

## **Guide to Otto Kraus papers 1988.1147**

Finding aid prepared by Judith Janec

Tauber Holocaust Library

JFCS Holocaust Center

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**Title:** Otto Kraus papers

**Identifier/Call Number:** 1988.1147

**Contributing Institution:** Tauber Holocaust Library

**Language of Material:** English

**Storage Unit:** Archives Box 4

**Physical Description:** 0.1 Linear feet containing three documents

**Date:** 1944-1945, undated

**Language of Materials note:** All items have been translated into English from the original Czech. Translator unknown.

**Abstract:** The Otto Kraus papers are comprised of two translated and transcribed letters and a translated account, describing the experiences of two Czech Jewish families -- Kraus and Munk -- during the period of 1941-1944, when members of both families were deported to Terezin and then Auschwitz concentration camps.

**Creator:** Kraus, Otto

**creator:** Munk, Honza

**Scope and Contents note**

The Otto Kraus papers include a translation and transcription of a letter written by Otto Kraus on July 17, 1944, smuggled out of Auschwitz to Prague and intended to reach his parents in Terezin, in which Mr. Kraus pleads with his family to, under no conditions, allow themselves to be transported from Terezin, but to run for their lives.

The papers also include a translated transcript of a letter written to Mr. Kraus by Honza Munk, perhaps a family member or a friend, after the war, in June/July 1945, describing his experiences during the period of 1941-1944, beginning with the suicide of his mother, his and his brother's deportation to Auschwitz from Terezin in October 1942, his brother Jindra's death there, and his experiences until liberation. Further Munk family history is described in an undated account of Honza Munk's life, focusing on the implementation of anti-Jewish laws in Czechoslovakia in September 1939; the account also includes a transcription of his mother's suicide note, in which she explains that she could not endure the imminent suffering she saw approaching.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

Documents were donated by Golda Kaufman on March 7, 1986, who received them from her daughter.

**Conditions Governing Use note**

There are no restrictions to use for this collection.

**Conditions Governing Access note**

There are no restrictions to access for this collection.

**General note**

The documents have been transcribed from the original handwritten letters.

**Existence and Location of Originals note**

Location of originals is unknown. Documents donated as copies.

**Biographical/Historical note**

Otto Kraus was a survivor of Auschwitz concentration camp. A Czech citizen, he was deported with his family to Terezin (Theresienstadt) concentration camp in May 1942, and from there to Auschwitz.

Honza Munk was born in 1922 in Prague to a middle class family. He was the younger of two sons; his older brother was named Jindrich (Jindra). The family lived in Prague until the autumn of 1941 when they were scheduled for deportation. After the family received deportation orders, Honza's mother took her life. In her suicide letter, she pleads for their forgiveness, and ends it on this tragic, poignant note: "P.S. Look through your underwear and take only the good, new ones with you."

Honza and his brother Jindra were deported to Terezin in April 1942, and subsequently to Auschwitz in October 1942. Jindra perished there on January 18, 1943. Honza survived, worked as a nurse, and was forced on a death marches in the winter of 1944. From Auschwitz he was sent to Buchenwald and then to a satellite camp in Berga. On April 18, 1944, Honza escaped the camp and travelled to Prague. He survived to graduate school and make plans for an upcoming marriage. Further information about his life is not available.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Auschwitz (Concentration camp).

Kaufman, Golda

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Kraus family  
Theresienstadt (Concentration camp).  
Concentration camps -- Europe  
Correspondence -- Europe  
Jewish women  
Jews -- Persecutions -- Czechoslovakia  
Memoirs -- Czechoslovakia  
Suicides -- Europe  
World War, 1939-1945 -- Deportations from Czechoslovakia  
World War, 1939-1945 -- Europe.

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**Otto Kraus letter 1944 July 17**  
**Honza Munk letter 1945 June or July**  
**Honza Munk account undated**