

The Autobiography of Alice B Toklas, by Gertrude Stein

CHAPTER 3

GERTRUDE STEIN IN PARIS 1903–1907

During Gertrude Stein's last two years at the Medical Schools Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, 1900–1903, her brother was living in Florence. There he heard of a painter named Cézanne and saw paintings by him owned by Charles Loeser. When he and his sister made their home in Paris the following year they went to Vollard's the only picture dealer who had Cézannes for sale, to look at them.

Vollard was a huge dark man who lisped a little. His shop was on the rue Laffitte not far from the boulevard. Further along this short street was Durand-Ruel and still further on almost at the church of the Martyrs was Sagot the ex-clown. Higher up in Montmartre on the rue Victor-Masse was Mademoiselle Weill who sold a mixture of pictures, books and bric-a-brac and in entirely another part of Paris on the rue Faubourg-Saint-Honore was the ex-café keeper and photographer Druet. Also on the rue Laffitte was the confectioner Fouquet where one could console oneself with delicious honey cakes and nut candies and once in a while instead of a picture buy oneself strawberry jam in a glass bowl.

The first visit to Vollard has left an indelible impression on Gertrude Stein. It was an incredible place. It did not look like a picture gallery. Inside there were a couple of canvases turned to the wall, in one corner was a small pile of big and little canvases thrown pell mell on top of one another, in the centre of the room stood a huge dark man glooming. This was Vollard cheerful. When he was really cheerless he put his huge frame against the glass door that led to the street, his arms above his head, his hands on each upper corner of the portal and gloomed darkly into the street. Nobody thought then of trying to come in.

They asked to see Cézannes. He looked less gloomy and became quite polite. As they found out afterward Cézanne was the great romance of Vollard's life. The name Cézanne was to him a magic word. He had first learned about Cézanne from Pissarro the painter. Pissarro indeed was the man from whom all the early Cézanne lovers heard about Cézanne. Cézanne at that time was living gloomy and embittered at Aix-en-Provence. Pissarro told Vollard about him, told Fabry, a Florentine, who told Loeser, told Picabia, in fact told everybody who knew about Cézanne at that time.

There were Cézannes to be seen at Vollard's. Later on Gertrude Stein wrote a poem called Vollard and Cézanne, and Henry McBride printed it in the New York Sun. This was the first fugitive piece of Gertrude Stein's to be so printed and it gave both her and Vollard a great deal of pleasure. Later on when Vollard wrote his book about Cézanne, Vollard at Gertrude Stein's suggestion sent a copy of the book to Henry McBride. She told Vollard that a whole page of one of New York's big daily papers would be devoted to his book. He did not believe it possible, nothing like that had ever happened to anybody in Paris. It did happen and he was deeply moved and unspeakably content. But to return to that first visit.

They told Monsieur Vollard they wanted to see some Cézanne landscapes, they had been sent to him by Mr. Loeser of Florence. Oh yes, said Vollard looking quite cheerful and he began moving about the room, finally he disappeared behind a partition in the back and was heard heavily mounting the steps. After a quite long wait he came down again and had in his hand a tiny picture of an apple with most of the canvas unpainted. They all looked at this thoroughly, then they said, yes but you see what we wanted to see was a landscape. Ah yes, sighed Vollard and he looked even more cheerful, after a moment he again disappeared and this time came back with a painting of a back, it was a beautiful painting there is no doubt about that but the brother and sister were not yet up to a full appreciation of Cézanne nudes and so they returned to the attack. They wanted to see a landscape. This time after even a longer wait he came back with a very large canvas and a very little fragment of a landscape painted on it. Yes that was it, they said, a landscape but what they wanted was a smaller canvas but one all covered. They said, they thought they would like to see one like that. By this time the early winter evening of Paris was closing in and just at this moment a very aged charwoman came down the same back stairs, mumbled, *boa soir monsieur et madame*, and quietly went out of the door, after a moment another old charwoman came down the same stairs, murmured, *bon soir messieurs et mesdames* and went quietly out of the door. Gertrude Stein began to laugh and said to her brother, it is all nonsense, there is no Cézanne. Vollard goes upstairs and tells these old women what to paint and he does not understand us and they do not understand him and they paint something and he brings it down and it is a Cézanne. They both began to laugh uncontrollably. Then they recovered and once more explained about the landscape. They said what they wanted was one of those marvellously yellow sunny Aix landscapes of which Loeser had several examples. Once more Vollard went off and this time he came back with a wonderful small green landscape. It was lovely, it covered all the canvas, it did not cost much and they bought it. Later on Vollard explained to every one that he had been visited by two crazy americans and they laughed and he had been much annoyed but gradually he found out that when they laughed most they usually bought something so of course he waited for

them to laugh.

From that time on they went to Vollard's all the time. They had soon the privilege of upsetting his piles of canvases and finding what they liked in the heap. They bought a tiny little Daumier, head of an old woman. They began to take an interest in Cézanne nudes and they finally bought two tiny canvases of nude groups. They found a very very small Manet painted in black and white with Forain in the foreground and bought it, they found two tiny little Renoirs. They frequently bought in twos because one of them usually liked one more than the other one did, and so the year wore on. In the spring Vollard announced a show of Gauguin and they for the first time saw some Gauguins. They were rather awful but they finally liked them, and bought two Gauguins. Gertrude Stein liked his sun-flowers but not his figures and her brother preferred the figures. It sounds like a great deal now but in those days these things did not cost much. And so the winter went on.

There were not a great many people in and out of Vollard's but once Gertrude Stein heard a conversation there that pleased her immensely. Duret was a well known figure in Paris. He was now a very old and a very handsome man. He had been a friend of Whistler, Whistler had painted him in evening clothes with a white opera cloak over his arm. He was at Vollard's talking to a group of younger men and one of them Roussel, one of the Vuillard, Bonnard, the post impressionist group, said something complainingly about the lack of recognition of himself and his friends, that they were not even allowed to show in the salon. Duret looked at him kindly, my young friend, he said, there are two kinds of art, never forget this, there is art and there is official art. How can you, my poor young friend, hope to be official art. Just look at yourself. Supposing an important personage came to France, and wanted to meet the representative painters and have his portrait painted. My dear young friend, just look at yourself, the very sight of you would terrify him. You are a nice young man, gentle and intelligent, but to the important personage you would not seem so, you would be terrible. No they need as representative painter a medium sized, slightly stout man, not too well dressed but dressed in the fashion of his class, neither bald or well brushed hair and a respectful bow with it. You can see that you would not do. So never say another word about official recognition, or if you do look in the mirror and think of important personages. No, my dear young friend there is art and there is official art, there always has been and there always will be.

Before the winter was over, having gone so far Gertrude Stein and her brother decided to go further, they decided to buy a big Cézanne and then they would stop. After that they would be reasonable. They convinced their elder brother that this last outlay was necessary, and it was necessary as will soon be evident. They told Vollard that they wanted to buy a Cézanne portrait. In those

days practically no big Cézanne portraits had been sold. Vollard owned almost all of them. He was enormously pleased with this decision. They now were introduced into the room above the steps behind the partition where Gertrude Stein had been sure the old charwoman painted the Cézannes and there they spent days deciding which portrait they would have. There were about eight to choose from and the decision was difficult. They had often to go and refresh themselves with honey cakes at Fouquet's. Finally they narrowed the choice down to two, a portrait of a man and a portrait of a woman, but this time they could not afford to buy twos and finally they chose the portrait of the woman.

Vollard said of course ordinarily a portrait of a woman always is more expensive than a portrait of a man but, said he looking at the picture very carefully, I suppose with Cézanne it does not make any difference. They put it in a cab and they went home with it. It was this picture that Alfy Maurer used to explain was finished and that you could tell that it was finished because it had a frame.

It was an important purchase because in looking and looking at this picture Gertrude Stein wrote *Three Lives*.

She had begun not long before as an exercise in literature to translate Flaubert's *Trois Contes* and then she had this Cézanne and she looked at it and under its stimulus she wrote *Three Lives*.

