

# *Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris* and Mansion Displays

## Label and Display Information for Volunteers

On View: February 17, 2024-June 16, 2024

To better equip volunteers in answering questions and promoting the exhibition, this document is provided to volunteers in advance of the exhibition opening and includes the text the visitor will read in the exhibition and information pertaining to the exhibition displays. Minor edits may be made to the exhibition text featured in this document. The thumbnail images in this document are not featured on the labels, unless otherwise noted. The exhibition opens to the public in the dacha on February 17.

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# Breakfast Room

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Thumbnail images are NOT on labels, unless otherwise noted.

## Color-Coordinated Entertaining

The breakfast room table, set for a dessert course, encapsulates two themes. The first is Parisian, in celebration of the exhibition *Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris*. The second is a green palette, in keeping with Marjorie Post's custom of color-coordinated table settings for her entertainments. The green porcelain dessert service, combining multiple historical styles, was made by the manufactory of Jacob Petit in the 1800s. The service is accompanied by two whimsical porcelain sculptures, each consisting of a trio of figures weaving floral garlands around a vase. The silver-gilt flatware, part of the same set selected for the dining room table, was produced by the Parisian goldsmith Martin-Guillaume Biennais for Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich (1798–1849) of Russia. The linen napkins in a green lily-of-the-valley pattern were supplied by the Parisian company D. Porthault. Glassware depicting hunting scenes in a wooded landscape was produced by the Bohemian house of Harrachov (ca. 1712–present). The Imperial Russian green glass chandelier above further complements the various green elements of the table.



### Serving wares and plates from a dessert service

Jacob Petit (French, 1796–1868)

Fontainebleau, ca. 1835

Hard-paste porcelain, gilding

Gift of Eleanor Close Barzin, 1974 (24.198.1–2, 24.199.1–6, 24.200.1)



### Silverware from a service for Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich

Martin-Guillaume Biennais (French, 1764–1843)

Paris, 1819

Silver gilt

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.289.1–72)



### Napkins with lily-of-the-valley pattern

D. Porthault (French, 1920–present)

France, 1900s

Linen

Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (45.38.3–42)



### Figures

Jacob Petit (French, 1796–1868)

Paris or Fontainebleau, 1830–42

Hard-paste porcelain

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (24.237.1, 24.237.2)*



### Glassware with hunting scenes

Harrachov (Bohemian/Czech, ca. 1712–present)

Harrachov, Czechoslovakia (now Czech

Republic), 1920–33

Painted glass, gilding

*Gift of Mrs. Augustus Riggs, 1973 (23.260.1–12, 23.259.1–13)*



### Pair of candlesticks

Russia, 1800s

Gilt bronze, crystal

*Gift of Madame Augusto Rosso (14.245)*



## Dining Room

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Thumbnail images are NOT on labels, unless otherwise noted.

### Dining à la française in Paris, 1800s

To celebrate the exhibition *Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris*, the dining room table is arrayed with wares made in or near Paris and offers an impression of an aristocratic meal from the early 1800s. The table is set for a dessert course in the manner known as *service à la française*, in which all dishes are laid out simultaneously for a sumptuous

effect, and which predominated through the first half of the century. The pink Rococo Revival dessert service is attributed to the manufactory of Jacob Petit, located in Paris and then moved to Fontainebleau. The silver-gilt flatware was made by the preeminent Parisian goldsmith Martin-Guillaume Biennais, a supplier to Napoleon's court, for Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich (1798–1849) of Russia. The cutlery is set in the French manner with tines oriented downward, as indicated by the placement of the grand duke's crest. Four sinuous, silver-gilt Rococo Revival candelabras, which appear to grow around crystal vases, were made by the Parisian goldsmith André Aucoc, whose workshop supplied the courts of Louis-Philippe and Napoleon III. Finally, the table features a set of glasses that Marjorie Post's daughter Eleanor Close Barzin (1909–2006), who resided primarily in Paris from the 1930s, gave to Hillwood.



