The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Program
Foreign Service Spouse Series

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF
CLEMENCE JANDREY BOYD
1938-1939

"Introduction to the Mezzogiorno"

In 1936, Fritz Jandrey was assigned as Vice Consul to the American Consulate General in Naples, Italy. During the period between our engagement and our marriage, I stayed for a while with my mother in Los Angeles, where I spent some time acquainting myself with Naples by reading what few books were available, the most colorful of which was Matilde Serao's Paese di Cuccagna ("Cloud-cuckoo Heaven"). By means of her affectionate and impassioned descriptions, I saw the crowded streets of Naples: the Tribunali, with its swarms of poor people, the old rich churches, the sellers of hot chestnuts on cold winter nights, the vendors of cheap clay figures for poor peoples' Christmas presépios (crèches). And I walked in my imagination in the old gardens on the wooded cliffs of the seaside suburb of Posillipo, those gardens which spoke so eloquently of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with their elaborate clay pots of luxuriant geraniums, petunias, and the stately yucca with which I was acquainted in California. I came to know these visionary gardens in reality when I arrived to live in Naples. And in time I also was to drift in rowboats and idling sailboats past these gardens and their old villas, to know the supreme peace of Posillipo, beloved of the ancient Romans; and to know the delight of seeing this beauty from the water, the best way to know its enchantment. Thus, through reading and through the ensuing experience of living twice in Naples, I came to love it better than any other city in the world, for I found it to be all that I had read about and dreamed of.

On July 6, 1938, I arrived on the S.S. VULCANIA in Palermo, Sicily, where Fritz met me, having come down from Naples on the night boat. When I suddenly caught sight of him in the milling crowd in front of the Purser's Office, (not having expected to see him until I arrived in Naples), he looked the same to me as he had two years before: a very tall young man, thin and quiet, with reddish-brown hair, eyebrows and lashes; even his eyes were a warm cinnamon-brown. The American Consul General in Palermo had loaned Fritz his automobile for the morning, and we drove to Monreale, just outside Palermo, and there, as we walked back and forth in the beautiful cloister, there seemed to be no strangeness between us after our long separation. The two years were quickly washed away, leaving no shadow, and very easily we fell into a comfortable and pleasant empathy. Within minutes I felt that this was still, without doubt, the only man I had ever wanted to marry. Later, as we had lunch at the apartment of the Consul General and his wife, and sat on their balcony overlooking the marvelous view of cliffs and sea, I felt that it was all so natural and right: we were meant to be together, bound by that natural tie which sometimes, with lots of luck, makes two people companions, happy to live side by

side for as long as life may last.

Fritz bedded down on a mattress on the gym floor that night, while the VULCANIA carried us to Naples, and the next morning early we were met at the dock by Fritz's friend Homer Byington, who took me out to his house, while Fritz followed in his new Fiat. As we left the dock, the very first thing that met our eyes was a large, very dead horse in the middle of the road, lying where it had been hit, and the carriage was just in the process of being detached from the victim. However, with great kindness and tact, Homer immediately stated with emphasis that in Naples a dead horse was a sign of good luck; (though I was more concerned with the fate of the poor horse)!

At their villa in Posillipo Jane Byington greeted us, and we had a delicious breakfast on their delightful balcony, which was built right out over the sea on a high cliff, with a view of the coast from the Island of Capri on the right to the volcano of Vesuvius on the left. Even through the light mist of early morning I could see the volcano's long scarf of smoke drifting over towards the Sorrentine Peninsula. Here, at my first Italian breakfast, I was introduced to that marvelous Italian specialty, prosciutto crudo, with its twin companions, ripe figs and little squares of ripe melon. The atmosphere was so charming, so different in every way from anything I had ever known, that I was aware of an immediate love for this part of Italy, the Mezzogiorno ("noonday," or "noon-tide"), where, in the heat of summer the intense quiet is filled with special echoes: the lapping of water, the distant cries of peddlers in the street above the seashore, and the midday and hot-afternoon roar of countless cicadas, almost bursting one's eardrums, but filling the mind and body with a deep and lasting content.

After breakfast with the Byingtons, we had a quick look at Fritz's apartment, called on our Consul General's wife, and then took off for Rome in the Fiat. There I stayed with the Gilson Blakes, who were assigned to the American Consulate in Rome, on the top floor of an apartment building where a balcony ran around all four sides of their quarters, and the tops of the huge Roman pines hung low over our heads as we had tea on the balcony. Here I experienced for the first time the unique atmosphere of a Foreign Service home, full of treasures acquired in various posts in different parts of the world.

At the Blakes' apartment I of course had my own bathroom, spacious and clean-smelling. Though I did not yet recognize it, it had the typical Italian bathroom smell of chlorine, reminiscent of swimming-pools. There are many good and special smells in Italy which gave me much pleasure, and I have no doubt that they are still there, waiting to be discovered for the first time by other lucky people. Important among the elements of the best scents in Italy is the lack of central heating, especially in monasteries and churches, where the fragrances of incense and wood smoke blend and age together in an atmosphere innocent of artificially warmed air. But the clean Italian bathroom has its own good smell; and in the Blakes' bathroom I savored it, along with another new pleasure: the telephone-type hand shower which permits a quick shower in an empty bathtub -- a feature which became so beloved of Americans that they soon introduced it into their American homes, along with the indispensable bidet.

Fritz, meantime, was staying with his very good friend Johnny Jones, and his bride of two months, Kitty. They had a small apartment with an enormous terrace roofed entirely with wisteria. They had one servant named Gino, a fine fellow and servant, to whom we hoped to fall heir when the Joneses left Rome. (However, Gino was soon dismissed by the Joneses, suspected of having taken all of Johnny's best socks!)

We spent four days in Rome before our marriage, and the first notable thing we did was to attend, with Kitty and Johnny, a tea at the apartment of Monsignor Hemmick, an American who lived in the Palazzo Doria, a famous old palace once inhabited by the noble family of Doria -- I was told that at one time several thousand members of the family, and their retainers, lived there and defended it against all comers. It is on the Piazza Venezia, right across the street from Mussolini's apartments. In this piazza is the well-known balcony from which "Il Duce" made his speeches to the people who crowded the square to hear him. At the tea-party I met many men and women with famous Roman names, and in my exhilaration it seemed like fairy-tale dream-stuff.

But the most interesting occurrence at the tea was when I remarked to Father Hemmick on the beautiful coffered, carved, and painted ceiling of his dining room. He told us that when he first took the apartment, the ceilings were low, and apparently whitewashed. But one winter night, when the winds outside were causing the usual Roman draughts inside, he noticed that the ceiling of his dining room was fluttering up and down in the breeze. The next day he had the ceiling examined, and found that what had appeared to be low, white ceilings, were just pieces of canvas; and having heard that many Roman families had thus lowered their ceilings to save heat in winter, he had the canvas removed, and discovered to his and everyone else's delight that his ceilings were very high, elaborately decorated in beautiful designs, all in perfect condition and unfaded.

The view from Monsignor Hemmick's apartment was historically interesting, taking in I1 Duce's quarters and the Piazza Venezia, then the immense monument of King Vittorio Emmanuele, built in marble, with ornaments of bronze, and gold; beyond the monument a street slanted away toward the Coliseum in the distance.

The next day, after calling on the American Ambassador, The Hon. William Phillips, our 'inner-circle' of the wedding party, the Blakes, the Joneses, and ourselves, drove to the Borghese Gardens, and had frozen chocolate and cakes at tea time in a delightful teahouse.

On Saturday night a whole group of us went dancing in the garden of the Hotel Quirinale. It was beautiful outdoors at night, and we danced around a huge tree in the middle of the garden, and the music was wonderful. I did a bit of the Big Apple, then the rage at home, but unknown here, and poor Fritz was mortified, and quenched my high spirits in desperate whispers! That night it was decided that we were to be married at the American Church, St. Paul's-Within-the-Walls, on Via Nazionale. So after the dance, the whole party invaded my bedroom to ransack my trunk, from which they selected a long cotton print in yellow and white, with black velvet bows. It was decided that to complete the costume I needed a very large straw garden hat. Kitty, my Matron-of-Honor, had a long

yellow chiffon dinner dress, but no hat to go with it. We were to be married on Monday morning; so by Sunday the whole affair had lifted itself from a quick affair in a clergyman's office to a church wedding with our Ambassador and all the Embassy and Consulate families, to be preceded by an indispensable Italian Catholic ceremony. So we had two weddings, and they were both lovely!

Early on Monday morning, Margery Blake picked up Kitty and me and rushed us down to find hats for us both. The shops were just that moment opening, and by great good luck, I found in the very first shop a beautiful rough straw suitable for myself; and for Kitty we found a hat consisting of silk bows: the hat they had was black, but they promised to make it up in yellow by noon. Then we tore off to the Catholic ceremony, the first of the two; it was brief and charming, taking place at the Campidoglio, the first of Rome's seven hills, the very one where Romulus and Remus ran the plow around four sides of a field, to mark Rome's first boundaries. I felt that to be married here was something really special. The room itself was used for marriages, with walls of red satin brocade and white and gilded paneling. It was a very short service, with a lot of little Italian men running around bowing and congratulating us nicely. At the end, when they spoke of Fritz as now the "Capo de Famiglia," which even I understood, Margery laughed, and so did I, and Johnny scowled at us, but I am sure he was only maintaining diplomatic dignity for us all. They presented us with a little red book containing spaces for our first twenty sons, which unfortunately we lost the next day, for we never had any sons at all. Though we were now man and wife, I didn't feel a bit married as they rushed me back to the Blakes' apartment for the obligatory bride's beauty-nap before the church ceremony at 12:30.

At the church rehearsal the day before, I had seen on the church walls the name plaques for the Page family, and had mentioned to Dr. Tyler, who was to marry us, that my own family was full of Tylers and Pages, a coincidence of possible interest to our family. By 12:30, when the ceremony began, I was in shock, but Margery Blake and others had handled things so efficiently that everything seemed to fall into place without a flaw. My bouquet materialized from somewhere, a huge, round, prim, simple bouquet of white flowers like a combination of jasmine and honeysuckle, but without scent -- or maybe I was too frightened to be able to smell anything. The handle of the bouquet was of silver foil, coming to a point at the end, and it had a big bow of white tulle.

Johnny Jones was Fritz's Best Man, and Gilson Blake gave me away with much sweetness and dignity, as though he were my own Father (though much younger), and now calls himself my "Pop." The American Ambassador, the Hon. William Phillips, had mentioned to his secretary that if we would invite him to our wedding, he would supply the flowers for the church, and we were very flattered to have him as a guest. He had sent white cannas and tiger-lilies for the altar. Dr. Tyler wore a simple dull-silver surplice. After the betrothal part, we followed him up the steps to the altar, where we stood in a beam of sunlight from a window high in the apse [The only example known of a mosaic apse done by Burne-Jones (who did it all by mail, not being able to come to Italy at that time).] , and in the sunlight I saw my unadorned young left hand stretched across to Fritz as he slipped the ring on my finger, and I thought, "This moment is forever. I am married,

and to the only man I have ever wished to marry." Then we turned around to face the church, and looked down upon our guests. In a daze, I forgot that we had mounted some narrow steps to the altar, so I stepped right out into space; but Fritz's first act as a husband was to steady me with his hand on my elbow, thus saving me from eternal mortification. All I could see was the Consul General's amused face in the distance.

Leaving our guests in the garden of the church, we were whisked away by car to the Hotel Ambassadeurs, where the reception was held, after which thirteen of us walked out onto a pleasant terrace and sat down at a large round table for our wedding breakfast, from jellied consommé and lobster right through to champagne. Ambassador Phillips sat on my right, and he stood to make a very kindly toast, welcoming me into the Foreign Service, and Fritz made a splendid reply on my behalf, while I wondered how I could have deserved to be this happy. Fritz and I were so pleased at this kindness of our Ambassador, because it really wasn't the least necessary for him to take the slightest notice of a young vice consul and his fiancée, from out of town. But he is a dear, a most cultured and handsome gentleman, somewhat resembling my own Father, especially around the forehead and mouth.

The first night of our marriage was spent at the huge resort hotel of Fiuggi, and the next day we drove on southwards, stopping in Naples just long enough for Fritz to show me our apartment again, and then we went on to Ravello, the hill town which has become my favorite of all places in Italy. We stayed at Fritz's favorite Ravello hotel, the Caruso-Belvedere, and at our first dinner there, Fritz recommended the Caruso Family's own famous wine, Rosa di Ravello, and at the end of the meal, their renowned chocolate soufflé.

That very night, July 12th, was the fiesta night of Santa Trofimena, the patron saint of the Amalfi coast, of whose sacred bones the entire coast was jealously proud. After dinner at the hotel, we drove down to the Maiori/Minori beach, wandered with the fishermen and their wives among the boats on the sand, and purchased a small photograph of the Saint's statue, framed in a cheap base-metal. When we returned to our hilly perch, high above all the gaiety, we went out onto our dark balcony, which framed the picture of coast, mountains, and sea in its Saracenic arches, and sat there for hours, looking down that tremendous swooping dive to the sea so far below; down over the slopes and little hills crowned with farmhouses, down to the beaches, where we had just been, and where the people and boats were almost too small to be seen at all from so high above. At nighttime all that huge space was midnight blue; we hung high over the world like an eagle's nest, and we could see not only the tiny lights of Minori and Maiori, but the pinpricks of light of the little fishing boats offshore, each with a lantern hung over its bow, to attract the fish called "Aouglie," while the fishermen stood ready to impale the fish with their long trident spears.

This second night of our honeymoon, (our first in Ravello), the local youth were celebrating with fireworks, and their greatest joy was setting off the botte, giant cannon-crackers inside tin cans, which made more noise than a gunshot, and these botte continued all through the night and into the dawn. We adopted Santa Trofimena as our

own patron saint, and forty-two years later, I still have a framed picture of her hanging in my house.

Hotel Caruso Belvedere
Ravello, July 13, 1938

(Note from a letter:)

I am almost too happy today. This is such a glorious place. Every direction one looks is beautiful beyond belief. South of us, beyond the beaches, lie the blue sea and the mountain ranges, beginning with the nearby diagonal bastion of high hills which jut out into the water, hiding Salerno and Paestum from our view. (Note: Both of them were later to become famous in World War II as the Salerno Beachhead.) From behind Salerno there stretches a majestic line of mountains far out to sea. But when we turn to look landward, every inch of ground is terraced for planting in narrow parallel lines of varying greens, running in strips around the hillsides. At present I am sitting out on an old terrace, or belvedere, of stone, with the land dropping away on three sides, a brook roaring over cascades one-quarter of a mile away, little white houses and straggling narrow villages along ledges of the hills. And to the right, the sea, bluer than the sky. All is perfect.

The garden leading to the belvedere is long and narrow, tapering like a finger at the end, flowers and vineyards on both sides, with here and there an ancient broken column or a marble head dug up somewhere nearby. The belvedere itself is like a little box at the opera, with parapet of stone and an ancient marble table with broken marble columns for legs; and in the hot sun and miraculous silence, broken only by the blessed roar of cicadas, one looks directly down into the piazza of a very small village, almost a suburb of Ravello, with its ancient fountain carved with animals, and a narrow street, hardly more than a path, which climbs steeply towards the hills behind the village. The women and men come staggering down this steep village street, bearing on their shoulders a terrible load of long poles to be used in their hillside vineyards. Dressed in black, thin, twisted, and strained-looking, they seem tragically overloaded, as if in supporting their tremendous burdens they wore their lives out quickly, and looked to be a century old, when probably not a great deal older than myself.

We have spent the day visiting Ravello's four most famous attractions, consisting of the Cathedral, a smaller church, and two villas, one of them more palace than villa, with early Norman-Saracen architecture; the other villa made internationally famous as the honeymoon spot of Greta Garbo and Mr. Stokowski.

Ravello's town square has a large venerable tree in its middle, devotes one side to a road coming up from the valley below, one to shops and a cafe, and another to the Cathedral, which faces a wide view over the valleys and mountains between itself and Sorrento and Naples. This ancient Cathedral has an august pulpit of cosmatic work (cosmatico or cosmatique), characterized by designs of colored stones such as marble and lapis, with bits of gold and other bright colors. The pulpit is supported by ancient stone lions, worn

smooth by the constant touch of pious or curious fingers. (The word cosmatic has the same base as our word, cosmetics, and for the same basic reason. It is found in many parts of Italy, including the Cathedral of nearby Salerno, which has both a pulpit and a choir-box which will hold a handful of singers for a concert. And in Rome this work is found represented in name as well as decoration in the small church near the Tiber River, Santa Maria in Cosmedin.)

Several days later we left Ravello to drive to Sorrento along the exciting Amalfi Drive, a narrow, curving, not-quite-two-way road which hangs over the sea. The buses plummeting along this road consider it a one-way road on their own side, whichever way they are going, and as they race by blaring their horns, they force one's car over to the very edge of the abyss, where one can imagine the automobile digging in its tires and holding its breath. When no buses or speeding cars are in sight, one can enjoy the plunging downward view; every so often, on the slope below, there is an old church with pointed onion-bulb dome covered with shiny tiles in yellow-green or turquoise. And at the very bottom of the long, steep slope, the sea curls white on the rocks.

In Sorrento we went to another of Fritz's favorite hotels, the Hotel Cocumella, which stood then, and still stands, in the center of a very large, walled garden filled with palm trees, old fashioned flower beds, and lots of roses. On the sea side of the garden, one leans one's elbows on a seawall, and looks straight down to the beach, (straight down!) far, far below.

There we had lunch in the huge, white, Italian-smelling dining room of the hotel. Lunch consisted of the usual beef broth, delicious pasta, the anemic boiled meat from which the soup had been made, salad, and for dessert, the usual Italian choice, so good for the health and such a letdown to adventurous taste buds: either stewed pears or caramel custard!

We put our baggage in charge of a porter, crossed the garden to the sea wall, and descended to the beach down through an underground staircase-tunnel, which brought us out onto the sandy beach, where a fisherman waited with a rowboat to row us and our luggage to the jetty where the ferryboat for Capri was about due to come in from Naples. Of late years, many of those staircases cut into the cliff have been replaced by elevators; but since Italian elevators often find it convenient to get stuck in the middle of their trip, so unpleasant in the dark, many people prefer the old-fashioned descent by foot, although the steep climb back up after a swim, wet and puffing and covered with sand, is not ideal. Sometimes one rolls one's dice hopefully by going down by foot and taking a chance that the elevator will not stall on its upward trip.

Capri, sometimes called the White Elephant, in contrast to the island of Ischia, the Grey Elephant, is an island one can come to love dearly. It is so light and cheerful, with many differing aspects: the cliffs, the promontories, villas, beaches, and three villages. Long ago Lenin and Trotsky stayed in Capri while they planned the Bolshevik Revolution, in a cliff-hanging house still pointed out to the newcomer. When I first arrived in Capri, no automobiles were allowed on the island, and when one arrived at the Marina in the ferry,

there were carriages (carrozas) for the romantically minded, and a funicular for the practical, and by either method one had a delightful ride upwards through orange groves and flower gardens, punctuated by colorful cottages and farmhouses. And at the top lay the prize, the Shangri-La, the focus of all Capri life: that little square with its bell-tower, and its curiously-attired crowd of tourists, summer residents, and celebrities from all walks of life: the cinema, the stage, the fashionable world, and honeymooners, like ourselves.

This town square of Capri is exhilarating, the center of a spider web of lanes that reach outwards in all directions, leading to the different parts of the island. In summer weather, with the sunshine and the colorful passing crowd, always shifting, it is a lovely place to be. The square is bounded on one side by the post office and on the other by the old church. On the other two sides there are cafes, with chairs and tables outside on the pavement, where the major occupation is talking and staring at others, while sipping coffee or an aperitif. Little by little over the years, the chairs and tables have encroached further onto the open space until there is hardly space for people to sidle their way through in the middle.

