

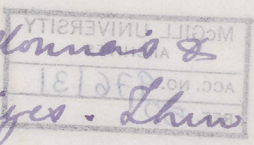
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Hotel de Bristol et Victoria
Rome
Monday Dec. 17th 83.

Dearest Anne,

We arrived at the "Eternal City" this afternoon so we have not had much experience of it & read little of you but little of it. Since arrival here we got letters fr. home - two being fr. you - one to me & one to mother. Thank you very much for them. You really are a most satisfactory correspondent. It is so hard to get even a whole week's news for there is so very much to tell & this week my time is very short. I think we last

letters were sent from Lucia and will now
 tell you about our experience in Florence.
 We got to Florence last Wednesday
 evening - too late to see anything that
 night - but we heard a good deal for
 the people there seem extremely
 fond of singing by night - in the streets.
 And then from 4 A.M. onwards the
 bells kept up a continual clanging.
 But having heard them so well the
 first night - I felt quite satisfied
 on the subject & did not trouble
 about listening any other night. On
 Thursday morning it was bright &
 lovely & we felt quite warm for the
 first time in our travels. We spent
 this first morning in the Caffè gallery
 of pictures - oh! there are so many
 pictures there & statues. Most of them
 old things done before Raphael's time



low to paint. Endless McDonnais &
 saints of all colours & sizes. There
 to there are some very fine things
 & we enjoyed seeing everything. There
 are some very fine pieces of sculpture
 & in fact too much to begin to tell you of.
 In all these galleries there are always
 many people copying pictures & we
 have been surprised to see how
 many quite old women were
 actively engaged in painting. Apparently
 it is the "deciere resort" here.
 We then (after the Lippiz) visited the
 Sams, the Battistero & several other
 things until we were rather tired &
 then fell upon the happy plan of
 taking a dive round about to see how
 the land lay. In this way we rested
 & saw sights at the same time. The next

day we spent in a similar manner
visiting the Petti gallery & other churches
& museums & in the afternoon driving
to Piesole a high hill near Florence
at the top of which there is a lovely view & as
the top of which was once an old Etruscan
town. In the way up we were met with
the blind, the lame & the halt "wonderfully"
along & our driver took great amusement
out of them. Encouraging them to follow
after us & at the same time warning
us in broken English not to give
anything to them. On Saturday we
visited several museums & also the
old monastery of St Marco which includes
Savinella. We also called upon the
Miss Horner's sisters of Mrs Lyell of
London who had asked us to call.
They are very pleasant elderly ladies

who live in Florence & the next night we took tea with them & spent a very pleasant evening there. We also became acquainted with a family of the Dougalls friends of the R. Redpaths who are very nice. We took dinner with them. Miss Doud. knows Lybel Wilson having met her in Edinburgh. Indeed our whole visit to Florence has been very pleasant & we have really seen a great deal there & learned much too. To-day we left Florence & came on to Rome. At dinner we heard of a wonderful illumination that was to take place to-night in honour of the Crown Prince of Germany. So as we had enjoyed the one at Lyons so much we thought we wd like to see this one & so started in a

Carriage & started in search - But we
 could find no illumination at all - After
 driving about for some time we decided
 it was best to return here as it was
 rather chilly & we were tired. And we
 found that we were stopped at every
 corner by soldiers who were keeping
 the very streets that we wanted to
 get up. So we were driving about
 for about an hour round & round
 before we got back to the hotel. So
 you see the evening has been wasted
 in a rather unsatisfactory manner.
 This too is the reason of my hurried &
 badly written epistle to you this
 week. I must stop now for it is
 late & we are tired. We hope to be
 here until next Monday & then
 go on to Naples until the 29th when
 we hope to sail for Egypt. We still intend
 to go unless there is worse news of the
 than with love & best wishes from
 your ever affectionate
 friends