



Gratia A. Countryman and Family Papers.

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B.W.C.
Business Woman
Fall 1926.

A trip to Europe is no unusual thing, and yet we four B. W. C. members from the Public Library did have such an unusually good time that we want to tell you about it. We did not go with any conducted tour; we did not even have a tour worked out carefully beforetime as all guide books say that you should. When we made plans ahead, we changed them on short notice if we wished to. We did not read and prepare sufficiently well before starting, and often our historical knowledge or literary background was lamentably lacking. But we enjoyed every moment and wouldn't change any part of our trip, nor any of our experiences, nor any member of the party.

We did not take much baggage with us,-- only a small and a medium-sized suitcase apiece, but that was quite enough when we had to stick our heads out of compartment windows at the stations and call frantically for porters to come and get our eight bags off onto the platform where we hovered over them attempting to talk a few words that the natives could understand. It would have been convenient sometimes if we could have spoken more French or Italian but, on the other hand, it was amazing that so many porters, servants, shopkeepers, and hotel concierges could speak and understand English.

From our port at Havre, the first objective was the beautiful old Gothic city of Rouen where we were fortunate enough to find an excellent English guide who had a seven-passenger Cadillac. We engaged him and his car to drive us through Normandy to Mont St. Michel. To be sure it rained, but it was a heavenly drive and we couldn't bear to let that Cadillac leave us, so we hired our competent guide to drive us on through the valley of the Loire into the chateaux country. He showed us many points of interest which we could not have seen by train and took us to several historic Chateaux on the way to Tours.

Regretfully, we had to leave the Cadillac there and proceed by train from Tours, south to the wonderful old walled city of Carcassonne, and then by train to Nimes from where we again motored for three days to the Provencal towns of Arles, Avignon, etc. We always hated to board a train with our eight bags after motoring, but we went again by train to Nice, and then we hired another Cadillac and driver and motored along the Riviera to Genoa. After Mont St. Michel and Carcassonne this drive along the deep blue Mediterranean was the third high spot in our travels. From Genoa to Rome, and then another private car and guide through the hill towns of Italy,-- Orvieto, Perugia, Assisi, and Siena for three heavenly days to Florence which was another high spot.

We tore ourselves (and our eight bags) with extreme reluctance from Florence and Venice to take another glorious motor trip through the Dolomites-- that portion of the Alps which the Italians took from the Austrians-- and that ride was one of the most memorable, over passes and through beautiful valleys and little villages. We drove up and up until we were above the snow line and on the fourth of July, we stood on a snow bank and shouted patriotically with another group of Americans. We should have liked to send you a wireless from there.

There is no space to tell of our boat rides down the Italian lakes nor Geneva, Chamonix, Paris, or London. But we do want to tell you of the climax of our motor trips. When in London, we hired a seven-passenger Buick and proudly stowed our four selves and our bags, and drove off by ourselves to tour England for three weeks. That was altogether too short a time, but we managed to see a great deal of the lovely rural scenery of Southern England, the charming villages of thatched cottages covered with roses, as well as the Cathedral towns and such famous places as Bath, Oxford, Stratford, and Cambridge. With a motor, one is independent

of trains and time tables. It is the only way to travel and see the things one wants most to see. We were most satisfied when we were proceeding by motor.

As to the ocean trip going and returning, the least said about that the better. We can only wish that each of you may some day have just as congenial a party and as restful and satisfactory a trip as ours has been.

(Signed)

Gratia A. Countryman
Ethel I. Berry
Marion Prest
Marie A. Todd

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Womans Club Bulletin

December 13, 1929

My dear Mrs. Bartholomew,

I am enclosing the article which I promised for your "Bulletin." I hope it will be what you want, but if you have something else in mind, I will rewrite it. I took this occasion to say to a picked group an idea which is sizzling around in my head.

Yours very truly,

Librarian

Mrs. C. L. Bartholomew
2809 Irving Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Enclosures 2
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