The next thing that happened was in the autumn. It was the first year of the autumn salon, the first autumn salon that had ever existed in Paris and they, very eager and excited, went to see it. There they found Matisse's picture afterwards known as *La Femme au Chapeau*.

This first autumn salon was a step in official recognition of the outlaws of the independent salon. Their pictures were to be shown in the Petit Palais opposite the Grand Palais where the great spring salon was held. That is, those outlaws were to be shown there who had succeeded enough so that they began to be sold in important picture shops. These in collaboration with some rebels from the old salons had created the autumn salon.

The show had a great deal of freshness and was not alarming. There were a number of attractive pictures but there was one that was not attractive. It infuriated the public, they tried to scratch off the paint.

Gertrude Stein liked that picture, it was a portrait of a woman with a long face and a fan. It was very strange in its colour and in its anatomy. She said she wanted to buy it. Her brother had in the meantime found a white-clothed woman on a green lawn and he wanted to buy it. So as usual they decided to buy two and they went to the office of the secretary of the salon to find out about prices. They had never been in the little room of a secretary of a salon and it was very exciting.

The secretary looked up the prices in his catalogue. Gertrude Stein has forgotten how much and even whose it was, the white dress and dog on the green grass, but the Matisse was five hundred francs. The secretary explained that of course one never paid what the artist asked, one suggested a price. They asked what price they should suggest. He asked them what they were willing to pay. They said they did not know. He suggested that they offer four hundred and he would let them know. They agreed and left.

The next day they received word from the secretary that Monsieur Matisse had refused to accept the offer and what did they want to do. They decided to go over to the salon and look at the picture again. They did. People were roaring with laughter at the picture and scratching at it. Gertrude Stein could not understand why, the picture seemed to her perfectly natural. The Cézanne portrait had not seemed natural, it had taken her some time to feel that it was natural but this picture by Matisse seemed perfectly natural and she could not understand why it infuriated everybody. Her brother was less attracted but all the same he agreed and they bought it. She then went back to look at it and it upset her to see them all mocking at it. It bothered her and angered her because she did not understand why because to her it was so alright, just as later she did not understand why since the writing was all so clear and natural they mocked at and were enraged by her work.

And so this was the story of the buying of *La Femme au Chapeau* by the buyers and now for the story from the seller's point of view as told some months after by Monsieur and Madame Matisse. Shortly after the purchase of the picture they all asked to meet each other. Whether Matisse wrote and asked or whether they wrote and asked Gertrude Stein does not remember. Anyway in no time they were knowing each other and knowing each other very well.

The Matisses lived on the quay just off the boulevard Saint-Michel. They were on the top floor in a small three-roomed apartment with a lovely view over Notre Dame and the river. Matisse painted it in winter. You went up and up the steps. In those days you were always going up stairs and down stairs. Mildred Aldrich had a distressing way of dropping her key down the middle of the stairs where an elevator might have been, in calling out goodbye to some one below, from her sixth story, and then you or she had to go all the way up or all the way down again. To be sure she would often call out, never mind, I am bursting open my door. Only americans did that. The keys were heavy and you either forgot them or dropped them. Sayen at the end of a Paris summer when he was congratulated on looking so well and sun-burned, said, yes it comes from going up and down stairs.

Madame Matisse was an admirable housekeeper. Her place was small but immaculate. She kept the house in order, she was an excellent cook and provider, she posed for all of Matisse's pictures. It was she who was *La Femme au*

Chapeau, lady with a hat. She had kept a little millinery shop to keep them going in their poorest days. She was a very straight dark woman with a long face and a firm large loosely hung mouth like a horse. She had an abundance of dark hair. Gertrude Stein always liked the way she pinned her hat to her head and Matisse once made a drawing of his wife making this characteristic gesture and gave it to Miss Stein. She always wore black. She always placed a large black hat-pin well in the middle of the hat and the middle of the top of her head and then with a large firm gesture, down it came. They had with them a daughter of Matisse, a daughter he had had before his marriage and who had had diphtheria and had had to have an operation and for many years had to wear a black ribbon around her throat with a silver button. This Matisse put into many of his pictures. The girl was exactly like her father and Madame Matisse, as she once explained in her melodramatic simple way, did more than her duty by this child because having read in her youth a novel in which the heroine had done so and been consequently much loved all her life, had decided to do the same. She herself had had two boys but they were neither of them at that time living with them. The younger Pierre was in the south of France on the borders of Spain with Madame Matisse's father and mother, and the elder Jean with Monsieur Matisse's father and mother in the north of France on the borders of Belgium.

Matisse had an astonishing virility that always gave one an extraordinary pleasure when one had not seen him for some time. Less the first time of seeing him than later. And one did not lose the pleasure of this virility all the time he was with one. But there was not much feeling of life in this virility. Madame Matisse was very different, there was a very profound feeling of life in her for any one who knew her.

Matisse had at this time a small Cézanne and a small Gauguin and he said he needed them both. The Cézanne had been bought with his wife's marriage portion, the Gauguin with the ring which was the only jewel she had ever owned. And they were happy because he needed these two pictures. The Cézanne was a picture of bathers and a tent, the Gauguin the head of a boy. Later on in life when Matisse became a very rich man, he kept on buying pictures. He said he knew about pictures and had confidence in them and he did not know about other things. And so for his own pleasure and as the best legacy to leave his children he bought Cézannes. Picasso also later when he became rich bought pictures but they were his own. He too believed in pictures and wants to leave the best legacy he can to his son and so keeps and buys his own.

The Matisses had had a hard time. Matisse had come to Paris as a young man to study pharmacy. His people were small grain merchants in the north of France. He had become interested in painting, had begun copying the Poussins at the Louvre and become a painter fairly without the consent of his people who

however continued to allow him the very small monthly sum he had had as a student. His daughter was born at this time and this further complicated his life. He had at first a certain amount of success. He married. Under the influence of the paintings of Poussin and Chardin he had painted still life pictures that had considerable success at the Champ-de-Mars salon, one of the two big spring salons. And then he fell under the influence of Cézanne, and then under the influence of negro sculpture. All this developed the Matisse of the period of *La Femme au Chapeau*. The year after his very considerable success at the salon he spent the winter painting a very large picture of a woman setting a table and on the table was a magnificent dish of fruit. It had strained the resources of the Matisse family to buy this fruit, fruit was horribly dear in Paris in those days, even ordinary fruit, imagine how much dearer was this very extraordinary fruit and it had to keep until the picture was completed and the picture was going to take a long time. In order to keep it as long as possible they kept the room as cold as possible, and that under the roof and in a Paris winter was not difficult, and Matisse painted in an overcoat and gloves and he painted at it all winter. It was finished at last and sent to the salon where the year before Matisse had had considerable success, and there it was refused. And now Matisse's serious troubles began, his daughter was very ill, he was in an agonising mental struggle concerning his work, and he had lost all possibility of showing his pictures. He no longer painted at home but in an atelier. It was cheaper so. Every morning he painted, every afternoon he worked at his sculpture, late every afternoon he drew in the sketch classes from the nude, and every evening he played his violin. These were very dark days and he was very despairful. His wife opened a small millinery shop and they managed to live. The two boys were sent away to the country to his and her people and they continued to live. The only encouragement came in the atelier where he worked and where a crowd of young men began to gather around him and be influenced by him. Among these the best known at that time was Manguin, the best known now Derain. Derain was a very young man at that time, he enormously admired Matisse, he went away to the country with them to Collioure near Perpignan, and he was a great comfort to them all. He began to paint landscapes outlining his trees with red and he had a sense of space that was quite his own and which first showed itself in a landscape of a cart going up a road bordered with trees lined in red. His paintings were coming to be known at the independent.

