bergen-Belsen in February 1944 where Oscar Klau died in the spring. In early April 1945, as the Allies advanced on Bergen-Belsen, Klau and her mother were loaded onto a transport for Theresienstadt which became lost in the woods as the conductor tried to circumnavigate tracks destroyed by Allied bombs. The transport's SS guards abandoned the train near Tröbitz as the Red Army advanced, and the transport was liberated by Soviet troops on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Soviets housed the survivors in Tröbitz and in Schilda. Klau and her mother were located in Schilda, where Therese died of typhus on May 7, 1945. Klau remained under quarantine in Schilda until August 1945, when she was transferred to Maastricht. Helga Klau located Ursula and arranged to have her transported to Amsterdam, where she was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Klau's family in the United States and Switzerland arranged for her to be moved to a sanatorium in Davos, Switzerland in early 1946, and she immigrated to the United States in November 1946 where she lived in New York under the guardianship of her cousin Adolf (Adi) John Elkeles.

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

The Ursula Klau papers contain biographical materials, correspondence, estate, reparations, and restitution records, photographic materials, song lyrics, a calendar, and two prayer books. The records document Ursula Klau's family; their experiences in Nazi Germany, Nazi-occupied Netherlands, the Westerbork transit camp, the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, and the so-called "Lost Transport"; and Klau's liberation and recuperation in Davos, Switzerland, immigration to the United States, and efforts to liquidate and distribute her parents' estate and to receive restitution and reparations for her family's experiences.

Biographical materials include identity papers, birth and death certificates, immigration records, health records, American Chamber of Commerce records, a Displaced Person registration card and a membership card for the Association of Former Prisoners of Concentration Camps in Germany, records

regarding citizenship status, and letters to the New York Times and New York Sun describing Ursula's story.

Correspondence includes letters among Ursula, Helga, Oscar, and Therese Klau, Helga and Ursula's aunt Margaret (Grettchen), Adolf (Adi) and Ruth Elkeles, and Miriam Wareburg, a friend of Ursula's from Davos. Correspondence from 1939 and 1941 documents the Klaus' lives in Amsterdam and their efforts to emigrate. Correspondence from 1945 and 1946 describes Helga and Ursula's wartime and postwar experiences, efforts to move Klau to a sanatorium in Switzerland, their desire to join their remaining family members in the United States, and Klau's arrival in New York. Letters from Miriam Wareburg document Klau's time at the sanatorium.

Records regarding the Estate of Oscar and Therese Klau document Ursula and Helga Klau's and Adolf Elkeles' efforts to liquidate and distribute the Estate's assets including a life insurance policy, bank accounts, securities, and a trust, as well as expenses incurred by Elkeles acting as Klau's guardian. Records include court documents, correspondence, forms, bills, accounting and tax records, and the Klaus' last will and testament.

Correspondence, forms, and bank records document Ursula Klau's efforts to obtain reparations and restitution through German Federal Compensation Laws, the Foundation for Governmental Maror Funds, Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation regarding Swiss banks, and other programs in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Photographic prints and three photo albums document Ursula Klau and her family and friends. Photographs depict Klau's family starting around 1893, pre-war life in Frankfurt and Amsterdam, trips to Paris and Winterthur, Switzerland, Klau's recuperation in Davos, her life in New York, the Bergen-Belsen Memorial, and the memorials in Tröbitz commemorating the victims of the "Lost Transport."

The Ursula Klau papers also include lyrics to songs such as "Kaddish," "Treblinka," "O, Buchenwald," "Im Thüringerland," "Mein Schtetetele Belz," "Oi es is ois Malchume," "Mir kommen an," "Ach mein Ghettole," "Mir senen Koimenkerers," "Keidankis Keiten," "Es brennt," and "Es is a schener warmer Tug."

### **System of arrangement**

The Ursula Klau papers are arranged as six series:

- Series 1: Biographical materials, approximately 1867, 1935-1950, 1956-1958
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1939-1946
- Series 3: Klau estate, 1942-1960
- Series 4: Reparations and restitution, 1950-1962, 1972-2006
- Series 5: Photographic materials, approximately 1893-1990s
- Series 6: Songs, circa 1939-1946

### **Indexing terms**

Bergen-Belsen (Concentration camp)

Holocaust survivors.

Jews--Germany--History--1933-1945.  
Jews--Netherlands--History.  
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Children.  
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Reparations.  
Prisoners--Transportation.

Frankfurt am Main (Germany)  
Davos (Switzerland)  
Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Photographs.

## CONTAINER LIST

### Series 1: Biographical materials, approximately 1867, 1935-1950, 1956-1958

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Helga Klau, 1942-1945
1.2	Oscar Klau, 1933-1935, 1941-1947
1.3	Therese Klau, 1945-1949
1.4-1.5	Ursula Klau, 1940, 1945-1947, 1956-1958
1.6	Klau Family, 1939-1940, 1945, 1950
OS 1	Wertheimer family tree

### Series 2: Correspondence, 1939-1946

Box/Folder	Title
1.7	Correspondence, 1939-1946

### Series 3: Klau estate, 1942-1960

Box/Folder	Title
1.8	Basler Lebens-Versicherungs-Gesellschaft, 1942, 1947-1948
1.9	Claims Against the Estate, 1947-1951
1.10	Correspondence, 1946-1953, 1960
1.11-1.12	Court Documents, 1946-1952 (2 folders)
1.13	Etania Committee, Inc., 1945-1946, 1957
1.14	Expenditures on Behalf of Ursula Klau, 1948-1950
1.15	Hugo Wolf, 1946-1947
1.16	International Nickel Shares, 1947
1.17	Last Will and Testament [1936], 1945
1.18	Lippmann, Rosenthal & Co., 1945-1949
1.19	N. V. Tansandine Handel-Mij, 1950-1952

1.20	S. Japhet & Co., Ltd., 1947-1952
1.21	Taxes, 1947-1951
1.22	Tedesco Stiftung, 1947-1949
1.23	Treasury Licenses, 1945-1949
1.24	U. S. Treasury Certificates, 1948-1949

**Series 4: Reparations and restitution, 1950-1962, 1972-2006**

Box/Folder	Title
1.25-1.31	Germany, 1950-1962 (7 folders)
1.32, 2.1-2.4	Germany, 1972-2006 (5 folders)
2.5	Netherlands, 2001-2004
2.6	Switzerland, 1999

**Series 5: Photographic materials, circa 1893-1990s**

Box/Folder	Title
2.7	Bergen-Belsen Memorial, 1959
2.8	Helga Klau, 1922
2.9	Klau Family, 1931
2.10-2.12	Klau Family and Friends, approximately 1893-1940 (3 folders)
2.13	Oscar Klau, approximately 1929-1938
2.14-2.16	Ursula Klau, approximately 1932-1939 (3 folders)
2.17	Ursula Klau and Her Family in Amsterdam, 1938-1940
2.18	Ursula Klau in Davos, 1946
2.19-2.21	Ursula Klau, Family, and Friends, circa 1944-1990s (3 folders)
Box 3	Photo Album: "For my dear Ursula as a remembrance from Europe. Your Harry. 31 May 1947," approximately 1949-1952
Box 4	Photo Album: "Helga," approximately 1921-1930, 1953
2.22-2.26	Photo Album: "Photographs," approximately 1919-1950

**Series 6: Songs, circa 1939-1946**

Box/Folder	Title
2.27	Songs, approximately 1939-1946