

d'une rare stupidité.

Voir *Le Traité de S. R. Roman, etc.*  
in *Correspond. Gen. de Bossuet*  
Blaise

*André Blide, the noted European author, has recently exposed his journals. We are very proud indeed to print here a portion of that immensely interesting work. André Blide is more than a writer; he is an intellectual, involved in all the problems the current world evokes. This excerpt, which covers the first half of 1948, is being printed here for the first time and will be published shortly by the Hagestrom, Trueblood Co.*

*André Blide was born in Cluny-sur-Seine, a small suburb of Paris, in the year 1880. He studied in Paris and Florence and published his first volume of verse Les Heures Lugubres in 1891—a charming collection of childhood reminiscences. In 1898 he and the poet, Manuel Barbusier, after an extended tour of French Equatorial Africa, started the famous but short lived literary review La Voix de Crépuscule. During the 1st World War, Blide fought gallantly and was awarded the Croix de Guerre. In the twenties he began writing that long string of novels which have gained him an international reputation as a writer. His most famous work, Chambres Meublées (Furnished Rooms), was published in 1926. Since then Blide has continued to work hard and steadily. He has produced a number of plays, twenty volumes of verse, three collections of short stories, four screen plays, two minor novels and a large volume of essays entitled Moralités. He spent the 2nd World War in seclusion near Carcassone in the Midi. Today he still travels widely and writes articles for the world's leading intellectual reviews. His journals are a testimony to his energetic genius, to his devotion to truth, to his search for peace.*

*From the Journals of*

## ANDRÉ BLIDE

TRANSLATED BY SAMUEL L. BLUMENFELD

*Paris, 1 January 1948*

Frightfully cold. Ran out of long underdrawers weeks ago. Must not allow myself to be diverted by the weather. Expecting Octave tonight.

*Paris, 12 January 1948*

Felix is an utter fool. I should have never loaned him my ball point pen. Received an invitation from Mme. de la Fourchette to spend several weeks in Touraine. I am tempted to go, but I dread the long hours of surreptitious platitudes and the immense hypocrisy of the Viscount Beal who is most likely to be there. Can I leave Octave? *Quo usque tandem abutere* . . .

*Paris, 18 January*

Went to the Rally yesterday. Why must Thorez dress like a slob? Duclos should at least

have given him a hint.

*Neully, 25 January*

Richepin asks whether I am concerned with life. Yes, I am—thoroughly and irrevocably. I find no sense in a paralysis of living. Those who attack my seclusion during the occupation know little of what I actually did and felt. I am amused by their inconsistencies. An individual should be measured by his works, not his ferocity.

*Paris, 1 February*

Received a wonderful letter from Guillaume. I must toddle down to see him immediately. Will read Proust on the way. Where did I put my yellow beret?

*Auxerre, 5 February 1948*

Four days with Guillaume have been splendid. He has a personality of extreme voluptu-

ousness. I find his smile less hesitating than his words, his ideas more exhilarating than the crisp weather. (This, in spite of the fact that he is too much of a legalist.) His wife, Danielle, whom I have never seen before, strikes me as being ethereal. Her cheeks are pale, but her eyes are intriguingly calm. I find a liveness to her form which makes her seem especially light. Yes, I can see why he married her. She brushes her lips across his eyes and he quivers shamelessly. How immaculate they are! Last night we read Valéry aloud. I played Chopin for them with an utterly passionate abandon. They visibly enjoyed my transports.

*Paris, 11 Feb.*

Another Rally and this is the last straw. Thorez with his fly wide open!

*13 Feb.*

Visited Picasso for a few moments. Showed me his ceramics. Cocteau, who was also there, cried tenderly at an urn-like affair which struck me as being à propos to our times.

Spent the evening writing to Chaumieux, Lisette and de Beauvoir. Campobianco must wait.

*22 Feb.*

Found the beret in the bottom of the old bureau. I wonder how it got there.

P.S.—Have decided to give up Communism completely.

*Zurich, 23 February*

Rain, rain. And how are the Swiss, chéri? Dull, but willing.

*Paris, 24 Feb.*

I think I am being blackmailed.

*Neuilly, 28 Feb.*

Octave revealed himself quite unconsciously yesterday. "André," he said, "did you know I was the best ballet dancer in my artillery regiment?"

*Paris, 2 March*

Have received invitation to lecture at Hawthorne Junior College, Clappsboro, Pennsylvania, this Spring. The offer is quite generous with practically all expenses paid. Would seriously enjoy trip to the United States at present.