Matisse worked every day and every day and every day and he worked terribly hard. Once Vollard came to see him. Matisse used to love to tell the story. I have often heard him tell it. Vollard came and said he wanted to see the big picture which had been refused. Matisse showed it to him. He did not look at it. He talked to Madame Matisse and mostly about cooking, he liked cooking and

eating as a frenchman should, and so did she. Matisse and Madame Matisse were both getting very nervous although she did not show it. And this door, said Vollard interestedly to Matisse, where does that lead to, does that lead into a court or does that lead on to a stairway. Into a court, said Matisse. Ah yes, said Vollard. And then he left.

The Matisses spent days discussing whether there was anything symbolic in Vollard's question or was it idle curiosity. Vollard never had any idle curiosity, he always wanted to know what everybody thought of everything because in that way he found out what he himself thought. This was very well known and therefore the Matisses asked each other and all their friends, why did he ask that question about that door. Well at any rate within the year he had bought the picture at a very low price but he bought it, and he put it away and nobody saw it, and that was the end of that.

From this time on things went neither better nor worse for Matisse and he was discouraged and aggressive. Then came the first autumn salon and he was asked to exhibit and he sent *La Femme au Chapeau* and it was hung. It was derided and attacked and it was sold.

Matisse was at this time about thirty-five years old, he was depressed. Having gone to the opening day of the salon and heard what was said of his picture and seen what they were trying to do to it he never went again. His wife went alone. He stayed at home and was unhappy. This is the way Madame Matisse used to tell the story.

Then a note came from the secretary of the salon saying that there had been an offer made for the picture, an offer of four hundred francs. Matisse was painting Madame Matisse as a gypsy holding a guitar. This guitar had already had a history. Madame Matisse was very fond of telling the story. She had a great deal to do and she posed beside and she was very healthy and sleepy. One day she was posing, he was painting, she began to nod and as she nodded the guitar made noises. Stop it, said Matisse, wake up. She woke up, he painted, she nodded and the guitar made noises. Stop it, said Matisse, wake up. She woke up and then in a little while she nodded again the guitar made even more noises. Matisse furious seized the guitar and broke it. And added Madame Matisse ruefully, we were very hard up then and we had to have it mended so he could go on with the picture. She was holding this same mended guitar and posing when the note from the secretary of the autumn salon came. Matisse was joyful, of course I will accept, said Matisse. Oh no, said Madame Matisse, if those people (*ces gens*) are interested enough to make an offer they are interested enough to pay the price you asked, and she added, the difference would make winter clothes for Margot. Matisse hesitated but was finally convinced and they sent a note saying he wanted his price. Nothing happened and Matisse was in a terrible state and very

reproachful and then in a day or two when Madame Matisse was once more posing with the guitar and Matisse was painting, Margot brought them a little blue telegram. Matisse opened it and he made a grimace. Madame Matisse was terrified, she thought the worst had happened. The guitar fell. What is it, she said. They have bought it, he said. Why do you make such a face of agony and frighten me so and perhaps break the guitar, she said. I was winking at you, he said, to tell you, because I was so moved I could not speak.

And so, Madame Matisse used to end up the story triumphantly, you see it was I, and I was right to insist upon the original price, and Mademoiselle Gertrude, who insisted upon buying it, who arranged the whole matter.

The friendship with the Matisses grew apace. Matisse at that time was at work at his first big decoration, *Le Bonheur de Vivre*. He was making small and larger and very large studies for it. It was in this picture that Matisse first clearly realised his intention of deforming the drawing of the human body in order to harmonise and intensify the colour values of all the simple colours mixed only with white. He used his distorted drawing as a dissonance is used in music or as vinegar or lemons are used in cooking or egg shells in coffee to clarify. I do inevitably take my comparisons from the kitchen because I like food and cooking and know something about it. However this was the idea. Cézanne had come to his unfinishedness and distortion of necessity, Matisse did it by intention.

Little by little people began to come to the rue de Fleurus to see the Matisses and the Cézannes, Matisse brought people, everybody brought somebody, and they came at any time and it began to be a nuisance, and it was in this way that Saturday evenings began. It was also at this time that Gertrude Stein got into the habit of writing at night. It was only after eleven o'clock that she could be sure that no one would knock at the studio door. She was at that time planning her long book, *The Making of Americans*, she was struggling with her sentences, those long sentences that had to be so exactly carried out. Sentences not only words but sentences and always sentences have been Gertrude Stein's life long passion. And so she had then and indeed it lasted pretty well to the war, which broke down so many habits, she had then the habit of beginning her work at eleven o'clock at night and working until the dawn. She said she always tried to stop before the dawn was too clear and the birds were too lively because it is a disagreeable sensation to go to bed then. There were birds in many trees behind high walls in those days, now there are fewer. But often the birds and the dawn caught her and she stood in the court waiting to get used to it before she went to bed. She had the habit then of sleeping until noon and the beating of the rugs into the court, because everybody did that in those days, even her household did, was one of her most poignant irritations.

So the Saturday evenings began.

Gertrude Stein and her brother were often at the Matisses and the Matisses were constantly with them. Madame Matisse occasionally gave them a lunch, this happened most often when some relation sent the Matisses a hare. Jugged hare prepared by Madame Matisse in the fashion of Perpignan was something quite apart. They also had extremely good wine, a little heavy, but excellent. They also had a sort of Madeira called Roncio which was very good indeed. Maillol the sculptor came from the same part of France as Madame Matisse and once when I met him at Jo Davidson's, many years later, he told me about all these wines. He then told me how he had lived well in his student days in Paris for fifty francs a month. To be sure, he said, the family sent me homemade bread every week and when I came I brought enough wine with me to last a year and I sent my washing home every month.

Derain was present at one of these lunches in those early days. He and Gertrude Stein disagreed violently. They discussed philosophy, he basing his ideas on having read the second part of Faust in a French translation while he was doing his military service. They never became friends. Gertrude Stein was never interested in his work. He had a sense of space but for her his pictures had neither life nor depth nor solidity. They rarely saw each other after. Derain at that time was constantly with the Matisses and was of all Matisse's friends the one Madame Matisse liked the best.

It was about this time that Gertrude Stein's brother happened one day to find the picture gallery of Sagot, an ex-circus clown who had a picture shop further up the rue Laffitte. Here he, Gertrude Stein's brother, found the paintings of two young Spaniards, one, whose name everybody has forgotten, the other one, Picasso. The work of both of them interested him and he bought a water colour by the forgotten one, a cafe scene. Sagot also sent him to a little furniture store where there were some paintings being shown by Picasso. Gertrude Stein's brother was interested and wanted to buy one and asked the price but the price asked was almost as expensive as Cézanne. He went back to Sagot and told him. Sagot laughed. He said, that is alright, come back in a few days and I will have a big one. In a few days he did have a big one and it was very cheap. When Gertrude Stein and Picasso tell about those days they are not always in agreement as to what happened but I think in this case they agree that the price asked was a hundred and fifty francs. The picture was the now well known painting of a nude girl with a basket of red flowers.

Gertrude Stein did not like the picture, she found something rather appalling in the drawing of the legs and feet, something that repelled and shocked her. She and her brother almost quarrelled about this picture. He wanted it and she did not want it in the house. Sagot gathering a little of the discussion said, but that is alright if you do not like the legs and feet it is very easy to guillotine her and only

take the head. No that would not do, everybody agreed, and nothing was decided.

Gertrude Stein and her brother continued to be very divided in, this matter and they were very angry with each other. Finally it was agreed that since he, the brother, wanted it so badly they would buy it, and in this way the first Picasso was brought into the rue de Fleurus.

It was just about this time that Raymond Duncan, the brother of Isadora, rented an atelier in the rue de Fleurus. Raymond had just come back from his first trip to Greece and had brought back with him a greek girl and greek clothes. Raymond had known Gertrude Stein's elder brother and his wife in San Francisco. At that time Raymond was acting as advance agent for Emma Nevada who had also with her Pablo Casals the violincellist, at that time quite unknown. The Duncan family had been then at the Omar Khayyam stage, they had not yet gone greek. They had after that gone italian renaissance, but now Raymond had gone completely greek and this included a greek girl. Isadora lost interest in him, she found the girl too modern a greek. At any rate Raymond was at this time without any money at all and his wife was enceinte. Gertrude Stein gave him coal and a chair for Penelope to sit in, the rest sat on packing cases. They had another friend who helped them, Kathleen Bruce, a very beautiful, very athletic English girl, a kind of sculptress, she later married and became the widow of the discoverer of the South Pole, Scott. She had at that time no money to speak of either and she used to bring a half portion of her dinner every evening for Penelope. Finally Penelope had her baby, it was named Raymond because when Gertrude Stein's brother and Raymond Duncan went to register it they had not thought of a name. Now he is against his will called Menalkas but he might be gratified if he knew that legally he is Raymond. However that is another matter.

