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In the 1880s while Palestine was a run down corner of the Ottoman Empire, Jews scattered in the Diaspora still treasured and revered the ancient place names. Mendele Mocher Sforim tells of a traveler who arrived in the mythical village of Tunyadevka with a date. The town came running to look at it. A Bible was brought to prove that the very same little fruit grew in the Holy Land. The harder the Tunyadevkans stared at it, the more clearly they saw before their eyes the River Jordan, the Cave of the Patriarchs, the Tomb of Mother Rachel, the Wailing Wall. They bathed in the hot springs of Tiberias, climbed the Mount of Olives, ate dates and carobs, and stuffed their pockets with holy soil to bring back to Tuneyadevka.

In those years a group of young Jews in London met regularly to dine together and discuss Jewish topics. They were looking for fresh interpretations of Judaism, and they called themselves "The Wanderers," perhaps because they wandered in and out of each other's houses, and their discussions often wandered from the set topic. The group included Colonel A. E. Goldsmid, an officer in the British Army, the Reverend Simeon Singer, who in 1890 translated the Siddur in an edition that remained standard for decades, and the writer Israel Zangwill. Herbert Bentwich and his brother-in-law, Solomon J. Solomon, were enthusiastic members.

Claude Goldsmid Montefiore, later the founding president of The Liberal Jewish Synagogue was then one of the Wanderers. Montefiore, having taken a first in Greats at Balliol, had gone on to study at the Berlin *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*. There he met Solomon Schechter, and, finding that Schechter was, in himself, an everflowing source of Jewish learning, persuaded him to come to England as his private, postgraduate tutor. Schechter, attracted by the English tradition of tolerance and liberty and by the extensive collections of Hebrew manuscripts and early printed Hebrew books at the British Museum accepted Montefiore's offer. When Schechter arrived in England in 1882, Montefiore introduced him to the Wanderers.

For me, as a child, Solomon Schechter was like Michelangelo's prophets, -- a picture on the wall of my father's study. Schechter had been president of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America when my father entered there as a student. Though he died in 1915, he remained, twenty years later, a lively presence at the Seminary -- at once the paradigm of scholarly and religious values, and the subject of irreverent stories. It was told that on one occasion he ordered three eggs, saying, "Two for me and one for my beard." Schechter's concept of catholic Judaism, and his vision of the Seminary's role in American Jewish life,

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shaped my father's thinking and' in large measure, his career.

Herbert and Susannah Bentwich met Schechter soon after he came to London. He was then in his middle thirties, --an impressive physical presence -- tall, with a flaming red beard, and sparkling blue eyes. He had an immediacy of religious experience that came from his childhood in a Rumanian village. (My father used to quote his saying : "You cannot love God with your father's heart."). He had mastered the Jewish sources -- the Bible, the Talmud, and rabbinic literature; his studies in Vienna and in Berlin made him familiar with German scientific scholarship; and beyond his scholarship he had a unique grasp of the harmony between Jewish law and inward religion. He dominated the Wanderers' discussions by the power of his intellect and learning, the depth of his convictions, and the force of his personality.

During the twenty years that Schechter lived in England (1882-1902), he was a close friend of Herbert and Susannah, and their religious guide. They relied on his judgment in all religious and ethical matters. They considered his association with them to be in itself evidence and commendation of their piety. He was a frequent and honored guest in their home. Susannah thought him "the personification of Truth." She washed out his bedroom herself, when the servants complained about his disorder. The children, especially Norman, worshipped him. He seemed the ideal of inspired scholar. Norman wrote "The fastidious were put off by his wildness. He would tramp the room like a caged lion, and roar at his own sallies. His wide mouth would almost eat you; and on the other hand his blue eyes had such a childlike expression, his hand and voice such a warmth, that every child loved him, and their acme of happiness was to run errands for him. "

In England Schechter quickly rose to prominence as a rabbinic scholar and spokesman for Jewish traditionalism. In 1890 he was appointed lecturer in talmudics, and in 1892 Reader in Rabbinitics at Cambridge University. In 1894 Herbert reported to Susannah about a visit to Cambridge, which included attending a service in King's Chapel.

"The service we listened to there, sung by the finest of College choirs, made it a real Holiday, for the major portion of it was the Hallel, which I enjoyed even in its English dress...which made me feel quite at home and proud of our having given these beautiful psalms to all the world. We were seared behind the choir in a "stall", dear old Schechter being received everywhere with the honours which are due to him, notwithstanding the russet colour of his once black coat, and the negligé appearance of his hair, his hat, his scarf, his everything which cannot conceal the true nobility of the man beneath these outer coverings."

