

The Matas family history

by David Matas

How do we know what was lost in the Holocaust? One way we can know is to look at who survived.

Strictly speaking, Jewish immigrants who came to Canada before World War I and their descendants are not survivors of the Holocaust. Yet, in a very real sense, every Jewish person is a survivor of the Holocaust. Six million Jews were killed. All Jews were targeted. It is only the fortunes of war that gave us an Allied rather than an Axis victory in World War II. If the Axis powers had won, not one Jewish person would be alive today.

If those who died in the Holocaust and their descendants never born had been free to lead their lives, who would they have been? What would they have accomplished? Presumably they would have been and accomplished much the same as those who came to Canada before the Holocaust and their descendants.

A figure of six million staggers the imagination. One way of coming to grips with the scope of the devastation is looking at just two people, Anna and Simon Matas, and their descendants. Anna and Simon were ordinary people, ordinary Jews, *prosteh yidden*. When Simon came to England, he worked in a factory, making caps. The two of them in Winnipeg made a living in a family store, but nothing more.

Anna and Simon came to Canada from what was then Imperial Russia and is now Ukraine. Imperial Russia, from 1827 to 1856, had a compulsory military draft with different minimum ages for Jews and non-Jews. For non-Jews the minimum draft age was 18. For Jews, it was 12. Once drafted, those drafted had to serve for 25 years.¹ If the drafted had children while

¹ Encyclopedia Judaica: Cantonists
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0004_0_03914.html

in the military, the children had to attend military schools.²

Russia drafted Jewish children for Christianization, in order to convert them, while they were still young and easily influenced. Not every Jewish child was drafted. There was rather a Jewish quota, a fixed number every year of Jews to be drafted from each community.

In order to avoid this draft many Jewish families changed their names to those associated with other local ethnic groups.³ The ancestors of Simon were one of these. According to family lore, the name used to be Lapidus, a name common amongst the Jewish community in the area at the time, and was changed to Matas, a name associated with the local Greek and Turkish communities.

Odessa and its neighbourhoods suffered massive spasms of antisemitic violence, pogroms, in 1881, the year of Simon's birth, 1882 and 1905, the year both Simon and Anna left Russia.⁴ Simon lost a sister in one of these pogroms when she was an infant. An antisemitic attacker picked her up by her heels, threw her against a wall and crushed her skull.

Anna too lost a sister, through starvation. Famines and starvation swept periodically swept across Imperial Russia. Escaping them was more difficult for Jews than others because of restrictions on their movement. Jews could live within the Pale of Settlement, which included Odessa and its surrounding, but did not include the interior of Russia, including

² "Military Service in Russia" Yivo Institute for Jewish Research

http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Military_Service_in_Russia

³ "Jews in the Russian Army" The Museum of Family History

<http://www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/mfh-jitra.htm>

⁴ Ariel Parkansky "Anti-Semitism and Pogroms"

http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/odessa/LIF_violence.asp

Moscow. For Jews, escaping the Pale meant leaving Russia.⁵

Russia in 1874 introduced a universal draft at the age of twenty. The term of service was reduced from twenty five years to six.

What is now Lushun port, Dalian City, Liaoning Province, China was in 1904 Port Arthur, Russia's only all weather port on the Pacific. In a precursor of Pearl Harbour, the Japanese attacked the Russian fleet anchored at the port.

The Russo-Japanese war, from February 1904 to September 1905, went badly for Russia. Russia lost Port Arthur in January 1905. That defeat, the hardships of war and more led that month to what is called the First Russian Revolution - strikes, demonstrations and mutinies across Russia. The traditional scapegoats, Jews, were blamed for the uprising and accused of treason, fomenting in 1905 yet another fit of violence against the Jews, yet another pogrom.⁶

Within the army itself, Jews became cannon fodder in the war. An estimated 3,000 Jewish soldiers were killed or missing in action, fighting for Russia.⁷ Many thousands more were injured.