Kathleen Bruce was a sculptress and she was learning to model figures of children and she asked to do a figure of Gertrude Stein's nephew. Gertrude Stein and her nephew went to Kathleen Bruce's studio. There they, one afternoon, met H. P. Roché. Roché was one of those characters that are always to be found in Paris. He was a very earnest, very noble, devoted, very faithful and very enthusiastic man who was a general introducer. He knew everybody, he really knew them and he could introduce anybody to anybody. He was going to be a writer. He was tall and red-headed and he never said anything but good good excellent and he lived with his mother and his grandmother. He had done a great many things, he had gone to the austrian mountains with the austrians, he had gone to Germany with the germans and he had gone to Hungary with hungarians and he had gone to England with the english. He had not gone to Russia although he had been in Paris with russians. As Picasso always said of him, Roché is very nice but he is only a translation.

Later he was often at 27 rue de Fleurus with various nationalities and

Gertrude Stein rather liked him. She always said of him he is so faithful, perhaps one need never see him again but one knows that somewhere Roche is faithful. He did give her one delightful sensation in the very early days of their acquaintance. Three Lives, Gertrude Stein's first book was just then being written and Roché who could read english was very impressed by it. One day Gertrude Stein was saying something about herself and Roche said good good excellent that is very important for your biography. She was terribly touched, it was the first time that she really realised that some time she would have a biography. It is quite true that although she has not seen him for years somewhere Roché is probably perfectly faithful.

But to come back to Roché at Kathleen Bruce's studio. They all talked about one thing and another and Gertrude Stein happened to mention that they had just bought a picture from Sagot by a young spaniard named Picasso. Good good excellent, said Roché, he is a very interesting young fellow, I know him. Oh do you, said Gertrude Stein, well enough to take somebody to see him. Why certainly, said Roché. Very well, said Gertrude Stein, my brother I know is very anxious to make his acquaintance. And there and then the appointment was made and shortly after Roche and Gertrude Stein's brother went to see Picasso.

It was only a very short time after this that Picasso began the portrait of Gertrude Stein, now so widely known, but just how that came about is a little vague in everybody's mind. I have heard Picasso and Gertrude Stein talk about it often and they neither of them can remember. They can remember the first time that Picasso dined at the rue de Fleurus and they can remember the first time Gertrude Stein posed for her portrait at rue Ravignan but in between there is a blank. How it came about they do not know. Picasso had never had anybody pose for him since he was sixteen years old, he was then twenty-four and Gertrude Stein had never thought of having her portrait painted, and they do not either of them know how it came about. Anyway it did and she posed to him for this portrait ninety times and a great deal happened during that time. To go back to all the first times.

Picasso and Fernande came to dinner, Picasso in those days was, what a dear friend and schoolmate of mine, Nellie Jacot, called, a good-looking bootblack. He was thin dark, alive with big pools of eyes and a violent but not rough way. He was sitting next to Gertrude Stein at dinner and she took up a piece of bread. This, said Picasso, snatching it back with violence, this piece of bread is mine. She laughed and he looked sheepish. That was the beginning of their intimacy.

That evening Gertrude Stein's brother took out portfolio after portfolio of japanese prints to show Picasso, Gertrude Stein's brother was fond of japanese prints. Picasso solemnly and obediently looked at print after print and listened to the descriptions. He said under his breath to Gertrude Stein, he is very nice, your

brother, but like all americans, like Haviland, he shows you japanese prints. *Moi j'aime pas ça*, no I don't care for it. As I say Gertrude Stein and Pablo Picasso immediately understood each other.

Then there was the first time of posing. The atelier of Picasso I have already described. In those days there was even more disorder, more coming and going, more red-hot fire in the stove, more cooking and more interruptions. There was a large broken armchair where Gertrude Stein posed. There was a couch where everybody sat and slept. There was a little kitchen chair upon which Picasso sat to paint, there was a large easel and there were many very large canvases. It was at the height of the end of the Harlequin period when the canvases were enormous, the figures also, and the groups.

There was a little fox terrier there that had something the matter with it and had been and was again about to be taken to the veterinary. No frenchman or frenchwoman is so poor or so careless or so avaricious but that they can and do constantly take their pet to the vet.

Fernande was as always, very large, very beautiful and very gracious. She offered to read La Fontaine's stories aloud to amuse Gertrude Stein while Gertrude Stein posed. She took her pose, Picasso sat very tight on his chair and very close to his canvas and on a very small palette which was of a uniform brown grey colour, mixed some more brown grey and the painting began. This was the first of some eighty or ninety sittings.

Toward the end of the afternoon Gertrude Stein's two brothers and her sister-in-law and Andrew Green came to see. They were all excited at the beauty of the sketch and Andrew Green begged and begged that it should be left as it was. But Picasso shook his head and said, non.

It is too bad but in those days no one thought of taking a photograph of the picture as it was then and of course no one of the group that saw it then remembers at all what it looked like any more than do Picasso or Gertrude Stein.

Andrew Green, none of them knew how they had met Andrew Green, he was the great-nephew of Andrew Green known as the father of Greater New York. He had been born and reared in Chicago but he was a typical tall gaunt new englander, blond and gentle. He had a prodigious memory and could recite all of Milton's Paradise Lost by heart and also all the translations of chinese poems of which Gertrude Stein was very fond. He had been in China and he was later to live permanently in the South Sea islands after he finally inherited quite a fortune from his great-uncle who was fond of Milton's Paradise Lost. He had a passion for oriental stuffs. He adored as he said a simple centre and a continuous design. He loved pictures in museums and he hated everything modern. Once when during the family's absence he had stayed at the rue de Fleurus for a month, he

had outraged Hélène's feelings by having his bed-sheets changed every day and covering all the pictures with cashmere shawls. He said the pictures were very restful, he could not deny that, but he could not bear it. He said that after the month was over that he had of course never come to like the new pictures but the worst of it was that not liking them he had lost his taste for the old and he never again in his life could go to any museum or look at any picture. He was tremendously impressed by Fernande's beauty. He was indeed quite overcome. I would, he said to Gertrude Stein, if I could talk french, I would make love to her and take her away from that little Picasso. Do you make love with words, laughed Gertrude Stein. He went away before I came to Paris and he came back eighteen years later and he was very dull.

This year was comparatively a quiet one. The Matisses were in the South of France all winter, at Collioure on the Mediterranean coast not far from Perpignan, where Madame Matisse's people lived. The Raymond Duncans had disappeared after having been joined first by a sister of Penelope who was a little actress and was very far from being dressed greek, she was as nearly as she possibly could be a little Parisian. She had accompanying her a very large dark greek cousin. He came in to see Gertrude Stein and he looked around and he announced, I am greek, that is the same as saying that I have perfect taste and I do not care for any of these pictures. Very shortly Raymond, his wife and baby, the sister-in-law and the greek cousin disappeared out of the court at 27 rue de Fleurus and were succeeded by a german lady.

