

1 Volume 3rd.

2 Journal of trip to Europe & return by J.M.Van Osdel & family

3 1875 Naples

4 Jany. 20th. An enterprising Italian named Darley has made arrangements for conducting parties of
5 tourists once per week to Amalfi and Paestum and return to Naples, the trip occupying two days. We
6 joined his party and left Naples at 9 A.M. for Vietri by rail. There were 13 persons in the party, 11
7 Americans, and two Englishmen. We found on this train 9 persons from Chicago besides ourselves,
8 making 13 Chicagoans; namely, Mr. Van Wyck & wife and young lady cousin, Mr. Hammill & wife, Mr.
9 Dickinson & wife, Mr. Rand & wife – all going by train to Pompei. It was pleasant to meet so many
10 people from our own city in this far off land. We had a pleasant ride along the shore of the bay, then
11 across the mountainous promontory of Sorrento to Vietri, 30 miles from Naples. Vietri is situated at the
12 extremity of the valley on the gulf of Salerno. It is picturesquely located on the sides of the steep
13 mountains. Here we found three comfortable landau carriages to convey our party to Amalfi about 14
14 miles distant. This drive is said to be one of the loveliest in the world, and we found (as far as our
15 experience goes) that the saying is true. It is difficult to think of any thing that would add to its
16 incomparable beauty and grandeur. The road is formed by cuttings in the steep slopes of the
17 mountains. It winds around the jutting points, or headlands, passes inland around deep gorges and
18 indescribable, picturesque valleys, at some places from three to five hundred feet above the sea, at
19 others going down to a level with the coast. In many places the rocks forming these gorges and valleys
20 rival in beauty and magnificence the walls of the Yosemite Valley. We passed three little towns nestled
21 in the mouth of the narrow defiles. These were formerly the homes of the pirates of the Mediterranean,
22 and the people looked as if they had not changed much in character. But the truth is they are now
23 simply an industrious class of fishermen. Near Amalfi are many orange plantations. The groves are
24 formed on terraces, one above the other, on the steep slopes of the mountains and make a very
25 interesting variety to the already beautiful landscape. Arriving at Amalfi, we found a very bountiful
26 dinner awaiting us at the hotel. After doing ample justice to this preparation, we visited the cathedral
27 built some 800 years since. It is a good specimen of Romanesque style of architecture. It has nave and
28 two aisles separated by antique marble columns and has some very fine mosaic Arabesque
29 ornamentations. Passing down into the crypt, we were shown the tomb containing the remains of St.
30 Andrew (one of the apostles) which were brought from Constantinople 600 years ago. This interesting
31 relic caused Amalfi to become a place of pilgrimage for kings, queens, and popes for many years. In
32 1466 Pope Pius 2nd caused the head of the apostle to be set on a silver bust and took it to Rome where it
33 is still preserved among the relics at St. Peters. We next visited a macaroni factory and saw the
34 interesting process of its manufacture. We then walked about a mile through the town, up the narrow
35 valley of the Canneto, a small stream which furnishes power for several factories of paper, soap, and
36 macaroni. The view of the valley from the upper edge of the town is exceedingly grand and interesting.
37 Leaving Amalfi at 3 o'clock, we had a reversed view of the magnificent scenery along the road. The
38 quaint old watch-towers of the Greek pirates gave a finishing touch to the already picturesque
39 headlands. We reached Salerno at 6 o'clock, put up at a first class hotel where we had a sumptuous
40 supper and a comfortable nights rest.

41 Jany. 21st. After breakfast, started in carriages for the rail road station. I discovered that I had let my
42 field glass at the hotel, but we had not time to return for it, and the girls enjoyed my calamity excessively