### **Candelabra vases**

André Aucoc (French, 1856–1911)

Paris, ca. 1889

Silver gilt, crystal

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.308.1–4)*



### **Serving wares and plates from a dessert service**

Possibly Jacob Petit (French, 1796–1868)

Demont, decorator (French, active 1832–40)

France, ca. 1835

Hard-paste porcelain, gilding

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (24.119.1–30, 24.120.1–44)*



### **Silverware from a service for Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich**

Martin-Guillaume Biennais (French, 1764–1843)

Paris, ca. 1819

Silver gilt

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (12.289.1–72)*



### **Glasses**

France, 1700s  
Glass, gilding  
*Gift of Eleanor Close Barzin, 1975 (23.313.1–15)*



## French Drawing Room

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Thumbnail images are NOT on labels, unless otherwise noted.



### Evening dress

Paris, ca. 1920  
Silk velvet, tulle, faux pearls  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (48.43)*

This evening dress combines the naturalistic whimsy of Art Nouveau with the glittering embellishment of Art Deco. Its densely beaded bodice with fringed shoulder straps contrasts with a soft silk velvet draped skirt. Evocative of a *papillon*, or butterfly, a panel of tulle at the center back is reminiscent of wings. The theme continues at the front of the skirt with three hand-applied beaded teardrops corresponding to the distinctive markings of a butterfly's wings. Finally, two rhinestone butterfly appliqués reiterate the motif on the opposite side of the skirt. Such intricate ornamentation and hand-sewn details suggest that the garment originates in Paris.



### Evening dress

Robert Piguet (Swiss, 1898–1953)  
Paris, ca. 1937  
Silk satin, tulle  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (48.76)*

Robert Piguet, noted for hiring Christian Dior (1905–1957) as an assistant at his Parisian atelier in 1938, created the elegant evening dress seen here. Both designers shared an appreciation for details from the 1800s in their work, represented on this dress's box-pleated silk satin trim at the skirt hem. The garment remains rooted in the 1930s with its meticulous construction of bias-cut silk satin strips and trumpet-shaped skirt. Marjorie Post must have especially favored this model, for a second, cream version remains in Hillwood's collection today.



## Large Closet

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### Evening dress

Paris, ca. 1934

Silk crepe, organza, needle lace

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (48.75)*

This deceptively simple evening dress is emblematic of 1930s design details—many original innovations from the work of French couturier Madeleine Vionnet (1876–1975). Its cowl-neck bodice is draped on the bias, or diagonal of the silk's weave. The bodice finishes dramatically at the back in a low V shape, another hallmark of the period. Geometrically cut panels are pieced together to form the skirt, which features a slight train, and a free-hanging diagonal panel from the waist at the back heightens the glamour. Marjorie Post, a devoted collector of historic lace, must have requested the addition of the organza-backed needle lace insert seen in the bodice front.

(Image is on label)



This might be the garment Post wore for this 1934 portrait by Frank O. Salisbury, displayed in the first-floor library. Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, photographed by Edward Owen



## Lace Case

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Open the drawers to view exceptional examples of small, Parisian-made textiles from Hillwood's collection.

### Lace Case Drawer 1



**Trio of handmade gold flowers and matching headpiece**

Paris, 1920s

Metallic thread, synthetic horsehair, metal wire, faux pearls  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (2014.7.3,7-9)*



**Corsage of handmade pink berries and matching headpiece**

Paris, 1920s

Wool felt, metallic wire, silk satin, waxed cotton, feathers  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (2014.7.10, 2012.9.28)*

**Lace Case Drawer 2**



**Child's cloche**

Marindaz (French, active 1900s–1920s)

Paris, 1920s

Silk crepe, satin, cotton bobbinet

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973  
(2016.4.13)*



**Child's bonnet**

Paris, ca. 1915

Silk crepe, cotton embroidery

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973  
(2016.4.14)*

**Lace Case Drawer 3**



### **Christening weekend ensemble worn by Nedenia Hutton (1923–2017)**

Imported by B. Altman (New York, 1865–1990)

Paris, 1923

Cotton lawn, lace insertions, embroidery, silk satin, crepe, knit wool

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (2016.4.8.1–2, 2016.4.3.1–2, 2016.4.5.1–2)*

Nedenia Hutton, later known by the stage name Dina Merrill, was Marjorie Post's third daughter.