But in 1938, on our honeymoon, the square was considerably less crowded than it is now, and Capri life was a bit more intimate and relaxing, though it was already famous, and maybe a little bit infamous also. The walks leading out from the square were all lovely; but our favorite went past the Quisisana Hotel, past beautiful gardens and villas, to the Faraglioni, the three rocks which stand out to sea at one end of the island.

(Years later, we witnessed a delightful scene in that square early on a rainy winter morning. We entered one of the cafes for a breakfast-coffee, it being too wet to have tables and chairs outside. As we sat with our coffee, looking out through steamy window-glass into the empty square, we saw the parroco, or parish-priest, in his long black robes, huddled under his black umbrella, hurrying across the square to the church. On this morning three small children saw him, and ran out into the middle of the square to greet him; and, in the pouring rain, he stopped a moment to smile down upon the children, and with a beautiful expression and graceful movement, he put his hand upon their heads and lightly caressed their hair.)

Back in Naples after our brief honeymoon, I began to get acquainted both with Naples and with our apartment, which was located on a little vico, a narrow side street which would be called a lane in an American or English village; its name was "The Little Street of the Pretty Ladies of Chiaia," and it curved around the old Toledo Palace. Laetitia Cerio, daughter of a friend of Fritz's who lived on Capri, had married the young Count Toledo, and upon their separation she had kept a wing which formerly had been the servants' quarters, and had turned it into a convenient, modern, amusing apartment.

Every house or apartment has its own special virtue: one room, perhaps, which we remember all our lives and say: "If only I could have THAT room in this house, (and that other room from another house), then THIS house would be perfect." The triumph of Laetitia's little apartment was the bedroom; large, perfectly-proportioned, with modern

built-in closets. The woodwork and furniture were painted a soft sky-blue, and the curtains were blue and white checked cotton. There were two tall windows which opened like doors onto balconies outside. One looked down into a private garden belonging to the next palace, and there was a very large, perfect, and beautiful date palm just outside our window. The other door and balcony looked down into the noisy little street, where the cries rang, all day long, of sellers of fish or fruit; while from the small chapel on our corner came little chiming strokes at appropriate times, to call the worshipers. Certainly it was a rather harsh, strident little chime, but it had its charm and added to the special atmosphere of our neighborhood. After breakfast or lunch, I could rush to this door, step out onto the balcony, and watch Fritz get into our little Fiat, which he parked just below the window, and wave goodbye to him. From this window we could also, each morning, see the Italian gentlemen in the apartments across the street open the shutters which had sealed them all night from the outdoor air, and step out onto their balconies in their inevitable blue and white striped pajamas, to stretch and enjoy the fresh morning.

This apartment was only a few rods from the park called the Villa Nazionale, which ran for blocks along the seashore. At night Fritz and I would often walk over there after dinner, and stroll along the lighted paths, stopping at some small kiosk to have a granata de limone or granata di cafe, which were a sort of iced lemon and iced coffee, in which was used, instead of ordinary ice, delicious frozen granules of ice like small pieces gathered up after a hailstorm, which melted quickly and delightfully in our mouths as we sipped.

That summer of 1938, the first summer of our marriage, was probably the happiest of my life. We seemed to spend most of that beautiful season in the water, or on it. One day, with friends, we sailed westward from Naples to the long peninsula ending in Mare Morto -- the Dead Sea -- where so many Romans had built villas centuries before, to escape the great summer heat of Rome. When our sailboat arrived offshore of an open-air restaurant roofed with dried palm leaves, we dove overboard and swam ashore, while our sweaters were brought to us by rowboat. There we had wonderful pasta, and broiled fish, fresh from the sea that very moment. We waved bottles of Chianti over our heads, felt mellow, and took snapshots we still have, proving that we too were once young and very, very happy.

At that time, Americans living in Naples were discovering (to their joy) the pizza, which had not yet invaded America to any extent, and had not achieved world-renown and utter disaster, as the “pizza pie,” frozen for the super-market. The pizza was then relatively unknown, concocted by experts, made of a perfect crusty dough, baked in a special oven, lifted in and out with special wooden shovels or paddles, and decorated discreetly, not massively and indiscriminately, with just the right amount of tomato, fresh anchovy, cheese, etc. A few days after my arrival in Naples, eight of us, Italians, Americans, and Italo-Americans, set out to drive far past Pompeii, on the autostrada (one of the earlier forerunners of the modern freeway) to a restaurant so famous for its pizza that a round-trip drive of nearly 70 miles was well worthwhile.

August 5, 1938
(Excerpt from a letter.)

"Eight of us drove 45 kilometers to a "pizzeria" called Pontecagnano. It was a nice place, outdoors, with wisteria. The maids rush in with a pizza, which is immediately cut into eight pieces and gobbled down, while another maid flies in with a fresh hot one, a different kind. You have to help eat 5 of them (sometimes 7) and I mean have to, because they are so good and you are rushed into it; then comes wonderful fried chicken and a green salad. If you order fruit and coffee, you get a special treat, for they put an old cracked record on the Victrola, their "Bird Song," played very fast, and every waitress in the place takes a dish of fruit and they line up at the door according to their height, smallest first, and come marching briskly in to your table in perfect time. If you order coffee, they put on special red and white paper caps for their march, which is a feature of the place. Sometimes they sing in unison as they march in double-time. The place is by now very famous, and the Prince of Naples is said to go there often."

Soon after my arrival in Naples, Fritz took me to meet some friends, an elderly couple named Mastro-Valerio. Cavaliere Mastro-Valerio had been given that honorary title by Mussolini for the work he had done in persuading Italians who had immigrated to America to work on farms, as they and their ancestors had done, instead of remaining cooped up in big cities in the slums. He had started a farm community in Daphne, Alabama, which in 1938, was flourishing. The couple had at that time been married at least fifty years, forty of which they had spent in America. Mrs. Mastro-Valerio was of French origin, born in America.

(Excerpt from letter:)

August 7th, 1938. "I noticed on the Mastro-Valerio's wall an oil portrait of a lady with a wonderfully strong, sensitive, beautiful face -- a woman of about 50 or 60, in a dress of the '90's, sitting under an apple tree with a book in her lap. I asked who she was, and was told it was her mother, painted when she was teaching French in Rockford College, in 1898. Her mother had been a good friend of Jane Addams, and Cav. Mastro-Valerio himself had aided her in starting her work at Hull House in Chicago. It was interesting to me to find such a couple now living in a typical little Italian flat filled with flies, with a gorgeous view over all of Naples and the other direction." (i.e., towards Bagnoli, Camaldoli, and Pozzuoli, Cumae, and the Phlegreaen Fields). They returned here because his family needs him -- he's sort of the patriarch of them all.

I was quite pleased to hear about Mrs. Mastro-Valerio's mother, because my own grandmother had gone to Rockford College, and later my aunt. (It was then called Rockford Young Ladies' Seminary.) Had my mother consented to go to college, which she refused to do, she would have been a student at the exact time that Mrs. Mastro-Valerio's mother was teaching French there.

(Part of same letter)

Sunday

This afternoon we went up to a palace called Capodimonte. The museum, where they have fine china and armor, was closed, but we walked through the park of beautiful woods. It was quite stunning as we came through the gate -- five roads radiate outwards from a central place with fountains and trees, all the roads embowered in foliage -- the center road especially lovely, with big mossy oaks meeting in an arch overhead -- the roads stretching in sun and shadow, straight as an arrow as far as we could see. We wandered there for an hour and a half, and really there were scores and scores -- perhaps hundreds of little roads cutting across the five main ones, all beautifully planned and surveyed, so that at each crossroad there would be seven or eight more paths and roads leading in; different directions, some wide and sunny, others narrow and shady, paved with thick moss or fallen autumn leaves. There were fountains with goldfish and old ruined summerhouses.

There is still a member of Royalty in residence there: Princess Helene of France, widow of the Duca d'Aosta. Therefore the palace is not open to tourists.

August 16, 1938

Over the week end we had an Italian holiday called Ferragosto. It's a very nice holiday because the law dictates that you take it. (Could this have been the annual day of holiday for Pippa, in Browning's Pippa Passes?) Custom dictates that you have to go away somewhere for a few days -- in short, you are forced to indulge yourself! Even the street urchin puts his ragged swimming shorts under his arm and goes to the beach for the day. The islands of Capri and Ischia, and seashore towns like Amalfi and Sorrento are always crowded on this holiday; all rooms are engaged for weeks ahead.

On Sunday we sailed to Sorrento in the Signorini's 8-meter sailboat. It was a lovely day, sunny, but rough -- the first day under 90 degrees since I arrived here. I was sick all the way over, but managed to hold out without letting anyone know it, by sitting way upon the bow where I got lots of breeze. We sailed straight across the bay, and it took us an hour and forty minutes, good time. (The steamer takes an hour.) The sky was so blue, there were hundreds of sails on the water, and ahead of us Sorrento looked very beautiful with the sun on its violet-colored cliffs and its pink and white houses. So many of the shoreline escarpments in Sorrento have old Roman remains built into them, walls of gray blocks or bricks, or even arches that look as old as the stone of the cliff itself. When we arrived, Giovanni Signorini and I went swimming around the boat, and then one of the ever-present boatmen rowed us to shore, where we all had lunch in an old shipyard -- spaghetti and chicken, fruit and coffee. (They were building a little boat nearby, while we ate.) There we were joined by Giovanni's brother, Mario, and his pretty Italian bride, who were staying on the cliff above, at the Hotel Vittoria. They had seen the boat come in, and came down to look us up.

We had a nice lazy afternoon, tea at the hotel, and then decided to drive back in Mario's

car, leaving the other Signorinis the boat, so they could use it to see the regatta at Sorrento the next day. On the way home from Sorrento we went into the villa of Giovanni's mother located on the old shore road just below Vesuvius, and it's a lovely old-time place -- long avenues of flowers and fountains, big rooms, Italian paintings -- and dogs! Giovanni says he has always had from twenty-five to fifty dogs on the place at one time.

Monday, still part of the holiday, we were invited to Gallottis' for a fishing party and lunch. Only five of us went fishing. We went in a speedboat, towing a rowboat, to a little island called Nisida, near the shore. We fished underwater with harpoon guns, and I loved it. You have a pair of heavy underwater goggles, a breathing tube, and half of a lifebelt to float on; and the gun, which is very long, has a trigger which releases a long harpoon attached to a rope. The technique is to float or swim on the surface with your face under water, looking for a good-sized fish (there are none under a foot long -- and some are enormous). When you see him, you roll off your lifebelt and jackknife down after him carefully, so as not to disturb him. When you get a couple of yards away you pull the trigger, and he's yours -- maybe. The idea is to shoot for his shoulder muscles, because if you hit the tail, he pulls away, and if you hit his tummy it blasts him wide open. If you have made a good hit, the point of the harpoon opens in him when he tries to pull away, and all you have to do is rise to the surface and yell for a rowboat -- unless the fish is a really big one (a couple of feet long), in which case you either let him go (probably losing your harpoon-tip), or if you are the kind of fisherman Gino is, you go right down after him. Gino really fights with his fish -- he grabs them and wrestles, and so far he's always been the winner. However, he is covered with cuts and slashes and bloody holes, and last night they had to call a doctor for him where one fish had gone right in with its teeth under his nail and the whole finger was infected and swollen hard. From this perhaps you would never dream (from our conventional American idea of nobility) that Gino is a Baron, but he is. He caught three fish and nobody else got any. I just missed one by two inches, but I was so excited I forgot to roll off my lifebelt and go below to shoot; I shot from the surface and it was too far away.

We stayed out for hours, and then went back to Villa Gallotti for lunch. There were a lot of people there -- other Americans and a few Italians, including the Prince and Princess Caracciolo. She is Spanish, and we talked about the Palace and Cathedral at Santander. She's a tall blonde, and looked lovely all in dark-bright blue and cerise.

We had a wonderful Italian lunch of special macaroni with four kinds of cheese cooked in it; then the fish that Gino had caught, and various vegetables and cheese deep-fried in batter, and three kinds of melons. They rarely have any kind of dessert here -- usually fruit and/or cheese, and then small cups of black coffee.

The two kinds of upper-crust Italians are the nobility and the very wealthy commercial giants. The Consular people are accepted by both groups; we have an anomalous position, in fact no real position, but a kind of status, and we are accepted everywhere by those who happen to like us personally. The friendly acceptance by the non-nobility is more steady, perhaps, except for two or three noble families with whom the Americans

are close friends. Some of the nobility keep to themselves, as they have every right to do; but those who have made friends with us are very fine people.

One thing I do much admire about the Neapolitan nobility is the easy, relaxed, simple and comfortable way they like to live. The women and girls wear sleeveless cotton dresses, no stockings, no hats or gloves, sandals of leather when they go to town, but otherwise, wooden clogs with canvas straps worn all day, every day. And once when I asked Mario Galloti to dinner, he said he would come only if I had something "semplice ma graciosa." When I asked what was to him "simple but gracious," he replied: "Just a fresh-caught lobster with green salad, and a Testa di Moro" -- which is a cannon-sized ball of ice cream and sherbet, chocolate ice on the outside, and soft, creamy spumoni inside.

August 23, 1938

At 1:30 p.m. we took the interurban from Naples to the coast near Baiae, where we were to take a ferryboat to the island of Ischia to visit Fritz's friends, the Klingenbergs -- he is Norwegian, she American. Cyril Klingenberg had advised us to take third-class to save money, but it was not too comfortable, for I was feeling sick after a typhoid shot -- in fact, we had to stand jammed outdoors on the platform between two cars, rocking and jolting along at a high speed through the vineyards in thick clouds of dust! We were pressed tight against the peasants in their working clothes, and we found out afterwards that, as we had expected, numerous fleas had transferred themselves to us.

We finally reached a little bay where we were crammed into a small packet-boat and taken out to the Ischia steamer, the "Sorrento", on which we had a nice trip of about an hour over a pleasant calm blue sea. Fritz paid the extra fare so we could go first-class on the boat (only 15 cents apiece!), so we sat on the upper deck under an awning. After stopping at the island of Procida to discharge and pick up passengers, we arrived at Porto d'Ischia, which has one of the prettiest little bottleneck harbors I've ever seen. I got quite a shock, as I imagine all visitors do the first time they approach Ischia, by having the ship steer full-speed ahead for the shore and not stop when they reach it! -- for you cannot see the bottleneck unless you know it is there and where to look for it. I thought we were going to go crashing onto the land, and told Fritz I thought something must be wrong with the ship's motors or steering gear; but he was in on the secret and said nothing. Then the narrow passage appeared, and it was great fun to go tearing through it at full speed with only a few yards to spare on each side, sending bow waves in both directions, making pretty scalloped patterns as they splashed against the retaining walls, and spraying the bathers who were sunning themselves there.

At Porto d'Ischia we caught a bus (again we had to stand up) and drove along the shore for 15 to 20 minutes, through two little towns, Casamicciola and Lacco Ameno. Just outside the latter we started uphill, and got off at a little gate in a high wall, where we were greeted warmly by Cyril, very tanned, wearing shorts, and by his 9-year-old daughter, Dagny, who curtsied gravely as she shook hands.

We went up a stony path under bunches of grapes hanging from grapevines, and between cornstalks much higher than we were. At the top was a white stone house, obviously of farmhouse origin, where Grace Klingenberg and the 11-year-old son of the family, Ivar, were hanging out of a semi-circular window waving and calling to us. When we finally got up to the house, it proved to be really enchanting, cool and emptyish, very true to the ideal of a country summer home, simple and refreshing. What they had done was to buy a farmhouse several hundred years old that had been deserted, then later used as a storehouse and barn. They have snapshots taken when they bought it, and it was really terrible. I don't see how they ever realized the possibilities in it: it was falling down, with not enough windows, ceilings collapsing, grimy, smoke-blackened, and greasy, filled with old wine vats and animal filth -- one room used for hogs, another for stamping the juice out of the grapes. Now they have put in floors of Italian tile, made several more windows, mended steps and roof, whitewashed the walls, painted the log-rafters green, put in a beautiful knotty-pine ceiling in the front room; and they have furnished it with rattan furniture, candlesticks, tiles, plaques and prints of Italian origin, books, and big bowls of colorful fruit. It's really lovely -- no rugs, which I like for a summer home, especially with tile floors -- it looks and feels so much cooler.

In back of the house they have a terrace under olive trees, with a wonderful view of the sea and cliffs, the little town of Lacco Ameno below, and in the distance are Procida and the mainland, including a tiny glimpse of Naples and Vesuvius far away. At night it is beautiful to see the distant faint lights across the sea, and the occasional dim glow of old Vesuv, and closer at hand the flares on the bows of the fishing boats on the bay below.

This island of Ischia has always been much loved by the English and Germans, who spend summers here under the looming peak of the (hopefully!) extinct volcano Epomeo, and while earthquakes are not uncommon, it has never discouraged these tourists. Henrik Ibsen's rather impressive villa is still to be seen, in a prominent position near the shore. In the summer of 1883 a big earthquake caused severe damage to the town of Casamicciola and the deaths of large numbers of the tourists who were crowded there for the holidays.

On Sunday evening the Klingenbergs and Fritz and I took a bus into the town where the ferry had landed us. We all sat at a table in the middle of the main street and had an ice cream, while we enjoyed a fine sunset as we watched a soccer game in the park on one side of us and on the other side, the newly-arrived tourists disembarking, and the departing passengers going on board the little steamer which was about to leave the port. There were scores of German tourists walking about ice-creaming -- they are always so outstanding in their typical clothes; relaxed, informal walking-clothes and hiking-boots, and the women in their heavy, full-cut, somehow rather masculine-looking suits.

Then we took a carroza back to the K's after sunset, and it was grand -- I felt that it all was the height of romance, my first drive in a carroza, along a little road by the seaside, with the fishermen working with their nets, peasants carrying loads on their heads, and just dark enough so that everybody and everything was in silhouette. At the foot of the hill we had an argument with the carroza-man over the price he demanded, so got out and into another carroza, and paid an even higher price, just to spite the rude one.

The Klingenbergs' daughter Dagny is so blonde, so tranquil and collected, (shades of Norwegian maidens alongside fjords, Ibsen, Undset, Grieg!), and is always perfectly willing and eager to help. She and her brother, Ivar are remarkable children -- instead of running off to play the moment they had greeted us, they stayed with the adults every moment of the weekend, by choice, listening attentively to the conversation, which ranged from automobiles to divorces. They amused me very much once: one day on the beach an Englishwoman, hearing the two children speak Italian and Norwegian together and thinking they didn't know English, spoke disparagingly to her escort within their hearing about the K's Scottie, Dinah. She said, "Poor little miserable beast, how thin, how melancholy. What a dreadful life she must lead!" Mrs. K. said the woman was obviously of doubtful virtue; so when we went down to the beach she said in front of the children, "I do hope that Englishwoman is there today. I'm going to pretend I don't know she's English, and say in a loud voice: 'This is a lovely beach, but it's too bad it's being visited by so many prostitutes with their boyfriends'." And what amused me was the spontaneous, natural laughter of Ivar and Dagny -- not a sign of a dirty mind in their expressions or in the way they laughed, although they obviously knew what she was talking about.

