



◀ The 'Theatre District' of Pompeii. *Teatro Grande* is seen left of the picture with the smaller *Odeon* on the right.



Teatro Grande.



Anfiteatro.



Odeon.

their researches although they had access to the books of Vitruvius and to sites such as the roman theatre in Verona. It is all part of the glorious jigsaw which is a major pleasure of theatric tourism.

At the edge of the city is the **Anfiteatro**. This is the oldest known Roman amphitheatre and, unlike the later ones, has no underground 'dressing rooms' for the animals, victims or gladiators who trained in the adjacent gymnasium and swimming pool. A positive arena wall normally protected the 12,000 spectators from any excesses of the performers except during the riot of AD59 which is recorded on a wall painting (now in Naples) and led to a ten year ban on the use of the Anfiteatro. Again one's sense of occasion on visiting the Anfiteatro is heightened at Pompeii by visiting it in the context of a complete city. This experience juxtaposed with that of opera in Verona enables one to edge closer to an understanding of what it must have been like to sit there twenty thousand years ago.