## Small Closet

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### **Evening dress**

Madeleine et Madeleine (French, 1919–26)

Paris, 1920

Silk tulle, silk brocade with metallic threads, silk satin

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (48.42)*

Two cousins, both named Madeleine, established their Parisian atelier in late 1919. During its brief existence, the firm was known for luxurious textiles and unexpected silhouettes, seen here in this evening dress. The draped silk satin panels constructing the underskirt are joined together and weighted at the hem, giving the effect of trousers.



## Jewelry Case

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(Image is on label)



Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens Archives

*Post wearing her sapphire and diamond necklace, 1940s*

In 1936, Marjorie Post became a member of the General Foods Corporation's board of directors and her husband Joseph Davies was appointed US ambassador to the Soviet Union. That year, Post instructed Cartier to combine two  
*Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris Exhibition Label Text | 8*



of her sapphire and diamond bracelets to create a necklace (left panel). To great effect, the firm designed a necklace of cascading diamonds surrounding a bold centerpiece—a large 40-carat, cushion-shaped Burmese sapphire—which could be detached and worn separately as a brooch. The result is a new classicism and restraint that manages to remain imposing in character.

(Image is on label)



*Marjorie Post at Mar-A-Lago, 1964, from the pages of Life*  
Alfred Eisenstaedt/The LIFE Picture Collection/Shutterstock

In the 1960s, the world of fine jewelry embraced luminous turquoise cabochons. Post wore these earrings, necklace, and bracelet (center panel) for a photo shoot at Mar-A-Lago, in Palm Beach, Florida, to illustrate a 1965 feature article on her in Life magazine. The ensemble added a bit of tropical elegance to her otherwise formal look.

The Cartier diamond brooch is exhibited here with its customized turquoise clip, which Post commissioned in 1964 from Harry Winston. Adaptable and interchangeable pieces of jewelry are characteristic of Post's collection, bringing a surprising spirit of practicality to an otherwise lavish and costly pursuit.

Among Post's diamonds is the one from her engagement ring (right panel), which Herbert May gave her in 1958. The company De Beers, in a 1940s campaign, had introduced the concept of bestowing diamond engagement rings as symbols of commitment and affection.



### **Earrings**

Van Cleef & Arpels  
(French, 1896–present), attributed  
Paris, mid-1930s; altered, 1950s  
Sapphires, diamonds, platinum  
*Gift of Nina Rumbough (2021.6.6.1–2)*



### **Necklace**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)  
New York City, 1937  
Sapphires, diamonds, platinum  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.68)*



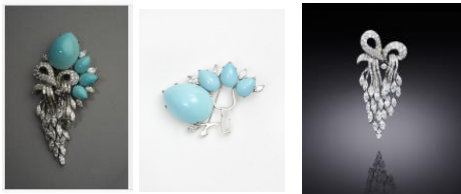
**Earrings**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)  
New York City, 1960  
Turquoises, diamonds, gold  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.73.3–4)*



**Necklace**

Harry Winston (American, 1932–present)  
New York City, 1961  
Turquoises, diamonds, platinum  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.73.1)*



**Brooch and clip**

Cartier (French, 1847–present), New York City, 1950: brooch  
Harry Winston (American, 1932–present), New York City, 1964: clip  
Diamonds, platinum: brooch  
Turquoises, diamonds, platinum: clip  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.82–83)*



**Bracelet**

Harry Winston (American, 1932–present)  
New York City, 1961  
Turquoises, diamonds, platinum  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.73.2)*



**Necklace**

Harry Winston (American, 1932–present)  
New York City, ca. 1965

Diamonds, platinum  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.70)*



**Brooch**

Harry Winston (American, 1932–present)  
New York City, 1959  
Diamonds, platinum  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.76)*



**Ring**

Harry A. Meyers (American, active 1950s)  
New York City, 1958  
Diamonds, platinum  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (17.79)*

## Second Floor Library Case

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From 1939 to the late 1960s, Marjorie Merriweather Post patronized A La Vieille Russie, the famed Parisian antique dealer later established in New York. During this period, she also purchased items for her collection from Léon Grinberg, nephew of A La Vieille Russie founder Jacques Zolotnitsky, both during his time with the dealer and after. Grinberg formed a close friendship with Post’s curator Marvin Ross, and the two of them worked together to bring books, art, and other objects into Post’s collection. The objects in this case represent just a few of these collaborative acquisitions, and the matching correspondence demonstrates the depth of their business and personal relationships.



