

APPENDIX C

THE TRUST AND ITS TRUSTEES

The Richmond Road building was originally rented. On 28 December 1897, Mr. John Job Gardiner transferred the premises known as the Jews Synagogue to Joel Zacharias and Louis Crook for £500, and they mortgaged it the next day for £350 to Henry F. Galpin, solicitor, closely identified, like Joel Zacharias, with the Oxford Conservative Party. In June 1903, Galpin was repaid an initial £320 by 'Messrs Mocatta and Montefiore', and in February 1904, he formally transferred the whole mortgage to Laurie Magnus, Joel Zacharias, and Robert Sebag-Montefiore, then still an undergraduate; Baron Franks took over Joel Zacharias's share of the mortgage in November 1905, after Zacharias's death.

Up to this point, no trust had been created, but in January 1906, Louis Crook, the surviving owner of the freehold, made a false declaration that the 1897 conveyance had been to himself and Zacharias as joint tenants as Trustees for and on behalf of the members of the Congregation of the Jewish Synagogue in the City of Oxford, and now declared that he held the property as Trustee for and on behalf of the members of the said Congregation and undertook to hold and deal with it as the Committee or other proper representatives of the said Synagogue might from time to time direct.

In November 1926, at the suggestion of the Charity Commission, the mortgage was paid off, at least formally by Louis Crook, and Crook transferred the property to Laurie Magnus, A.L. Emanuel, H.D. Barnard and Michael Franklin as Trustees. In August 1936, since Magnus and Emanuel had died and Henry Barnard wished to retire from the Trust, Franklin appointed L.G. Montefiore, son of Claude Montefiore, Isaiah Berlin and Neville Laski as additional Trustees. Of

this new body of Trustees, Michael Franklin and Isaiah Berlin survived until the extended site of the new building made new arrangements necessary.

On these facts, Neville Laski in 1945, at a time when he was trying to curb undergraduate independence, told the President of the University Jewish Society that the synagogue was established by the Oxford Jewish townspeople for the Jews of Oxford and that the undergraduates had no position in it other than their membership during residence on payment of a nominal sum by way of subscription.

It is presumptuous of me to question the view of someone who afterwards held high judicial office, but I do wonder whether he could have come to this conclusion if he had known that in October 1905, just three months before Louis Crook made his declaration of Trust, what was described as a joint meeting of the whole Oxford Hebrew Congregation appointed Baron Franks and an undergraduate, A.M. Green, as co-Treasurers and Secretaries, one to have control in vacation, the other in term, and that the minutes of the Congregation had recognized the existence of a University Section since about 1898.

The arrangements arrived at in 1974 are sufficiently described in the main text, with the addition that, for reasons always mysterious to me, the Charity Commission eventually preferred to make the new Company Trustee rather than owner of the building. The original members of the Company were: Lord Segal (Chairman), Mr. G. Silver and Dr. D.M. Lewis (appointed by the Congregation); Rabbi C.K. Harris, Mr. H. Fox and Mr. M.D. Paisner (appointed by the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation); Rabbi J.D. Rayner, Dr. D. Patterson and Dr. I.P. Grant (appointed by the Retiring Trustees). In autumn 1991, the members are: Dr. I.P. Grant (Chairman), Mr. G. Baron Cohen, Mr. W. Faust, Prof. D.M. Lewis, Dr. D. Patterson, Mr. M.D. Paisner, Mr. H.H. Posner and Rev. M. Weisman; there is one vacancy.