Simon was born in August 1881. By the time he was draft eligible, the universal draft was

⁵ http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Pale_of_Settlement

⁶ "Military Service in Russia" Yivo Institute for Jewish Research

http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Military_Service_in_Russia

⁷ "Russian-Japanese War of 1904-1905: Database of Russian Army Jewish soldiers injured, killed, or missing in action"
<http://www.bfcollection.net/fast/rjmain.html>

in place. So the name change did not help him. He was drafted into the army and in 1905 was told that he was going to be sent to the front to fight the war against the Japanese.

Russian soldiers were sent to the war zone on ships routed around the Cape of Good Hope. Simon, on a ship of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea off Odessa, jumped overboard and swam to shore. He crossed overland to the North Sea and booked a passage to England. Anna Rossler was born in 1888. Fleeing the pogroms and poverty, she fled to England the same year as Simon, 1905.

Simon in England went to movie and saw a woman he said to a friend was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen and was going to marry. Later in his stay, another friend fixed him up on a blind date with the very same woman – Anna Rossler.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Canadian Prime Minister, and Clifford Sifton, his Minister of Interior, actively promoted in Europe and the US immigration to Western Canada, to populate the country and to make the transcontinental railways economically viable. Those that applied to come were quickly welcomed.⁸ Though Sifton resigned from the Laurier cabinet in February 1905, the generous immigration policy continued, in modified form, until the beginning of World War I.

Simon's brother Matthew also fled the Russian pogroms of 1905, and came to Winnipeg in 1905 where he got a job at Sam Denaburg's Grocery and Butcher shop at 80 Euclid Avenue.⁹ Simon joined him in 1907. Simon brought Anna over in 1908; they married in Winnipeg in

⁸ "Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900 - 1977"

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/legacy/chap-2.asp>

⁹ The Common History from Winnipeg's first neighbourhood, "Ringleaders for 99 years" Tuesday, August 3, 2010

<http://pointdouglas.blogspot.ca/2010/08/ringleaders-for-99-years.html>

January 1909. Anna and Simon had six children - John born 1909, Edna, born 1911, Harry, born 1912, Mary born in 1914, Max, born 1918, and Roy, born 1920.

They worked in a store, and then built their own 1911, down the street, at 121 Euclid. They ran that store, also a grocery and butcher shop till Anna died in November 1954 at the age of 66.¹⁰ The store is still there under the name Metro Meat Products. After Anna's death Simon lived with Harry and Esther and their children until a friend convinced him to go live with him at the Sharon Home, a Jewish personal care residence. Simon died in October 1971 at the age of 90.

Simon and Anna were lucky to have got out of Russia and come to Canada when they did. If they had met, married and had children in Russia/Ukraine, their children would not have made it here. After World War I, Canadian immigration policy got increasingly restrictive and antisemitic. It was harder for Jewish refugees to get to Canada and safety in the years before, during and immediately after World War II, than it was for Nazi mass murderers to get to Canada for a haven and immunity after the War.¹¹

Once Simon and Anna were here, in Winnipeg, antisemitism was far less harmful that it was in the Ukraine/Russia, but did not end. Starting in 1932 and lasting till 1943, there was a Jewish quota for entry into medical school at the University of Manitoba.¹²

¹⁰ <https://billiongraves.com/grave/Anna-Matas/17169448>

¹¹ Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many*, Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1982; David Matas with Susan Charendoff, *Justice Delayed: Nazi War Criminals in Canada*, Summerhill Press, 1989

¹² Allan Levine, "Medical Faculty's Poisoned Pill", Winnipeg Free Press, November 5th, 2009

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/Medical-facultys-poisoned-pill-44711822.html>

Both John and Harry applied for and got into medical school before the imposition of the quota. Harry's admission was both precocious and fortuitous - precocious, because he was admitted at the age of 19 and fortuitous, because the quota began the year after his admission.

Roy applied during the quota period and was rejected. The issue was not academic ability, since Roy was valedictorian in high school and, when he then went into law school, was the gold medallist. Simon complained to the Dean of the Medical Faculty, Alvin Mathers, about Roy's rejection and Mathers replied that Simon had already had two sons admitted into medicine. So he should not complain. Yet, in principle, if admission was based on qualifications, the prior admission of siblings should not matter.