August 26, 1938

I have a friend named Titti Granata, who was born in Naples and is married to an American Vice Consul here. She has two brothers and several sisters, and they have a villa in Posillipo called the Villa Gallotti, where Titti and her husband, Harold, live, and also the Byingtons, on whose balcony I had breakfast the morning of my arrival in Italy in July. (This is the villa mentioned in Sinclair Lewis' Dodsworth.) Titti's elder brother, Gino, (the courageous fisherman I told you about), is not married, and is full of life and fun. He recently drove three of us consular wives downtown in his open convertible, all of us feeling very happy and elegant, out on a spree. When we arrived at the Piazza dei Martiri, he jumped out of the car and went into the best store there and bought each of us a Swiss lapel-watch as a surprise, for no reason except that he makes and spends a lot of money and likes to do kind things on the spur of the moment. However, his generosity did make it hard on one of the three of us, whose husband is very jealous; that very morning he had seen her (us) once downtown in Gino's car, and again coming up the hill at noon from Gino's house, and furthermore, she had to account for his gift of the lapel-watch. It was an awkward moment as we gathered around the luncheon table, clouds gathering on the jealous husband's face. But Fritz helped the situation a lot by taking it so naturally. He saw the problem at a glance, and with his usual sensitivity to other people's feelings he reached over and took my watch, examined it and said "What a nice little watch, and how wonderful of Gino to do such a kind thing!", and then put my watch in his own lapel in such a casual way that the other husband couldn't say anything at all to his wife about it. At least not at the luncheon table. Sometimes I just adore Fritz!

Last night our Consul General and his wife gave a dinner party for the whole Consulate in honor of the three brides and grooms of this summer, the Durbrows (married in

London), the Veteres (in Naples) and ourselves (in Rome). The Bowmans have a huge flat with enormous rooms. We sat out on the terrace, overlooking the sea, for cocktails and soup, and then moved inside to the smaller of their two dining rooms where all the food was laid out, buffet-style, and then we went into the large dining room, which is practically as big as a ballroom, with gigantic bronze chandeliers, and a table that can seat 50 people. Only Mr. Bowman confessed that it doesn't -- they only said it did when he bought it. There were about 10 last night, and five at a small table -- the "kids," all about 17 to 25. Emily Durbrow as the most important bride (because her husband is a full consul) sat on Mr. Bowman's right, and I on his left. Irene Vetere sat farther down the table because she has no consular rank, though a bride; her husband is an Italian chemist. The table was beautifully arranged -- linen tablecloth with the United States' coat of arms and all the Washington buildings and the Capitol, White House, Mt. Vernon, etc. woven into it (all white, of course), and masses of red and white flowers in the center.

August 30, 1938

Fritz and I drove to Pompeii last Sunday -- the outside of it is very touristy, with hotels and busses, parking lots and sellers of coral and tortoise shell. But Pompeii itself is fascinating. When you are looking at it, it doesn't surprise you much, for you have seen pictures of it all your life -- but a day or two later the idea begins to amaze you -- a whole town of streets, laid out with curbs, houses with patios and tables and painted walls, street signs, wine shop, etc., etc., all lying shell-like and empty! And suddenly the realization hits you that it's been lying there empty for thousands of years -- a sort of fossil-shell empty of its former inhabitants.

Pompeii still has walls of a sort, and gates to enter it. The tourists enter by the Marine Gate, towards the sea, (which used to be higher than it is now, and the beach much closer to the town). The forum, an open square, holds the remains of several beautiful temples and pedestals which held statues. All the stone is very rough and crude now, with bits of marble still adhering; and it's a sandy, dirt-colored brown, but one has to remember it was once white with various colors -- for Pompeii was one of the most brightly-colored cities in the world: everything was painted red, yellow, green, blue: bright, primary colors. I had always pictured Pompeii as quite small, but it is getting progressively larger as they excavate. We walked for about three and a half hours and saw less than one-ninth of it. I will spare you the descriptions of all the dead bodies of people caught by death as they tried to wait it out, closed into rooms of houses or barracks. These descriptions can be found in thousands of books. But perhaps the most touching testimony is the twisted, tortured body of the dead dog, now lying in Pompeii's museum.

On Sunday evening we all went down to the S.S. SATURNIA to see Titti and Harold Granata off on their home-leave to the States. At least thirty of Titti's two "crowds" were there. Her two groups of friends are like two circles partly intersecting. The Americans are mostly consular, the Italians titled -- the two crowds only overlap at parties or for swimming. The total mixture was there Sunday night. Then we all went from the ship to a very hilarious party of 22 for dinner outdoors on the balcony of a seaside restaurant,

where the Italian men began throwing plates at each other, and catching them skillfully. But the horse-play was finally ended when an American girl became so inspired that she picked up a plate and threw it, hitting an American Vice Consul and slicing his forehead open, so that he bled like mad. She of course, felt terrible about it.

Old Vesuvio blew off his hat the other night (the same night you had an earthquake in California which occurred about six hours after our eruption -- a coincidence? -- or was some strange disturbance afoot under our earth's surface?). I didn't see the eruption myself, which breaks my heart. Fritz and I were at home -- it was a windy night, and we were both reading. But the Durbrows were just having their after-dinner coffee at 10 o'clock, when their maid, Maria, came rushing in from the terrace screaming religiously for Mercy from Above; they went out, and there was old Vesuv spitting forth like fury, apparently very upset about something. Flames were shooting up, and the sky, which was very black and stormy that night, was red clear to the top. He kept it up for fifteen minutes, and during that time blew his small interior cone to Kingdom Come -- after building it up carefully for 10 to 15 years! Now we can't see his pretty red glow from Naples, as we used to every night, because the fire is below the edge of the crater; whereas formerly the cone lifted the flame up into full view.

We drove right by under his flank the next day and didn't even know anything had happened, because his head was hidden in fog, and because we didn't hear about the eruption for two days after it happened. Fritz says a real blow-up is overdue; but don't let that worry you about us, for Naples has never experienced anything serious from an eruption -- it is too far away. It's surprising how limited its action is: it's only about 15 or 20 minutes from Naples by the fast autostrada to the foot of Vesuvio, yet only the towns at the foot of the slope have ever been badly harmed -- like Pompeii or Herculaneum. One time the professor in the Vesuvius Observatory remained quite unharmed at his post during a bad eruption (lava flow three miles long right under his nose!).

On Wednesday, the niece of the American Consul General in Rome, who had been one of our wedding party, came down to sail for home on the "Rex" on Thursday, and asked us to take her around the Amalfi Drive. I put up a picnic lunch (with Sofia's erratic aid), and we drove through Pompeii to the Chiunzi Pass (pronounced Koonzy), and picnicked high up on the pass, with a lovely view of Vesuvio, the valley, many small towns, and Naples in the distance. We fed to the bursting point three cute peasant boys who sat on the wall by the car and regarded us solemnly the whole time. Then we met some English people whose car had broken an axle (just missing being hurled over the precipice because luckily they were going slowly). It turned out they were an English Lord and Lady. They were very matter-of-fact and unalarmed by their narrow escape, and went striding down the hill on foot in an adventuresome spirit, while we drove on in the other direction taking with us their chauffeur, who was to phone from Maiori for another car.

After we dropped him off, we drove again through the familiar scenes of our recent honeymoon: Ravello, Amalfi, and then went on to a beautiful town called Positano. There we were halted on a hillside road by a man waving a bunch of lemons and calling out to us in English; so we had an orangeade at his shop. Tom had spent many years in

America; Fritz had seen him there on his hillside before, and we found him very amusing. He has a very strong Bronx accent -- incidentally, he is still an American citizen.

The coast looked gorgeous that day -- the grayish sky and fitful sun brought out the turquoise of the sea, the whiteness of the waves beating against the cliffs, the subtle colors of the rocks, the gray-green foliage, and the pink-and-white towns.

On the way back, we stopped in Sorrento at the Hotel Reale and called on the mother of one of our vice consuls. On the basis of the size of her children, we had bet each other that she would be tall and thin, in the attire of a Scottish noblewoman being photographed in front of a castle on the Highland crags. But we were doomed to disappointment, for she was mild and gracious, with shining silvery hair and delicate, pretty white hands. We had tea with her there, and then drove back to Naples for dinner in a famous restaurant where you choose your own fish, and they cook it to order. Ours was roasted and served with oil and vinegar -- superb! By then the passengers who were sailing on the S.S. REX had all assembled, including the Learneds from Rome (later note: The parents of Michael Learned of television fame), so we went down to the dock to see them all off.

Last night there was another party for the three couples (including ourselves) who were married this summer. It was at a house in the country near the sea, and although it was cold, we had dinner outside, at five tables on the terrace. Once the food had warmed us up it was lovely, with the oleander blossoms around us, the Japanese lanterns, and completely roofed-over with grapevines, whose huge Bacchic bunches of green and purple grapes hung thickly down over our heads. We three newly-married couples sat at one table, and it was hilarious. Several very funny things happened. Virginia had a boy of about twelve to pour the wine and water, and he was terribly confused and impressed by his immense importance -- so confused that he invariably poured wine into the water glasses and water into the white-wine glasses, with the result that by the end of the meal, in spite of all that we could say or do, there was practically a complete line of glasses all the way around the table, containing half wine and half water. And to top this, to succeed in rendering us really hysterical, Elbridge Durbrow, one of the grooms, started acting up, and when Durby is funny, he is very, VERY funny! They brought on ice cream and little individual pink-frosted cakes with a candle in each -- much larger candles than the American birthday candles. Durby looked at his candle, took it out of the cake, and with a straight face, put it, flame and all, into his mouth. While he went on talking quite seriously about something or other, he chewed up the candle, swallowed it, and solemnly, with no change of expression, he next ate my candle and Irene's candle, both with the flame. By then the whole garden was in an uproar because all the other tables were watching him, and then he ate the three candles on the three grooms' cakes, flames and all. It didn't seem to affect him, because he had a fine time all evening, doing tarantellas and apache dances with girls, or sometimes by himself. The expression "life of the party" was certainly invented for people like Durby, but his bride is a little dazed by it all, and looks on wide-eyed. Apparently lacking a sense of the ridiculous, she doesn't seem to know whether to enjoy his silliness or not; but I can guess what is going to happen in a year or so to his high spirits, because sometimes she says coldly: "Durby!" and after a little while he stops having fun.

August 19, 1938

One evening this past week we walked along the shore to the Castel dell'Ovo (Egg), which is always nice at night. It is near the yacht basin and has little seaside restaurants with tables along the water's edge, where you can get coffee (it was near here where we had the plate-throwing contest I mentioned). At each place they have several musicians -- usually an accordion and a violin or mandolin, and a singer -- almost always a tenor singing "Santa Lucia" and other old favorites, largely for the benefit of the tourists. The other night we heard a boy of about fourteen singing -- he had a grand untrained voice. The man he sings for was watching him with much pride -- we found out he pays the boy 10 centesimi (1/2 cent!) for singing all evening long, almost constantly, until midnight or after! He has a wild, sentimental, truly Neapolitan/Saracenic type of voice. It should be trained (but one doubts he will be as lucky as was Enrico Caruso, who is said to have been discovered in this way and in exactly this spot).

From there we walked back to the park called the Villa Nazionale and had our coffee at a little outdoor pavilion. It was very nice there -- cool, sitting in rattan chairs, at little tables, with very few people passing that late (about 10:30 p.m.). It was surrounded by large trees, with nice white paths and a statue or two, and the bandstand (tall and narrow, of painted iron grille-work, unlike any American small-town bandstands I have seen). I've always loved the rich green color of tree foliage under electric light.

Last evening Fritz and I walked through the famous Via di Tribunali. It is the old part of town, and is fascinating -- huge old churches rising in black masses from tiny squares; statues overgrown with grass, huge windows like vast empty eyes (no glass in some of them). Life runs through that street in a full stream like blood in an artery -- hundreds of people wandering up and down in the narrow street (no automobiles), looking down from balconies, sitting in front of the shop doors -- all the ground floors are tiny shops. We stopped in one of the shops for coffee and had an amusing talk with an ironical old lady and equally ironical pretty young girl. They were determined to find out from Fritz what he does here in Naples, but they didn't succeed. We walked the full length of the Tribunali, and then up a narrower street where we found in an alley a whole row of clay-workers' shops. We stopped at one where the whole family was at work, and amidst much jumble of their pathetic anxiety to sell, we bought two figures at fifteen cents apiece; a figure of an old lady, a wine-seller, and a little fisher boat.

Yesterday was the day for my dreaded Italian lesson -- I am not a good student like Fritz, who studies the grammar and fills in all the blanks left in the sentences to show case, mood, gender, and number. So instead of just sitting still at home, and taking it on the chin, I suggested to Signora C that she take me to see a beautiful church she had told me of -- Donna Regina. It really is lovely, and all future Italian sessions are going to be enjoyed on foot, exploring, learning conversational Italian rather than doing grammar. Donna Regina (Lady Queen) was neglected, then became a dilapidated public meeting place; and finally, from 1929-1934 it became a warehouse with stalls built into the walls.

One day four years ago an old portiere from another church was sent over there to see to the storing of some political handbills, and during a lull in his work he took a little walk through the dark warehouse, a stroll which resulted in his rushing madly to the Director of the Art Department of the University of Naples. Together they discovered, by poking into corners, sufficient tracings to justify the professor in writing to the government. The last four years have been spent in restoring it. Much of the wall fresco (which formerly covered every inch of wall and ceiling) is unfortunately gone -- only patches remain, but the effect is wonderful. Scenes from the lives of saints, some in full color, some in shades of yellow ochre, etc. One small chapel has a fresco by Giotto -- a real treasure! There is a wonderful sepulchre of Queen Mary of Hungary, and the ceilings are painted with the crest of Hungary's royal family -- red, blue, white and silver. The church is Gothic, some of the lovely Gothic pillars remain -- partly original, partly restored -- for the warehouse people had chopped right into the walls and pillars to make storerooms!

Then we poked our heads in quick succession into other churches: San Filippo Neri, San Lorenzo, and the Cathedral. Some of them were pretty terrible: stickly, furry, plushy, and sickening with gilt, rotting fabrics, bulging gilded baroque balconies, and life-sized holy figures in glass cases, dressed in antique clothes. But San Lorenzo is something different. Its original fine interior has recently been rediscovered under a completely baroque top layer of decoration. The walls are now being torn out, as well as ceilings, and they are uncovering the original walls and Gothic arches and revealing some early frescoes. The apse has already been restored, and is one of the finest things I've ever seen: gray stone pillars marching around in a dignified lovely curve, with stone arches above, and a semicircle of austere little chapels with tombs and sarcophagi of old knights, represented in full relief or line-drawing in their armor. It was a church frequented by Dante and Petrarch, and now is reassuming, hopefully, more of the form in which they knew it. It contains a gigantic Roman arch, now filled up with stones which will be removed when restoration is complete.

Fritz and I were looking forward so much to going north the week after next, to see Florence and Venice. But the Italian decree on the Jews has quadrupled the work at the Consulate, and all in the Consulate are working at top speed, since this work is of great importance.

Sunday we had a lovely day seeing the famous Campi Flegrei of the ancients, visiting three well-known grottoes. The one at Lago Averno was considered to be the entrance to Hell, where a mustachioed man in a sailor's hat and with rolled-up trousers took us one at a time on his back, and waded through underground water in pitch-black tunnels, holding a candle in one hand, informing us that we were in Hell, which we already realized from our general discomfort. At one point, I was left alone in the dark while the pirate went back to retrieve Fritz; I had been put down on my feet on a very damp little shelf of rock about one-half inch above water-level, in a room momentarily revealed by the light of his candle, to be barrel-vaulted and to have various mysterious doors on the outer edges of vision. While he had gone to fetch Fritz, I stood in total blackness, frozen with apprehension, not daring to move, in a mysterious underground cave (subject to volcanic earthquakes!), filled with the ghosts of all the bygone sibyls who had inhabited it, and I

could hear the water lapping quietly around me right up to my toes!! In the distance I could hear the struggles of the pirate to maneuver 6 foot 3 of American manhood onto his back without too much trailing of feet in the water.

Eventually, we were deposited back on terra firma in the blessed sunshine, and, re-entering our car, we drove along a covered road (which SHOULD have been condemned, even if it wasn't) through a fascinating rock tunnel, rather like driving through an upside-down ravine with the earth curving over our heads -- dark, but with a tiny beam of daylight at the far end. Occasional holes in the roof allowed patches of sunshine to cheer our way, and also permitted trailing tendrils and garlands of green to hang down from the fertile fields above our tunnel. It seems that always in Italy (in ancient temples and tunnels) there is a rift in the roof through which loops and swatches of green are trailing picturesquely, causing the tourist to grab for his camera!

Next we drove to Cumae to have a look at the grotto of the Cumaean Sibyl on her home base. It was more tremendous and startling than the other, but not so much fun to get to. You walk through great rock chambers with ceiling vents to let in daylight, eventually reaching a large, circular domed room, very black, where the sibyl used to sit on an ivory throne, with her predecessor (dead, of course) suspended above her in a wooden cage, and her novice, who would later take her place when she died, out-of-sight, creating stage settings for her as she prophesied to a visitor, by putting colored paper over the vents. In Robert Graves' I, Claudius, Claudius tells of how he came all the way down from Rome to consult her. At first he could just see the dead sibyl, with a red light on her from above (red paper over the vent); then she disappeared (black paper), and the living sibyl appeared suddenly (paper removed from another vent) in a shaft of white light, sitting on an ivory throne. He says she had a "beautiful mad face." It was all terribly impressive, and I loved it, so Fritz accommodated me by seating himself on her throne (which, at least nowadays is white stone -- not ivory) for ten minutes, while I took the picture, purely by guess. At first Fritz thought quietly to himself, but time seemed so long down there, and it was impossible to converse because of the tremendous echo making everything unintelligible (I wonder how the ancient understood what the sibyl was saying?); so he began to moan and whistle weirdly to scare me, until I hastily clicked off the camera, and we left.

There is a group of temple ruins called the "Cumaean Acropolis" on the hilltop over the grotto which Fritz had not told me about because he didn't want to climb around anymore. When we drove away, I turned around and saw them, and was furious. But I can't stay angry with him, and in five minutes or so he had me laughing. It's rather fun to get angry, because it's so nice afterwards.

Last, we drove to Lago Agnano to see the lake and the third grotto: "The Grotto of the Dog." We were much embarrassed to find no lake there at all (because we were more or less following Mark Twain's 1869 account of his travels in the area), and when we asked three old men where the lake had gone to they burst out laughing uproariously, and told us that Lago Agnano had been gone for 64 years! It had been drained and is now a racetrack for surrey racing.

But we did find the grotto, which is filled with carbon dioxide, so they say, and a dog is supposed to die in only two minutes if held upside-down by his legs over the fumes; and a chicken will die in one-half minute. (We were fortunately told later that the dog does not die, only passes out. They toss him behind the grotto, and when the tourist has been gone for a while, he recovers, and lives to die many times more for the delectation of the tourists.) In this grotto you can only walk down about four steps -- beyond that, it's suicide. It seems that carbon monoxide is like water in being heavy, and it flows and holds its own level. Our legs were instantly bathed in heat and perspiration, so we stepped back onto the ground, while the girl in attendance made interesting experiments for us with torches. You can ladle it like water, so she filled a bucket with it, and showed us how it would extinguish the torches. Then she turned the bucket upside down for a second, and then put the torches in, and they didn't go out, because the carbon dioxide had poured out like water. The last and best experiment was filling the grotto with smoke from the torches. It all settled exactly at one level, very smoky and lace-like, looking exactly as if the grotto were half-filled with water, and the smoke flowed in a flat surface toward the door, and then poured out over the lintel onto the ground! You just couldn't believe it wasn't water. Thus ended our big Grotto-Day.

On Monday my Italian teacher took me to the favorite church of the Neapolitans, Santa Chiara, where an American girl came up to us and asked if she could join our party, which was being shown around by a monk. Then she said to me: "I'll bet you are Mrs. Jandrey," which floored me. She turned out to be the daughter of the Honorable Lincoln MacVeagh, the American Minister to Greece, and she had guessed my name because she had heard from her father that Fritz had been married in July. She is still at Bryn Mawr, and she had just stopped over in Naples for the day on her way from Greece to the States to attend the fall semester of college; so that night Fritz and I saw her off for school on the S.S. EXETER. Fritz has caught the attention and affection of Mr. MacVeagh because our own American Consul General in Naples has never gone to the trouble of going down to meet Mr. MacVeagh at any ship on which he has passed through Naples on his way to or from Greece. (Note: He was later Ambassador to Portugal and Spain). Whereas Fritz, out of his sense of what is courteous, and due to Mr. MacVeagh, meets him each time he comes through Naples, to greet him and do what he can for him.

