

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Simon, and I am the second grandchild of Naim whom I always knew as Papa.

From my earliest recollections of childhood, Papa played a huge role in our lives and his departure leaves a big hole. However, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on some of the things he taught me and that I will remember him proudly for.

Firstly, optimism and strength in the face of upheaval. Papa, like many of his generation, lived through times of profound change that my generation can barely begin to imagine. From birth in Ottoman Mesopotamia to the upheavals of the new state of Iraq to the challenges the Jewish community faced in Baghdad in the 1940s and 1950s to the eventual need to leave his homeland in mid life and resettle with a young family in a new country. Yet his outlook on life was always optimistic and forward looking, taking each challenge in his stride and supporting those for whom the challenge was harder to bear. While I hope that my generation never has to face similar levels of upheaval, his life will always remain a guide to me for how to face and overcome challenges.

Secondly, devotion to family. Through all the change he saw in his life, he always kept his family as his central concern. Each Shabbat afternoon of our childhood would be spent at his and Mama's apartment in South Kensington with many of our relatives around us and this was when Papa seemed at his happiest. But perhaps his strongest devotion was to his wife Renee, my grandmother. The depth of his love for her was plain to see, not least in the way he cared for her in the later years of her life. The relish with which he would tell the story of her being crowned Miss Baghdad in New Year 1947 spoke of a youthful love that extended far in to old age.

Thirdly, devotion to his community. Papa saw it as his role to help continue the memory of the Jewish community of Iraq which he did up to the age of 90 through his journal *The Scribe*. I had the opportunity to work a little bit on *The Scribe* in the later stages of its publication and it was an amazing experience to see how many people around the world appreciated the connection the magazine gave them to their original homeland and the traditions and history of the community. As his resources grew, he turned his focus to helping the wider community both Jewish and non-Jewish with a particular

focus on education, a cause very dear to his heart. His philanthropic outlook will always be a guiding light to me and my family.

Finally, his love of knowledge. Papa was fascinated by the world and the way it worked. He had the good fortune to travel extensively; his honeymoon alone was a two year journey around the world taking in much of the near east, Europe and the US and I loved all the stories he would tell us about his experiences. He always thought deeply about the world and had theories, often controversial, about many varied issues from the nature of monotheism to the optimal monetary system. Conversations with him were always thought provoking and rich in insight and knowledge. I will miss his wisdom.

While the current days are tinged with sadness that he is no longer with us I will always remember him with:

much love for his warmth and kindness,
with deep gratitude for the lessons he taught me
and with great pride for the life he was able to lead.

Tov shem mishemen tov veyom hamavet miyom hivalido.