Simon came from a shtetl, a small Jewish town called Medarevkeh (also spelled Miedryvec). Anna came from Odessa proper. In the fall of 1941 and the winter of 1942, invading Nazi German troops with the help of allied Romanian forces and local Ukrainians massacred the Jews of Odessa and surrounding villages.¹³

After the Nazi invasion of Russia, every shtetl near Odessa, including Medarevkeh, from where Simon came, was obliterated. The City of Odessa before the Nazi invasion had an estimated 180,000 Jews. By the time the War was over, there were none. All the Jews had fled, been killed or were deported.¹⁴

¹³ World Heritage Encyclopedia "1941 Odessa massacre"

http://worldjournals.org/articles/1941_Odessa_massacre

"1941 Odessa massacre"

<http://www.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=1941%20Odessa%20massacre>

¹⁴ "Odessa", Holocaust Encyclopedia, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

At the time of the Nazi massacres in and around Odessa, Simon, Anna and their six children were safe in Canada. None of their grandchildren had yet been born.

The first son of Anna and Simon, John, became a practising psychiatrist and a University of Manitoba medical faculty professor. He served as a psychiatrist during World War II in India and Burma and was mentioned in dispatches for gallantry. During the war he met Renee Horowitz in England and married her. After the war, he developed a psychiatric unit at St. Boniface, the first psychiatric unit in a general hospital in Winnipeg. Previously, psychiatric patients had to go to Selkirk Mental Hospital, located outside of the city. He died in January 2005. An auditorium is dedicated in his name in the psychiatry building at St. Boniface Hospital.¹⁵

John and Renee had three children - Arthur born April 1948, Dyane born September 1950 and Roger born November 1957. Arthur became a kidney transplant surgeon and researcher. He is a professor of transplant surgery at the Medical School, University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He was rated one of the best doctors in America in 2013.¹⁶

Arthur married Patty Joane; they had two children - Saari born November 1980 and Aaron born May 1982.

Saari has three post graduate degrees - two masters, one in counselling psychology and a second in clinical psychology, and a doctorate in clinical psychology. She has been working as a forensic psychologist at the Department of Corrections in two states, first in Wisconsin and now in Minnesota. Saari is married to Scott McCornack; she has a girl Maisie born April

¹⁵ Winnipeg Free Press, Obituaries, Feb 02, 2005
http://passages.winnipegfreepress.com/passage-details/id-92699/John_Matas

¹⁶ <http://www.surgery.umn.edu/bio/surgery/arthur-matas>

2014 and a boy Bracken born November 2015.

Aaron is a sports anchor and news reporter at an NBC affiliate TV station in Denver, Colorado, 9NEWS.¹⁷ Earlier he had worked as a sports reporter in Champaign, Illinois and La Crosse Wisconsin. His reporting has won awards in all three states. He is married to Kelsey; they have two daughters, Winter born in October 2011 and Aspen born in September 2014.

Dyane was the Redevelopment Agency Director for the City of Fremont, California and a founding member of the Board of Directors for East Palo Alto Youth Court.¹⁸ She is currently an artist working in a variety of media and a community mediator. Dyane married Peter Davies. Their daughter Morgan was born September 1989; their son Oliver was born October 1991.

Morgan is studying for a Master's degree, Counselling Psychology with a focus in Marriage and Family Therapy/Counselling at the University of San Francisco.¹⁹ She has had a variety of jobs working with children including as a kindergarten teacher assistant in a Hebrew school, teaching students about Judaism through artwork, music and stories.

Oliver graduated Cum Laude with Highest Distinction in Joint Mathematics/Economics, at the University of California San Diego. He has been a senior research assistant at the Federal Reserve Board in Washington DC. He is currently studying economics in a PhD program in

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<http://www.9news.com/about-us/team-bios/aaron-matas/32693990>

18 <http://epayouthcourt.org/board.html>

19 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/morgan-davies-13763248>

UCLA - the University of California, Los Angeles.²⁰

Roger has worked in Winnipeg as a news reporter for CJOB, a press secretary in the Manitoba provincial government, a manager of strategic marketing with the Manitoba Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism and a senior communications consultant at The City of Calgary. He now runs a public relations firm in Calgary with his wife Irene White, called Matas & Associates.²¹

Edna was an Associate of The Royal Conservatory of Music. She earned a teacher's diploma - the highest academic standing awarded by The Royal Conservatory. She had a career as a piano teacher. Edna married Jack Snider. She moved to Ottawa and then Toronto with him. They had three children - Norman, born November 1945, Leslie, born May 1949 and Alvin born November 1954.