In 1896 two Christian visitors visited Schechter in Cambridge to show him some Hebrew fragments they had bought in Cairo. Schechter saw that the fragments were from the Hebrew

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original of the book of Ben Sira, which had been lost and was known only in its Greek translation. Inspired by this discovery, he arranged to travel to Cairo to inspect the whole contents of the Cairo Genizah, from which such tantalizing fragments were drifting into European possession.

Since Jewish law forbids destruction of books and ritual objects containing the name of God, communities have historically set aside genizahs, (hidden storage places) to store such books and objects when they become unfit for regular use. Most frequently the manuscripts, books, etc. succumb to damp and mildew. In Egypt's dry climate they survived. The Cairo Genizah was located in the attic of the Ezra synagogue, whose worshippers had preserved ancient Palestinian customs, and in which Maimonides had taught. Schechter worked in the Genizah for months in the heat and dust, and retrieved over one hundred thousand manuscript pages and fragments which he took to England. There they were presented to Cambridge University by Schechter and Charles Taylor, the master of St John's College, who had made Schechter's trip possible. The Genizah manuscripts included literary and historical documents that gave scholars new understandings of Jewish and Mediterranean history. The discovery made Schechter famous.

On his way back from Egypt Schechter stopped to visit his twin brother Jacob who had migrated from Rumania to Palestine in the same year as Solomon moved from Berlin to England, and had settled as a colonist in the village of Zikhron Ya'akov. From there, Schechter wrote to Bentwich (Feb 22 1897) :

"only a Philistine of the worst sort will escape the feeling that he is treading on Holy Ground. Every passage in the Bible becomes here an intensive expression. I can only tell you again and again to come here and you will take home so many sacred Erinnerungen to refresh you for all your life. As long as the country is under Turkish Government there is little hope for the colonists that they will ever be prosperous or independent;...the predominant French influence in the Colonies is unfortunate. All the Jews here (i.e. the Administration) are French Jews from America, Algeria, and Russia. Their education is a Paris education which hardly fits a man for the administration of poor simple peasants who came to the country with the most lofty ideals. What we want here are English men and women. They alone with their missionary spirit and sincerity, could educate a generation. One learns to admire and love England after one has seen what other nations are."

Schechter's letters confirmed Bentwich's feelings about England and about the Land. In fact, when he received them he had come under the influence of Theodor Herzl, and had moved from unfocused sentiment to active Zionism.

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For me, as a child, where Schechter was a legend “Herzl” was an abstract noun equivalent to “Zionism.” The profile drawing of Herzl in the corridor of our apartment depicted a significant symbol, unimaginable as a person. By contrast, Herbert and Susannah Bentwich knew Theodor Herzl as an eloquent speaker, a charismatic leader, a courteous guest. -- a dazzling figure, not yet cast in bronze. Norman wrote “[Herzl] was an occasional visitor in our home, and his magnificent presence, royal dignity and beautiful voice made him a hero for us children.”

Now, reading Herzl’s diaries, I meet a politician who carefully calculated the effects of his words and actions, and I find a visionary who opened up new, redeeming possibilities for the Jews. I can see Herbert Bentwich’s Zionism, his participation in the Zionist Congresses, and the “Maccabean” pilgrimage to Palestine that he led as parts of an effort to establish a new Jewish reality. Norman Bentwich’s career, and the emigration of eight of the eleven Bentwich children to the Land of Israel, however eccentric among English Jews of their generation, looks like the fulfillment of a dream.

When Theodor Herzl went to England, in 1895, he was the Paris correspondent for Vienna’s *Neue Freie Presse*, an influential liberal newspaper. He was well known as a Viennese man of letters, interested in social questions. Born in Budapest into a family that maintained the forms of Liberal Judaism in the spirit of the German-Jewish “Enlightenment,” Herzl was a freethinker who set up a Christmas tree for his children. When a friend made some comment, he said they could call it a Hanukah bush. When Herzl arrived in Paris he thought the “Jewish problem” should be solved by the mass conversion of Jewish youth and their affiliation with the socialist movement.

The biased trial and verdict of the Dreyfus case, together with the fury of the Parisian mob crying “Death to the Jews!” as they watched Dreyfus being stripped of his military status, changed Herzl’s thinking. He became obsessed by the conviction that the Jews had to leave Europe and settle in a land of their own. He spent months jotting down proposals for action as they occurred to him. One friend to whom he told his ideas counseled him to see a psychiatrist. Max Nordau, a Viennese physician and writer who had settled in Paris, told him, “If you are crazy, then so am I!” He wrote a novel to give his ideas human shape, and emotional force. Then the novel became a script for his own life.