War Casts its Shadow Ahead

One night this week we went to a Ball at the Excelsior Hotel. It was very fancy and took place in two great rooms -- one for dancing and one for supper, with a gigantic supper table. It was, however, a very tense, rather uncomfortable evening, for at 9 p.m. Germany had given its ultimatum to the Czechs, and at 10 Czechoslovakia flatly refused it. Germany's deadline was 11 p.m., and all evening our hearts were in our throats, and nobody could talk about anything else. It was so tense that I now know how people feel on the eve of a war. Paolo, the host, has an American wife, and it was all very confusing. If there were a war, America wouldn't go into it right away, if at all, and maybe Italy could keep out of it too. But here it's so close to the troubled area; and if Italy does go to

war with anybody, Paolo and all the other young Italians at the party (two of them were army officers) would have to go immediately. So despite the orchestra and dancing it was a strange ominous evening -- so different and so much more alive than war worries must be at home at this point. But, in the end, war was not declared that night.

We are moving on October first to a new apartment at Via Tasso 203, and Paolo (see above) and his wife have a maid who has a friend in Modena who would like to come down to work for us. Since people seem to prefer girls from northern Italy for maids, we jumped at the chance of getting a clean healthy girl from the northern countryside even if we do have to train her from the ground up. (And what do I know about training, fresh out of schoolrooms and offices?) The average pay for a beginning servant here is 130 lire ($6.50 a month). We'll raise her 5 lire a month (25 cents) till she reaches 150 to 180, according to her value, which will be enough to keep her eager to keep the job, for pay is about 130 or 140 here for most servants.

(Enclosure, August, 1938)

Consular lunch given for American Navy, August 11, 1938:

MENU

Hors d'Oeuvres Excelsior
Clear Soup Madrilene
Grilled Spring Chicken with Bacon
Straw Potatoes
Combination Salad
Dry Biscuits
Fruits

Nothing remarkable about it except spring chicken in August and dry biscuits -- so attractive sounding! However, the menu itself is very pretty, printed on cream-colored paper, with pale green garlands, flowers, loops and swoops of green, and an elegantly entwined "E" at the top, for Excelsior Hotel.

September 21, 1938

As I eat marron glacés, which I don't particularly like, but were a gift, I will try to tell you the happenings of the last few days. Last Sunday was a glorious day, and everyone was outdoors enjoying themselves. We drove to a tiny town called Casertavecchia (Old Caserta), near the town of Caserta proper, with its great palace in the hills north and east of Vesuvius. It is an ancient town with narrow hilly streets, very simple and rural, stony and bare -- no inessentials like stores -- not even a single shop! The villagers all eat at home, so of course there is no restaurant to go to. There is an old castle on the hill, at the foot of which the village was built centuries ago on a steep slope which drops down towards the valley with its groves of olive trees. We found that a wedding was about to

take place, and watched the procession -- everyone in town was out for it. We stared at them and they stared at us, and everyone was delighted with everybody else. But I had the advantage, for I had a camera and they didn't!

We walked up through the quiet, twisty lanes past the fascinating ancient stone church (hexagonal or octagonal tower -- can't remember which, or maybe one of each!) and finally arrived up at the castle. There I had the loveliest quiet hour I've had in a long time. The ruin is particularly restful, though the round tower has a rather sinister air about it, and the wind whistles through its empty windows even on a tranquil day. The hill is very high, so one has a wide view over valley and hills, lying spread out in the sun, and the wind rustles the vines growing out of the ruined castle halls, and yellow and lavender flowers blow, and bees bumble. I lay down in the yellow and 1avender flowers and got drowsy and dreamed about who lived in the castle and what he did to amuse himself ('bopped the villagers on their heads'?), and what it would be like to be the daughter of the castle, growing up there with more worldly goods than anybody else in sight, but nobody to look at but the local yokels. (Hope there was at least one handsome one!) However, I forgot at the time that Naples was only a couple of hours away by horse, so they probably kept up with things, and maybe the princess married into a decaying noble family in Naples, whose descendants sold my maid the fish she bought this morning to cook for our dinner tonight.

In the meantime, Fritz was sound asleep with his crossed foot waving gently in the breeze under the round tower; so I got up and stalked about taking pictures. After doing considerable climbing around on ruins which were undoubtedly condemnable on safety grounds, we went back down through the old town, got in the car, and drove away, leaving Casertavecchia very much as it was when we arrived.

As we returned through Caserta proper, we had our lunch at an outdoor restaurant in a courtyard garden, where, to our surprise, we found three of our young vice consuls. So after lunch we all went together to the palace and walked a bit in the gardens, but everybody was tired, and refused to walk with me up the long steep hill behind the palace, where the great cascade of water runs down, with fountains, pools, and marble statues. They went on to Casertavecchia where we had just been, and we drove to the town of Capua. It was getting towards sunset, so we sat in the square and had an orange juice and enjoyed ourselves by laughing at the people who went by -- but that was only fair, since they were laughing at us too. (It's our clothes and our great height that strike their funny-bone.) Then, as we drove home through the evening, we watched all the peasants out for a Sunday evening stroll; and, incidentally, marked mentally an interesting trattoria for some future occasion.

Recently we gave a dinner for nine in a little restaurant here that has very good Bolognese food, the proprietor being from Bologna, of course. He is always stirred to the depths when we come, because the first time we went there we were with the "Heinzes of Italy", (the Signorinis). So the table was covered with pink lilies and red roses and hundreds of <u>toothpicks</u> laid out in lovely designs on the tablecloth!!!

And last night we went with a vice consul to the trattoria we had discovered Sunday night on the way home from Caserta, and it was loads of fun. Trattorias are always very simple and rustic, offering mainly spaghetti and red wine. Our waiter spoke English, and had been to America, and hovered over us (Italian waiters always hover better than any others), and he produced two very stringy roasted chickens as a special treat. I fed my portion to a very sweet cat, who thought it was lovely.

The only other people there were eight chauffeurs having a party for themselves on their night off. They were very far along on red wine, and amused us considerably by singing questionable songs (so our waiter told us, hoping we did not understand dialect) in tremendously loud, coarse voices, and dancing the fandango boisterously, with their baggy, unpressed trousers just clinging to their hips and bay-windows by a miracle. They specialized in bumping their plump back ends together hard, and trying to knock each other down. When we left, they were still going strong.

(Later note: Meanwhile, at the Consulate General, the Jewish people kept pouring in from Germany and elsewhere, desperate, carrying with them whatever they could manage, frantically searching for a place to go which would accept them. Of course the United States had an immigration quota, and could only take a certain number; besides which there were health regulations, as with usual would-be immigrants, glaucoma and other things. Some of the consuls and vice consuls apparently found it easier to turn desperate people down than did Fritz, or hid their feelings better. After explaining that they could not give the Jew or Jewish family a visa for the States they would just stand up, and say firmly that they were very sorry they could do nothing for them. The Jews would often cry or threaten to go and jump out into the street from the Consulate balcony, all to no avail. Poor Fritz, always most sympathetic, found it very difficult to turn them down, talked to them longer than necessary, though he could not help them; and would come home at night totally numb, emotionally and physically exhausted.)

At 8 a.m. this morning I went with a vice consul to the Cathedral (Duomo) to witness the liquefaction of the blood of San Gennaro, the patron saint of Naples. It happens every year at this time, and they have a three-day festival. It seems that by some miracle, a small glass bottle of San Gennaro's blood (quite dried out these many centuries, of course), suddenly turns liquid again; and according to how fast the miracle of liquefaction of his blood takes place, the good or bad luck of the city for the following year is predicted. When we were let into the church from the waiting room at 8:45, we got a strong sense of excitement from the crowd inside the church -- almost like a spiritual electric shock. They were all leaning forward hard in their seats, with their faces turned towards the altar, as if their bodies and spirits were being pulled hard in that direction by some invisible force. The priests put rich vestments on the bust of San Gennaro, and then brought out the beautiful gold and glass container holding the dried blood. When at last he turned it upside down and the blood ran down, obviously liquid, the crowd surged like a tide towards the front of the church to get as close as possible to the vial of blood, and then strained tensely towards it. Two rows of old women were chanting in unison, some really weird song, first in minor and then high key -- very oriental sounding, to my untrained ear. (There is much Saracenic and Spanish ancestry in the Neapolitans). Then

the priest let the nearest people kiss the bottle containing the blood, and made the sign of the cross with it in front of some of the visiting priests and monks. We were right up with other privileged people in front, because we had tickets which admitted us to the altar part of the church. It was all a very strange experience, and quite apart from whether one believes in the miracle or not, there was definitely a powerful emotion abroad in the church -- an actual impact of human feeling and belief. It was exceedingly exciting to be in that church in the cold early morning light, with the mass of people all straining and tugging forward, their bodies in a diagonal line, their heads much further forward than their feet, irresistibly drawn towards something that stirred them to worship. I have heard that in years when San Gennaro's blood is slow to liquefy, or utterly refuses to do so at all, the people of Naples take it as a tragedy, and the old women who were chanting, (who call themselves his relatives or family, related to him by birth) get very angry at the saint, and shriek all sorts of horrible curses and insults at him.

You ask if I am happy with Fritz. The answer is that I'm almost deliriously happy most of the time. He's simply wonderful -- I can't imagine any man being so kind and so good, or my being lucky enough to have him and to be so much in love with him. This may sound a little extravagant, but it's not. I'm sure no man could make me more truly happy than Fritz does -- and perhaps no other man could come anywhere near it. We get along beautifully if I am orderly and sensible; so far there is no cloud in our life at all. I didn't have the faintest idea I could feel for any person what I feel for him -- and yet it seems so natural now to be that way that I can't even remember back to what I was like when I wasn't depending practically for every breath on keeping one special person within sight and touch.

We have just returned from our second honeymoon -- a two-week trip north, with Venice as our ultimate goal. It was the most wonderful trip I have ever had. In Venice we visited a school where they teach lace-making, and they took us to watch their more experienced girls make lace -- it's fascinating to watch. They were working on absolutely unbelievably beautiful silk and lace sheets, lingerie, and even curtains for Queen Farida of Egypt, and I nearly lost my mind over the beauty of them. They cost thousands of dollars. The girls work with fine needles such as we use to sew silk -- different sizes for different kinds of lace: Venetian Point, Burano Point, flat Venetian, flat Burano, etc., altogether over sixty kinds. Then the girl took us into their showrooms, and wouldn't let us go -- she had Fritz convinced that he was an utter fool not to mortgage a year's salary to buy lavish lace dinner sets without a moment's delay as long as we were in Venice and could see just what they had. There were also wonderful handkerchiefs of practically solid lace which Fritz fell in love with, for $25, which would have cost at least twice that in America; but that was too expensive for us, so he ordered a special one made for me, which has one corner of lace instead of a border all round, and even that cost us $5! He also ordered several small handmade monograms to be set into handkerchiefs or pillowcases, and while we waited they drew a monogram of CDJ and are making them up now and will send them down to us here. Then when I saw how helpless Fritz was in that terrible saleswoman's hands I had to become rude to her, and dragged him away by main force. The simplest embroidered sets of twelve-place pieces, 12 napkins and a centerpiece cost $35; and the lacier ones (still practically their cheapest kind) cost $125. We could

have gotten 6 place mats and 6 napkins, without the centerpiece, of the $125 kind, for about $38-$40, but we just couldn't afford it and I knew it; but poor Fritz is still talking about them.

October 21, 1938

We met the Captain of an Italian cruiser at a party at the tennis club here, of which Fritz and two other American Consuls are playing members. I sat on the right of the club president, Count Gaetano. As a result of our meeting the Captain, Fritz and I were invited on board the cruiser. They piped us on board, which was my first experience of such grandeur, and later they piped us off. All the officers were lined up to greet us, with salutes and hand-kissing (I am married now, and my hand may therefore be kissed). We were shown over the ship and served cocktails and many delicious sandwiches, nuts and cakes, and I was given a little silver pin in the form of their ship, with its name engraved on it. (Note: The ship was about to go on a cruise, for which I was chosen to be their mascot; but unfortunately, that particular cruise was the one on which the ship caught fire and sustained considerable damage! I am ashamed of myself!)

To get back to our second honeymoon: the trip north. We started on Monday, September 26, a lovely day, and we were both as exhilarated and happy as children, as soon as we had bidden our crazy Sophie goodbye forever, had finished our breakfast at Miss Middleton's tea room, and had gotten really out-of-town. We drove through a countryside of tiny towns and ruined castles on top of cone-shaped hills, and by the middle of the afternoon we were in the mountains, surrounded with lovely feathery pines, which later gave way to bare rock where sheep were pastured. At about 4:30 we arrived at our destination, a mountain town called Scanno -- very isolated, with old stone houses, narrow mountainous streets, and the women in costume, (about the only place remaining in Italy where you can see costumes on a daily basis). They were made of heavy homespun black wool, for it is a cold climate. The skirts are especially beautiful, floor-length and in back they are laid in very fine pleats and then given a side-to-side swirling wave from waist to floor, so from behind the whole skirt flows gracefully with every movement. We stayed at a simple but nice hotel called the Rome, where we were lucky enough to run into a wedding party, the women all in costume.

We went for a walk after tea, and found the town most primitive and interesting, but villainously damp and raw. Babies were sneezing, and old ladies coughing, and we each took colds. But due to the cold dampness, the women's' complexions were wonderful. We enjoyed seeing the women wash their clothes in a mountain stream, though that is not unusual in Italy. When the Scanno women carry heavy burdens on their heads, they tie up their long heavy skirts with a black scarf just below their posteriors, whereupon the accordion pleats all expand; and this great bustle, like a huge inner tube around them, bobs up and down in a peculiar motion as they trot along with great loads of hay or twigs on their heads.

Back at the hotel we watched the wedding party on a large balcony terrace do folk dances

and grand marches, and semi-modern two-steps. (I waited with baited breath for the Big Apple or the Lambeth Walk, but they didn't appear.) I took many photographs, of course. Then we had a marvelous dinner of soup, steak, fried potatoes, and red wine -- and to bed.

(Incidentally, the father of the bride had gone to America when he was young, worked there until he had enough money to return to Scanno where he is considered to be very rich. What the wife does meanwhile I don't know, except work hard and raise the children, and where the others come from after the first, the bridal baby, I don't know. But this is their objective and ideal: To get married, go to America, make good, and return to Italy well-heeled, to spend their declining years with their family. As a matter of fact, that was exactly what the groom in this case was planning to do. He would stay long enough in Scanno to get his wife with child, and then disappear to America for many years. Perhaps after a visit or two during those years, he too, like the bride's father, would reappear as a middle-aged or old man, with enough money to live on and support his family for the rest of his life. Not an ideal marriage, from our point of view, but apparently satisfactory and practical for the Scanno-ese and numberless other Italians.)

The next morning we left Scanno and during the day we passed through many towns, like Aquila, which have great histories, and where we loved the many old churches we saw. Especially the town called Trevi, which we passed between Spoleto and Foligno, was absolutely fairy-like in the after-sunset light, with many turrets and spires, high on a hillside, delicately colored in lavenders, pale yellows, and silver. And thus finally to Assisi, our destination for the night, which we were to spend in a convent -- in separate rooms, of course!

Back in Naples
October 30, 1938

Fritz and I have just finished a walk around the old part of town. There is one amazing thing about the little streets here, which would be called tenement districts in America: they are dirty and tortuous and about ten feet or less wide, and filled with mobs of poor, ragged people; but, whereas in a real tenement district in America there would be no trees or decent views for a mile, these places have absolutely enchanting vistas everywhere one looks. Most of the buildings are very old and very large, and were at one time palaces (everything here is a palace or a hovel) built by noble families. Each one has a big door at the ground floor front which leads back into a courtyard from which there is access to all the apartments into which these old palaces have now been cut up. As you walk along the street and look back into these large gate-doors (formerly used as entry for horses and carriages) you often see lovely gardens, interesting walls with flowers and vines, and parts of little apartments with green shutters and wrought-iron balconies. This morning, in the most dirty, crammed part of a dingy street, we went into one of these passageways, and found ourselves immediately on a stone balcony overhanging one of the loveliest old-world gardens I've ever seen, filled with rubber trees, date palms, flowering vines, ferns, ramblers with rose-orange and purple flowers -- and this was right in the <u>center</u> of

one of the most crowded tenement districts in the world! A block away, in the same district, Fritz and I found a place we would love to live -- a little, dirty, paved street leads up to a little courtyard like the cloister of a monastery, with tiny iron balconies, climbing flowering vines, and pigeons cooing. The amazing thing about all this is the close proximity in which the rich and the poor live. The new-rich and some of the wealthier nobles go out into the newer sections near the waterfront and build themselves modern palaces; but many of the old families go on living in their old palaces, the father and mother, or whoever is head of the family taking the piano nobile (the choice floor, with the highest ceilings, best-decorated); while the sons and daughters and their families live on the other floors; and what is left they rent out. And the ground floor on the street side of the house is lived in by a mass of the dirtiest, most squalid, cheerful and loving paupers the world has ever seen! And the streets are filled with song -- the Italians all seem to have fine voices. In the house we particularly liked, all the flats in the garden side were occupied by Barons, Marquises, and Princes, according to the name-plates. The portiere said there might be a flat empty by May.

November 1, 1938

I am again at the office, waiting for Fritz, who is downstairs talking to Mr. DeCourcy, the deputy to our Consul General. An American battleship came in this morning, and they are waiting till it's time to go out to pay the Admiral the usual office call. It isn't very often that we have our navy here. After Mr. DeCourcy's call to the ship, the Admiral will call here at the Consulate General. If Fritz is not called upon to amuse the officers with tennis or some such thing, we will drive by ourselves out to Baiae for a long walk in the country, for it is a lovely day, sunny and cold, and a holiday: All-Saint's Day.

To return again to our recent trip -- that second honeymoon which I never seem to finish telling you about. Assisi: This is a lovely little medieval hill town built all of creamy-tan stones. In order to preserve its charm (and to keep the tourists coming) there is a law that all new buildings must be constructed of this same stone, and in a certain style which they consider proper to maintain the atmosphere of Assisi. Of course, it was St. Francis' hometown, he of the mild goodness and lectures on Divine Love to flocks of birds and meadows of flowers. There are many night, and went to a convent which is a sort of hospice. All the nuns are American. It had a quiet pleasing atmosphere. Although it was after 9, they courteously raked together a nice supper for us; then put us in separate cells overlooking the hillside and churches below. The beds were terrible, and extremely narrow! The next morning we had a grand big breakfast, and then walked through the town to the larger church, (Basilica of) San Francesco, which has frescoes by Giotto and Cimabue, and wonderful stained-glass windows. Under the nave was a crypt where St. Francis is buried very austerely in an old square granite column. There were beautiful cloisters to which I was not admitted, which Fritz saw in the company of a priest. After lunch we talked to the pleasant Kansas nun who was delegated to look after us, and then we drove off across the valley to Perugia, an hour and a quarter away.

P.S. I've now been sitting here in the office for <u>three hours</u> while Fritz works and runs

errands for the “Omaha,” and I’m starved and mad.