**Chamberlain key**

Russia, 1881–94  
Gilt bronze  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post (14.126)*



In 1966, Marjorie Post agreed to purchase a chamberlain’s key (**1, at right**) produced during the reign of Emperor Alexander III (1881–94). Post already owned several chamberlain’s keys produced during

the Romanov family dynasty, including keys from the courts of Empress Catherine II and Emperors Paul I, Alexander I, and Alexander II. While once used to control access to the royal household, by the 1700s these keys were a ceremonial but powerful sign of prestige and influence. In a January 1967 letter **(2, at right)**, Léon Grinberg informs Marvin Ross that the key has yet to be sent. On a more personal level, Grinberg cautions his friend to “take it easy, you will be surprised to see that the world will go on in the same beautiful way; nothing will change except your health will improve.”

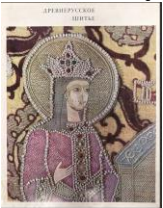


**Vodka bottle**

Attributed to Orlov Glassworks (Russian, 1793–1851)  
 Russia, ca. 1800  
 Glass, silver, cork  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (23.211.1-2)*



After many long months of negotiations by Hillwood curator Marvin Ross and antique dealer Léon Grinberg, Marjorie Post acquired the Russian glass collection of Berthe and Alexander Popov in early 1970 **(3, at right)**. Much of the collection had once belonged to Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich, uncle of Emperor Nicholas II, and Paul’s morganatic second wife, who was later granted the title Princess Olga Paley. The correspondence **(4, at right)** from December 1969 demonstrates Post’s enthusiasm for the purchase, the words “OK Buy!” written in her hand. Grinberg notes the seller’s desire to have the collection at Hillwood, which was most likely true but also perhaps a bit of flattery aimed to help complete the sale.



**Old Russian Sewing (Древнерусское Шитье)**

By Nataliia Andreevna Maiasova  
 Moscow: Izd. Isskustvo, 1971



In the process of researching her collections, Marjorie Post and Marvin Ross acquired hundreds of volumes for her library, creating the seed from which Hillwood’s Special Collections Library would grow. This volume on Russian ecclesiastical embroidery **(6, at right)** was purchased in July 1973, only a few months before Post’s passing in September. In August 1973, Ross wrote to Grinberg **(5, at right)** and referenced the book, while also assuring his friend that he was currently cancerfree and felt “splendid.” Ross passed away in April 1977.



## Entry Hall

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### Deconstructing Riesener

(Image is on label)



**This screen displays animations of the two Hillwood commodes, or chests of drawers, displayed here in the entry hall. To begin, touch the screen.**

As the visuals reveal, the elaborate wood marquetry panels and gilt-bronze mounts that adorn the commodes are supported by an oak frame or *carcass*. Born in the German region of Westphalia, Jean-Henri Riesener (1734–1806) was active in Paris after about 1754. He supplied sumptuous furniture in the Neoclassical Louis XVI style to the French court at Versailles. Much of Riesener's furniture was dispersed during and after the French Revolution.

British institutions with prominent collections of Riesener furniture recently undertook extensive research into his construction and techniques, an endeavor titled the Riesener Project. One result of the project's scientific analysis was a series of visuals that illustrate the complex construction of Riesener's pieces. Inspired by this research, Hillwood commissioned similar visuals. The commodes were disassembled, and each component was scanned. These individual scans were then reassembled to produce an interactive experience.

(Image is on label)



The animations can also be accessed on your personal device by scanning the QR code.