Gradually Herzl assembled his jottings in a pamphlet that was eventually published

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in December 1896 as *Der Judenstaat*. He looked for organized support among the leaders of French Jews; but they were very cool. Then Nordau suggested that he might find a more encouraging response in London, and recommended the Maccabean club, which Herzl noted in his diary as “the ideal instrument for my needs: artists, writers, Jewish Intellectuals of all kinds compose its membership.”

On November 21, 1895, in line with Nordau’s advice, Herzl drove “in the fog through endless streets” to the home of Israel Zangwill (a writer and a friend of Nordau). Herzl’s diary noted: “the conversation was in French, his command of which is inadequate. I don’t even know if he understands me. Still we agree on major point.... He gives me the names of several suitable men,” (including, “the painter Solomon” and Colonel Goldsmid).

The next day Herzl met with Chief Rabbi Adler who counseled him against the Maccabeans, saying they were young people without influence. At dinner at the Chief Rabbi’s house on the following evening Herzl observed, “Everything was British, with old Jewish touches breaking through. Here I had a strong feeling that Jewish ways need not be ludicrous, as they are among us in Austria, where the heart has gone out of our practices. And so I put on my top hat after the meal, like the others, and listened to the Rabbi’s after dinner blessing.”

On November 24 Herzl lunched at the home of Sir Samuel Montagu. M. P., on “Kosher food, served by three liveried footmen.” He spent the evening with the Maccabeans and noted, “Skimpy dinner, but good reception.” After dinner he spoke, partly in German (Reverend Singer took notes and gave an English resume) and partly in French. His speech was well received and he was unanimously elected an honorary member.

Then Herzl traveled to Cardiff to meet Colonel Albert Edward Goldsmid. Goldsmid had been born in India, the son of baptized Jews, and was brought up as a Christian. He found out about his Jewish heritage as a young man, and decided, while serving as a lieutenant in the British Army, to go over to Judaism. His family was indignant, but his future wife, also a Christian of Jewish descent, agreed with him. They eloped and had a civil marriage in Scotland. Then she had to become a Jewess and they were married in a synagogue. Goldsmid told Herzl, “I am an orthodox Jew. This has not done me any harm in England. My children Rahel and Carmel have had a strict religious upbringing and learned Hebrew at an early age.”

In 1890 Goldsmid established in England a branch of Chovevei Zion (the Lovers of Zion), setting up “Tents” (corresponding to the tribes of Israel) in the quarters of London and in other English towns and cities. Each Tent was governed by a Commander, who received a

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commission from the Chief, like that of an army officer. The association spread rapidly, and in May of 1891 an enthusiastic campaign culminated in the largest Jewish assembly held in England. At that meeting, presided over by Samuel Montagu, M. P., the members of the Chovevei Zion presented a petition to Lord Rothschild, who was to deliver it to Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister. It was hoped that the Prime Minister would make official representations to the Russian Czar to let the Jews go from his empire, and to the Sultan to let Jews enter Palestine. The petition, drawn up by the Reverend Singer in Hebrew and in English, said: "The outcast Jews desire to return to the Holy Land. They love the very stones and favour the dust thereof; and they would deem themselves blessed indeed if they were permitted to till the sacred soil." (Herbert Bentwich was stirred by the meeting and in later years referred to it as the beginning of Zionism in England.)

Herzl was fascinated by Goldsmid's story. He read his plan to Goldsmid in German; and though Goldsmid knew little German, he understood the essential points and endorsed them, saying, "That is the idea of my life." He also told Herzl that the pious Christians of England would help the Jews to return to Palestine, since they expected the coming of the Messiah after the Jews had returned home. (It is interesting, in this connection that Orde Wingate, a British officer who built the Hagana forces that made the State of Israel possible, was a devout Christian who always kept a copy of the Bible with him.)

Back in London Theodor Herzl met with Simeon Singer, Asher Myers, editor of the Jewish Chronicle and S. J. Solomon, who impressed him as a person with energy and organizational ability. The Reverend Singer said that before proceeding to action they should consult prominent Jews, such as Lord Rothschild and Montefiore. Herzl answered, "You can't make me yield to majorities. This is the cause of poor Jews, not of the rich ones." Myers asked for a summary statement of Herzl's ideas to publish in the Chronicle. Herzl was disappointed that no Center for discussion of his plan would be set up; but Solomon consoled him, saying that the Study Commission he desired would be created within the Maccabean Club, and that "his brother in law Bentwich was filled with enthusiasm, and the club would devote several Sundays in succession to a consideration of my pamphlet." In the spring of 1896 the Maccabeans discussed Herzl's ideas.