This german lady was the niece and god-daughter of german field-marshal and her brother was a captain in the german navy. Her mother was english and she herself had played the harp at the bavarian court. She was very amusing and had some strange friends, both english and french. She was a sculptress and she made a typical german sculpture of little Roger, the concierge's boy. She made three heads of him, one laughing, one crying and one sticking out his tongue, all three together on one pedestal. She sold this piece to the royal museum at Potsdam. The concierge during the war often wept at the thought of her Roger being there, sculptured, in the museum at Potsdam. She invented clothes that could be worn inside out and taken to pieces and be made long or short and she showed these to everybody with great pride. She had as an instructor in painting a weird looking frenchman one who looked exactly like the pictures of Huckleberry Finn's father. She explained that she employed him out of charity, he had won a gold medal at the salon in his youth and after that had had no success. She also said that she never employed a servant of the servant class. She said that decayed gentlewomen were more appetising and more efficient and she always had some widow of some army officer or functionary sewing or posing for her. She had an austrian maid for a while who cooked perfectly delicious austrian pastry but she did not keep her

long. She was in short very amusing and she and Gertrude Stein used to talk to each other in the court. She always wanted to know what Gertrude Stein thought of everybody who came in and out. She wanted to know if she came to her conclusions by deduction, observation, imagination or analysis. She Was amusing and then she disappeared and nobody thought anything about her until the war came and then everybody wondered if after all there had not been something sinister about this german woman's life in Paris.

Practically every afternoon Gertrude Stein went to Montmartre, posed and then later wandered down the hill usually walking across Paris to the rue de Fleurus. She then formed the habit which has never left her of walking around Paris, now accompanied by the dog, in those days alone. And Saturday evenings the Picassos walked home with her and dined and then there was Saturday evening.

During these long poses and these long walks Gertrude Stein meditated and made sentences. She was then in the middle of her negro story Melanctha Herbert, the second story of Three Lives and the poignant incidents that she wove into the life of Melanctha were often these she noticed in walking down the hill from the rue Ravignan.

It was at that time that the hungarians began their pilgrimages to the rue de Fleurus. There were strange groups of americans then, Picasso unaccustomed to the virginal quality of these young men and women used to say of them, ils sont pas des hommes, ils sont pas des femmes, ils sont des américains. They are not men, they are not women, they are americans. Once there was a Bryn Mawr woman there, wife of a well known portrait painter, who was very tall and beautiful and having once fallen on her head had a strange vacant expression. Her, he approved of, and used to call the Empress. There was a type of american art student, male, that used very much to afflict him, he used to say no it is not he who will make the future glory of America. He had a characteristic reaction when he saw the first photograph of a skyscraper. Good God, he said, imagine the pangs of jealousy a lover would have while his beloved came up all those flights of stairs to his top story studio.

It was at this time that a Maurice Denis, a Toulouse-Lautrec and many enormous Picassos were added to the collection. It was at this time also that the acquaintance and friendship with the Vallotons began.

Vollard once said when he was asked about a certain painter's picture, oh ça c'est un Cézanne pour les pauvres, that is a Cézanne for the poor collector. Well Valloton was a Manet for the impecunious. His big nude had all the hardness, the stillness and none of the quality of the Olympe of Manet and his portraits had the aridity but none of the elegance of David. And further he had the misfortune of having married the sister of an important picture-dealer. He was very happy with

his wife and she was a very charming woman but then there were the weekly family reunions, and there was also the wealth of his wife and the violence of his step-sons. He was a gentle soul, Valloton, with a keen wit and a great deal of ambition but a feeling of impotence, the result of being the brother-in-law of picture dealers. However for a time his pictures were very interesting. He asked Gertrude Stein to pose for him. She did the following year. She had come to like posing, the long still hours followed by a long dark walk intensified the concentration with which she was creating her sentences. The sentences of which Marcel Brion, the french critic has written, by exactitude, austerity, absence of variety in light and shade, by refusal of the use of the subconscious Gertrude Stein achieves a symmetry which has a close analogy to the symmetry of the musical fugue of Bach.

She often described the strange sensation she had as a result of the way in which Valloton painted. He was not at that time a young man as painters go, he had already had considerable recognition as a painter in the Paris exposition of 1900. When he painted a portrait he made a crayon sketch and then began painting at the top of the canvas straight across. Gertrude Stein said it was like pulling down a curtain as slowly moving as one of his swiss glaciers. Slowly he pulled the curtain down and by the time he was at the bottom of the canvas, there you were. The whole operation took about two weeks and then he gave the canvas to you. First however he exhibited it in the autumn salon and it had considerable notice and everybody was pleased.

Everybody went to the Cirque Médrano once a week, at least, and usually everybody went on the same evening. There the clowns had commenced dressing up in misfit clothes instead of the old classic costume and these clothes later so well known on Charlie Chaplin were the delight of Picasso and all his friends in Montmartre. There also were the english jockeys and their costumes made the mode that all Montmartre followed. Not very long ago somebody was talking about how well the young painters of to-day dressed and what a pity it was that they spent money in that way. Picasso laughed. I am quite certain, he said, they pay less for the fashionable complet, their suits of clothes, than we did for our rough and common ones. You have no idea how hard it was and expensive it was in those days to find english tweed or a french imitation that would look rough and dirty enough. And it was quite true one way and another the painters in those days did spend a lot of money and they spent all they got hold of because in those happy days you could owe money for years for your paints and canvases and rent and restaurant and practically everything except coal and luxuries.

The winter went on. Three Lives was written. Gertrude Stein asked her sister-in-law to come and read it. She did and was deeply moved. This pleased Gertrude Stein immensely, she did not believe that any one could read anything

she wrote and be interested. In those days she never asked any one what they thought of her work, but were they interested enough to read it. Now she says if they can bring themselves to read it they will be interested.

Her elder brother's wife has always meant a great deal in her life but never more than on that afternoon. And then it had to be typewritten. Gertrude Stein had at that time a wretched little portable typewriter which she never used. She always then and for many years later wrote on scraps of paper in pencil, copied it into french school note-books in ink and then often copied it over again in ink. It was in connection with these various series of scraps of paper that her elder brother once remarked, I do not know whether Gertrude has more genius than the rest of you all, that I know nothing about, but one thing I have always noticed, the rest of you paint and write and are not satisfied and throw it away or tear it up, she does not say whether she is satisfied or not, she copies it very often but she never throws away any piece of paper upon which she has written.

Gertrude Stein tried to copy *Three Lives* on the typewriter but it was no use, it made her nervous, so Etta Cone came to the rescue. The Miss Etta Cones as Pablo Picasso used to call her and her sister. Etta Cone was a Baltimore connection of Gertrude Stein's and she was spending a winter in Paris. She was rather lonesome and she was rather interested.

Etta Cone found the Picassos appalling but romantic. She was taken there by Gertrude Stein whenever the Picasso finances got beyond everybody and was made to buy a hundred francs' worth of drawings. After all a hundred francs in those days was twenty dollars. She was quite willing to indulge in this romantic charity. Needless to say these drawings became in very much later years the nucleus of her collection.

Etta Cone offered to typewrite *Three Lives* and she began. Baltimore is famous for the delicate sensibilities and conscientiousness of its inhabitants. It suddenly occurred to Gertrude Stein that she had not told Etta Cone to read the manuscript before beginning to typewrite it. She went to see her and there indeed was Etta Cone faithfully copying the manuscript letter by letter so that she might not by any indiscretion become conscious of the meaning. Permission to read the text having been given the typewriting went on.

Spring was coming and the sittings were coming to an end. All of a sudden one day Picasso painted out the whole head. I can't see you any longer when I look, he said irritably. And so the picture was left like that.

Nobody remembers being particularly disappointed or particularly annoyed at this ending to the long series of posings. There was the spring independent and then Gertrude Stein and her brother were going to Italy as was at that time their habit Pablo and Fernande were going to Spain, she for the first time, and she had

to buy a dress and a hat and perfumes and a cooking stove. All french women in those days when they went from one country to another took along a french oil stove to cook on. Perhaps they still do. No matter where they were going this had to be taken with them. They always paid a great deal of excess baggage, all french women who went travelling. And the Matisses were back and they had to meet the Picassos and to be enthusiastic about each other, but not to like each other very well. And in their wake, Derain met Picasso and with him came Braque.