Norman has been a columnist for The Globe and Mail, Toronto Life, Saturday Night, Maclean's, and Rolling Stone. His films include *Dead Ringers* for which he won a Genie, with David Cronenberg and *Casino Jack*, starring Kevin Spacey. Books he has written include the true crime book *Smokescreen*, a work of political journalism, *The Changing of the Guard*, and *How To Make Love To A Movie Star: Writing For Film*.²² He was shortlisted for Exile magazine's short fiction award.

Norman married FM (France Mary) Morrison. They had a boy James born October 1981.

²⁰ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/oliver-davies-12620179>

²¹ <http://www.mataspr.com/who-we-are>

James is a conservation scientist. He has worked for the World Wildlife Fund Canada since 2007 as a conservation planning expert. He provides landscape analysis and mapping support for the Fund's freshwater, Arctic and climate programs.²³ James married Jessica Ward. They have a daughter Keira born October 2015.

Leslie has been teaching cello in Quebec for over thirty years. He has played cello with the Quebec symphony orchestra and chamber ensembles and has made a wide variety of recordings. In the late sixties and early seventies he performed and recorded in the rock band Lighthouse.²⁴

Leslie married Jacinthe Lemieux. Their daughter Marie-Justine was born April 1976. Their daughter Léah was born May 1983.

Marie-Justine Snider is the curator of the art collections of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec. She is an honorary member of the Board of Directors of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and the Board of Directors of the Montreal Biennale. Earlier she had been curator of Hydro-Québec's art collection.²⁵

Marie Justine has two children with François Méthé. They have a boy Léo born March 2006 and a girl Clara born April 2009.

Léah has been a consultant for private art collections. She has done research work on

²³ http://www.wwf.ca/about_us/experts/james_snider.cfm

<http://conservatoire.gouv.qc.ca.otdev.ca/la-formation/musique/professeurs-et-disciplines/article/leslie-snider>

²⁵ <http://www.gallery.ca/sobey/en/21.htm>

theatre, movies, design, media and art for a variety of employers²⁶. Léah has two children with Tristan Cinq-Mars. There is a girl Éva born May 2010 and a boy Elias born March 2013.

Alvin is an associate professor of English literature at the University of Iowa. He has written a book titled *Origin and Authority in Seventeenth-Century England: Bacon, Milton, Butler* and many articles in his field.²⁷

Alvin married Jacqueline Krivel. They have twin daughters Julia and Susannah born May 1986.

Julia attended Syracuse University and did graduate work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, to which she returned to complete a PhD in Education. Before that she worked for eight years as a teacher in the Chicago Public School system.

Susannah went to the University of Rochester and then the University of Southern California, where she completed a graduate degree in journalism. She has worked as a reporter and is now the personal finance editor at US News and World Report.²⁸

Harry married Esther Steiman. They had three sons, David, born August 1943, Manny born July 1945 and Robert born June 1947.

Harry had a career as a general practitioner medical doctor, offering a complete range of medical services. He worked, after graduation from medical school, in Morris, Manitoba, then, during World War II, in Fort McMurray, Alberta, and, after, in Winnipeg, until his

²⁶ <http://ca.linkedin.com/in/leahsnider>

²⁷ <https://english.uiowa.edu/people/alvin-snider>

²⁸ <http://www.usnews.com/topics/author/susannah-snider>

retirement. He died August 1998.

David is an international human rights, immigration and refugee lawyer. He has produced eleven books on human rights subjects, attempting to elaborate on lessons he felt could be learned from the Holocaust. He has been active in a number of human rights causes and non-governmental organizations, including B'nai Brith Canada. In 2008, he was awarded the Order of Canada.²⁹

Manny began medical school at the same young age as his father, 19, and, when he graduated, became the youngest psychiatrist in Canada. He had a career as a practising psychiatrist in Winnipeg and has served on the Board of the Canadian Psychiatric Association. In retirement, he has become an accomplished portrait artist.³⁰

Manny married Maggie Dwyer. They have two children, Anna born October 1975 and Sylvia born March 1977.