Some months later, Herzl, who in the intervening time had had serious conversations with major political figures in Germany and Turkey, returned to England, where he hoped to find

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substantial financial and popular backing. On the evening of Sunday, July 6, 1896 he spoke at a Maccabean dinner. The speech was a great success, (though he was using an English translation in which he had “jotted down the pronunciation of the words between the lines.”) During the following week he met with Samuel Montagu in the House of Commons, and commented in his diary, “I began to understand why English Jews should cling to a country in which they can enter this house as masters.” He conferred with Goldsmid and Montagu explaining his hopes for a political arrangement with Bismarck and the Sultan. They listened with interest, and admiration, but advised him against a proposed mass meeting in the East End (Montagu’s district).

Nonetheless, on the evening of Sunday July 13, 1896, Herzl spoke at the Workingmen’s Club in the East End. The clubhouse was full. People crowded into every corner. Herzl spoke from the stage, extemporaneously, from jotted notes, for an hour in frightful heat. He evoked wild enthusiasm. His speech was followed by others. Ish Kishor, speaking in Yiddish, compared him to Moses and Columbus. Chief Rabbi Gaster, the chairman, made a fiery speech. Herzl, sitting on the stage, listening to them, “saw and heard my legend being born.” Days later he reflected, “I believe that even now [the masses] no longer have a clear idea of me. A light fog is beginning to rise around me and it may perhaps become the cloud in which I shall walk.”

Herzl’s words spurred Herbert Bentwich to action. During the summer, while Susannah and the children spent the holidays on a Norfolk farm, Herbert stayed in London working and arguing for a Great Pilgrimage. His enthusiasm bowled over friends who were doubtful so that they agreed, he wrote “if only for the sake of a quiet life.” When he went up to Norfolk for long weekends with the family, he spent his time there hatching fresh plans. He wrote a letter to the Jewish Chronicle, saying that “a pilgrimage to the holy land, mooted at the recent discussion of the Maccabean, would be a healthy preparation” for a Conference on Palestine that the Chronicle had proposed in an editorial note.

Throughout the fall he worked out plans for the pilgrimage and on December 14 (an auspicious day being the anniversary of his wedding), he published a letter in the Jewish Chronicle informing “the many persons who have expressed a vague desire or intention to join the Maccabean pilgrimage to Palestine that arrangements have definitely been made for the tour which will extend from April 6 to May 10 (1897).”

A few weeks later, promoting the pilgrimage in a speech to the Maccabeans, he said, “We are not going for any specifically religious, much less for any political purpose, nor are we

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going as prospectors or philanthropists. And yet not as mere curiosity hunters or sightseers.... [We go] as Western Jews evidencing only by our participation in the Pilgrimage the great truth of a feeling of identity and brotherhood between our people wherever they may be spread, and of interest in our Land however far we may be removed from it.”

Before Bentwich left, Herzl wrote him a private letter, assuring him that “the Jews in Palestine know already that you are coming, and will give every possible assistance they can in smoothing your way.” He asked Bentwich to take particular care for the health of the party, saying, “Should some get ill, it would be said that Palestine has an unhealthy climate, which is not the fact. Here, for instance, my whole house is down with influenza; yet no one dreams of imputing it to the climate. If such a thing were to happen on your expedition, the cry would be: “the Land is no good.”

On Tuesday, April 6, 1897, twenty pilgrims with Herbert Bentwich at their head set out to survey Palestine. They went with a sense of exaltation, each wearing a medallion, designed by S.J. Solomon, that combined the motifs of the Menorah and the Shield of David.

The group included Israel Zangwill, already famous for his book *Children of the Ghetto*, Dr Frankel, a leader of the Jewish community in Copenhagen, and three women, Mrs Frank and Mrs Muhr from the United States, and Miss Douglas of Ilkley. All were eager to see with their own eyes places mentioned in biblical texts; all took with them English standards and expectations of social order.

Bentwich had laid out a route of travel. Through Thomas Cook & Son, he had made arrangements for shelter along the way, for ample supplies of food, for a crew of servants, and for horses and mules to accompany the pilgrims as they traveled through the country. But neither he nor any of his companions (with the possible exception of Miss Douglas, the single expert traveler) knew what conditions they would encounter, or what energies they would need to draw on.

