On a European Honeymoon

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Mr. and Mrs. Robert Root, who spent the past year traveling in Europe, believe they learned as much during their 10 weeks in Germany as in a year of college. "We learned as much German," said Mrs. Root, the former Ferne Karns, "as the average student would learn in 2 years of college study. Not only that, but I learned more history than in all my years of study put together, and we both acquired a greater appreciation of paintings.

"Both Bob and I learned to know characteristics of different painters and we could tell whose pictures we were analyzing without looking for the names of the artists. Of course, not all painters are recognized.

"A heightened interest in things made our travels most valuable. We saw Wartburg Castle, where Luther translated the Bible, and now we are anxious to read Luther's biography. However, a year in Europe is worth 2 of college only after one has been to college. Bob and I are increasingly convinced of that."

While in Berlin the Roots lived with Baroness Frau von der Hagen. Her home was decorated with swords, helmets of ancestors, family crests, chandeliers of gold chains and circles with white bead fringe and full length mirrors with red velvet frames.

"Berlin," Mrs. Root said, "is not old like so many German towns; it is an art and music center, and quite New Yorkish despite its lack of tall buildings."

While in the German capital the Roots visited Schloss-Museum, which is the old castle of the Prussian kings, including Kaiser Wilhelm the Great and World War Kaiser. The castle was partly built in the 1500's and completed in the 1700's.

"It is the most elegant place I ever have seen," commented Mrs. Root. "Most of the rooms are papered with cloth-brocade. One is done in red velvet. Gold and silver are used everywhere, even on the woodwork. Chandeliers are made of glass beads and medallions; the floors are inlaid in several kinds of wood.

"Hundreds of pictures hang in the Kaiser Frederich Museum, one of four or five on what is called museum island in Berlin, including Italian, Dutch, English, French and Spanish pictures. We especially enjoyed the rooms of Rembrandt, Vermeer and Frans Hals.

"According to modern standards the museum is not as artistic as the smaller castle of Henry the Lion in Braunschweig."

"Deutsches Museum if full of examples of German painting, carving and sculpture done before the eighteenth century. Holbein's pictures are impressive. There are not too many well known pre-eighteenth century German painters.

"We went to the opera in Berlin and saw 'Tannhauser,' which has a famous orchestra. We also heard an organ concert in a little church in the old part of Berlin."

Several days were spent by the Roots in the art galleries in Rome. One of the most famous things seen there was the portrait of Pope Innocent X, painted by Velasquez, the Spanish painter. He is the one who painted the 'Infanta' which hangs on the second floor in Home Economics Hall.

"We learned from a painter who lived in Spain that the Infanta is typical and was surely done by Velasquez except the head of the girl. He was dead when the girl was as old as shown in the picture so the head was probably painted by one of his pupils several years later. The picture is of the little girl with a huge skirt, partly red. The original of Infanta hangs in Madrid, Spain.

"We saw Van Gogh's self portrait in Basel. Here there is a whole floor of modern art—work by Cezanne, Manet, Monet and others. In the large gallery we saw the original painting of Raphael's Sistine Madonna, Correggio's Holy Night, besides several paintings by Rembrandt and Rubens."

Mrs. Root learned while in Dresden that the factory which turns out the famous Dresden china is at Meissen, 20 miles away from Dresden. "I was thankful for my ceramics course; it helped me understand the porcelain factory and to read between the lines."

The house where Bach was born, the church where he played for years, the restaurant where Goethe got his inspiration for part of Faust were seen by the Roots in Leipzig.

"We saw Wartburg—an old castle and stronghold from about 1000. It was just like I have always dreamed a castle would be," Mrs. Root said. "Luther, the founder of the Lutheran Church, was a prisoner in Wartburg castle for a year. We saw his room with the original furniture. St. Elizabeth lived in the same castle and part of the opera Tannhauser describes a troubador contest held there."

"Seeing Wartburg was one of our top experiences in Germany. It took us an hour to walk up the hill to the castle but only 20 minutes to come down."

In Cologne the Iowa travelers visited the renowned Cologne cathedral—the fifth largest in the world. They walked along the grape terraces of the Rhine River and saw the birthplace of Beethoven.

Among the lakes and mountains of beautiful Lucerne, tiny children were seen skiing. In Switzerland everyone starts when young to learn to ski and then keeps it up until old age.

"Germany was interesting and educational, while Switzerland was the place for a restful vacation," said Mrs. Root. "Traveling on to Italy the Roots went to Pavia to the church where Leonardo da Vinci's 'Last Supper' is painted on the whole north wall of a little room. It was done in tempera between 1494 and 1497. It has been restored several times but is still badly peeled. They also saw Raphael's 'Marriage of the Virgin.'"

"St. Peter's Cathedral, which is part of the Vatican, is very fancy and some of the marble is lovely. We saw a sculpture, 'The Pieta,' by Michelangelo, who also designed part of the dome of the Vatican Church, Titian's 'Sacred and Profane Love' and Botticelli's 'Birth of Venus.'"

"Sicily is the most colorful place we visited. We saw more colorful carts with donkeys and burros—little, tiny ones. The carts are painted and carved, some with religious scenes, but most of them just with red and blue and yellow pictures."

"Mt. Etna, snow covered and smoking, looked like a mountain rising right out of the sea. It really was a glorious sight."