The Pope Family’s Grand Tour

Theodate experienced Paris’ Belle Époque firsthand during the Pope Family Grand Tour. This transformative period between 1871 and the beginning of the First World War in 1914, served as inspiration for both the Revivalist style of Theodate, America’s fourth female architect, and Philip Johnson, her cousin, a modernist architect and MoMA’s first curator of architecture.

Eclectic Paris allowed both old and new architectural aesthetics to co-exist peacefully. Now iconic bookends of the City of Lights, Sacré-Cœur Basilica, is a beacon of the Old World set upon Montmartre’s hilltop. In contrast, the Eiffel Tower, a wrought-iron lattice construct on the Champ de Mars built for the 1889 World’s Fair represents the modernist vantage point.

Smitten by the Eiffel Tour, the architectural megalith would continue to inform Philip’s Modernist architecture from his Glass House to the Seagram Building throughout his career. For Theodate, her first glimpse of ethereal Sacré-Cœur Basilica was love at first sight. The momentous trip to Europe greatly influenced the Revivalist style and old-world feel of Theodate’s projects from Old Avon Farm to her beloved Hill-Stead.

Episode 2 - Paris 1888
November 10, 1888

“This morning we all with Uncle Ned and Aunt Alice started out for a long drive going first to see the new cathedral of the heart of Jesus that is being built in the northern part of Paris.”

Theodate is referring to the Sacré-Cœur Basilica, now a familiar part of the Parisian skyline, which was still under construction in 1888. Inspired by churches such as Saint Sofia in Constantinople and San Marco in Venice, the development of this ornate, Roman-Byzantine-style church began in 1875 and continued through 1914.

Situated on the top of Paris' highest point, in the northern district of Montmartre, the church contains the largest mosaic in France.

In 1900, a funicular, a short, cable railway built at the base of Sacré-Cœur. The original design used two trams or passenger cars that counterbalance each other by moving in opposite directions. At the top of the hill, a tank in the car would be filled with water. The combined weight of the passengers, water, and tram would allow it to descend, pulling the other car and its passengers up the hill.

It takes 300 additional steps to reach the very top of the Dome - there's no funicular, or elevator to help you the rest of the way!

Questions:

- Why did France build the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur?
- The Sacré-Cœur is in the Byzantine style - how does this differ from the Gothic style of Notre Dame?
Montmartre has long been an artistic hotspot where generations of artists have lived and worked. Can you name a few of them? Bonus: can you identify an artwork made there or inspired by the neighborhood?

To learn more:

http://www.academickids.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Cathedral_architecture
https://kids.kiddle.co/Montmartre
https://kids.kiddle.co/Funicular
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJI_P8p2ZW8s take a ride on the funicular!
Take a tour of the Basilica of Sacre-Coeur: http://www.sacre-coeur-montmartre.com/english/

November 10, 1888 (continued)

“Harris and I returned to the carriages. We came home through the bois de Boulogne, and what a frightfully drive it was.”

The Bois de Boulogne, on the western edge of Paris, is a large park of over 2,000 acres - almost twice the size of Central Park in New York City.

The Bois was a fashionable place for Parisians to visit and socialize, particularly on the weekend. You can see the traffic jam of carriages in this painting from 1893.

To this day, the Bois offers a wide range of activities and attractions for Parisians and tourists alike, including walking; cycling and horse-riding trails; restaurants, two lakes, a botanical garden, and even a waterfall.

Hill-Stead connection:

The Longchamp racecourse (Hippodrome de Longchamp) is also located in the Bois and has held public races since 1857. The fancy thoroughbreds and jockeys have inspired painters, including Edouard Degas, who painted and drew horses throughout his career. You can see his masterpiece, “Jockeys,” only at Hill-Stead Museum.

www.hillstead.org
Questions:

- Can you name the room at the Hill-Stead where the Degas picture of Jockeys hangs?
- What medium did Degas use: oil paint, watercolors, pastels, pencil, crayon?
- Other famous sports events take place in the Bois de Boulogne. How many can you name?

To learn more:

https://www.napoleon.org/en/magazine/places/bois-de-boulogne/
https://kids.kiddle.co/Bois_de_Boulogne
https://travelforkids.mobi/funtodo/france/paris/paris-boisdebourgogne.html
https://www.kitchentableclassroom.com/talking-writing-art-edgar-degas/
https://www.hillstead.org/our-collection/paintings/impressionists/#degas

Getting around Paris in 1888:

Theodate recalls a carriage ride back from the Bois de Boulogne. The Bois is about three miles from central Paris, too far to walk at the end of a long day sightseeing.

The carriage and the horse-drawn omnibus were the primary forms of transport in the streets of Paris. The first automobile taxis entered service in Paris in 1898.
Questions:

- What other sorts of transport can you name?
- Nowadays, many major cities have either underground or aboveground systems. When did the Paris Metro first start? And when did these similar transport systems start in other major cities?
- Can you recognize the famous monument in the background of this painting?