Anna represents survivors of sexual violence, as well as physicians with various practice-related legal matters, for the law firm Lerner in Toronto.³¹ She had previously worked for the law firm McCarthy Tétrault, in Toronto, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (Arusha, Tanzania) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Anna married David McCleary. They have two children, Esther Mae, born June 2012 and

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[http://www.nationalmagazine.ca/Blog/July-2015-\(1\)/David-Matas-Portrait-of-a-human-rights-advocate.aspx](http://www.nationalmagazine.ca/Blog/July-2015-(1)/David-Matas-Portrait-of-a-human-rights-advocate.aspx)

³⁰ <http://fineartamerica.com/profiles/manuel-matas.html>

³¹ http://www.lerners.ca/insurance-defence/anna-matas/?download_pdf

Asher, born October 2014.

Sylvia an interdisciplinary artist working in Winnipeg.³² She received a Masters of Fine Arts from the Chelsea College of Art and Design in London, England. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Her partner is Mike Brown.

Robert worked as a journalist first for the Winnipeg Tribune, then for the Globe and Mail, initially in Toronto, but mostly in Vancouver. He covered the Robert Pickton trial and the Air India disaster. He currently volunteers as a member of the Vancouver City Planning Commission and does freelance writing.³³

Robert married Alicia Ludwig. They have two sons, Jared, born November 1975 and Max, born June 1978.

Jared works is the director of educational technology at Boston's Jewish Community Day School. He has doctorate in education from Northeastern University. His dissertation topic was "The impact of digital education on teaching and learning".³⁴

Jared married Cheryl Weiner. They have twins, a boy Ethan and a girl Gabi, born August 2007.

Max is a graduate of the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto Law School. He practices tax law for the Department of Justice Government of Canada in

³² <http://www.sylviamatas.com/cv.htm>

³³ <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/author/rmatas/>

³⁴ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jared-matas-edd-49a4082a>

Vancouver.³⁵

Max married Danya Rogen. They have two boys, Joseph born October 2010 and Gideon born April 2013.

Simon and Anna's daughter Mary caught rheumatic fever as a child. She survived the attack, but was an invalid the rest of her life. She married Oscar Marantz. She died during open heart surgery at the Mayo Clinic in September 1960.

Simon and Anna's son Max volunteered for the Canadian Army during World War II. After the War, he worked in the family store with his parents until the store closed. After that he started his own wholesale meat distribution business. He was married to Gertie Smith. He died in August 1981.

Roy was a practising lawyer in the law firm Cantor Matas Simkin, chair of the Winnipeg School Board, chair of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees and President of the Liberal Party of Manitoba. He was a prominent and active member of the Jewish community; there is a chair in biomedical engineering at Technion University in Israel named after him. From 1967, he was a judge of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench and, from 1973 a judge of the Manitoba Court of Appeal. He was also President of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet; there is a studio named for him at its school. He died in November 1986 at the age of 66.³⁶

Roy was married to Ruth Churchill. They had three children, Susan, born April 1947, Carol born November 1949, John born April 1953.

³⁵ <http://www.goc411.ca/en/92591/Max-Matas>

³⁶ http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/people/matas_rj.shtml

Susan was first a special education teacher and then a literacy coach and teacher in north Toronto. As a special education teacher, she worked mainly with learning disabled students. As a literacy coach and teacher, she coached teachers and worked as a Reading Recovery teacher, to help young children to read.

Susan married Robert Dunn. They had two boys Michael born February 1978 and Mark born June 1981.

Michael is a graduate from the University of Western Ontario, where he won the gold medal, and from the University of Toronto Law School. He worked at the law firm McCarthy Tétrault as a litigation lawyer. He is currently counsel in the Constitutional Law Branch of the Government of Ontario.³⁷

Michael is married to Jessica Amey. They have three children Judah born May 2008, Ezra born October 2009 and Elijah born August 2011.