## Staff Dining Room

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### Commander Clyde B. Ault

Commander Clyde B. Ault (1903–1979) loved life on the sea. During his twenties, he served aboard multiple vessels as an assistant engineer. His earliest work for Marjorie Post came in 1931 when he was hired to be the first assistant engineer on the *Hussar V*, the yacht that Post and her second husband, E. F. Hutton, built. Ault would eventually be promoted to chief engineer aboard the renamed *Sea Cloud*, holding that position until he entered the U.S. Navy in 1940. Ault would serve in both the Navy and Naval Reserve, being promoted to commander before retiring from the service in 1954.

When Post began to renovate Hillwood after purchasing it in 1955, she needed a strong organizational mind whom she could trust to handle the day-to-day operations of such a complex project. She turned once again to Commander Ault, who assumed responsibility for the operations of all of Post's properties, including Camp Topridge and Mar-A-Lago. Almost nothing happened on any of her estates without Ault's input or approval. Ault also holds the distinction of being one of only two Post staff members who served both on the *Sea Cloud* and at Hillwood.

Ault and his wife, Betty Marie, loved Hillwood; Mrs. Ault often volunteered there, most likely as a hostess for Post's many social events. The commander retired from his role as general manager in January 1969, moving out to California. He passed away in Alameda, California, in April 1979.

*All documents and images are from Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens Archives and Special Collections. Those displayed here are reproductions of the originals.*



*Left to right:*

Clyde Ault's "résumé" as compiled by Captain C. W. Lawson of the *Hussar V*, 1931. Lawson hired Ault at the recommendation of Chief Engineer John Martinson. Ault immediately reported to Kiel, Germany, where the ship was under construction.

Commander Ault (far right) and others aboard one of the launches at Camp Topridge, ca. 1960s

View of the engine room aboard the *Sea Cloud*, ca. 1930s. Ault would have spent most of his time aboard ship in this hot, dark, and noisy space.



*Left to right:*

Commander Ault showing one of his retirement gifts to Post financial secretary Helen Krotec and Ault's wife, Betty Marie, January 1969

Commander Ault and wife, Betty Marie, in his office, 1969

## Dacha

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**Thumbnail images are NOT on labels, unless otherwise noted.**

### **Donor Panel**

#### **Exhibition Sponsors**

The Richard C. von Hess Foundation  
The Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation  
Ellen MacNeille Charles  
Janice and Ralph Shrader  
Susan and David Thoms  
A La Vieille Russie  
Ms. Nedenia Rumbough and Mr. Jan Roosenburg  
Janice H. Brambilla  
Kyra Cheremeteff and Thomas W. Richardson  
Phyllis and Glenn Gerstell  
Gloria Hidalgo  
Katherine Levine and Daniel Culley  
Diane B. Wilsey

All exhibitions and programs are funded in part by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts through the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs Program. This project was supported by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

### **Intro Panel**

This exhibition explores some of the Parisian treasures represented in the collections of Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, which Marjorie Merriweather Post (1887–1973) acquired during her numerous visits. These cherished objects range from haute couture gowns and exquisite jewelry to remarkable antiques dating to the 1700s, augmented by archival images and stories about her favorite spots in the French capital.

Marjorie Post first visited Paris in 1900. The thirteen-year-old was accompanied by her parents, Ella Letitia Merriweather Post (1852–1912) and C. W. Post (1854–1914). The voyage seemed to be arranged around her father's booth at the Exposition Universelle in Paris, representing his pioneering prepared food business, Postum Cereal Company.

Image is on label.



Post Family Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan  
*Post at sea as a young woman, ca. 1904*

In 1904, Post experienced her second trip across the Atlantic Ocean, again with her family, this time aboard the SS *Minnetonka*. Following the traditional format of the Grand Tours of the 1800s, the multi-destination visit began in late spring and continued through the summer months for an early September return. The itinerary brimmed with social and cultural highlights in Britain, Ireland, and the Netherlands, and it included time for Parisian couture shopping.

Whether she was visiting the impressive salons of turn-of-the-century milliners, seeking treasures connected to the royal court of Louis XVI, ordering custom jewelry from Cartier and Joël Helft during the interwar years, or receiving France's most prestigious decoration, the Legion of Honor, in 1957, Marjorie Post clearly cultivated a taste for French history, culture, and design, a sentiment revealed in Hillwood's collections today.

