

KLARA LEE
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Klara was one of the 50 children brought to American by Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus in 1939. She was born in 1930, an only child, to an orthodox family. Her father owned a paper factory and was originally from Poland and he met her mother in Vienna. Her memory of the times is vague, but she does remember that things got difficult for the Jews after Kristallnacht and there were many limitation on them; for example, they were not allowed to buy fruit.

Klara was just getting over the measles when her family heard about the Kraus' and they applied for Klara to go to the United States. Klara was accepted and her parents both went to England where her mother worked as a domestic and her father in the Kitchener camp. Her father had at some point been detained by the SS and put on a train to a camp, but he had managed to jump off and escaped.

Klara remembers that on the trip to American she had been given an apple by her mother, even though fruits weren't allowed to Jews. She kept that apple most of the way over. Klara were taken in by a wealthy great uncle and his wife from Brooklyn. They were quite old and she wasn't very happy until her parents came. Before they came she found that her aunt and cousins had come to the United States and moved also to Brooklyn which made her very happy. Her mother came after a year and before her father. Her father found that he had lost all his relatives in Poland.

The family eventually settled in San Francisco. Klara went to the University of California at Berkeley; her son had his Bar Mitzvah at Temple Beth Jacob in San Francisco. Klara said that because they settled on the West coast, she has more memories about the war with Japan than with Germany. She does remember being frightened in Vienna, especially when the male relatives had to go into hiding in the basement. Klara thinks that in Germany, the Jews were German first and then Jewish, but that in Vienna they were Jews first and Austrians second.