*Paris, 8 March*

Have made all arrangements. Have written Jean in New York. Will sail on the De Grasse next Friday. Marcel and Judith will go to LeHarve with me. Felix will stay in the apartment until I return in September. Octave is furious because duties keep him here.

*LeHavre, 15 March*

Left Paris in a fury. Octave made a disgusting scene throwing Sartre and vile language

at me left and right. But I am sure he understands. I will get him a gift in New York, perhaps a refrigerator.

*Mid-Atlantic, 18 Mar.*

Immensely stimulated by the sea. I find myself thinking constantly of the past, of Georges, of Frederico, of René. Where are they now in this raging sea of years? Georges killed at Soissons. Frederico drowned in this very sea. René lost in a world of millions, dead, alive, anxious—who dares to know? I must write, write, and write. I must give myself no other raison d'être.

Occasionally I think of Octave in Paris. He is so terribly jealous, so naive, so primitive. Alas, therein lies his attraction. But are all dancers primitive? Is it not strange, but whenever I enter the Opéra-Comique to see the ballet, I imagine I am entering a pagan temple. How simple religion becomes, and so with it the act of worshipping!

I have been dining at the Captain's table for two nights. I sit opposite a famous American movie star who calls herself Rita Hayworth. She bores me. Ah, America, what shall I find upon your shores?

*Mid-Atlantic, 21 Mar.*

Have made the acquaintance of an extremely friendly young American who writes rather pleasant poetry. His home is located somewhere between New York and Chicago. He has invited me to spend a few days there when passing through. We have had some lively chats together, and his ideas are brilliant.

Someone has been slipping suggestive notes under my stateroom door. Typical American handwriting. At any rate, I will not go to lifeboat station 23 and look for someone with a red carnation.

Cabled Jean in New York to meet me at the docks.

*New York, 23 Mar.*

First Impressions:

America at last! Gad, so many cigarette butts. I must refrain from picking them up.

We docked at noon with the tall skyscrapers in full view. Jean found me almost immediately as I was making final adieus to friends made on board. Most of them were surprised when I introduced Jean (tall, impertinent and twenty-four) as my son. Few realized that I had once been married.

It is amazing how Jean resembles his mother. Perhaps when he becomes older I shall have somewhat of an idea of how Irène would have looked had she lived beyond the age of 15.

Oscar and Phyllis Leger met me on the pier.

I have not seen them since the Amsterdam opening of *La Cérémonie*—almost 20 years. Phyllis has aged—or has it been so long since she was in love with Nijinsky. How decades fly!

I am staying at a tall hotel near the park. Jean has been exceedingly helpful, dashing in and out, receiving calls. I am dining with all his Columbia friends tomorrow.

My one wish: to be left alone. I should like to discover America for myself.

*New York, 25 March*

America—such waste, such plumbing!

Jean's friends—a curious mixture of faculty and pupil. Two are in love with each other, three are normally married but having affairs with each other's wives, one is a despicable (the editor has found it necessary to suppress some phrases), another hates his father beyond imagination, the rest are refreshingly subdued.

Interviewed by a charming young girl from Harper's Bazaar. Her name is Imogene Abramowitz. Her phone number is somewhere on the desk.

*New York, 26 Mar.*

Who is Miss Hush?

*New York, 30 Mar.*

Alone at last. Walked in the park this morning. Strange, in Europe the boys wear short pants well beyond the fifteenth year.

Spent the afternoon travelling on busses and subways. Found myself completely lost on a large mess of a street called Fordham Road.

Stumbled this evening upon a delightful place called Pokerino. Vastly intriguing!

*New York, 1 Apr.*

Yes, the best place is the Astor Bar.

*New York, 2 Apr.*

No, I think Terry's is better.

(Entries from the 3rd April beginning with *Sex, how I love it . . .* to the 15th April ending with *. . . never again,* have been suppressed by the editors. They will be published in the book.)

*Philadelphia, 16 Apr.*

Read the Koran. Went to bed early.

*En route to Clappsboro, 18 Apr.*

Spring is coming. How I dread it. My soul is in a depressing state. Read Octave's letter several times. It is soothing.

Countryside is hideous. Hemingway must have been born here.

*Clappsboro, Pa., 20 April*

Small quiet college town. Staying at Mrs. Haggerty's Rooms. College is lovely. Viviane Romance's cousin teaches phonetics here. I feel dull—perhaps the altitude or the conversations.

P.S.—There is not a drop of Absinthe within 50 miles of here.