Mark is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario and Osgoode Hall Law School at York University. He is a partner in the litigation group at the law firm Goodmans in Toronto. He also is engaged actively in pro bono legal work through Law Help Ontario.³⁸

Mark is married to Theo Goldstein. They also have three children Maya born January 2011, Alyssa born January 2013 and Ethan born March 2016.

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https://www.eiseverywhere.com/file_uploads/9df304ae79f2d097cc18e34dc0f59ac7_ALOC_2012.doc

³⁸ http://www.goodmans.ca/People/Mark_Dunn

Carol is a children's author whose works have won over 100 awards and honours, been translated into 15 languages, including Russian, and sold over a million copies. She has written over 45 books for children, including eleven about the Holocaust. The first of these eleven, *Daniel's Story*, done for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, was one of the first books ever for children about the Holocaust. Another of her books, *Sworn Enemies*, recounts in fictionalized form the forced conscription of Jews into the Russian military.

Carol married Per Brask. They have two children, Rebecca born September 1977 and Sam born August 1981.

Rebecca is the Development Manager at Manitoba Theatre for Young People. Before that, she was the Community Partnerships and Volunteer Engagement Officer for the Children's Hospital Foundation of Manitoba People. She previously was the Rady Jewish Community Centre Cultural Arts Communications Manager and Program.³⁹ Rebecca has two children, Zevi born June 2004 and Naomi born July 26th.

Sam is a technologist in the City of Winnipeg's Water and Waste Department. He is the contract administrator for the City's contract to supply, install and maintain equipment and provide data for a rainfall monitoring network.⁴⁰

Sam married Bonnie Brunnen. They have two children, Kai born June 2012, and Meira born March 2016.

John, in his younger years, was a hockey player, representing Manitoba in the Canada

³⁹ <https://ca.linkedin.com/in/rebecca-brask-9080a5116>

Winter Games and playing pro in Germany and France.⁴¹ John met Stephanie Greene in a bookstore in Grenoble, France, while playing hockey for the Grenoble Tigers, and they were married in Amherst, Mass. in 1975. They have taught in England, New Mexico, and Northern Saskatchewan. They were the first teachers to job-share in Manitoba and currently still teach for the Pembina Trails School Division.⁴² They have two sons, Jesse, born [May](#) 1982, and Eli, born [January](#) 1986.

Jesse composes lyrics and music and plays with a trio, The Crooked Brothers, a band with a blues based sound. The Crooked Brothers have recorded and performed both across Canada and internationally.⁴³

Eli is a graduate of Winnipeg's Mid-Ocean School of Media Arts. He has been composing music and lyrics and playing with various bands since he was a teenager. His current band is The Heights which has a rock, funk, pop and soul sound.⁴⁴

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The Talmud says: "Whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world."⁴⁵ It also says: "Whoever destroys a soul, it is considered as if he destroyed an entire world." The Holocaust did not just kill millions of people. It destroyed millions of worlds.

The Holocaust was not only a crime of the past. It was a crime against the present and the

⁴¹ <http://www.hockeyarchives.info/clubs/grenoble3.htm>

⁴² <http://ca.ratemyteachers.com/john-matas/1317836-t>

⁴³ <http://www.nelsonstar.com/entertainment/137688838.html>

⁴⁴ <http://www.theheightswinnipeg.com/#!epk/d9i8y>

⁴⁵ Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5; Yerushalmi Talmud 4:9, Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 37a.

future. The novelist William Faulkner wrote: "The past is never dead. It's not even past."

The descendants of Anna and Simon are the other side of the looking glass, a microcosm not only of those who survived the Holocaust, but also of those who would have survived, but for the Holocaust. The descendants of those murdered in the Holocaust live in a parallel universe; we are their anti-matter.

What did we lose from the Holocaust? To answer that question, we do not need to scour the history books or wrack our imaginations. Look around you. Look at us.



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David Matas is the first grandchild of Anna and Simon. An earlier version of this text was delivered as remarks to a family reunion dinner July 29th in Winnipeg where the picture was taken.