

Summary of Oral History: PAULA GOLDLUST BLUE

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This Summary was written by a USHMM Volunteer on [03/2022]

Paula Blue nee Goldlust was born in Konstanz, Germany in 1928 to Bernard and Manya Goldlust, both originally from Poland. The whole family living in Germany was considered stateless. Paula describes Konstanz as a small town near the border of Switzerland, which had an active Jewish life before the war. The border, however, was closed to immigrants. Paula's father ran a clothing and tailoring store. Paula also had a brother, Leo, who was 4 years older.

Paula recalls that on Kristallnacht the Gestapo came to their apartment looking for forbidden literature, etc. They took her father and sent him to Dachau. He stayed there about 4-6 weeks and was freed with the provision that he leave Germany. He managed to go to England, to Kitchener. The family did have papers to go to the US, but the process was too slow to be effective.

After 1938 Paula remembers that Jewish children no longer could go to school. When the war began in October 1940 the Jews, who had already been crammed into a small area, were sent to Gurs in France. She describes poor conditions there, with rats, lice and hunger. The family was in different bunks but could see each other. She remembers the Quakers being active in the camp.

In April 1941, the family was sent to a larger camp at Rivesaltes where there were also horrible conditions, but they were able to help the farmers harvest their crops and so had more food to eat. She thinks this was near the Spanish border, because the locals spoke Catalan. Soon after Paula was sent with other children to homes in Marjolet, where she stayed for 2 1/2 years. At that time her mother was deported and she didn't know where, though she got a few letters.

After this time, Paula was sent to Haute-Savoie and hidden with a family. Leo was in Morsak with the French scouts. Paula doesn't remember many details about this time. When liberation arrived she went to refugee camps in Geneva. She found out that her father had died in London in 1943 from natural causes. Leo had joined the Maquis and then the French army. She also discovered that her mother had been sent to Drancy and then to Auschwitz where she died.

Paula and Leo went to New York from Paris but Leo then stayed in France. Paula got a job in Chicago and married another survivor who lost his first wife and child in Plazchow. Her husband died in 1982.