Once across the Channel, the pilgrims traveled by train across France. In Paris between trains, Bentwich and Zangwill met with Chief Rabbi Zadoc, and received his blessing for the pilgrimage. On board ship crossing the Mediterranean, Bentwich insisted that they keep up the pilgrim spirit with a full service of prayers each day. Zangwill reflected, unhappily, “The pleasure ship was a synagogue.” In Alexandria, the pilgrims found that the Jewish community had arranged for a banquet in their honor at the home of Baron de Menasce. It was a luxurious

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and exotic occasion; a feast that seemed like a scene from the Arabian Nights. One of the Baron's sons was inspired to join them as a pilgrim. Bentwich was thrilled. He felt it enhanced the importance of the mission.

At last, on the morning of Friday, April 16, the eve of Passover, the pilgrims came to Jaffa. They saw a gray line of rocks change gradually into terraces of red sloping roofs brooded over by a palm tree. The ship lay to outside the ancient harbor. The sea still rolled and roared between the ship and the shores. Heavy boats rowed by Arabs and Syrians, in red fez and girdle, came out and clamored for the passengers.

Zangwill's Jewish hero Aaron, was "thrown unceremoniously over the ship's side at a favorable moment when the boat leapt up to meet him; he fell into it soused with spray, but glowing at heart. As his boat pitched and tossed along, a delicious smell of orange-blossom wafted from the orange groves and seemed to the pilgrim a symbol of the marriage betwixt him and Zion. The land of his fathers, -- there it lay at last, and in a transport of happiness the wanderer had, for the first time in his life, a sense of the restful dignity of an ancestral home." (Dreamers of the Ghetto pp 451-452)

From Jaffa the Maccabeans traveled by carriage to Ramleh, (with some hours at the colony of Rishon-le-Zion by the way) . They proceeded from Ramleh to Jerusalem by train. At the Jerusalem station they were greeted by leaders of the Jewish community and by pupils of the school of the *Alliance Israelite*. After those ceremonies, they went to the Western Wall, where they recited the evening service, and then on to the hotel where they celebrated the Seder.

The next two days were crammed with activities and visits. The pilgrims attended religious services and were welcomed by the revered Rabbi Salant. They visited the Hebrew Library of Dr. Chazanowitch, the beginning of the national Library, then lodged in a house with a lovely garden. They discussed problems of colonisation with local leaders. They interviewed colonists and workmen. On Saturday evening Zangwill lectured in English on the history and customs of the Ghetto. The lecture was attended by the American consul, Dr Wallace, and the English Consul, Dr. Bliss. The group was warmly received by leaders like Eliezer Ben Yehuda, then editor of the Hebrew newspaper Ha-Zvi, who saw the pilgrimage as "a coming of the successors of Judas Maccabeus."

On Monday the party left Jerusalem. During the next four days they traveled from Jerusalem to Nablus and Samaria, thence to Jenin, and then through the Jezreel Valley past Mount Gilboa and Mount Tabor to Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. Each day they spent twelve

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hours of slow, jolting, travel to arrive at the pre-arranged nightly stopping places, which had been set at distances of about thirty-five miles. They traveled over stony paths, the remnants of roads built many centuries earlier by the Romans, and hardly repaired since. The caravan was led by the Dragoman who acted as guide and interpreter; it included cooks, waiters, ritual slaughterer, etc., as well as beasts of burden and livestock to supply fresh meat. The Englishmen rode on horses or mules; the women were carried in palanquins. As the hours passed, the riders grew jaded and the passengers in the palanquins were shaken to the breaking point. Tempers were frayed. Mrs Muhr's maid asked her, "Why do people travel that have money?"

There was little chance to stop and savor the views. Miss Douglas, the most patient of the women, recorded in her diary that she would always feel a sense of frustration about Sebastia because, having arrived at the hill of Samaria with its relics of the Palace of Ahab in the dark, she was rushed off the next morning without time to see anything. Zangwill wrote to the Hebrew paper of Jerusalem: "The hurried character of my visit to Jerusalem, and the fatigue of my after journey through pathless Palestine have left me with only a confusion of experiences and whirl of broken images and flying emotions." Even Herbert Bentwich was so stressed that he wrote to Susannah, "One thing alone comforts me, and that is, strangely enough, that you did not accompany me. For the work, of course, had to be done, and the exertion has been so constant that I am afraid you would have suffered from it."