*Clappsboro, 22 Apr.*

First lecture warmly received. When I told Jean I gave them *Love Patterns in Literature*, he exclaimed—"What, again?" Such impertinence!

Am brushing up on all my English poets. The students here seem to bring one in with every question.

*Clappsboro, 28 Apr.*

Spoke on *Obscenities in Russian Poetry, Minor Characters of Sigrid Undset, Werther, and Sexual Sublimation in the Theatre.*

Have been invited to be at seminar on "Modern Authors" this Summer. Am thinking it over.

*1 May 1948*

Oh, I know it's coming. I feel it hanging over me like a huge black cloud. I am headed for one of my worst depressions. I know it, I can feel it. The Americans have been kind.

*4 May 1948*

Today I feel morbid—my dandruff has become worse.

*8 May 1948*

Two letters from Paris. Felix says that the stringbean De Gaulle is in for a clash with the Communists. I for one am out of this mess. Sent Ana Pauker back her autographed pictures.

*12 May 48*

I think my voice is changing.

*15 May 1948*

Ah, Spring, Spring, Spring! Can it be true that I am actually and truly no longer constipated?

*17 May*

No, it is not.

*20 May 1948*

Have accepted seminar offer. It is called the Meatloaf Summer School of Literature and is held for two months in ten log cabins on top of Mount Meatloaf, some 15 miles from here. My colleagues will be Robert Frost, Edna St. Vincent Millay, James Mason, Kathleen Winsor, Horace Gregory and Nick Kenny. The enrollment runs to about 150 selected young men and women.

Octave may join me in July.

*25 May*

Am beginning to write verse once more. It must be the atmosphere. These Americans know all the tricks—casual dress with sexual emphasis, deliberate tightness in the most suggestive places, low cut shoes to show the beauty of the ankles—indeed, such flagrant talent in eroticism. Could this flourish in a land but as warmblooded

as this?

27 May

Reread Vergil's *Aeneid*. I have lost my patience with the Trojans. Let the horse in, see if I care.

30 May 1948

School deserted because of holiday. Was offered auto ride to New York. Declined in favor of solitude and poetry. Or could it be that I am getting old.

1 June 1948

Reflexions about the world at random:

The difference between France and America: We do not need a Kinsey Report.

What is good about American women: They are eager to learn.

What is bad about American women: They are too fussy about the teacher.

6 June 48

Glorious week of rain and work. Have been wearing my tennis shoes for days.

Clappsboro, 8 June 48

Have started on a new novel. It will be magnificently long and weary. It will be so difficult, so complicated that it will make Proust look like a comic strip. I'll get Rosenthal to write a key to it when I am done.

10 June 48

Who is this great man Robert Mitchum everybody talks about?

12 June 48

Spent the entire afternoon packing for the trip to Meatloaf. Miss Westerly, whom the school has given me as an assistant, has been helpful. She has never been to France but speaks French remarkably well. She asked me if I would not mind if she wore her sailor pants. Mon Dieu, what matter is it to me what she wears?

14 June 48, On top of Mt. Meatloaf

Heavens, what a place to hold a school. Nothing but mist and clouds. Everyone goes around bumping into everyone. However, perhaps there is something about this American informality which I have not perceived yet.

Was introduced to my colleagues at lunch. I am sure I have seen Miss Millay someplace before. Tanganyika? Come now, what would she be doing there? Also met a new young American writer, Truman Capote. We should get along quite well, I imagine.

Mt. Meatloaf, 17 June 48

Today Mr. Frost gave a talk on the role of horse manure in American literature. He stressed rather wisely that manure has penetrated more deeply into American literature than the

literature of any other country.

Capote showed me the manuscript of a new story he is writing. I am thoroughly thrilled by it. His character Belvedere is a revelation.

Mt. Meatloaf, 20 June 48

Gave my first Summer lecture to a filled room. *Poetry and the Subconscious* was the topic. I was unusually nervous. Forget my thoughts at several places. Had to refer to notes which I detest doing.

The novel is growing.

Mt. Meatloaf, 23 June 48

Wonderful day. Took a walk and found a spot with a marvelous view. One can see for miles around the wonderful expanse of green valleys and hills, the immense reach of the sky. My God, whenever I think of Louis XIV building palaces in Versailles and at the same time letting a continent slip from his fingers I can choke. Such little insight on the part of so great a monarch. And Napoléon, giving up Louisiana so that he could have enough money to liberate the Boches! Eh bien, Bismarck made the same mistake in Africa. At least we have the desert if nothing else.

