

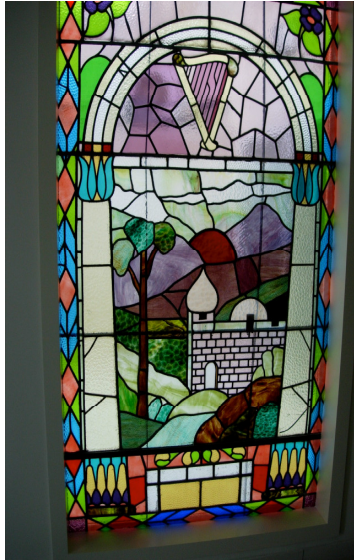
## SHUL WINDOWS FROM ENGLAND COME TO ISRAEL VIA CANADA

A series of four stained glass windows, originally from a now-defunct synagogue in the city of Preston, northwest of Manchester England, are now in Israel. Three of the panels depict traditional Jewish symbols as the menorah, Torah scroll, Star of David and eternal light. The fourth window dating from 1910-1920 depicts Rachel's Tomb in Bet Lechem, a symbol that became popular during the British Mandate over Palestine. The white domed building appeared on both stamps and coins, issued by the British authorities, and it seems likely that the window was an expression of the Zionism of Preston's Jews.

Preston, a city of close to 200,000 inhabitants nowadays, had a Jewish population of 89 in 1905. The synagogue, which followed the Ashkenazi Orthodox rituals, was founded in 1882 and was the only Jewish congregation in Preston. The Jewish population peaked in 1946 at 300 and then began to rapidly decrease in numbers. The synagogue building was finally sold in 1980 to a developer who, in turn,

sold it to a Pakistani immigrant association, which then converted the structure into a mosque. The Muslims then removed the stained glass windows and sold them to a Canadian dealer. Following up on a newspaper article about the windows, the Korzen family of Toronto purchased them from the dealer, again returning them to Jewish ownership.

The windows' journey to Israel began after the Korzens purchased an apartment in Efrat and noticed that the view from their apartment replicated the scene in the window panel. The window is now installed in their apartment and faces Kever Rachel. The road between Bet Lechem and Efrat, as described in the Torah and as depicted in the window, can easily be seen from the apartment, but unfortunately Kever Rachel itself no longer is the beautiful structure it once was, due to fortifications that have been built around it over the last years.



*Barry Korzen*

*(The writer is the nephew of our former members, Louis and Rebecca Korzen)*