It may seem very strange to every one nowadays that before this time Matisse had never heard of Picasso and Picasso had never met Matisse. But at that time every little crowd lived its own life and knew practically nothing of any other crowd. Matisse on the Quai Saint-Michel and in the indépendant did not know anything of Picasso and Montmartre and Sagot. They all, it is true, had been in the very early stages bought one after the other by Mademoiselle Weill, the bric-a-brac shop in Montmartre, but as she bought everybody's pictures, pictures brought by any one, not necessarily by the painter, it was not very likely that any painter would, except by some rare chance, see there the paintings of any other painter. They were however all very grateful to her in later years because after all practically everybody who later became famous had sold their first little picture to her.

As I was saying the sittings were over, the vernissage of the independent was over and everybody went away.

It had been a fruitful winter. In the long struggle with the portrait of Gertrude Stein, Picasso passed from the Harlequin, the charming early italian period to the intensive struggle which was to end in cubism. Gertrude Stein had written the story of Melanctha the negress, the second story of Three Lives which was the first definite step away from the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century in literature. Matisse had painted the Bonheur de Vivre and had created the new school of colour which was soon to leave its mark on everything. And everybody went away. That summer the Matisses came to Italy. Matisse did not care about it very much, he preferred France and Morocco but Madame Matisse was deeply touched. It was a girlish dream fulfilled. She said, I say to myself all the time, I am in Italy. And I say it to Henri all the time and he is very sweet about it, but he says, what of it.

The Picassos were in Spain and Fernande wrote long letters describing Spain and the spaniards and earthquakes.

In Florence except for the short visit of the Matisses and a short visit from Alfy Maurer the summer life was in no way related to the Paris life.

Gertrude Stein and her brother rented for the summer a villa on top of the hill at Fiesole near Florence, and there they spent their summers for several years. The

year I came to Paris a friend and myself took this villa, Gertrude Stein and her brother having taken a larger one on the other side of Fiesole, having been joined that year by their elder brother, his wife and child. The small one, the Casa Ricci, was very delightful. It had been made livable by a Scotch woman who born Presbyterian became an ardent Catholic and took her old Presbyterian mother from one convent to another. Finally they came to rest in Casa Ricci and there she made for herself a chapel and there her mother died. She then abandoned this for a larger villa which she turned into a retreat for retired priests and Gertrude Stein and her brother rented the Casa Ricci from her. Gertrude Stein delighted in her landlady who looked exactly like a lady-in-waiting to Mary Stuart and with all her trailing black robes genuflected before every Catholic symbol and would then climb up a precipitous ladder and open a little window in the roof to look at the stars. A strange mingling of Catholic and Protestant exaltation.

Hélène the french servant never came down to Fiesole. She had by that time married. She cooked for her husband during the summer and mended the stockings of Gertrude Stein and her brother by putting new feet into them. She also made jam. In Italy there was Maddalena quite as important in Italy as Hélène in Paris, but I doubt if with as much appreciation for notabilities. Italy is too accustomed to the famous and the children of the famous. It was Edwin Dodge who apropos of these said, the lives of great men oft remind us we should leave no sons behind us.

Gertrude Stein adored heat and sunshine although she always says that Paris winter is an ideal climate. In those days it was always at noon that she preferred to walk. I, who have and had no fondness for a summer sun, often accompanied her. Sometimes later in Spain I sat under a tree and wept but she in the sun was indefatigable. She could even lie in the sun and look straight up into a summer noon sun, she said it rested her eyes and head.

There were amusing people in Florence. There were the Berensons and at that time with them Gladys Deacon, a well known international beauty, but after a winter of Montmarte Gertrude Stein found her too easily shocked to be interesting. Then there were the first russians, von Heiroth and his wife, she who afterwards had four husbands and once pleasantly remarked that she had always been good friends with all her husbands. He was foolish but attractive and told the usual russian stories. Then there were the Thorolds and a great many others. And most important there was a most excellent english lending library with all sorts of strange biographies which were to Gertrude Stein a source of endless pleasure. She once told me that when she was young she had read so much, read from the Elizabethans to the moderns, that she was terribly uneasy lest some day she would be without anything to read. For years this fear haunted her but in one way and another although she always reads and reads she seems always to find more to

read. Her eldest brother used to complain that although he brought up from Florence every day as many books as he could carry, there always were just as many to take back.

It was during this summer that Gertrude Stein began her great book, *The Making of Americans*.

It began with an old daily theme that she had written when at Radcliffe,

“Once an angry man dragged his father along the ground through his own orchard. ‘Stop!’ cried the groaning old man at last. ‘Stop! I did not drag my father beyond this tree.’”

“It is hard living down the tempers we are born with. We all begin well. For in our youth there is nothing we are more intolerant of than our own sins writ large in others and we fight them fiercely in ourselves; but we grow old and we see that these our sins are of all sins the really harmless ones to own, nay that they give a charm to any character, and so our struggle with them dies away.” And it was to be the history of a family. It was a history of a family but by the time I came to Paris it was getting to be a history of all human beings, all who ever were or are or could be living.

Gertrude Stein in all her life has never been as pleased with anything as she is with the translation that Bernard Faÿ and Madame Seillière are making of this book now. She has just been going over it with Bernard Faÿ and as she says, it is wonderful in English and it is even as wonderful in French. Elliot Paul, when editor of *Transition* once said that he was certain that Gertrude Stein could be a best-seller in France. It seems very likely that his prediction is to be fulfilled.

But to return to those old days in the Casa Ricci and the first beginnings of those long sentences which were to change the literary ideas of a great many people.

Gertrude Stein was working tremendously over the beginning of *The Making of Americans* and came back to Paris under the spell of the thing she was doing. It was at this time that working every night she often was caught by the dawn coming while she was working. She came back to a Paris fairly full of excitement. In the first place she came back to her finished portrait. The day he returned from Spain Picasso sat down and out of his head painted the head in without having seen Gertrude Stein again. And when she saw it he and she were content. It is very strange but neither can remember at all what the head looked like when he painted it out. There is another charming story of the portrait.

Only a few years ago when Gertrude Stein had had her hair cut short, she had always up to that time worn it as a crown on top of her head as Picasso has painted it, when she had had her hair cut, a day or so later she happened to come into a room and Picasso was several rooms away. She had a hat on but he caught

sight of her through two doorways and approaching her quickly called out, Gertrude, what is it, what is it. What is what, Pablo, she said. Let me see, he said. She let him see. And my portrait, said he sternly. Then his face softening he added, mais, quand même tout 'y est, all the same it is all there.

Matisse was back and there was excitement in the air. Derain, and Braque with him, had gone Montmartre. Braque was a young painter who had known Marie Laurencin when they were both art students, and they had then painted each other's portraits. After that Braque had done rather geographical pictures, rounded hills and very much under the colour influence of Matisse's independent painting. He had come to know Derain, I am not sure but that they had known each other while doing their military service, and now they knew Picasso. It was an exciting moment.

They began to spend their days up there and they all always ate together at a little restaurant opposite, and Picasso was more than ever as Gertrude Stein said the little bullfighter followed by his squadron of four, or as later in her portrait of him, she called him, Napoleon followed by his four enormous grenadiers. Derain and Braque were great big men, so was Guillaume a heavy set man and Salmon was not small. Picasso was every inch a chief.

This brings the story to Salmon and Guillaume Apollinaire, although Gertrude Stein had known these two and Marie Laurencin a considerable time before all this was happening.