Mt. Meatloaf, 25 June 48

I played the piano for the people at dinner. Capote turned the pages.

Mt. Meatloaf, 26 June

Green frankfurters! Who ever heard of such a thing?

Mt. Meatloaf, 27 June

Stumbled into my cabin to find Miss Westerly doing push-ups with a young man. I ran away immediately. I do not mind sharing the cabin, but she must make out a schedule of activities.

29 June 1948

Received wire from Octave. He is arriving on the 8th of July. I am in a state of exhilaration.

Mr. Frost has loaned me a pair of overalls. Miss Winsor and Miss Millay have been seeing much of each other. James Mason has dysentery.

30 June

We discussed Gorki today.

Mt. Meatloaf, 2 July

Miss Winsor has contracted dysentery. We read Baudelaire aloud in French. Am preparing cabin for Octave. He likes mauve curtains.

4 July

The great American celebration. We had a wonderful dance in the stables and a huge festival. Delightful!

5 July 1948

Le petit Capote has dysentery. Poor thing, I stayed with him in his cabin for hours.

8 July

This is terrible. There is a line at the outhouse.

9 July

Octave is here. For hours we have been talking about Paris, Jean, Felix and all the others. I could not introduce him to anybody as yet, as they are all laid up with that awful sickness. Mr. Frost and myself are the only ones in normal (ah, that word again) condition. Octave is as beautiful as ever. His eyes—I am lost for words. He danced his latest piece for me. Magic, pure magic! He tells me that Paris is hot this summer. Felix has gone to Chamonix and Inez is in Cannes with Elsa Maxwell. I now she will do anything to sell herself to Hollywood.

11 July

School has been temporarily suspended for the week. I am beginning to feel faint at moments myself. Octave is convinced it is a psychological effect. We spend many moments together by the lake with *pauvre petit Truman*.

14 July 1948

Lovely gesture today. At dinner they all sang, rather weakly, the Marseillaise. Their sincerity is unquestionable. Octave has impressed them all. He dances on the grass for them. Capote adores him. That, I do not especially approve of.

18 July 1948

I can not keep my mind on my work. Miss Westerly and Truman are after him.

20 July

I despise Octave! He winks at everybody!

23 July

Good news! Miss Westerly has dysentery. I hope she dies.

25 July 1948

A perfect day. We discussed my old novel, *Chambres Meublées*. Gregory called it "the ragged edges of genius."

The weather has been exceptionally brilliant. They are showing outdoor movies tonight for the benefit of the school. We shall see, "The Diamond Horseshoe."

30 July 1948

A very quick week has passed. Everyone is well again. They are all amazed that I did not get sick. Mon Dieu, we French are used to such things.

As for my jealousy, I have put it under the most stringent control. I am no longer a child and my feelings must not interfere with my basic position as a human being capable of civilized behavior. Octave is a savage. He lives by the laws of nature. His life is a dance and he

reacts to the sweetest music. He may do as he wishes.

As for Truman, dysentery was not enough.

2 August 48

My students discussed Huxley today. They disapprove of him. I am pleased with their attitudes.

Why does the world seem so transitory? Perhaps because of this continuum. I expect an end frightfully soon.

5 August

Octave has gone to Pittsburg for a few days. I am relieved with his absence. Things were becoming unbearable.

7 August

Rain and fog. This mountain, this school, this reeking insanity. Why am I here? Why don't I drown myself? I have stopped completely. I no longer live. I have laid on this couch for two days and two nights, wrapped in my ridingcoat, listening to Palestrina. It does not help, it does not stir me, I am gone.

10 August

Jean came up from New York. Wants me to stay permanently in this country. No, no, no. I would die within a year if I did. I am like a fish who needs water, and Paris is my water.

13 August 1948

Octave is back. I should not be as happy as I am about it. He spoke very quietly about Pittsburg. It is obvious he did not enjoy it.

My students have handed in their final papers. I shall read them all in time.

15 Aug.

Jean and Octave have gone back to New York. I am alone. Capote is already seeking penitence. I am certain he will turn my pages when I sit at the piano tonight.

19 August

Miss Westerly has returned to normal. She goes around barefoot. It is a pleasure to find my papers neatly arranged once more.

20 August

Maude Bromberg-y-Davega, my old secretary, paid a nostalgic visit. She lives in Baltimore now, married to an attaché of the Bolivian Embassy. Her husband has a tin mine and a string of delicatessens. Poor Maude, once a first class prostitute, now working for the Bolivian Culture Bureau. I am sure Maugham could write a book about her.