November 4, 1938

Another holiday today -- festa in honor of the Italian Armistice, which was seven days before ours. It is a perfectly lovely day -- crisp and sunny, and everybody is out of doors. Horse-carriages are rattling by along the sea embankment below the Consulate windows. Fritz is playing tennis, and I, as usual, am waiting. There is a parade somewhere near, with all the brightly-colored uniforms of the bersaglieri and carabinieri, soldiers, sailors, and the cute little ballile (regiments of 8-12 year old boys in fascist uniforms). Our American cruiser, the U.S.S. OMAHA, and two Italian battleships (including the one we visited), are still here, tied up alongside the shore near the Consulate, with festoons of pennants; and just now when a small liner came in, they all fired 40 or 50 guns, so I gather that one of the Italian Royal Family was aboard, probably the Princess returning from her trip to England.

On Tuesday, after I wrote you, Fritz and I drove up a very picturesque little country road near here, with small whitewashed farm houses and orchards with almost-bare boughs; we passed donkeys, pigs, barefooted peasants dressed mostly in red, and arrived at the highest point near here, except of course for Vesuvius. On the hilltop is built the Monastery of Camaldoli. There are two monasteries of this name; we visited the other one near Florence on our recent trip. I was not allowed inside the monastery, of course, but we left the car and plunged into an enchanting little forest of young trees, like a Botticelli painting in its fresh atmosphere. I was delighted; I deserted Fritz and wandered, headlong and solitary, up and down hills and along moist ravines, ankle-deep in undergrowth, wet ferns and miniature wild cyclamen, collecting as I went, a huge handful of freshly-scented pink cyclamen. I then reclaimed my patient husband, and we walked out onto the belvedere, or terrace-outlook of the monastery, where we stood in the cold wind and dying sunlight, with the world’s best view at our feet (if I may exclude from this flat statement the view from the terrace of the Caruso-Belvedere Hotel at Ravello), a clean sweep of 240 degrees of the horizon, 2,000 feet above the sea, though not more than two miles from it at the nearest point. To the extreme left, the very-tranquil Vesuvian plain, then old Vesuvio and his farm houses, burnt-rosy with the last sun on it, pouring forth unusually large quantities of pure white smoke-clouds, which on that particular day had a pleasing trick of exploding upwards in little white pillars of smoke from its long plume, remaining distinct even when they had drifted miles away towards Sorrento and the back hills of the Sorrentine Peninsula. I regretted painfully the absence of my Kodak.

Next in the vast panorama came Naples, itself, and then all the little near islands and promontories described by old Roman poets and historians as the most lovely of all coastlines: Capo Miseno, Baia, the Island of Procida with its pink houses, the large elephantine-gray Island of Ischia with the peak affectionately known as “Old Epomeo,” and then Cumae with its ruined hilltop temples and Sibyl’s grottos; then the flat shore strip called Lago di Patria (Lake of the Homeland) where we swim, picnic, and play

"obstacle golf" in the brush and stubble. And finally, in the far distance lay many islands rarely seen because of fog, including the penal island where Mussolini's political prisoners have lived for 14 years.

But the part I liked almost the best, since I love landscape detail, (my opinion not shared by Fritz, who loves the long spectacular views) was the patchwork of orchards and vegetable gardens far below us, in every possible shade of green and blue-green, with some gray boughs showing through the whole scene, given character by an occasional weathered white or pink-painted stone hut. If there's anything better to look at than the fine gray of bare boughs and twigs against the red, green, or gray of leaves, and brown or black of earth, I don't know what it is. In this instance it was particularly fine because of the intricacy of the bough-and-twig patterns made by fig and olive trees etched against the ground when looked down upon directly from 500 feet above.

November 13, 1938

As I told you, the U.S. cruiser OMAHA came in on the 2nd, and we've been going to parties for them ever since. Two days ago two U.S. destroyers came in, the JACOB JONES and the BADGER, and now it begins all over again. All three ships are moored down at the end of the big modern dock where the two Italian cruisers I told you about were moored last month. The Consulate gave a big formal luncheon for the OMAHA officers at the Excelsior Hotel last week.

Fritz believes in circulating at parties, and does not mind big ones, as I do; so I have been thrown a great deal into the company of a very nice young Ensign from the OMAHA, and we have wandered through most of the parties hand-in-hand, so to speak, because we are comfortably silent together. This afternoon Fritz and I are to be his guests on the OMAHA. Before that, Fritz is playing tennis; and after we have visited the ship with Ensign Mac D., we will have a group for tea at home, including the visiting U.S. Consul from Zagreb, Yugoslavia. (All visiting guests here are called "firemen," a short-cut for "visiting firemen." The Consular couple from Zagreb are not our firemen, but we want to include them.)

Last night the MCPc's (at whose party D. ate the six burning candles) gave a big cocktail party for the officers of the three ships, and such of their wives as are present, because Bob MCPc. used to be in the army, and likes to have the navy out to his house and have a nice quarrel about whether the army or the navy is the better. We went down to the dock and picked up some of the officers from the JACOB JONES and took them out. The MCPc's house is very small, and they crowded about 76 people into two minute rooms, and the noise, confusion, and smoke were really awful. Finally about ten of us got our coats and retired to the garden in self defense. Then we ended up in a little dive called the Golden Barrel for pizzas.

On Friday (Armistice) we drove out to Montevergine, a monastery southeast of Naples. I've never seen such lovely country -- small clean-cut hills covered with very slender

bare trees, each with a clump of leaves at its top, like a tuft of feathers, as if hundreds of arrows had been shot into the hillside from straight above; and the color contrasts were stunning! -- gray and black trunks, yellow and red leaves, black earth, green underbrush, red autumn grape leaves shining against the sun like burning red lanterns, and the bluest sky I've ever seen.

Montevergine itself is high on a mountain; we drove up to it through forests of big gray trees with yellow leaves, and as far as we could see into the depths of the woods, the ground was covered a foot deep with blazing yellow leaves (which reminded me of Tissot's 19th century painting of a party picnicking in the woods under trees covered with yellow autumn leaves). It was really enchanting, and made our stay at the top seem even more like something out of a storybook. There was a huge rambling monastery and a sweet little church with bones of Saints stowed away on shelves behind glass, in boxes of glass and wrought-iron, carefully labeled as to Saint's name and sex. The bones are arranged in different complicated designs, with artificial daisies and primroses stuck here and there, in between the bones. I thought it a touching sight -- the Saints had all been dead about 600 years. A dear little fat monk in a white robe took us around -- the vaguest man I've ever talked to. Fritz and Tommy nearly collapsed with mirth as his mind kept wandering; and he would suddenly stop right in the middle of his story and start laughing heartily about some other anecdote he'd just remembered about the Saint whose bones were in the next case. He knew all their stories, and it seems that most of the female Saints had died or entered the Convent because their betrothed had refused to embrace Christianity. The little fellow was terribly embarrassed when we gave him some money for the church, and kept saying: "Oh dear no, oh dear me, oh thank you!", and tried to give me about 25 post cards at 2 cents each (all of the same view!) to make up for our gift, which would not even have covered the cost of the cards.

November 16, 1938

The most important news is that we have a cat! She is mostly Angora, pure white from nose to tip of tail, quite long fur, with pink ears and brilliant azure eyes. She is about seven months old and full of the devil. She was filthy when we got her -- is now shining and white. I am glad to say that Fritz, not a pet-lover in general, likes her; and she has completely changed the once-moody disposition of our maid, who worships her. Her name is Blanche Florence Eleanora Parthenope; Blanche for you and for her own color, Florence for Florence Nightingale (who was born in Florence, Italy), Parthenope for F. Nightingale's younger sister, who was born in Naples, the ancient name of which was Parthenope. And Eleanora for my Italian teacher, who discovered her on one of our lesson-walks, miserable and wilting outside a bird-shop, actually crammed into a bird-cage about a foot square, which had been placed on the very summit of a pyramid of cages containing about 200 screaming birds. We call her Parthy, but the "th" sound is impossible for the maid, Rina, who calls her "Party." When I bought Parthy, I sent her home with a little boy, and paid him for the errand and long tram ride. When I got home several hours later, I found that the cat had been shoved under our sofa, with all four legs tied together: our maid had been worried that she would run away before I got home. So

Parthy has had a pretty frightening beginning to her life with us!

Sunday, November 27, 1938

Well, our poor Parthy has had another terrible experience! On Wednesday night we had a dinner party here, and she was very pretty and playful with our guests, and she was also very fond of the roast veal that we had as our main course. On Thursday, she seemed unusually quiet, and that night cried so hard that we had to let her out of her room (the guest room). On Friday she was very logy and strange, and on Saturday morning we found that during the night she had been sick all over her room. I went down to the Consulate and talked to a secretary who has a cherished 13-year-old Angora, and she got hold of a funny little veterinarian who is credited with having saved many a Consulate dog and cat. But when I arrived at home, and before the vet could get to our house, Rina met us at the door with beaming eyes, proud, fearful, and triumphant, and cried out to us that she had observed an inch of string hanging from the corner of Parthy's mouth, and had "had the courage" to pull on it -- much funnier in Italian: "Avevo il corragio di tirarla!" She had kept pulling and pulling until she had gradually extracted what seemed like two or three yards of heavy white cord from the cat's throat and stomach!! The poor infant had swallowed the cord which had been tied around Wednesday night's roast veal and had then been cast aside carelessly. (When Neopolitan cooks "cast" things in a kitchen, including all veg peelings, they cast them on the floor, and not even in the direction of a wastebasket. Then they sweep up the whole mess afterwards. They say it "freshens" the floor.) When the veterinarian arrived he said that Parthy's unfortunate tummy was so "ammazzato" (murdered) with 60 hours of this indigestible burden that she was in an uproar inside. He prescribed some medicine, and by now she can sleep comfortably and take a little milk.

Yesterday, Fritz and I went to look at an apartment up in Monte di Dio (Mountain of God), one of those areas where you find teeming slums on one side of the houses and tranquil gardens on the other. The family in this apartment had not yet moved out, so we had a most interesting view of Italian life. They were the Count and Countess of something or other, with an aged father and four daughters, "contessinas," that is, small countesses-to-be. We were somewhat floored by discovering that there were 17 rooms, though they spoke vaguely of dividing it, if we were inclined to take half. But it had no furnace (they say it gets congealingly cold here in winter), and Fritz says the building is so old that it is probably infested with rats. The people were very nice and cordial, though we were amazed to see under what conditions they lived, despite their noble lineage. (Perhaps in the past, the elegant fanfare of the nobility's public life was balanced by a spare, austere private life, judging from what I have seen here of their spartan, even dingy, bedrooms and bathrooms.) With 17 rooms and a very luxurious salon, this family was content with private accommodations that seemed to us sordid in the extreme. I could easily have imagined the girls' bedrooms to be those of the lowest tenement-dwellers: the walls patched and filthy, with huge discolored spots alongside their miserable little iron cots, hard and narrow, with the cheapest coarse bedcovers. There was a semblance of the atmosphere of young girls' rooms in the scattered books and cloth

dolls and animals, and in the photographs stuck around the mirrors, but everything was old and of the cheapest quality. The bathroom was inside and dark with no skylight, so old it was falling apart, with an unbelievably mossy old tub and hand bowl, and wooden cupboards in a dirty-brown color with things hanging out of them and piled on top of them up to the ceiling. Of course it has to be admitted that they are about to move; but even so, it made me ill. And yet their salon was, in its way, magnificent, about 20 by 60 feet, filled with blown-glass chandeliers, tapestries, glass cases full of things that appeared to be museum pieces: Capodimonte china, early Italian paintings, ancient things said to be dug up in Pompeii. They do everything for show here, and spend their money where their guests can see it, and no doubt each of their daughters will, in her turn, have a sumptuous wedding.

But the apartment did have one lovely feature -- all the south-eastern exposure was one long series of sunny rooms, each with French windows and a balcony, all hanging over an enchanting garden. We walked through one room after another until I thought they would never end. The apartment is "too small" for them, they have bought a villa up in the newer part of town, in Parco Margherita, where some of our Consular people live.

Despite the fact that Fritz clings tenaciously to his bachelor habit of spending Christmas at some resort-hotel, we will have Christmas Eve at home this year, with a decorated tree. This little flat is cozy and homelike, and though it is furnished, we have many of our own things in it. Besides, a maid and a cat or dog, in some subtle way make even a new place more homelike. Rina is turning out pretty well, though if I didn't keep a finger on her, she would soon rule the household with an iron hand. She has the good quality of considering each ashtray and piece of furniture as her very own, and thus cleans and treasures them all jealously. And when we come home at night, she will still be working; even as late as 10:30 p.m. she will be in the living room plumping up the velvety cushions of the sofa with loving care. With her peasant frugality she still lives practically on bread alone, and won't even eat a piece of candy if I offer it to her.

December 3, 1938

I want to send this letter by the S.S. REX, that huge Italian liner which is now standing practically outside the Consulate window, waiting to push off at noon. I came down to the office with Fritz this morning, and am sitting up in the cold damp library of the Consulate, which occupies a small glass penthouse on the roof. When we drove along the sea-drive to the Consulate, we saw the REX being nosed into port by her tugs, so I borrowed this paper on impulse.

I am now in charge at the library -- that is, merely being responsible for putting books away, and being the goat when somebody keeps a book out too long, and someone else wants to read it.

Did I tell you that Vesuvius has been a little more showy lately? They say it's not much more active than average, but for some reason it shows more. Wednesday night it was

lovely -- lots of fire; and through a telescope we could see showers of red-hot stones being thrown upwards. And last night it was shooting up a gassy flame in a diffused way, as though out of an exhaust pipe.

Here in Italy they have "name-days" which they celebrate as much as we do birthdays. Each day of the year is dedicated to a Saint, and even foreigners soon get into the habit of celebrating their name-day instead of their birthday, because their Italian friends send flowers; while one's birthday is practically overlooked. November 23rd was San Clemente, and I got lots of flowers and candy. The Signorinis sent me five green orchids -- the loveliest corsage I have ever seen.

Monday, December 12, 1938

I am again up in the library on the Consulate roof, and it is very hard to write with such cold early-morning hands. I am very worried about getting my Christmas box to you in time. Fritz now tells me that it will be held up by customs, bank, and various people; and the idea that people must write letters to their mothers, or that gifts must get places on time, for sure, is an idea totally beyond his comprehension. He simply looks at me dazedly, and I know he is thinking that I am an utter child to think such things important. Fritz thinks instead about world politics and what is to be done about the Jewish crisis, and beside things of such scope, everything else becomes dwarfed, as I can imagine it should be in a really fine mind like his. But how many of us have that sort of mind? I know for sure that Fritz has; but alas, I am but clay. This difference in the two of us has no effect upon, or relation to, my state of extreme happiness with him; but in the meantime I worry about your Christmas gifts! Mother, as I was writing that last sentence, Fritz came up here to the roof. He was in tears, and said that Bob MacCloud died last night of a cerebral hemorrhage. He was so young (early 30's) and everybody is so shocked. I really can't write anymore now -- I may go out to where they live in the country to be with his wife. (That is the house where we so recently had the amusing party where Durby ate all the lighted birthday candles.)

December 17, 1938

Here in Italy, at Christmas, they have crèches, which they call presépios: an arrangement, large or small, of figures of the Holy Family and surrounding figures of people and animals, made of clay or wood or wax. There are very elaborate ones with hundreds of expensive figures; the most famous one being displayed at all times in the San Martino Monastery at the top of Naples' highest hill. The poor people have figures of clay in their presépios. Today Fritz, Outer Horsey, and I went to the Via del Duomo ("Cathedral Street"), where they have a long row of little stalls with hundreds of figures in clay, which cost from a couple of cents up to 75 cents. We wanted to be in the spirit of things, so we bought enough figures to make a small but pretty presépio. We have a small stable, Mary and Joseph, the Baby Jesus, the three kings, two angels, a cow, two sheep, and a star, and also two Neapolitan figures: a shepherd with a bagpipe, and a shepherdess

carrying another lamb. It looks awfully sweet: Fritz cut off bits of holly and berries and decorated it. The maid is thrilled to pieces with it. We have hung the star and angels above the stable with dark thread.

Mussolini has made it a strict law that automobile horns must not, and never! be blown in the streets. This makes for very quiet traffic. While looking for our presépio figures, Outer's horn suddenly went out of control -- very startling in the quiet streets. He threw the hood up and worked on it madly to stop the horn, which took ages. Very amusing in retrospect, though at the time we were afraid of attracting the unwelcome attention of the police.

I am also carrying on your tradition, and that of our homeland, by having a Christmas tree. Fritz doesn't know my plans yet; but today I bought two dollars' worth of decorations from Germany for the tree: tinsel and berries, Santa Clauses, owls, birds with spun-glass tails, bells, a horn that toots, a pear, a peach -- all the things we have at home, for I wanted the same things you've always had. I also bought some lovely things that apparently aren't available in America -- a peacock and several butterflies of spun glass, but unfortunately I couldn't find a spun-glass cuckoo clock like the one you have. I bought Fritz an old map of Italy and the Tyrol, several hundred years old, for $2, and a black leather cigarette case, long and very thin, to carry with evening clothes.

My great need for cake and pie tins and measuring spoons has been satisfied at last; Mrs. K. (from Rome) brought me the latter, with a much-needed measuring cup, from her trip to America. At last I have discovered an aluminum-store here where you can buy almost anything you need. I went a little berserk in there, and bought many things: two nice cake tins, a pie tin, cookie cutters, something that will substitute for a spatula, and even a jello mold. Now if I could only find some jello!

December 29, 1938

Poor Virginia MacCloud's condition has become worse and worse since she lost her husband. She's apparently had breakdowns before, and we're all so afraid for her physical and mental health. Her self-command at first was too monumental; and now she won't work, even knit -- just sits. She was with me here at home all Tuesday, and by the time Fritz got home at 6:15 I was fit to be tied, and was weak as a baby all the next day; but it's too awful for her.

Ever since it happened Fritz and I have hung on to each other like two children in the dark; and I imagine all the rest of our American colony feel the same way. I have told Virginia how brave you were and are; and whenever she comes over she says: "Tell me again about your mother -- it helps me." She thinks you are wonderful; and lucky to have had children to turn to. She thinks you are so splendid that besides your many real virtues I have invested you with all sorts of splendorous qualities, extraordinary merits that I have read or heard here and there -- anything I can rake up out of my mind or memory that might help her, for she needs it so badly. (Not but what I think you are capable of all

this saintliness, and even more.)

To turn to happier things: Fritz and I are still immensely happy -- at least, I am, and he seems to be. Life with him is very tranquil, though lots of fun, and he is kind and affectionate. We love each other more every day, and I just don't know what I ever did to deserve him. He has a grand sense of humor, and is as ready for fun as I ever hoped he would be. (Before our marriage I was afraid he might be a little too serious.) He is wonderful, as good as gold, and one of the straightest persons who ever lived, like Father. His rather shy nature expands more and more towards me, and at each new revelation I almost cry: he's unaccustomed to exposing his inner self to anyone else except perhaps to his brothers; and what is revealed is so steadfast, that if I ever betrayed it I wouldn't be worthy of the powder to blow me up. Never from any other man except Father have I experienced such real tenderness; and it is the surest thing in the world to bring out the best in a woman. It is Fritz's pure goodness that makes me love him more, which makes him love me more. So, like a cross-ruff, it goes on ever increasing till sometimes I just sit and look at him or think about him, and feel as though I had eaten too many spiritual dried apples and then drunk too much spiritual water on top of them! I'm sure this all sounds extremely weird.

1939 -- January something or other

Getting mail out of Naples on time has its difficulties unless you concentrate on it. This place casts a sort of spell which makes the days rush by without counting, and I can understand better now Fritz's former difficulty in writing me often enough. Even living right in full sight of the bay, I seldom if ever happen to see a liner on its way in or out of the harbor; and the first thing I know some ship I might have used for mail has slipped quietly out on its way to America without my ever hearing that it was in town. Another difficulty is that the ships are in only about 4 hours, and unless you are very lucky, letters will not be accepted that late, for they must go to the main post office, and thus often miss the ship. The only other possible solution is to take letters right down to the ship and give them to some officer on board, but there is a strict rule against this. So unless you have some personal friend sailing home on that ship, you are out of luck. I've always wanted to go down at the last minute and just drop an addressed letter on the floor of a ship's corridor to see if it would be mailed by some kind soul.

