

LDB

1. Proper Noun

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Louis Dembitz Brandeis was born on November 13, 1856, in _____, Kentucky, the youngest of four children. His parents, Adolph Brandeis and Frederika Dembitz, both of whom were Jewish, emigrated to the United States from their childhood homes in Prague, Bohemia (then part of the Austrian Empire). They emigrated as part of their extended families for both economic and political reasons. The Revolutions of 1848 had produced a series of political upheavals and the families, though "liberal in their political views and sympathetic to the rebel cause," were "shocked by the anti-Semitic riots that erupted in Prague while the city was in the hands of the Czech rebels." In addition, the Habsburg Empire had imposed business taxes on Jews. Family elders sent Adolph Brandeis to America to observe and prepare for his family's possible emigration. He spent a few months in the Midwest and was impressed by the nation's institutions and by the tolerance among the people he met. He wrote home to his wife, "America's progress is the triumph of the rights of man."^{[2]:56}

The Brandeis family chose to settle in Louisville partly because it was a prosperous river port. His earliest childhood was shaped by the American Civil War, which forced the family to seek safety temporarily in Indiana. The Brandeis family held abolitionist beliefs that angered their Louisville neighbors.^{[2]:57} Louis's father developed a grain-merchandising business. Worries about the U.S. economy took the family to Europe in 1872, but they returned in 1875.