Unless otherwise noted, objects on display were bequeathed to Hillwood by Post in 1973. All images and archival documents and objects are from Hillwood's Archives and Special Collections unless otherwise Cited.

📷 Photography without flash is welcome.

Image is on label.



*Post, carrying Scampi, deplaning from the Merriweather, her private airplane, ca. 1965*

### **Section Label**

## **BON VOYAGE**

Over her eighty-six years, Post visited Paris more than a dozen times, first arriving via luxury steam powered liners that initially took about a week to reach Europe, then enjoying private voyages via her own luxurious yacht, the *Sea Cloud*, and later on board the *Merriweather*, her turboprop plane originally designed for forty-four passengers. As the uncontested fashion and design capital of the world for centuries, the allure of Paris to a twentieth century collector like Marjorie Post was unsurprising.



Image is on label.



Post (third from left) dining aboard the RMS Queen Mary with husband Joseph Davies (far right), 1938

Given the travel time to Europe at the turn of the century, the extended sojourns that could last an entire season, and the requisite daily wardrobe changes and expected fashion accessories of an elegant lady, Marjorie Post required a lot of luggage. She also must have found sets of coordinated leather trunks useful as she acquired multiple domestic properties such as Mar-A-Lago and Camp Topridge. Post and others of her class never would have traveled with just one trunk—this was the age of portaged luggage and vast ocean liner hulls—and for them, a set of customized trunks from the esteemed firm of Louis Vuitton was a necessity. Post ordered her first trunks from Vuitton in 1924, and she owned more than sixteen pieces. Today, Hillwood holds six examples in its collection. She never strayed from the traditional leather wrappings but often requested her own monogram and coordinated painted stripes.

Image is on label.



Queen Mary dinner menu, July 9, 1938

Image is on label.



Cunard White Star Line RMS Queen Mary postcard, ca. 1938

Platform Label



### **Secrétaire à chaussure shoe trunk**

Louis Vuitton (French, 1854–present)

Asnières-sur-Seine, 1924

Leather, brass, fabric, metal, wood

(2014.16.3)

On view here is Post's shoe trunk—complete with thirty narrow leather drawers, and two wider ones above and below to accommodate stockings. This model was favored by the famous French opera singer Lily Pons who requested additional smaller drawers to accommodate her collection of silk satin slippers. Hillwood's collection also includes thirty examples from other makers, such as the Hartmann Trunk Company and Oshkosh Trunk Company, both originally based in Wisconsin with reputations for producing exceptional luxury travel goods. Post identified her luggage with hand-painted stripes and her initials added to their exteriors. Each piece was numbered so that all of them could be tracked and inventoried.

Image is on label.





Catalogue from Louis Vuitton, 1928, featuring the secrétaire à chaussure shoe trunk  
© Collection Louis Vuitton

## Map

### POST'S PARIS

This map highlights destinations prominent in Marjorie Post's visits to Paris, including antique and specialty shops, jewelers, and the hôtel particuliers or grand town homes of her friends.

Post maintained an international address book with a Parisian section full of family and friends, including middle daughter Eleanor Post Close (1909–2006) **48**, ambassadors, dukes and duchesses, even princesses. Traditionally, Post favored a specific suite at the Ritz **10**—one "overlooking the Place Vendôme with a large sitting room." Earlier trips found her ensconced at the historic Hôtel de Crillon **8**, a former state palace commissioned by Louis XV, or at the Art Deco-infused five-star Hôtel Raphael **9**, which opened in 1925.

Image is on label.



## Map Label Rail

### LANDMARKS

1. Arc de triomphe
2. Tour Eiffel
3. Place de la Concorde
4. Louvre
5. Panthéon
6. Jardin du Luxembourg
7. Château de Versailles

### HOTELS

8. Hôtel de Crillon  
10 place de la Concorde
9. Hôtel Raphael  
17 avenue Kléber
10. Hôtel Ritz Paris  
15 place Vendôme

Image is on label.



Historic image of Hôtel Ritz Paris

### SERVICES

11. American Express

11 rue Scribe

Originally established as an express delivery business during the mid-1800s, the company was a pioneer in the issuance of traveler's checks in 1891, making it easier for Americans abroad to access cash.