As to the matter of coming home, I will probably see you in 1939. It is necessary to explain here the system of leave for Foreign Service Officers, about which I was suffering a considerable misapprehension. My idea when we were married was that we were always to be neatly transferred to a new post every three years on the day and hour to the dot. Now I have learned that there is a growing tendency to leave the men (especially the married ones) in a post nearer 4 than 3 years. In fact, three of the seven Consular married couples now in Naples have been here five years or more. In other words, if you are getting along fairly well and don't ask to be transferred, they are likely to let you sit still. In this way they avoid having to pay your transfer fares so often, and if you want to go on home-leave more often, you thus have to pay your own way. Fritz

confesses that he has never heard before of so many officers remaining in one post for so long as they have here in Naples. There's always a great thrill, I imagine, in being transferred; and of course the curiosity to know what the next post will be is tremendous, but profitless if you hurry up your transfer by requesting it, only to be sent to some fever-ridden hole, and since I don't like heat or humidity, I am willing to put off the tropics as long as possible. Italy is wonderful, and we'd like to see more of it. I also want to master Italian, for mine is still terribly feeble.

The chances are that you may expect us in a few months. I had originally intended to come home earlier than Fritz to stay with you, but I had a dream the other night, that I came home 6 weeks before Fritz, and that I immediately started looking for him in every room, and expecting to see his head emerge out of every crowd and from around every corner, and soon I became hysterical, and cried all day long every day, and neither you nor anybody else could stop me. In fact, I cried so hard that I woke myself up; and when I saw Fritz's head on the next pillow, I threw myself over on him (about 2 or 3 a.m.) -- but since he appeared to be sleeping facing me with his knees bent up, I whacked the pit of my stomach on his knees so hard that I fainted -- and didn't wake up until morning! Fortunately I was not injured, and was perfectly all right when I did wake up.

There are so many things that would be of interest to you here -- little things that accentuate the differences between countries; and as I walk or ride in the tram I'm forever noting them, but when I sit down to write, they slip away. For instance, I have not heard a single fire engine over here. Everything is built of stone, and there just don't seem to be any fires. Fritz says that if a fire started in one room it could never get outside the room, and wouldn't do more than burn the curtains and smoke up the ceiling a little. Another thing I noticed is that complexions are so nice here. I've always disliked imperfections and red spots, and I have noticed many times at home that you rarely see anyone on a streetcar or on the street without at least one temporary imperfection on his or her face. But here one rarely sees a face that is not perfectly clear and fresh.

As to salaries and costs: The average maid gets $6 to $10 a month in Naples only and $3 to $4 in the country towns! Our maid at present gets $7. The $10 jobs are very rare, and are usually worked up, to over a period of years. The average clerk or small respectable young married man is extremely well-fixed if he gets $75 per month.

Automobiles are very rare -- everyone takes the trams. In the north you see literally thousands of bicycles in every city and along every country road. On our trip in October we nearly went frantic late one afternoon when people were getting out of work at factories and going home on their bikes; in the dusk, with no street lights it was almost impossible to see the thousands around us and on the road, and we were in desperate anxiety not to hurt or kill someone, whereas they paid us no notice, and went all over the road ahead of us without trying to get out of our way.

Meat costs a little less here than at home; eggs are 2 1/2 to 5 cents apiece, depending on age and quality; 1/5th of a pound of butter costs 8 1/2 cents. Sugar is about 31 cents for two pounds; flour 9 1/2 cents for 2 pounds; potatoes, lettuce, etc., cost almost nothing --

lettuce a penny or so for two heads.

Everyone has a nice voice here. You hear little boys singing in the streets. Each peddler has his own call -- the shoeblack carries his box and raps it with a brush in sharp little taps, but the rest of the peddlers sing or shout. One man goes by here quite often, singing at the top of his lungs a weird, high, chanting melody that is very fascinating and oriental. It's disillusioning to know that he's just selling something, not giving an operatic performance.

The railway stations are much like they are at home, but if you want to go out to the tracks to see someone off, at some stations you must drop two cents in a slot machine and get a ticket to go onto the platform. The streetcars are rather Toonervillish, but there's hardly ever a vacant seat. In America the children must all stand to let grownups sit down on the trams, but here it is almost the opposite. Grownups will stand as a matter of course, if a seat is already taken by a child, and think nothing of it. I have even seen one man get up to give a 6 or 7-year-old boy his seat, but I'll admit that the child's mother was seated nearby and the man seemed to be a friend of the family. I thought it was very silly; and the mother seemed to think it was useless too, though she let the child take the seat. Fritz and I ride many trams now that we have sold our car, but it isn't bad except that Naples is so hilly and the trams so rocky. One of the most familiar signs here, on trains and trams is: "It is forbidden to spit out of the window." Fritz and I got quite hilarious the other night, reading to each other all the streetcar signs by mixing them up, such as: "Prepare yourself in time to spit," or "It is forbidden to get off this tram."

January 5, 1939

My flu-relapse having about come to an end, I got up last evening to help the maid with dinner, since we were having a guest for dinner. I went into the kitchen at 6, and emerged victorious at 7:30, having produced chocolate sauce, sweet potato puff, and "fruited holiday scones," horrible name, but very fine biscuits. Rina having filled in the gap, (or, created the main meal, however it appears to you) with soup, and excellent chicken roasted with garlic; also vegetables and coffee. And since there remained in the house, from the day before, some cake and some tapioca pudding, we managed to put before our guest, Outer Horsey, what he called "a good square meal for once in this d--- town!'' (Apparently he does not enjoy the local pasta as much as we do.)

I am enclosing a dollar bill, which I hate to part with, because dollars are so hard for us to acquire, but I am most sadly in need of four or five things the dollar will buy for me in the U.S. Please go to a 5 and 10 cent store and see how far my dollar will stretch on a potato masher, a spatula, various cookie biscuit cutters, and a biscuit tin -- 12 holes if possible.

January 23, 1939

Recently we went to dinner with the Caracciolos in their flat in their family palace, on the street named after them. It was the first time I had been entertained at dinner by a Prince and Princess, and I was excited ahead of time, for I think some of us Americans, perhaps because we have no nobility of our own, are at first inclined to regard them with a bit of awe. But of course the Caracciolos are, after all, just our friends, Gianni and Amparo, and within two minutes I'd forgotten all my false ideas, and enjoyed myself. Their flat is not especially large or fancy, but the rooms are large and high-ceilinged and comfortably furnished. Much of the furniture is old and beautiful, and they have many interesting pictures, pieces of glass, porcelain, alabaster statuettes, etc. I was particularly impressed by their china, crystal and silver, each piece with their crest, and every conceivable size and shape, for every possible occasion. Serving at the table was done very neatly and simply but well, with only one waiter. We sat at a round table, ten of us, in a dining room whose lightness, yet dignity, were at a contrast with the usual heavy rooms in these palaces. There were indirect lights on sideboards to show fine old pieces of Capodimonte porcelain.

There were candles on the table, and masses of roses in the center, with little white porcelain groups of figures, very beautiful. The china service was white with a blue and silver band and a crest. The dinner itself was very simple except for the main course, which was some towering affair of chicken, pate' de foie gras and pastry, exactly like a wedding cake. The waiter removed our plates in the order in which we finished each course, and when they were all changed, he would present the next dish to one of the ladies to start it -- each course to a different lady -- and I shall never forget my amazed consternation when I turned from saying something to our host on my right, to find this monstrous affair waiting at my left elbow for me to initiate it! It was about 15 inches high, pyramided in several layers up to a steeple, like a church, and was presented to me, virgin -- absolutely fresh and uncut. There stood the damned waiter, tranquil and relentless, waiting for me to do something about it, and everybody at the table watching me. There were three serving articles to choose from: a serving fork and spoon, and a large, wicked silver knife. I chose the fork and spoon, and I gather I had done acceptably, for thereupon the waiter grasped the knife and cut a wedge from the lower layer, to which I helped myself, but so hastily that I didn't get a smidgeon of the beautifully decorative pate' on the upper deck. Jane Byington was next, and I saw her sneak a little of the pate'. By the time this gastronomic wonder had gone the rounds of the ladies and got to Fritz, the whole top layer had slithered down into the gap made by the removed portions, so he got masses of the pate', doggone it. We had begun the dinner with a cup of bouillon, and after the main course there was a huge casserole of cauliflower and cheese, which was eaten as a separate course; and then a glorious dessert of creampuffs filled with custard and chocolate sauce, a form of Profiteroles au Chocolat.

Amparo's mother-in-law has given her some Caracciolo family jewels -- the most sumptuous pair of earrings I ever saw: each earring consisting of a very large diamond from which hangs a large and very beautiful teardrop-shaped Oriental pearl with marvelous luster. But I envy her most of all the amethyst ring that belonged to the Pope who was Gianni's ancestor: a wide gold band with oval amethyst with a beautifully worked oak leaf at each end of the stone (the oak, its leaf and its acorn are the family

crest). But most fascinating of all: inside the ring is the entire family coat-of-arms in beautiful enamel. It fit my finger perfectly, and I wore it for an hour or so, and never did I remove a piece of jewelry so reluctantly.

February 8, 1939

Since we are coming home on leave soon, we are buying little gifts for family and friends. Little coral necklaces can be had for fifteen cents, and I got a nice coral bracelet for twenty cents. For Fritz's two brothers we bought a really beautiful old map for each, for which we went overboard paying $2.50 apiece! They are so lovely that we'd selfishly love to keep them for ourselves. Fritz looked at them for a long time and finally said, with a sigh: "Well, at least we can feel that they're in the family." Heaven knows what they'd cost in America! One of the maps is of the eastern half of the United States, all lopsided and exaggerated, with the early State boundaries and the Indian tribes marked in French; and the other map is of North and South America. They are both a warm tan color, with various parts touched up with scarlet, pale blue, or green.

This morning Amparo Caracciolo and I went for a little walk -- stood in the courtyard of the Castel Nuovo and talked. I like her lots. Though the castle is being renovated inside and they wouldn't let us in, the outside and the courtyard are fascinating, if a bit drab. There is a famous triumphal arch outside, rather high for its width, I felt; and there is a church facade <u>inside</u> the courtyard. We also went to the Church of San Giovanni a Carbonara to see the tombs of the Caracciolos (one was a famous Admiral) which interested Amparo even more for her new little son than for herself. I had discovered these tombs by myself on another trip, and decided that Amparo, being a Spanish bride imported to Naples as a result of the war in Spain, ought to see them.

Today is so horrible and dreary and soppy-rainy that everything seems dismal. We can hardly see across the street, and the streetcars whine asthmatically as they labor up and down the curved hilly street. The cat Parthy has me mystified -- she went into her spring period (which is said to be the worst of the year); and after 4 days has stopped and is happy and gay, and -- most amazing and delightful -- quiet. I don't know whether that was just a preliminary and she will later burst into a Niagara of agonies, or whether she's through till June. Please Heaven it's the latter.

Yesterday, for no particular reason, I went to Capri alone. It is strange one doesn't go more often, since it sits right here in the bay, and only costs $1.35 round-trip. I was ashamed to go on home leave to America without having seen the Blue Grotto, so I went into it as soon as we reached the island. It certainly doesn't live up to the descriptions of it; but if you haven't had your expectations built up by intoxicated paeans of praise regarding it, you might find it delightful. I had unfortunately been led to expect a perfect fairyland of blues, in spite of Fritz's warning not even to waste my ninety cents on it -- you are inside the grotto for only about 2 1/2 minutes! But after the first shock of disappointment, I enjoyed myself, because the water is truly an indescribable shade of lovely blue (though the roof is black). One thing is most amusing: at first glance you see

nothing but dead blackness, even your hand in front of your face is invisible, and you ask yourself if this is just the anteroom of the blue grotto, or what? Then you turn your head and look towards the entrance, and instantly all is vivid blue, with the other boats and their occupants silhouetted black against the blue water. Turning back again, all is deepest black, even your own boatman is completely invisible. Thus each boatman must avoid the other boats nearer the entrance, which he can see, but which can't see him -- a system in which each man is truly his brother's keeper.

The people in the boats yell and shout and sing, and it's perfect pandemonium; but I liked the sensation of being closed in, in the dark, with scores of other people in other boats, in a pleasant confusion, all floating on an unearthly blue liquid which hardly seems like real water. And there lies the danger of describing the Blue Grotto: It begins to sound very attractive, and you want to go again, and possibly you make others want to go, whereas it's really not worth it. I can see that a person just happening on it, unadvertised, could be utterly delighted with his find, to be alone in a lovely place no one has ever seen before. But they've made a business of it, and most visitors are sadly disappointed. In the summer season people go to Capri, which is a lovely island to wander on; and instead, they spend their entire five hours between steamers waiting in line to see this grotto. The steamer carries hundreds of people in The Season; it anchors off the Grotto even before going into the port; all these hundreds are transferred two by two into rowboats and rowed in towards the entrance, to await their turn. If there are waves, each boat may take up to five minutes to get in and five to get out. Only a certain number of boats can be inside at one time. Since I went there in winter, we were up in the square of Capri by 12:15, with all the time till 4 o'clock to look around; but in summer the tourists wait until 3 or 4 o'clock trying to see the Grotto, dash up to the town for a quick bite of lunch and then rush off immediately so as not to miss the boat for Naples. Like my friend Professor Aileen Dunham of Wooster, Ohio, who sat on a boat on a rough day waiting, and getting sicker every minute, finally getting into the grotto, and ending up green in the face, too late to see Capri at all! Moral: go stay in Capri overnight, and then if you feel you MUST see the Blue Grotto, hire your own rowboat and boatman, which will at least assure you of a delightful half-hour's row along the shore.

Incidentally, my rowboat companion in the Blue Grotto was a Dutch Monk with an enormous red grizzly beard and a vivid pink face. He was young and pleasant, and spoke English. He took a tremendous kidding from his two fellow-monks, who were in the next rowboat to us. At the time they only giggled; but back on the steamer, headed for the Capri dock, I could tell they were pulling his leg unmercifully.

When we got up to the town on the funicular, I walked to a lovely promontory with three huge rocks, The Faraglioni, standing out to sea at a point of land called Punta Tragara, where it was sunny and quiet, and I could listen to the sea three hundred feet below, dreamingly lazily on the rocks. The sea by the shore was a vivid, intense turquoise-blue -- a color unbelievable. There were little pines and olive trees, mimosa in bloom, some miniature purple flowers, cacti, and a small soft wind. I hated to leave. I walked back through town, and then up to another promontory where the Emperor Tiberius built one of his villas, where the cliffs are over 500 feet high, and plunge straight down into the

water, where the (probably maligned) Tiberius has been said to have toppled his enemies over. I hung over the cliff, with my stomach on a flat, sun-warmed rock, watching the richly colored water ripple so far below, when suddenly I caught sight of a rowboat down there, and I felt as if I'd received a body-blow. I had realized, of course, that any boat would look small so far below; my mind and my eyes had adjusted themselves to the idea that the sea was a certain X-distance below me; but when I saw the rowboat I just staggered and batted my eyes, and the sea seemed to roar downwards away from me, for instead of looking about as big as a pumpkin seed, as I had expected it to, the rowboat looked about as big as a small flea. Ergo: the sea was about twice as far below me as my eyes had told me, and what I had thought were mere ripples on the water were real waves! I simply loved it -- it was a tremendous sensation; but it was such a shock that I nearly fell off the rock into the sea myself, like Tiberius' supposed victims.

February 28, 1939

Fritz and I will depart together for home-leave on March 19th, probably on my favorite VULCANIA, first-class if we can get enough discount, otherwise tourist. We will sail back here from New York, at the end of our leave, about the middle of June. War-clouds are predicted pretty heavily for March and April, but if they clear up at that time, we will probably get by for a while longer. The talk here is pessimistic for April, and a number of people have told me not to leave Fritz even for a day, in this crisis. If we get off together on the 19th, and war breaks out while we're home, we will at least be together; but if in March, before we sail for the U.S. we will at least have had a little more time together before I'm shipped home with all the other women. Don't tell a soul, but Fritz is going to request a transfer. I wanted some place where I could be sure to be with Fritz, but he is very eager to go to Vienna. He says it's heavenly, longs to live there for a couple of years, and I know he'll never be satisfied till he's got it. He wants to learn to speak German, and talks of Vienna in his sleep. He says it will make him so happy, in case there is a war, to have me safe and sound in some pretty town in ever-neutral Switzerland, where he will be only six hours away from me by train; whereas if I were in Switzerland and he in Italy, we wouldn't see each other for months perhaps. I do wish I could take Parthy wherever we go, but Fritz won't travel with an animal. (This came to mind because Parthy just fixed her beautiful vacant blue eyes on me and reminded me of it.)

Friday the 13th

My regular Saturday morning routine is to go sightseeing, then to the Consulate for Fritz, and we have lunch at the Bersaglieri, which is a reasonably-priced restaurant about a foot above sea level in the protected yacht basin. It faces the sun, and even in winter is comparatively warm and sunny. However, Naples is never really quite the same in winter -- in summer it blooms into its own unique enchantment. The outdoor tables (one almost <u>never</u> eats indoors) are right along the railing above the water, and you can look down into the clear water and see piles of last year's (and other years') discarded clam-shells.

Boatmen, even in winter, drift up to the railing, and while you eat, they try to talk you into going for a little boat ride after your lunch. Little boys climb from boats to the restaurant railing and cling precariously, hidden from the waiters by the tablecloth, and beg most pathetically for food and money, making tear-jerking motions towards their mouths, whispering, "I am dying from hunger!" Of course, I feed them, though I'm told repeatedly not to. (Who could turn a hungry kitten from the door, just because "if you feed them they won't go away?")

They have the strangest rackets for begging here -- men even borrow their neighbor's babies, and then trail you in the street, telling you it's dying of hunger, and how he has nine (sometimes 11) more at home. But I almost always give them a penny or so. When a child begs on his own, you know that his mama is across the street watching, having sent him over to beg; sometimes she has several children working a street at once. However, many here are really poor; and the easiest thing to do is to have always a pocketful of coppers, and give one to each person who asks, because I hate to skip a sincere one just because some of the boys are doing it for a lark or for pocket money.

To return to the "Bersaglieri" -- there is a stringed orchestra (terrible!) which plays songs in wild discord, while another orchestra in the restaurant next door, just a few feet away, is playing at the same time -- different songs, of course! It's an awful hubbub, but somehow manages even in winter to recreate a little of the soft spell of the summer -- when even the poorest orchestras, playing "Torna a Surriento" or "Bella Napule," really do something to you. At lunch we usually see lots of people from the Consulate -- the bachelors, or temporary-bachelors, and girls who work at the Consulate. There's always a holiday mood there on Saturday noon, and it doesn't matter how badly the orchestra plays or how hoarsely the tenor croaks (with gestures: "La bella NA-pu-lehhh!") -- it still has its special impact. We usually have spaghetti with vongole (clams) or, in the summer, with Cozze (mussels); or omelette alla Portoghese; or "cheese in little carts," which is slices of bread deep-fried with buffalo cheese. Then Fritz always has green salad, and we both have a banana and coffee.

Sometimes when it seems just right I have zuppa di vongole: watery red soup filled with bread crusts and clam-shells. When you open the shell, sure enough there are the clams, and you throw away the shells (into the sea, if you want to) one by one as you eat the clams. It's heavenly. Fritz is tired of it after three years, but as you can imagine, I'm not.