To learn more:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjDclfAFRB4-- a mesmerizing trip through Pairs in the late 1890s (speed corrected w/added sound)!
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renault_Voiturette
https://www.paristaxi1.com/blog-a---taxis-history/-first-taxicabs-with-taximetre

Paris, November 11, 1888

“We took Dejeuner at Aunt Alice’s today. Harris and I left right afterwards to go to the Lamoureux Concert at the Champs Elysee circus.”

The Champs Élysées is perhaps the trendiest address in Paris. The iconic avenue offers many opportunities to "see and be seen," whether on horseback, in an expensive carriage, or strolling along in the latest fashion. The Avenue runs just over one mile, from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place de la Concorde, and the view has not changed too much since 1900.
Near the eastern end of the Avenue, an unusual looking building housed the Cirque des Champs Élysées, utilized for music concerts as well as circus performances.

Theodate and Harris attended one of the weekly concerts performed by the Lamoureux Orchestra, named after founder and conductor, Charles Lamoureux.

Lamoureux helped introduce the French audience to such famous works as Debussy’s La Mer, and Wagner's Lohengrin. Judging from this cartoon, he must have been an energetic music conductor!

To learn more:

Aux Champs-Elysees is a popular song - the following video includes lyrics in both French and English, so you can sing along:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7-UcdcK4AA
https://kids.kiddle.co/Champs-%C3%89lys%C3%A9es
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoYEbsYgKGk

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_Louis_Lami,_Cir
cus,_Champs_Elysees,_Paris_NYPL_Digital_Collections.jpg
https://mywowo.net/en/france/paris/champs-elysees/history#
Paris, November 17, 1888

“Today the weather was perfect, sunny and warm...we decided to ...take advantage of the sunlight to go and see the Secretan...The Angelus...I hope I shall never forget.”

Theodate went to visit the private art collection of Eugène Secrétan several times during her first visit to Paris in 1888. Secrétan was a prominent metal manufacturer, who had assembled a significant collection of 19th century French and Old Master paintings. He donated 66 tons of copper, then turned into thin sheets used to cover the Statue of Liberty in 1875.

Theodate was impressed by many of the pieces in the collection, including The Angelus by Jean-François Millet (1814 – 1875). By 1889, however, Secrétan had gone bankrupt following significant changes in the value of copper and forced to auction off his art collection to cover his debts. The sale raised over $1 million (equivalent to over $28 million today). As a result, many famous paintings came to American collections and museums.

Questions:

- Who was inspired by Millet’s Angelus and other artworks and even made a version of it?
- Can you identify any of the other masterpieces that were part of the Secrétan collection and sold in 1889?

To learn more:

[https://www.jeanmillet.org/](https://www.jeanmillet.org/)
[https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/Jean-Fran%C3%A7ois-Millet/275845](https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/Jean-Fran%C3%A7ois-Millet/275845) 

Paris, November 17, 1888 (continued)

“This morning Papa, Harris, Mamma and I had a long drive...and came back through the Buttes Chaumont.”

Although not as famous as the Bois de Boulogne, the Buttes Chaumont park is another popular destination for Parisians. Originally used as a quarry for limestone, in 1864, Buttes Chaumont became a welcoming public space.

The designers included walking paths, lakes, a suspension bridge, and the Temple of the Sybil, modeled after the Temple of Vesta in Tivoli, Italy. This is a view of the completed Sacré-Cœur from the Temple of Sybil.

There are very few parks in Paris where people are allowed to sit on, or even walk on the grass. The Park at Buttes Chaumont was one of these unique places.
where people were encouraged to enjoy the grass, without any warning signs like this one (“Keep off the grass”).

![Pelouse Intermite](image)

Theodate’s early experiences in the Parisian Park would leave a lasting imprint on her. Buttes Chaumont inspired her beloved Hill-Stead, a beacon of hope for the creative community. Today, Hill-Stead Museum’s glorious grounds and gardens remain open every day for all to enjoy.

Created by Hill-Stead Museum: Beth Brett, Kate Ebner, Anitra Powers, Anna Swinbourne, and Lavell Thompson

Sources:

Sacre Coeur -
https://www.lesalonbeige.fr/il-y-a-cent-ans-la-consecration-de-la-basilique-du-sacre-coeur-de-montmartre/
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montmartre_Funicular

Bois de Boulogne -
https://www.hillstead.org/our-collection/paintings/impressionists/

Transportation -

Champs Élysées -
http://www.hberlioz.com/Paris/BOlympique.html#cirque

Secretan—

Buttes Chaumont:
https://vivsfrenchadventures.wordpress.com/2014/07/22/paris-lawns-forbidden-or-not/