Salmon and Guillaume Apollinaire both lived in Montmartre in these days. Salmon was very lithe and alive but Gertrude Stein never found him particularly interesting. She liked him. Guillaume Apollinaire on the contrary was very wonderful. There was just about that time, that is about the time when Gertrude Stein first knew Apollinaire, the excitement of a duel that he was to fight with another writer. Fernande and Pablo told about it with so much excitement and so much laughter and so much Montmartre slang, this was in the early days of their acquaintance, that she was always a little vague about just what did happen. But the gist of the matter was that Guillaume challenged the other man and Max Jacob was to be the second and witness for Guillaume. Guillaume and his antagonist each sat in their favourite café all day and waited while their seconds went to and fro. How it all ended Gertrude Stein does not know except that nobody fought, but the great excitement was the bill each second and witness brought to his principal. In these was itemised each time they had a cup of coffee and of course they had to have a cup of coffee every time they sat down at one or other café with one or other principal, and again when the two seconds sat with each other. There was also the question under what circumstances were they under the absolute necessity of having a glass of brandy with the cup of coffee. And how often would they have had coffee if they had not been seconds. All this led to endless

meetings and endless discussion and endless additional items. It lasted for days, perhaps weeks and months and whether anybody finally was paid, even the café keeper, nobody knows. It was notorious that Apollinaire was parted with the very greatest difficulty from even the smallest piece of money. It was all very absorbing.

Apollinaire was very attractive and very interesting. He had a head like one of the late roman emperors. He had a brother whom one heard about but never saw. He worked in a bank and therefore he was reasonably well dressed. When anybody in Montmartre had to go anywhere where they had to be conventionally clothed, either to see a relation or attend to a business matter, they always wore a piece of a suit that belonged to the brother of Guillaume.

Guillaume was extraordinarily brilliant and no matter what subject was started, if he knew anything about it or not, he quickly saw the whole meaning of the thing and elaborated it by his wit and fancy carrying it further than anybody knowing anything about it could have done, and oddly enough generally correctly.

Once, several years later, we were dining with the Picassos, and in a conversation I got the best of Guillaume. I was very proud, but, said Eve (Picasso was no longer with Fernande), Guillaume was frightfully drunk or it would not have happened. It was only under such circumstances that anybody could successfully turn a phrase against Guillaume. Poor Guillaume. The last time we saw him was after he had come back to Paris from the war. He had been badly wounded in the head and had had a piece of his skull removed. He looked very wonderful with his bleu horizon and his bandaged head. He lunched with us and we all talked a long time together. He was tired and his heavy head nodded. He was very serious almost solemn. We went away shortly after, we were working with the American Fund for French Wounded, and never saw him again. Later Olga Picasso, the wife of Picasso, told us that the night of the armistice Guillaume Apollinaire died, that they were with him that whole evening and it was warm and the windows were open and the crowd passing were shouting, à bas Guillaume, down with William and as every one always called Guillaume Apollinaire Guillaume, even in his death agony it troubled him.

He had really been heroic. As a foreigner, his mother was a pole, his father possibly an italian, it was not at all necessary that he should volunteer to fight. He was a man of full habit, accustomed to a literary life and the delights of the table, and in spite of everything he volunteered. He went into the artillery first. Every one advised this as it was less dangerous and easier than the infantry, but after a while he could not bear this half protection and he changed into the infantry and was wounded in a charge. He was a long time in hospital, recovered a little, it was at this time that we saw him, and finally died on the day of the armistice.

The death of Guillaume Apollinaire at this time made a very serious

difference to all his friends apart from their sorrow at his death. It was the moment just after the war when many things had changed and people naturally fell apart. Guillaume would have been a bond of union, he always had a quality of keeping people together, and now that he was gone everybody ceased to be friends. But all that was very much later and now to go back again to the beginning when Gertrude Stein first met Guillaume and Marie Laurencin.

Everybody called Gertrude Stein Gertrude, or at most Mademoiselle Gertrude, everybody called Picasso Pablo and Fernando Fernande and everybody called Guillaume Apollinaire Guillaume and Max Jacob Max but everybody called Marie Laurencin Marie Laurencin.

The first time Gertrude Stein ever saw Marie Laurencin, Guillaume Apollinaire brought her to the rue de Fleurus, not on a Saturday evening, but another evening. She was very interesting. They were an extraordinary pair. Marie Laurencin was terribly near-sighted and of course she never wore eye-glasses, no french woman and few frenchmen did in those days. She used a lorgnette.

She looked at each picture carefully that is, every picture on the line, bringing her eye close and moving over the whole of it with her lorgnette, an inch at a time. The pictures out of reach she ignored. Finally she remarked, as for myself, I prefer portraits and that is of course quite natural, as I myself am a Clouet. And it was perfectly true, she was a Clouet. She had the square thin build of the mediaeval french women in the french primitives. She spoke in a high pitched beautifully modulated voice. She sat down beside Gertrude Stein on the couch and she recounted the story of her life, told that her mother who had always had it in her nature to dislike men had been for many years the mistress of an important personage, had borne her, Marie Laurencin. I have never, she added, dared let her know Guillaume although of course he is so sweet that she could not refuse to like him but better not. Some day you will see her.

And later on Gertrude Stein saw the mother and by that time I was in Paris and I was taken along.

Marie Laurencin, leading her strange life and making her strange art, lived with her mother, who was a very quiet, very pleasant, very dignified woman, as if the two were living in a convent. The small apartment was filled with needlework which the mother had executed after the designs of Marie Laurencin. Marie and her mother acted toward each other exactly as a young nun with an older one. It was all very strange. Later just before the war the mother fell ill and died. Then the mother did see Guillaume Apollinaire and liked him.

After her mother's death Marie Laurencin lost all sense of stability. She and Guillaume no longer saw each other. A relation that had existed as long as the mother lived without the mother's knowledge now that the mother was dead and

had seen and liked Guillaume could no longer endure. Marie against the advice of all her friends married a German. When her friends remonstrated with her she said, but he is the only one who can give me a feeling of my mother.

Six weeks after the marriage the war came and Marie had to leave the country, having been married to a German. As she told me later when once during the war we met in Spain, naturally the officials could make no trouble for her, her passport made it clear that no one knew who her father was and they naturally were afraid because perhaps her father might be the president of the French Republic.

During these war years Marie was very unhappy. She was intensely French and she was technically German. When you met her she would say, let me present to you my husband a boche, I do not remember his name. The official French world in Spain with whom she and her husband occasionally came in contact made things very unpleasant for her, constantly referring to Germany as her country. In the meanwhile Guillaume with whom she was in correspondence wrote her passionately patriotic letters. It was a miserable time for Marie Laurencin.

Finally Madame Groult, the sister of Poiret, coming to Spain, managed to help Marie out of her troubles. She finally divorced her husband and after the armistice returned to Paris, at home once more in the world. It was then that she came to the rue de Fleurus again, this time with Erik Satie. They were both Normans and so proud and happy about it.

In the early days Marie Laurencin painted a strange picture, portraits of Guillaume, Picasso, Fernande and herself. Fernande told Gertrude Stein about it. Gertrude Stein bought it and Marie Laurencin was so pleased. It was the first picture of hers any one had ever bought.

It was before Gertrude Stein knew the rue Ravignan that Guillaume Apollinaire had his first paid job, he edited a little pamphlet about physical culture. And it was for this that Picasso made his wonderful caricatures, including one of Guillaume as an exemplar of what physical culture could do.

And now once more to return to the return from all their travels and to Picasso becoming the head of a movement that was later to be known as the cubists. Who called it cubist first I do not know but very likely it was Apollinaire. At any rate he wrote the first little pamphlet about them all and illustrated it with their paintings.

I can so well remember the first time Gertrude Stein took me to see Guillaume Apollinaire. It was a tiny bachelor's apartment on the rue des Martyrs. The room was crowded with a great many small young gentlemen. Who, I asked Fernande, are all these little men. They are poets, answered Fernande. I was

overcome. I had never seen poets before, one poet yes but not poets. It was on that night too that Picasso, just a little drunk and to Fernande's great indignation persisted in sitting beside me and finding for me in a spanish album of photographs the exact spot where he was born. I came away with rather a vague idea of its situation.

Derain and Braque became followers of Picasso about six months after Picasso had, through Gertrude Stein and her brother, met Matisse. Matisse had in the meantime introduced Picasso to negro sculpture.

At that time negro sculpture had been well known to curio hunters but not to artists. Who first recognised its potential value for the modern artist I am sure I do not know. Perhaps it was Maillol who came from the Perpignan region and knew Matisse in the south and called his attention to it. There is a tradition that it was Derain. It is also very possible that it was Matisse himself because for many years there was a curio-dealer in the rue de Rennes who always had a great many things of this kind in his window and Matisse often went up the rue de Rennes to go to one of the sketch classes.