24 Aug.

The last week of the Meatloaf School. I am somewhat relieved, and yet sorry. I am beginning to like mountain tops.

Had Capote for tea. We are friends once

more, with much profound and durable understanding.

*Mt. Meatloaf, 25 August*

Last lectures being given. Miss Winsor spoke on "Why Forever Amber is an American Classic," and Mr. Frost on "The Ass in American Poetry."

Received a very cordial letter from the Hackensack Truss Company, asking me to endorse their truss. I am flattered but must disappoint them as I have no hernia.

*28 August*

My last lecture, *The Crisis of the Intellectual*, was given today. Thus ends this lovely semester. I shall always remember it. Am leaving for New York in two days. Almost everyone will be gone by tomorrow evening. The faculty and student body are having a last gala supper this evening. I have a premonition that I shall be called on to say a few words.

*31 August 1948*

Meatloaf is a memory. Drove up to New York with Mr. Frost who is on his way to his New England farm to get the wheat in. I think Truman had a tear in his eye when we parted. I was not able to say goodbye to Miss Westerly as she had eloped the night before with the janitor's nephew who, I believe, is a football player with the Hawthorne College.

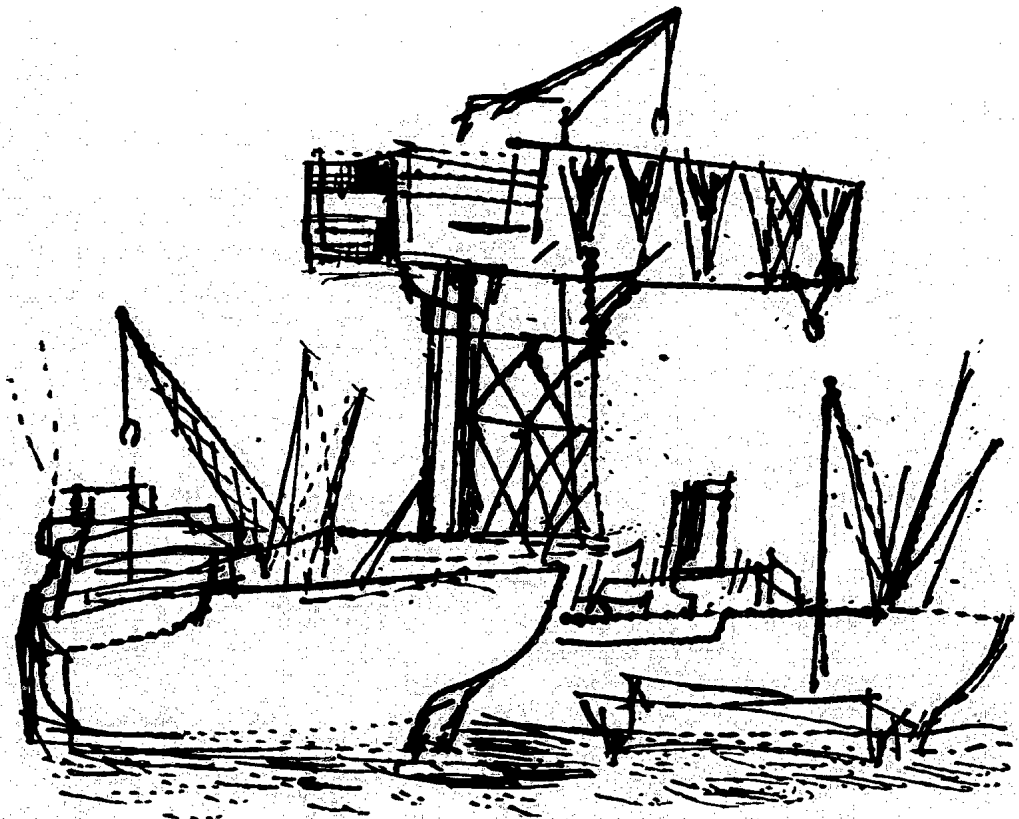
*New York, 3 September*

Once more in the enchanted city. I shall not be here long, for I am already getting my things together. I am leaving for France next Wednesday. Octave is staying on until the ballet company ends its tour in October. We are ourselves again. I am once more among Frenchmen—my son, my friends, my relatives.

Goodbye, America. I am old and may never see you again.

*Mid-Atlantic, 5 Sep 48*

Mon Dieu, I have dysentery!



Pen and Ink

—Alfred Zaloz