## 12. Florent

273 rue Saint-Honoré

The preferred dry cleaner of Marjorie Post in Paris during the 1950s and 1960s.

## 13. Lachaume

10 rue Royale

Active since 1845 (today located on rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré), this is the oldest florist in Paris, known for fresh blooms, exclusive varieties, and long-stemmed arrangements. Clients have included everyone from Marcel Proust to Marjorie Post to Karl Lagerfeld.

Image is on label.



*Historic image of Lachaume*

## 14. Paris Shopping Advisors

25 avenue Carnot

Services such as these could arrange private shopping appointments, handle shipments abroad, and—as the name implies—advise on appropriate retailers for specified goods.

## SHOPS

## 15. A La Vieille Russie

18 rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré

This specialized antique shop focused on exquisite treasures of old Russian origins, as its name implies. Established in Kyiv in 1851, the shop relocated to Paris in 1921, but it temporarily shuttered during the German Occupation in the Second World War. A New York branch opened in 1941, and today it is the sole remaining outpost.

Image is on label.



Courtesy A La Vieille Russie

*Historic image of A La Vieille Russie*

## 16. Au Bon Marché

24 rue de Sèvres

This renowned, innovative department store, still operational today (as Le Bon Marché), was known for its mail-order catalogue and wide variety of custom and ready-made goods in a luxurious building.

## 17. Boin-Taburet

10 boulevard Malesherbes

Marjorie Post owned a personalized dressing table set from this illustrious silversmith firm to commemorate her 1958 marriage to Herbert May, and a historic tea and coffee service dating to 1889, specially created for the 1891 French exhibition in Moscow, that remains in Hillwood's collection today.

## 18. Callot Soeurs

24 rue Taitbout (to 1914), 9–11 avenue Matignon (to 1928), and then 41 avenue Montaigne

A visionary couture firm established by the four Callot sisters in 1895, it created fancy dress costumes, exquisite day dresses, lace-filled examples of lingerie dresses, and eveningwear with distinctive Eastern influences. Callot Soeurs

continued into the 1930s, with modernist designer Louise Boulanger as its creative lead for a time, before merging and eventually closing.

### **19. Cartier**

11 rue de la Paix

Louis-François Cartier (1819–1904) established his prestigious jewelry firm in 1847. The firm opened its Boutique at 13 rue de la Paix in 1899. By 1913, Cartier also occupied the entire storefront at 11 rue de la Paix. His three grandsons catapulted the firm into international dominance during the 1900s, expanding to London and New York in addition to the Parisian headquarters.

Image is on label.



Cartier Paris Archives © André Taponie

*The Cartier Boutique at 13 rue de la Paix in Paris, ca. 1921*

### **20. D. Porthault**

18 avenue Montaigne

A Parisian legacy linens firm established in 1920 and known for stunning natural prints and couture-level details. Marjorie Post owned several printed napkins and accompanying tablecloths, including the lily-of-the-valley napkins on view in the breakfast room in the mansion.

### **21. Denis Francet**

362 rue Saint-Honoré

Mid-century accessories shop selling kid leather gloves, silk scarves, beaded purses, and printed parasols and umbrellas.

### **22. DeWailly**

134 avenue Victor Hugo

Retailer of parasols and umbrellas, active during the 1910s.

### **23. Galerie d'Art Ancien**

74 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré

Another antique shop Post favored, where she found many of her imperial Russian treasures in Hillwood's collection today.

### **24. Galerie Maurice Chalom**

17 place Vendôme

Renowned interior design, antique, and contemporary art firm.

### **25. Hermès**

24 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré

This Parisian luxury house dates back to 1837, when the firm's specialty was carriage and equestrian accessories. Hermès expanded to include fashion and some of its iconic handcrafted handbags during the 1920s. By 1937, the collectible square silk scarves known as *carrés* were added to its repertoire.

### **26. J.W. Chunn**

43 rue Richer

Small fragrance shop also selling beaded bags with antique porcelain cameos incorporated into their design.