In any case it was Matisse who first was influenced, not so much in his painting but in his sculpture, by the african statues and it was Matisse who drew Picasso's attention to it just after Picasso had finished painting Gertrude Stein's portrait.

The effect of this african art upon Matisse and Picasso was entirely different. Matisse through it was affected more in his imagination than in his vision. Picasso more in his vision than in his imagination. Strangely enough it is only very much later in his life that this influence has affected his imagination and that may be through its having been re-enforced by the Orientalism of the russians when he came in contact with that through Diaghilev and the russian ballet.

In these early days when he created cubism the effect of the african art was purely upon his vision and his forms, his imagination remained purely spanish. The spanish quality of ritual and abstraction had been indeed stimulated by his painting the portrait of Gertrude Stein. She had a definite impulse then and always toward elemental abstraction. She was not at any time interested in african sculpture. She always says that she liked it well enough but that it has nothing to do with europeans, that it lacks naïveté, that it is very ancient, very narrow, very sophisticated but lacks the elegance of the egyptian sculpture from which it is derived. She says that as an american she likes primitive things to be more savage.

Matisse and Picasso then being introduced to each other by Gertrude Stein and her brother became friends but they were enemies. Now they are neither friends nor enemies. At that time they were both.

They exchanged pictures as was the habit in those days. Each painter chose

the one of the other one that presumably interested him the most. Matisse and Picasso chose each one of the other one the picture that was undoubtedly the least interesting either of them had done. Later each one used it as an example, the picture he had chosen, of the weaknesses of the other one. Very evidently in the two pictures chosen the strong qualities of each painter were not much in evidence.

The feeling between the Picassos and the Matisseites became bitter. And this, you see, brings me to the independent where my friend and I sat without being aware of it under the two pictures which first publicly showed that Derain and Braque had become Picassos and were definitely not Matisseites.

In the meantime naturally a great many things had happened.

Matisse showed in every autumn salon and every independent. He was beginning to have a considerable following. Picasso, on the contrary, never in all his life has shown in any salon. His pictures at that time could really only be seen at 27 rue de Fleurus. The first time as one might say that he had ever shown at a public show was when Derain and Braque, completely influenced by his recent work, showed theirs. After that he too had many followers.

Matisse was irritated by the growing friendship between Picasso and Gertrude Stein. Mademoiselle Gertrude, he explained, likes local colour and theatrical values. It would be impossible for any one of her quality to have a serious friendship with any one like Picasso. Matisse still came frequently to the rue de Fleurus but there was no longer any frankness of intercourse between them all. It was about this time that Gertrude Stein and her brother gave a lunch for all the painters whose pictures were on the wall. Of course it did not include the dead or the old. It was at this lunch that as I have already said Gertrude Stein made them all happy and made the lunch a success by seating each painter facing his own picture. No one of them noticed it, they were just naturally pleased, until just as they were all leaving Matisse, standing up with his back to the door and looking into the room suddenly realised what had been done.

Matisse intimated that Gertrude Stein had lost interest in his work. She answered him, there is nothing within you that fights itself and hitherto you have had the instinct to produce antagonism in others which stimulated you to attack. But now they follow.

That was the end of the conversation but a beginning of an important part of *The Making of Americans*. Upon this idea Gertrude Stein based some of her most permanent distinctions in types of people.

It was about this time that Matisse began his teaching. He now moved from the Quai Saint-Michel, where he had lived ever since his marriage, to the boulevard des Invalides. In consequence of the separation of church and state

which had just taken place in France the french government had become possessed of a great many convent schools and other church property. As many of these convents ceased to exist, there were at that time a great many of their buildings empty. Among others a very splendid one on the boulevard des Invalides.

These buildings were being rented at very low prices because no lease was given, as the government when it decided how to use them permanently would put the tenants out without warning. It was therefore an ideal place for artists as there were gardens and big rooms and they could put up with the inconveniences of housekeeping under the circumstances. So the Matisses moved in and Matisse instead of a small room to work in had an immense one and the two boys came home and they were all very happy. Then a number of those who had become his followers asked him if he would teach them if they organised a class for him in the same building in which he was then living. He consented and the Matisse atelier began.

The applicants were of all nationalities and Matisse was at first appalled at the number and variety of them. He told with much amusement as well as surprise that when he asked a very little woman in the front row, what in particular she had in mind in her painting, what she was seeking, she replied, Monsieur je cherche le neuf. He used to wonder how they all managed to learn french when he knew none of their languages. Some one got hold of some of these facts and made fun of the school in one of the french weeklies. This hurt Matisse's feelings frightfully. The article said, and where did these people come from, and it was answered, from Massachusetts. Matisse was very unhappy.

But in spite of all this and also in spite of many dissensions the school flourished. There were difficulties. One of the hungarians wanted to earn his living posing for the class and in the intervals when some one else posed go on with his painting. There were a number of young women who protested, a nude model on a model stand was one thing but to have it turn into a fellow student was another. A hungarian was found eating the bread for rubbing out crayon drawings that the various students left on their painting boards and this evidence of extreme poverty and lack of hygiene had an awful effect upon the sensibilities of the americans. There were quite a number of americans. One of these americans under the plea of poverty was receiving his tuition for nothing and then was found to have purchased for himself a tiny Matisse and a tiny Picasso and a tiny Seurat. This was not only unfair, because many of the others wanted and could not afford to own a picture by the master and they were paying their tuition, but, since he also bought a Picasso, it was treason. And then every once in a while some one said something to Matisse in such bad french that it sounded like something very different from what it was and Matisse grew very angry and the unfortunate had

to be taught how to apologise properly. All the students were working under such a state of tension that explosions were frequent. One would accuse another of undue influence with the master and then there were long and complicated scenes in which usually some one had to apologise. It was all very difficult since they themselves organised themselves.

Gertrude Stein enjoyed all these complications immensely. Matisse was a good gossip and so was she and at this time they delighted in telling tales to each other.

She began at that time always calling Matisse the C.M. or cher maitre. She told him the favourite Western story, pray gentlemen, let there be no bloodshed. Matisse came not unfrequently to the rue de Fleurus. It was indeed at this time that Hélène prepared him the fried eggs instead of an omelet.

Three Lives had been typewritten and now the next thing was to show it to a publisher. Some one gave Gertrude Stein the name of an agent in New York and she tried that. Nothing came of it. Then she tried publishers directly. The only one at all interested was Bobbs–Merrill and they said they could not undertake it. This attempt to find a publisher lasted some time and then without being really discouraged she decided to have it printed. It was not an unnatural thought as people in Paris often did this. Some one told her about the Grafton Press in New York, a respectable firm that printed special historical things that people wanted to have printed. The arrangements were concluded, Three Lives was to be printed and the proofs to be sent.

One day some one knocked at the door and a very nice very american young man asked if he might speak to Miss Stein. She said, yes come in. He said, I have come at the request of the Grafton Press. Yes, she said. You see, he said slightly hesitant, the director of the Grafton Press is under the impression that perhaps your knowledge of english. But I am an american, said Gertrude Stein indignantly. Yes yes I understand that perfectly now, he said, but perhaps you have not had much experience in writing. I suppose, said she laughing, you were under the impression that I was imperfectly educated. He blushed, why no, he said, but you might not have had much experience in writing. Oh yes, she said, oh yes. Well it's alright. I will write to the director and you might as well tell him also that everything that is written in the manuscript is written with the intention of its being so written and all he has to do is to print it and I will take the responsibility. The young man bowed himself out.

Later when the book was noticed by interested writers and newspaper men the director of the Grafton Press wrote Gertrude Stein a very simple letter in which he admitted he had been surprised at the notice the book had received but wished to add that now that he had seen the result he wished to say that he was very pleased that his firm had printed the book. But this last was after I came to

Paris.

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