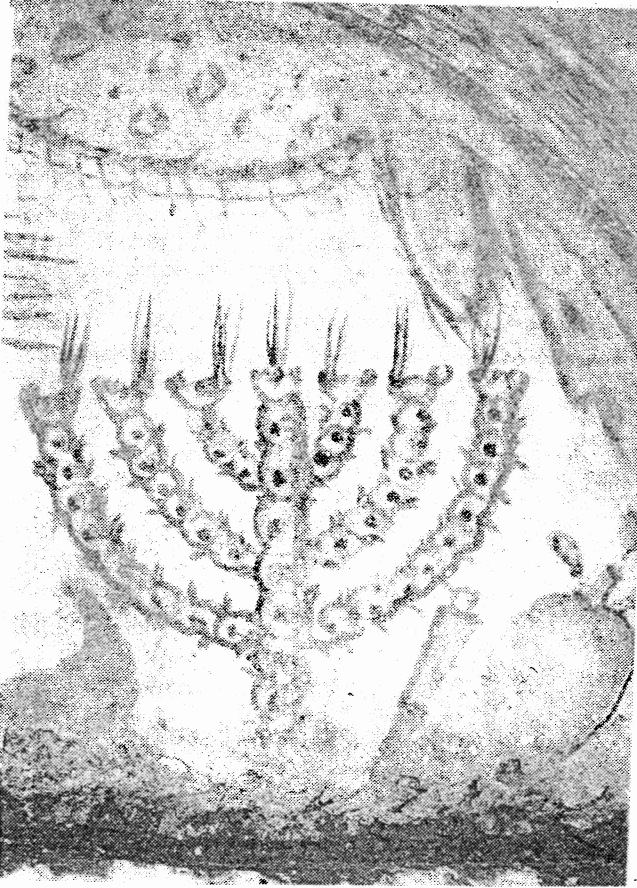


## Catacombs Exhibit at Boston Public Library



**MENORAH** with ritual objects. Detail of a painting from the Jewish catacombs under Villa Torlonia.

An exhibit derived from the Roman catacombs and burials in other sites, "Vaults of Memory: Jewish and Christian Imagery in the Catacombs of Rome," will be on view at the Boston Public Library from September 15 to October 11. The exhibit is circulated by the International Catacomb Society located in Boston. An opening reception will be held September 14.

The exhibition is the culmination of many years of research and exploration in such burial sites as Rome, northern Africa, Greece and the Near East by Estelle Brettman executive director of the International Catacomb Society. Working often with the cooperation of the Vatican and members of the regional superintendencies of Italy, Brettman was able to gain access to museum storage and to closed catacombs.

In addition, pertinent artifacts from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Harvard Semitic Museum will be shown at the Boston Public Library exhibit.

The exhibition includes the Jewish catacombs of Rome which are relatively unknown to tourists and students of religion. Monteverde, possibly the earliest Jewish catacomb, was uncovered in the early 1600s. It is now considered "lost" for all time. The most recently discovered Jewish catacomb was disclosed accidentally in 1918 by laborers reinforcing the foundations of a stable of the Villa Torlonia, destined to become a residence of Mussolini. In 400 years of exploration no fewer than seven Jewish catacombs have been discovered. Much of the material in "Vaults of Memory" is derived from these burial sites.