These two neighboring restaurants, "Da Bersaglieri" and "Zi' Teresa," are run in a terribly competitive battle, and they hate each other fiercely. Whichever you may choose to go to the first time, you have lost forever the chance to satisfy your curiosity as to what it would be like to eat at the other one. The owners memorize your face, and you are then considered strictly the property of the one you patronized first, and all the laws of taste and good breeding prohibit your being a Traitor. The two rival ladies stand in front of their establishments and sternly watch each person who comes down the steps from the street (a steep flight of steps leads down to each restaurant from above). And should you come down at the wrong end, you must walk the gauntlet between the tables of the wrong restaurant till you get to your proper one, and this takes no little courage, because of the

scorn in the eyes of the proprietress and the waiters in the other one. So you soon learn to come down the steps nearest to "your own" restaurant. I have seen "our" proprietress walk alongside people who have got into her restaurant by mistake and are moving towards Zi' Teresa territory, angrily shrieking and gesticulating every inch of the way to the line of potted trees which divides the two, whereupon she retires defeated into a corner, sullen, with eyes snapping with rage; while the other proprietress struts back and forth proudly, purring, obsequiously seating her new guests, watching her rival out of the corner of her eye. Fritz is an absolute coward on the subject, after three years of Da Bersaglieri, and would rather go hungry than endure the Medusa eyes of his proprietress by trying to eat at the other place. I sneaked over there one day, with guests from Rome, when Fritz wasn't along, but it was pointless, for there wasn't a hair's breadth difference in the food or service.

We had a sad casualty this week in our household. Fritz had to go to the hospital to have an infected finger cut open. I stayed with him, though I couldn't bring myself actually to watch the slicing (which was considerable) and he was grand. He didn't wince or lose his color. But afterwards he began to sweat and get weak. I told him to hang on, and the doctor made him put his head down. But he began to sag, and said "I'm sorry, but -- " and out he went. I'd never seen anyone faint, and it was terrible. His eyes stared and he puffed and snorted and the doctor said very loudly "Mr. Jandrey! Mr. Jandrey! Stand up! Stand up, and then lie down!" It seemed hours before his head raised and he stared at me completely blank. Then suddenly his identity came back into his eyes. I lived three years in those 40 or so seconds. Afterwards I stood there rubbing his legs, and the doctor looked at me quite a long time and then said, "Were you frightened, Mrs. Jandrey?" Fritz was humiliated, and couldn't get over it all day; but he has a lovely big bandage on his finger, and will have a nice scar to show people.

AMERICAN INTERVAL
(Home Leave, March-June, 1939)

June 3, 1939

We are on the train, leaving Wisconsin, both of us exhausted by social activities with our friends, but we have had such a lovely time! We now go to Knoxville, then Washington DC, then New York, with dinners and calls scheduled everywhere. It takes it out of you. Then we will sail back to Italy, and the period of quiet vegetation in the sun on the ship will be most welcome.

New York City
June 11, 1939

King George and Queen Elizabeth are going through New York today (and to the Fair), and as we drove along, the streets were crammed with thousands in their best, walking

out to the railroad tracks to stand in the sun for hours to see them go by. When we arrived at our ship, on the other side of the river, we saw their ship come in, amidst much tooting and blowing of whistles, with fireboats throwing up huge streams and fans of water to celebrate the arrival with as much pomp as was available.

Something very funny happened here in New York: I wrote several postcards, which I tried to give to a "hostess" at the hotel, asking her to mail one each week to you, just to fill up the month's gap while I am on my way to Europe, and cannot get letters mailed. She refused, and when I asked why, she became very maternal, and said: "My dear, we just couldn't help you to deceive your poor mother!" She thought the idea was to make you think I was still, in NYC while I went off on a trip with some man!

June 21, 1939
On Board S.S. EXOCHORDA

We are getting into Marseille tonight. Right now we are cruising N-NE along the east coast of Spain, just off Barcelona -- too misty, and too far away to see anything. The first five days of our trip were sensational for their tranquility. The sea was blue and as smooth as a mirror -- we felt as though we were on a ferryboat. Members of the crew said that in more than twenty trips across the Atlantic, it was by far the most ideal. I was mad to see a whale, and missed several that were sighted by others. I spent a good deal of time by myself up in the very point of the bow just watching the sea, and lying flat on the hot iron deck of the ship, enjoying the hot sun and the blue sea. It seemed to me almost like the South Seas, and as if we would go lazily on forever. One afternoon I saw some blowing directly ahead of the ship, and in a minute saw a whale, lazily rolling and spouting along, along the starboard side of the bow: head, and a huge stub on his back. As we passed him, he brushed brownish-green, pointed just one flick of his tail when he was just below me impressed me with his tremendous power.

One afternoon a day or two later, I was again alone in the bow at sunset, and saw something raising foam south and east of the ship. It seemed to be porpoises, leaping out of the sea; they were travelling in little groups, diving in and out in such a way that they have been known to deceive onlookers into thinking that they see a sea-serpent. Suddenly I thought I was seeing sunspots in front of my eyes, for everywhere I looked there were groups of little black dots rising and plunging in their own foam; soon the whole sea was alive with them, and I felt as though we were about to plow into a raisin pie, so solid they were on the water! A dozen or so passengers had witnessed my excitement and rushed to the bow, where we all had a marvelous sight, for the sea around us was a splashing mass of big porpoises with snouts like broomsticks. They are lively and happy fish, and they love to race ships. A dozen or so got right in front of the bow and raced us for several miles.

We are coming into Marseilles now. In a couple of days we'll be back in Naples again!

NAPLES AGAIN
"The Drilling Song of the Cicada"

June, 1939

We are back in Naples, staying at the Excelsior, my favorite hotel, and have an enormous room, with a gigantic royal blue tiled bath, which you can imagine is a relief after our 6 x 8 room on the ship. It is beautiful here in summer -- lots of sun, sun on pale buildings, and we are glad to be back. Many ships are in this weekend; the hotel lobby is fuller than I've seen it. The restaurants along the sea are crowded at night, brightly-lighted, tenor voices echoing from their balconies at the water's edge. Two new vice consuls and their wives are already here, having arrived just before us.

Later. We stayed at the hotel only one night, and then Durby asked us to stay with him till we find a place of our own. It is lovely here in Posillipo (a sea-suburb of Naples), and Durby's house has a garden and terrace hanging right out over the sea. It is a picturesque old house called the Villa Cottrau (full of ants, moss and Consular traditions, for other Americans have stayed here over many past decades.) Every day when I get back from wearily trudging the streets in search of an apartment I have the relief of plunging into the sea (after I descend underground steps and go through passages in the cliffs) -- it's a long walk down to the shore and seems still longer coming back up.

In the evenings it is glorious, because just now there's a full moon on the water, with sailboats going by, and the sound of little waves, and three pine trees, with star-shaped lights hanging from them, in front of the villa. There is also a charming little gazebo on a terrace one level lower than the house, and even further down than that, in another seaside house, a wedding party is celebrating tonight, with a typically tinkly, tinny orchestra and a good tenor voice -- while on the radio, as a bonus, we have "Rigoletto!" Sometimes it seems too marvelous to be true. Generally when we are alone, I don't dress; but tonight I feel especially in tune with the festival spirit, because I have on a new long dress, and have my hair up on top of my head in curls, with white geraniums tucked in, just because Fritz likes it that way.

One of the two new vice consuls' wives is a very cute little blonde, one of those very rare women of whom one can say that she has an "adorable" face and mannerisms; she is also very intelligent. The other new vice consul's wife is quite different in appearance: tall, dark, quiet, attractive, reserved, and gifted; and she paints. She chose an apartment immediately, near here, in Villa Roccaromana, and is busy getting it ready. Roccaromana is the very incarnation of all that I dreamed about Neapolitan villas before I ever arrived in Naples: with cliffs, pines, and garden paths with geraniums flowing out of old decorated urns.

Fritz and I seem, at the moment, to have two choices: an upstairs apartment right here in Villa Cottrau, which offers charm, beauty, gardens, balconies, age, convenience of location but very short on household conveniences, plus ants galore. The other is up on Alto Posillipo, in the new part of town, inconvenient location, possible difficulty of

heating, and the straight and ugly modern interior of the average new Naples apartment; yet has "all mod. cons.", as they say in English advertisements. But Naples has something so special to offer in its suburbs along the shore: i.e., age, beauty, and charm (along with ants and humidity), that it seems a shame to settle for less than its utmost. I feel that in Naples one should sacrifice the modernity, go for the charm, and live close to that sea which gives Naples such a special quality.

Fritz and I came over to the Island of Ischia again to spend the Fourth of July with the Klingenbergs; then the two men went back to work in Naples. Yesterday my hostess, her two children and I went into Porta d'Ischia to look around, and happened to take the homeward-bound bus that waits in the little town of Casamicciola for the 6 p.m. boat from Naples, and of course we had to sit in the bus and wait. When the boat came in, my host was on it, as his wife had hoped, though I was disappointed that Fritz had not made it.

On the way home, Cyril turned to me and said, "You like Italy?" "Yes." "Well, then, you'd better look around and enjoy it to the full, because you may not see it again for a long time." At first I thought he was joking; then that perhaps the international situation had burst during that day, and that I was going to have to leave with the other American women. Then Cyril said, "Of course, there are lots of other nice places in the world to live. Personally, I've always thought highly of Australia. They say Melbourne is a very beautiful city!" At this I managed to gasp feebly: "Has Fritz been transferred there?" By now thoroughly enjoying his coup de foudre, and roaring with laughter, Cyril answered, "Yes." It seems that since Fritz could not get back to Ischia, he had telephoned Cyril and asked him to break the news to me; he said we were to leave for Australia sometime in August.

This was all a terrific shock to me, because I felt quite settled here, and suddenly I realized even more how much I really like it; it is so very beautiful and interesting and picturesque in a way that a modern British country could never be. We had just found a flat, and I was dying to get all our things out and settle down. I wanted to haunt the antique shops and slowly collect several of the nice old pieces of furniture one can get here. What a treasure-house Italy is of scenery and works of art!

However, having regretted for one short paragraph, I shall cease to complain. They say Melbourne is beautiful, and certainly it must be modern, clean, and healthful. The only thing I hope is that life there won't degenerate into the usual large-city social life, consisting of bridge, country club, luncheon, and tea.

Three days later

We are back at the Hotel Excelsior. There is no additional news about our transfer. Fritz is rather unhappy about it; he would prefer a place that's more exciting or "different," or where we could learn a foreign language. He was anxious to learn more German; I, to improve what little French I have. We have read the Post Report for Melbourne, and it sounds expensive. But we are not hurrying away -- in fact, we may be here all summer,

and then leave in September via the Red Sea. Though we are none too happy about it, when you go into the Foreign Service, you must be prepared to take what comes and not fuss about it. Fritz had requested Vienna, Germany, France, or the Far East; and I would also have liked Scotland, Ireland, or Scandinavia. So you see they did pretty well in threading in and out among our likes until they found a place we had not asked for. Everyone here says it's always that way -- always some place you don't want -- that you can put down your preferences year after year and they are apparently completely overlooked in the Personnel Department in Washington. I really don't mind -- the trip by ship will be great fun; and everyone who has seen Melbourne loves it. It's just that we wanted a post with more foreign flavor.

(Later note: In the years following, Fritz was twice assigned, to his dismay, to the Personnel Department; and then we learned how difficult it is to send Foreign Service Officers to the places they put down as their preferences. Things sometimes have to be done on a crash basis, and it is never easy to make ideal assignments, even at the best of times. A man is needed somewhere in the world, and the officers who might be suitable for that post are all busy somewhere else; perhaps they have just arrived at a new post and cannot leave it immediately; or an officer's Chief of Mission may not want to let him go. Nor can a man always be sent to a country whose language he speaks: he may just have finished serving in the country of his language specialty; he may have had several luxury posts in a row and some other man, having done several hardship posts, must have his turn at a pleasant post. (And one must realize that there are always efficient interpreters at each post; and it never hurts to begin to learn another language.) While in Personnel, Fritz was often jumped on by officers who were even more unhappy about their new assignments than we were about leaving Italy for a country which we considered was not "picturesque," not different enough from what we already had seen. Personnel is not an easy job; and personnel officers have to be long-suffering about complaints concerning assignments that had to be made quickly, with no perfectly suitable officer available at that moment.

Naples
July 7, 1939

Last Saturday morning when I went down to the dock to see the S.S.EXCALIBUR come in, I noticed that part of the top deck looked burnt, and later found out that one of its passengers had been badly burned by an explosion in the emergency battery room, and is in the hospital here in a pretty bad state. They say now that he will live, but may lose a hand and a foot. The Consular people are taking turns going up and talking to him at night, when he is most depressed.

Also, something most unfortunate has happened to one of Fritz's and my recent fellow-passengers on the EXOCHORDA. A father and son, both clergymen, were kidnapped by bandits outside Jerusalem. They let the father go to get ransom for the son, who is still in their hands. We feel particularly badly about it because he is such a nice fellow -- a marvelous sport.

Rome, July, 1939

We went up to Rome by train on Saturday afternoon to stay with Johnny and Kitty Jones. (On the way up we saw, from the train windows, some country women in their provincial costumes and delightful head-dresses formerly worn here for fete days, and now becoming so scarce that to see them nowadays is a rare pleasure.) It was so hot in Rome that we sweltered all afternoon, but spent a cool evening in the Baths of the Emperor Caracalla, listening to a fine performance of "La Forza del Destino." Gigli tottered around oddly on his very tiny feet, but what a voice! On Sunday we sat in the Jones' lovely cool garden, and then wandered in the Roman Forum, the ground of which was strewn with bits of carved stone fragments and fallen broken pillars.

Monday morning Kitty drove me to Vatican City because I wanted to see the Sistine Chapel; but I was somewhat shocked when we arrived in the courtyard for Kitty said that I must be back at the car in twenty minutes! Even then I did not realize that the Sistine Chapel is blocks and blocks away from the entrance, down long corridors. I literally ran up the huge circular staircase, and down the marble halls like a scalded cat, finally sailing into the Sistine in a skid, swiveled my head around to take in the walls and ceiling by Michelangelo, and then started dashing back, my time already more than half gone. On the return Olympic sprint, I took only a second off to look out a window to catch a glimpse of Vatican City, so peaceful, with gardens, fountains, and old buildings, and to cast a yearning glance at a drawing by John Ruskin. When I rejoined Kitty, we went up onto the roof of St. Peter's, where I mailed you a card with a Vatican stamp. I then took Kitty and the Blakes to lunch in the Borghese Gardens -- (imagine, nearly $10.00 for only five of us!!!) -- and later in the afternoon we went back to the Borghese for a leisurely tea. (Shades of Prendergast paintings of Rome, with the ruffled and flowered hats of ladies in their carriages, coming down from tea in the Borghese Gardens in the Gay Nineties!)

Back in Naples
July 17, 1939

We went over to Sorrento this past weekend. It was lovely and quiet there, at our usual hang-out -- the Cocumella Hotel. They have such an appealing garden with grapevines and a tangle of flowers, huge old decorated jars containing plants, a dry well with a cross and flowers in it, and a gorgeous terrace which ends in a cliff, which drops several hundred feet to the sea. We spent part of our honeymoon there last year, and we wanted to visit it again for our anniversary. I gave Fritz a joke gift of a local primitive painting of the Naples seashore, and he gave me roses. Sorrento made us both feel marvelous in spite of the sirocco which blew up Sunday.

August 2, 1939

Well, it's August now, and the time is getting nearer for our jaunt to the Down-Under; but so far there is no more information about our actual departure date. Recent purchases for our hypothetical trip: two lengths of cotton material for summer dresses for the ship voyage and for Australia -- it costs about 30 cents a yard! (10% less than a meter). I want to have a copy made of my favorite Lord and Taylor two-piece summer dress, which cost $10.95. And I also have bought for our future home in Australia an attractive antique 3-drawer chest (commodino) for $5.00, including a small repair.

We had a splendid time over the last weekend in Ravello, where we spent part of our honeymoon last year. We went with the Thurstons in their car, going over one pass and coming back by another, in order to have a good last look at the whole neighborhood. The passes are wooded, with little towns tucked in here and there; and when you finally get over the top onto the Amalfi Drive, it is breathtakingly lovely. At one place we got out of the car to have a closer look at a waterfall, and discovered a special spot. Back from the road, by following a brook and climbing over rocks and wading through rapids, you find a very high waterfall dropping into a circular pool, which is surrounded by caves and grottos which are covered, every inch, with bright green moss, ferns, and ivy, all blowing in the draught caused by the waterfall. We waded around for a while and loved it.

The weather at Ravello was perfect. We arrived at dusk, had dinner at eight, and then went for a walk down the hill into a typical South Italian village built straggling up a single twisty alley on the side of the hill; stone houses, very crumbly, and at the top, a "city" gate, and the remains of a wall and two towers built long ago for protection. Also an old fountain with two very ancient animals carved of marble: an Assyrian bull and a lion. All this under a full moon!

August 6, 1939

Saturday a vice consul who has decided to leave the Foreign Service arrived on his way to America, with a very nice English girl in tow. He has caused himself a lot of unfavorable publicity because of the way he chose to leave the service: he was assigned to Aden, and refused to go. Aden is one of the dreaded posts in our service -- on the Arabian coast near the southern end of the Red Sea. It is terribly horribly hot, and there is not a thing to do, and you can't buy a thing, or any conveniences whatever -- not even a shop where you can have a shampoo. Even the sea-bathing has to be done in a cove behind steel netting because of the sharks. When this vice consul was assigned to Aden he was so dismayed that on his "local leave" he disobeyed the laws of the Department by leaving the country where he was stationed, and rushing back to Washington to try to talk them out of his transfer to Aden. (You are absolutely forbidden when on <u>local</u> leave, to go out of the country you are assigned to.) Of course, Washington said he had a choice: either go to Aden or leave the service! He went to the Naval Hospital and tried to get them to say he was unfit for tropical service; the hospital reported that he was in perfect health! Then he made his one wise move: he agreed to go to Aden for six months to show

he wasn't afraid of going, with the understanding that he would resign at the end of that time. He's just now arriving from his six months there, and says it's a hell-hole, and that if he hadn't resigned before he went, he certainly would do so now. He sets forth a rather better picture of his deeds than the current gossip. He says he has planned his resignation for a long time, and that Aden was only the last straw. He is interested in museum work, and is going to take a course at Harvard this year.

August 9, 1939

We would like to buy some more antique Italian furniture to take with us, but there are so many expenses entailed in a transfer (besides the fare, which the Government pays, of course). However, we did find a sewing table for $5.00, the lid of which lifts up to reveal little cubby-holes and boxes, all lined in old velvety felt, with a sweet pincushion outlined in furniture braid. The top is inlaid with panels of lighter wood forming an oval, with a butterfly in each corner, beautifully made of tiny inlaid pieces of wood-mosaic. Fritz has allowed $90 for furniture, including the sewing-table. With the $85 left, we have bought a job-lot of things which a Consul and wife do not want to take back to America with them when they are transferred; an absolutely new Beautyrest bed: mattress springs, and base (we had had no bed of our own) ($50.00); an overstuffed wing chair, newly upholstered, rather narrow in the seat, but fine for smallish guests ($12.50); a front room table which opens to reveal bridge and poker top of felt, with wood circles for tumblers or ashtrays, in beautiful condition ($7.50); as well as a coffee table ($3), bookshelf ($2.50), and several other things, all coming within the $90 limit.

