



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series E: General Alphabetical Files. 1960-1992

Box 83, Folder 6, Holocaust memorial Boys Town, Italy, 1973.

BENJAMIN HERTZBERG

September 25, 1973

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum-

We are just back and, first, let me apologize for possibly misspelling your name and omitting your first name. I simply don't have the information at hand.

We spent an entire day at Boys' Town Italy, where I took several hundred photographs to furnish them with material for newsletters and other purposes. I would prefer to do this type of photography for a Jewish cause and I'm ready at all times. I can't recall if you ever saw the letter I wrote on this subject to Messrs. Shapiro and Haskell.

Messr. Abbin was very proud of his new chapel and had relief leading into it. Specifically photographed one area showing the plight of Jews in concentration camps. Poor reproductions of these shots are enclosed. Before touching on the next subject I thought you may be interested in what the monarch included in the sculpture.

After we lunched together and spent much time with him, I brought up the possibility of my sponsoring an exchange of his boys towards that of Jerusalem. There was an immediate categorical 'no'!

He has met with their representatives already and finds the Jerusalem version much too religion oriented. If this is not clear, I shall be glad to go into details. Apparently - and I think I understand this - Abbing runs a somewhat different type of institution.

I want to mention one observation in another area that may be of interest to you. We spent a month at the Excelsior, Lido, Venice - most of the time in bathing clothes - or bron-clothes. I knew Italians are wont to wear crucifixes and medallions on chains around their necks. I was amazed how many Jews at the hotel (wealthier class, if I may use this awful term) wore Magen Davids - some of very modern and extremely chic design - and mazuzahs. This included Germans, French, Italians, and Americans. And particularly the British.

In connection with this
I must tell you a conversation
I had with a Jewish sales-
clerk in Rome.

We have decided to live
in Rome half of the year, in
two three month periods.
Is there anything we can do
for the A. J. C. here or there?

Sincerely,
Ben Herzberg

In reading a short story of
Henry James, I came across a reference
to an ancient Jewish cemetery
on the Tiber. We had quite an ad-
venture finding it and getting
in through a rusty gate that
must not have been opened in
many years.

As far as I can make out, it
dates back to the 14th Century.
There are many beautiful and interesting
grave stones. I took several dozen
photographs of these.

Is there a formal record of this
cemetery? If not, I would be interested
in doing an in-depth photographic

record of the cemetery, provided someone is interested in such a project. If you wish, I could send you some of the more interesting tombstones.

I was fascinated to learn that the word, ghetto, originated in Venice - but I'm sure that the back-ground for this is well known to you. After all, I'm just an amateur.

Happy New Year!





AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