On their return to England, when the members of the party addressed their leader at a testimonial for the benefit of his Tent of the Chovevei Zion, they mentioned their "sense of those possibilities of Palestine which under your auspices we have investigated, albeit more hurriedly than we could have wished."

With all the stress, the rush, the discomfort, and the complaints of the journey, Herbert Bentwich was enchanted by what he saw. He wrote: "The land surpasses all my dreams of its beauty and capacities; in ten days camping we have seen every variety of natural loveliness. The land is desolated of its inhabitants and it makes my heart ache sometimes to think that such a veritable Eden should be left to waste. The only real oases in the land are the Jewish Colonies, and these are the scenes of progress and happy content."

When he returned to England (according to Margery's memoir), "The impression of the pilgrimage on the home circle was deep and glorious. Every child reflected his flame; and my Father, always king at home, became hero as well....From the time that my Father fired our youthful imaginations with the idea of Palestine there was no tranquility in our minds. Not mild

contentment with a happy lot, getting the best of both worlds, was the ideal; but something more heroic, involving sacrifice of an easy life, but kindling ardour in the soul.”

Elated by the Maccabean pilgrimage, Herbert dreamed of moving the family to Palestine. He wrote to Susannah --possibly referring to some troubles of Norman's-- “All in the wars. eh? Well, he shall be out of that too, when we get to Palestine; and I live in hopes of seeing that glorious consummation.”

Susannah had other dreams. She answered:” Shall we be out of the wars when we get to Palestine, or shall we not rather be fighting another's battles, as well as our own...I rather think that this life, either here or in Palestine, must be a mixture of bitters and sweets, of hopes and disappointments.”

In the event, the Bentwiches built a country house on the coast of Kent.

On May 11, 1900 the family gathered for the laying of a foundation stone; it had a parchment in it saying: “The first stone of the marine villa to be known as Carmelcourt, Birchington was laid. on the 44th anniversary of his birthday by Herbert Bentwich, a Bachelor of Laws of London University, son of the late Marks Bentwich and Rosa his wife, formerly Rosa Levy of Bedford; and by Susannah Bentwich, his wife, daughter of Joseph Solomon and his wife Helena, and sister of Solomon J. Solomon, an Associate of the Royal Academy; in the presence of their five elder children, Lillian, Norman, Nita, Dorothy, and Margery and with the good wishes of their five children at home, Muriel, Naomi, Hebe, Thelma, and Carmel, this eleventh day of May C. E. , the twelfth day of Iyyar 5660 A. M. , and in the 64th year of the reign of Queen Victoria - LAUS DEO.”

Exactly a year later the house was consecrated. The extended family, including grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, together with the family's spiritual guides, Simeon Singer and Solomon Schechter, were brought to Birchington in a Pullman car. Prayers were said; speeches made. Susannah, who had spent weeks in a flurry of final touches, rejoiced in the thought of the family being together in “the loveliest country house.” On the inner wall of the hall of the house there was inscribed in Hebrew a verse from the Ethics of the Fathers: “Prepare yourself in the vestibule, so that you may enter into the chamber itself,” -suggesting, perhaps, that Carmelcourt in England should serve as preparation for living on the Carmel, in Palestine.

In the interim, Carmelcourt served as repository for those relics of the Pilgrimage that found no airing in London. The Harris-tweed cape, as on board ship, provided complete protection in Birchington. If the winds blew high, that only wrapped the folds closer on the

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gusty side. Herbert Bentwich, with his cape and pilgrim staff, walking ahead of a train of children who trailed behind him, remained for decades a legendary figure in Birchington; the children changed into grandchildren, but the main figure remained - bearded, lusty, doggedly ploughing his way against the wind.

Margery wrote of the hopes for Carmelcourt. "It was to give us all health, to be a gathering place for our friends, and the Bentwich manor." Some hopes were realized. Family letters refer to "Dr. Birchington" 's healing effects on body and spirit. There were lively house parties in the winter and spring holidays. Susannah's sister Lily had a house nearby and a few years later her brother, S. J. Solomon, ("Uncle Toddy") built a house and studio on the cliffs. Musicians and Zionists spent time at Carmelcourt and left refreshed. Hans Herzl, (Theodor Herzl's son) wrote in the Visitor's Book: "How splendid! a Jewish colony on English soil."

Nonetheless, the ideal of Bentwich settlement in Palestine remained; and in the course of years moved, step by step, towards realization.



The consecration of "Carmelcourt" May 11, 1901