Last night we were hosts to four other couples at an outdoor performance of "Aida." When we got there we saw quite a mob forcing its way in, so I gave one ticket to each member of the party, and we really had to fight our way in. Had we known there would be such a rowdy crush we would have waited, for as soon as we entered the crowd, we were picked up and whirled around like leaves on a stream. It was really terrible -- (unfortunately, Italians can be like this at such times, or on a bus or tram). Once I got frightened (I plunged in first, of course) and got well manhandled by one attendant (it is considered a compliment in Naples for a young woman to be pinched in the rear by a man, but he overdid it!), but I couldn't reach him to hit him because the crowd was milling around and my arms were pinned to my sides. Everybody in our group eventually got through into the park without more damage than wrecked clothes, except Elizabeth Thurston, who is very tiny. It seems that she got pushed up against a car and someone twisted her arm; and being short, she couldn't breathe, so she finally screamed, whereupon the crowd parted instantly like the waters of the Red Sea, and let her through. By the time I reached her, she was trembling and crying and stamping her feet, and shaking her fists in everybody's faces. I was terribly worried at first, but she soon quieted down and began to chuckle. She really is so little and cute, and to see her defy all those people like an enraged kitten, jumping up and down and shaking her fists, was quite a show. She came through with her funny little hat still perched unscathed on top of her head. Everyone very kindly and considerately dismissed the whole crush as amusing; and "Aida" made up for it -- it's a great spectacle. Part of the first act was inaudible, due to

storms of hisses and jeers from the rowdy back-grandstand because they couldn't hear and because people were standing in front of them. It finished at 1:30 a.m., to the accompaniment of a few impassioned hissers who had hissed all the way through the opera every time anyone so much as dared to blow his nose -- such is opera in Naples!

We are going to the top of Vesuvius tonight. Last night it looked fairly active, so I hope it will be tonight too.

Next day: Exciting picnic up on Vesuvius. We drove up as far as we could; then parked and walked, quite a group of us. Vesuv was satisfyingly active, but I inadvertently supplied the major excitement of the excursion by falling through into the molten lava! We had two Italian guides: I had on tennis shoes, and as we approached the crater, suddenly a piece of hard (but thin) lava (about a foot square) on which I had stepped broke loose and dropped four or five inches onto the red-hot lava underneath. I had hardly time to register the fact that there was a fiery-red circle of lava all around my tiny foothold, about to burn my feet off at the ankle, and to see everyone around me stop as dead as wax figures, frozen with fear, looking down at my feet, when I was seized under my armpits by the two guides, one on each side, who whisked me out of my little private volcano. They deposited me on top of a lovely warm, high rock, and handed me an open bottle of red wine with which to restore myself, which I speedily did; and with me waving the bottle overhead and happily tipsy, we all soon laughed it off as a good joke and memorable adventure.

August 15, 1939

To celebrate the Italian holiday of Ferragosto, I went over to the Island of Capri with friends, since unfortunately Fritz had work to do -- he always does have work to do!

However, I did enjoy walking all alone on Saturday afternoon to Anacapri (a LONG walk) to visit the Villa San Michele, where Dr. Munthe lived, who wrote The Story of San Michele. I did not particularly admire his villa. I took the bus back to Capri -- one of those with two long benches, one along each side of the bus, facing each other. Across from me sat the most perfectly beautiful and handsome young boy I have ever seen, about half my age. He was beautiful with that perfection of Robert Taylor, (whom I saw close up at Metro Goldwyn Mayer and of Dolores Del Rio, whom I once saw at a polo game) -- he was so like a Greek statue, that I couldn't help looking at him. He was with an older man. The boy kept looking at me, and smiling slightly in a friendly way, and the older man was furious at the boy and at me, though for the two of us it was just an immediate and quite innocent kind of empathy. In the square at Capri we all got off, and the boy turned to give me one last friendly smile; I smiled back, and the man angrily pulled him away. I felt sorry for the boy, who seemed somehow to be trapped; though perhaps my sympathy was quite wasted.

Many friends arrived from Naples that evening by later boats, and after dinner we all went together up to the little square, which is the center of Capri life. Everybody wanders

through it as least six times a day and stops for coffee or ice cream cones at the little outdoor restaurants. In the corners of the square are outlets, narrow hilly lanes which lead out to the different parts of the island, and to the hotels and pensiones. Thus the square is constantly being replenished with new streams of people, interesting to watch, for Capri is renowned as the place where everybody wears the strangest and most picturesque (not to say weird) clothes and beachwear in the world.

That Saturday night almost everyone stayed up until four o'clock in the morning, ending up in the square for food. I went to bed much earlier, and heard strange haunting screams during the night -- merrymakers no doubt. I have been told that on the Saturday night of Ferragosto nobody on Capri ever goes to bed at all until the sun comes up and blesses their revels, so to speak.

The next morning we all went down on the far side of this island (facing away from Naples) to the "Little Marina," where everybody likes best to swim; and Ray Thurston and I went out together in a sandolino, a slender little boat like a tiny racing-shell, with paddles like a double-headed canoe paddle. We went way out in the bay to the Faraglioni, the three enormous rocks which rise out of the water hundreds of feet, cliffs all round each, where there are arches and grottoes, and where the sea roars and ripples even on the calmest day. They say that the two outer rocks of the three (the inner one is connected to the main island) have flora, and even birds, on them that are found nowhere else on earth, so far as is known. (As we drifted close to the base of these rocks, I could see beautiful little bits of sea plants, or lichen, some in colors, including a rich Chinese red.) We took nearly two hours to go out there and back, and went in swimming four or five times on the trip, shoving the sandolino ahead of us, and sliding along the keel under water, and all sorts of silly things that were fun. After lunch with our entire Naples crowd at the restaurant at the Piccola Marina, it was time to pack up and leave for home. Many others stayed on for several more days; but as for me, I wanted to get back to Fritz!

Back in Naples
August 21, 1939

Last Saturday evening a group of us went to have dinner at the Savoia, a temporary summer-restaurant, put together rather crudely of wood every summer, hanging right out over the water; then taken down every winter. But the food is good, and they of course have music. Apparently the Neapolitans knew the sultry weather better than we did, for hardly anyone was there besides ourselves. Suddenly a terrific wind came up and started blowing the service off the tables, blew down a potted tree; and then it began to rain. The glass sunroof over our heads began to leak immediately, so we moved back into the only solid part of the structure -- a small entrance hall with a ceiling of wood. The storm became simply terrific -- such a cloudburst that we were all rather afraid that the fragile structure would collapse over our heads, and we would all go sliding down the big sharp rocks into the sea. The wind and rain blew in from all sides -- there was no real place for shelter or warmth. It became cold; most of the women had on light cotton dresses. The dance floor and dining room looked so dismal, the lights still on, but soaking wet.

Though everyone gets caught in the rain now and then, I suppose we were one of the few parties ever caught in a fierce rainstorm with two orchestras! It was rather fun. One of the orchestras finally had to give up because of possible damage to their instruments, but the guitar-and-mandolin Neapolitan orchestra kept right on playing throughout the storm, with the tenor and the baritone alternating on Neapolitan and gypsy songs.

On Sunday we had a grand drive out to Cumae and its Acropolis and the sibyls' caves which I wrote about last summer. Then we had a wonderful lunch in our favorite of all trattorias, way out in the country near Cumae -- a farm really, which few people know about, but which serves a delicious meal. It's a simple stone farmhouse with a crude courtyard under an awning of grapevines, with rough board tables. The brown bread is fresh-baked and crusty, and one sits in the warm speckled shade, tears off pieces of brown bread and eats them along with glasses of the farmer's own rough red wine. By the time the simple meal of pasta or clams baked in olive oil and garlic arrives, one feels very relaxed and lifted above all the turmoils of the world! Meanwhile, the farmer and his wife have a tumultuous fight in the kitchen (for he beats up his wife every time we go there), and she runs shrieking from the kitchen out into the vineyards, sobbing at the top of her voice, with the farmer hard on her heels! Not really a pretty picture -- but we try to overlook the beatings for the sake of the food, not knowing whether the beatings are part of the show, a la "Carmen," or genuine lovers' quarrels. (Or perhaps dead serious wife-abuse, who can know?)

Though I have always been practically a teetotaler, I have found in Italy that there are pleasant (and apparently harmless) ways of feeling really wonderful. One can lunch in the courtyard of a farm like the one we frequent, or perhaps stop at some little mountain town, go to a tiny shop and provide yourself with a loaf of bread, a large hunk of cheese, and a bottle of the local wine. Take these ingredients to the slopes of a nearby mountain, find a ledge with a good view over miles and miles of countryside; then begin with the bread and wine, progress to the cheese, until a certain unmistakable feeling of joyous abandon invades your body and spirit; the resulting exhilaration can be guaranteed either way. The quick hard lift and frequent let-down of strong liquor .just aren't in it, compared to the above recipe, for lasting, memorable pleasure.

August 24, 1939

Our transfer orders to Australia have come from Washington, so now I am going to be busy as a hornet. We are to sail on either the 3rd of September on a British ship, or on the 8th, on an Italian ship. When we arrive in Australia, we are not going directly to our new post in Melbourne; for Fritz has two temporary assignments of a month each, in Perth and in Brisbane, to give the Consuls there each a month of long-awaited vacation. This will be very interesting for us, for we shall get to see more of Australia immediately than we would have by going straight to Melbourne and staying there. We shall also get a peek at Adelaide, which is between Perth and Melbourne, and two peeks at Sydney, one going to Brisbane, and one returning, on our way to Melbourne to live. So we shall have seen each of the five largest cities in Australia before even settling down there.

If Italy has become involved in a war between today (August 24) and September 8, we of course cannot proceed to Australia, and I shall perhaps be living on the Island of Capri, and Fritz will commute. If war is not declared by September 8th, we will be off and away for Australia. I suppose in the former case, the American women will all have to go to Capri or to some place in the country, to sit there and worry ourselves sick about our husbands, and die a thousand deaths every time we hear there has been an air raid on Naples, which is Italy's principal seaport -- and our Consulate is right on the water near the port! Generally, in such crises, they move the Consulates further uptown, but it generally takes them so long to do it. A new Consul just here from Barcelona says they moved the Consulate five times in two years; but none of the five places were hurt. (Later Note: The Naples Consulate was indeed bombed out of existence during the war!)

August 27, 1939

It seems at this moment to be one of those many peaks in the current international situation. The Consulate courtyard is full of somewhat alarmed Americans trying to get some information about the advisability of returning to the United States, and our Consul General has appeared on the courtyard balcony to make a calming speech, but nevertheless advising them to try to find means of returning home as soon as they can find a suitable opportunity. Unfortunately, there are no ships. The Italia Line has canceled its sailings, thus making it very hard indeed for all the tourists who happened to be here when the crisis came. However, we are still hoping all will be well. Somehow I can't become alarmed. They say the British Consulate is so cool that they are going along in their routine way and not advising people to get out. Today is Sunday, and we are partly open; but the British Consulate is closed, and I suppose their Consuls are sailing or playing tennis as usual. I really think it's a very good idea (since at present there are no ships here to take the tourists away), for if a Consulate or Embassy is cool, the coolness transfers itself to the people.

Meanwhile, everyone is going about his usual business: dinners, luncheons, dancing (shades of Nero or Marie Antoinette?). We are going sailing all afternoon today. If there is no war by this time next week, Fritz and I may be leaving for Australia. If things are serious enough for all leaves and transfers to be canceled, then Fritz and I will do what all the rest do. He will stay here, and all the women will trail out into the country, or take off somewhere on a battleship to Algiers, Lisbon, or Heaven-knows-where, and wait quietly for the end of the war, or for our husbands to come and get us. I adore Lisbon, and in Algiers one could at least study French. The women are not the ones to be worried about. All the worrying should be done for the husbands, who would have to stay here and take it.

In an interesting situation like this, it is rather hard to talk about anything else, yet surprisingly enough, we do not think about it all the time -- we go right on doing exactly what we would do in any case; dinner at the sporting Club called Giovanezza with some oil people; a dinner for a friend who was supposed to leave on the SATURNIA, whose

sailing has of course been canceled; and dancing at a place called The Fireflies where we danced recently until 3 a.m. It was lovely outside at night, high on a hill above Naples, very cool, with a strong wind blowing, and all the faraway night-noises and furnace-flares of the little manufacturing town on the seashore below the cliff.

Meanwhile, we have packed all our furniture and clothes, to be ready for any eventuality. I bought a beautiful bracelet yesterday, a copy of an Etruscan bracelet: a braided circle with two rams' heads facing each other -- they have collars of royal blue enamel. Even so, I was torn between it and a copy of a pin found in the ruins of Pompeii: called one of "the little loves," a cupid like a baby angel, of gold, sitting on the back of a gold and blue enamel bird, holding on to fine gold reins which are wound around the bird's neck. The whole thing is not more than an inch long and three-quarters of an inch high, of the most delicate work. The curls of the cupid must have been done under a magnifying glass. Now, of course, our dollars are priceless to us, so I paid for the bracelet in lire.

This letter to you will go by perhaps the last possible freighter, in care of a young friend who is returning to Wellesley. (Pat Bowman, the daughter of our Consul general.) The Italian outgoing mails are now probably closed for good. In case you do not hear from me, DO NOT WORRY. We are so far still safe, spaghetti is plentiful, and we still have music with our meals! The only thing we can't get, beginning today, is coffee. (They will try to use ground acorns as a substitute. It tastes terrible.) Everyone here is very calm and collected. The men at the Consulate are working to get the Americans out; otherwise we still swim, sunbathe, and see our friends. The main thing I'm afraid of is that if you don't get mail from me, you'll worry. Don't. I am taking what may be my last chance to get a note to you telling you the truth. There is no food shortage. If newspapers exaggerate, don't believe them! We Consulate women are all still here, with no intention of leaving until we're thrown out, and our husbands will see that all precautions are taken. If we see a chance to get to Australia, we may go yet. Now I must go and buy a corsage for Pat's sailing.

September 3, 1939

This is the night we were to have sailed for Australia, and it does make me sad to think about it. It would have been so much fun. However, I suppose that one might say that this is an adventure. To me it is an interesting experience, though it is really awful to see the slow transformation of a city that is preparing for possible war. They are making the usual preparations for evacuation in case of need, the streets are very dark every night, and most nights there are practice blackouts. However, otherwise life goes on much the same: I mean, the city is different, but the people are the same. They continue to gather in the sidewalk cafes, drinking chocolate instead of coffee; barkers call their wares in the streets, people go to work, shops are open; the laughing and talking in the streets is exactly the same as it was three weeks ago when there was no serious war scare. The Italians do not want war, and do not think that they will have to join it.

There is a great shortage of transportation home for the Americans who were here when

the crisis started, and almost all of them had reservations to return home on the Italian ships, all of which have had their sailings canceled. So a few people are being sent back on each American freighter that leaves. But new Americans keep turning up!

This morning, for instance, the VULCANIA arrived from America with 250 Americans who didn't take the war rumors seriously enough. Now we've got to try to find a way to get them home again! No wonder there is a lot of need for consuls to remain in time of war -- our Consulate is flooded with people all the time these days. (Regular immigration work is of course halted.)

And the Italian-Americans who are over here for visits are nearly frantic because they want so much to go back, and those who are not yet naturalized American citizens will be kept here by the Italian government, which doesn't want any Italians to leave.

I scribbled my letter of last Friday in great haste, and rushed down to the freighter at four o'clock to see Pat off, clutching a very sad bouquet of faded red and white roses, which were all I could find in the part of Naples near the docks, only to discover that the ship was not, after all, sailing until eight o'clock, and Pat was not yet on board. I didn't want to put my letter under her pillow for fear someone else might find it first, and it is the law that all outgoing mail is to go through the Italian Post Office. But I had forgotten that our good old EXOCHORDA was due in yesterday and goes out to America today, so I gave it to someone on that ship to mail in the U.S. But Fritz and I have come to the conclusion that mail still IS going out to the U.S. through the Italian mails, so I'm going to go on writing you as usual, and using the Italian mails, and you can tell me later what happened. Aside from the German-Polish skirmishing, things still seem much the same, so far.

Naturally, we could not sail to Australia on the ORONSAY, since its sailing, was canceled. We considered sailing on the American ship which left here on Friday night for Egypt, to connect with a Dutch freighter which goes directly to Australia, but we found out that we would just neatly miss connections in Port Said. We could have flown from Port Said to Melbourne on a KLM plane, which I would have enjoyed, but it costs so much, and Consular Officers are not authorized to fly without special permission from the treasurer, so that we could not take a chance of having to foot the bill, as well as getting ourselves scolded for taking too much authority on ourselves. As Fritz says, we are after all just a vice consul and wife, not an important couple carrying some priceless serum or message to Garcia. So now Fritz has wired the Department, asking their permission to take whatever neutral ship comes along, with the idea of making whatever connection is possible in Port Said or Alexandria, or even so far afield as Singapore. I still dread most of all being sent away from Fritz for an indefinite period. However, in France they have compromised by sending the American wives all together up into the mountains, which gives their husbands the satisfaction of knowing they're safe, and of being nearby.

Last night we went down to the EXORCHORDA and played rummy with the Captain; then had dinner as his guests; then played bridge-on-the-bridge, so to speak, because it

was too hot to play indoors. I feel much better about the mail situation than when I wrote my recent hasty note. I'm practically sure they won't close the mails here, at least until Italy joins the war; and even then they may allow mail to go out over neutral borders.

Still in Naples, September 8, 1939

At the moment there is a return to a feeling of more security and normality, perhaps false, perhaps brief. This is just a hurried line to give to someone on board the REX which after all, despite the recent halt on the sailing to America of Italian ships, is sailing today. I want to take advantage of this sure opportunity to let you know that everything seems hopeful for the moment. All Italians seem sure they won't enter the conflict -- though sometimes I think England and France aren't going to be as obliging as they believe here that they will be. The weather is just changing from summer to fall, and according to the day, combines either the worst or the best features of both.

Yesterday Virginia and I had a wonderful day sight-seeing at Paestum -- my first trip there. Paestum is quiet, lonely, and isolated, on a flat plain by the sea, and has the remains of three very fine Greek temples. We wandered around for six hours, sitting in temples, walking along ruined city walls, taking photographs of groups of little country boys gathering snails, and hiding from the sudden showers under what cover we could find, since none of the three temples has a roof. We returned to Naples by train, as we had come. And I had a chance to see Virginia in full battle formation with all guns blazing. We were in a compartment for eight, along with two or three Italian men, who asked Virginia, in Italian -- everything had to be translated for me -- if they could pull down the little curtains in the corridor-windows of our compartment so that some of their friends in other compartments would think some hanky-panky was going on with us. Virginia flared into fury; she became a Medusa -- and in her fluid Neapolitan Italian, proceeded to take them to pieces, leaving them obviously very embarrassed and crestfallen. I could just understand enough to know that she told them we were honest married women -- though she is now a widow of course, however honest; but she of course did not mention that.

I'll get a longer letter off on the CONTE DI SAVOIA on the thirteenth.

(Note: But by the thirteenth of September, we had already sailed westward for our new post in Melbourne, Australia, via the U.S., on the American ship PRESIDENT TAFT.)

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BIOGRAPHIC DATA

Spouse: Frederick Wm. (Fritz) Jandrey

Spouse Entered Service: 1931 Left Service: February 1, 1959
You entered Service: 1938

Status: Widow of former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs

Posts:
Frederick Jandrey only
1931 Southampton, United Kingdom
1932 or 33 Calcutta, India

Frederick & Clemence Jandrey
1936 Naples, Italy
1939 Melbourne, Australia
1945 Naples, Italy
1947 Washington, DC
1949 Kabul, Afghanistan
1951-52 National War College
1952 Washington, DC
1955 Copenhagen, Denmark
1957 Inspection Corps, Iran
1957-59 Washington, DC

Place and Date of birth: Oakland California; June 14, 1907

Maiden Name: DeGraw

Parents (Name, Profession):
George Clement DeGraw, sewing machines
Blanche Eugenia Truesdell, housewife

Schools (Prep, University):
University of Illinois, 1925-6; University of Wisconsin 1926-28; UCLA 1928-29; USC teacher's certificate 1932

Date/Place of Marriage: Rome, Italy; July 11, 1938

Profession: Housewife

End of interview