### **27. Jacques Seligmann & Cie**

23 place Vendôme

Successful art dealers with a second branch in New York and a discriminating coterie of clients.

### **28. Joël Helft**

374 rue Saint-Honoré

A boutique jeweler active during the 1920s and 1930s, Helft worked with Post to complete her zircon and diamond *parure*, or coordinating set, in 1939; she also commissioned jewelry from him for her stepdaughter Emlen Knight Davies. Sadly, Helft was killed in 1944 by Nazis at Argenton-sur-Creuse, France.

### 29. Keller

18 avenue Matignon

Prestigious Parisian silversmith firm established in 1856 by Gustave Keller (1812–1894); it remained in the family through the 1950s.

### 30. Louis Vuitton

70 avenue des Champs-Élysées

Founded in 1854, this company offered notable innovations to luggage for extensive journeys, including stackable trunks (one never owned *just one* trunk), treated canvas, and customer-specific locks. The location in the Champs-Élysées remained open until 1954 and would have been the shop Marjorie Post visited to commission her sixteen trunks and additional accessories from the firm.

### 31. Madame Georgette

11 rue Scribe

Madame Georgette’s millinery firm was active here beginning in 1904. The success of her signature picture hats with handcrafted embellishments meant that she could expand with a second location at 1 rue de la Paix, and she spent a month working with elite American retailer Henri Bendel in New York.

Image is on label.



*Historic image of Madame Georgette’s shop*

### 32. Madeleine et Madeleine

104 avenue des Champs-Élysées

Two cousins, both named Madeleine, established their Parisian atelier in late 1919. During its brief existence, until 1926, the firm was known for luxurious textiles and unexpected silhouettes. You can see one rare example of the sisters’ work inside Post’s bedroom closets in the mansion.

### 33. Maison Beer

7 place Vendôme

Established in Paris in 1886 by Germanborn couturier Gustave Beer, the firm counted stylish European royals among its clients. Beer’s atelier was renowned for being among the first with electric lighting, but it featured nostalgic design and construction details inspired by the 1700s.

### 34. Maison Boullanger

5 rue Daunou

After Marjorie Post received her Legion of Honor from the French government in 1957, she went to this specialty shop to purchase the appropriate ribbons, rosettes, and other elements required for the display of her orders on her apparel for formal occasions.

### 35. Maison Paquin

3 rue de la Paix

The husband-and-wife team of Isidore and Jeanne Paquin established this design house in 1891, and Madame Paquin’s designs were worn by early “influencers” at Longchamp and Chantilly horse races, making her the leading French couturier of the Belle Époque period. Maison Paquin survived into the mid-1950s after a merger with another traditional French haute couturier, the House of Worth.

Image is on label.



*Historic illustration of Maison Paquin*

### **36. Maison Reboux**

23 rue de la Paix

Established during the 1860s, the millinery firm of Caroline Reboux enjoyed success under the patronage of Empress Eugénie and other members of the Parisian elite through the decline of hat wearing in the mid-1950s.

### **37. Martial**

13 rue de la Paix

Martial was a lingerie and accessories firm that merged in 1902 with the House of Armand, known for its outerwear and at-home apparel, forming Martial et Armand and expanding into women's evening and daytime apparel.

### **38. Pache**

66 rue de Castiglione

Handmade lingerie and embroidered silk blouses retailed at Pache; several examples of these delicate pieces of apparel exist in Hillwood's collection today.

### **39. Revillon Frères**

77, 79, and 81 rue de Rivoli

While Post owned luxurious furs offered by Revillon Frères, founded in 1723, she was especially a fan of its Carnet de Bal scent, which the company released in 1937.

### **40. Robert Piguet**

5 rue du Cirque

Swiss-born Robert Piguet opened his atelier here during the early 1930s. Christian Dior (1905–1957) began as an assistant to Piguet in 1938. Marjorie Post owned two "twin" Piguet gowns, one in cream and one in blush; the latter is on view now in the mansion's French drawing room.

### **41. Rogé Cavallès**

116 boulevard Haussmann

Parisian skin care firm active since 1855, catering to those with sensitive skin, including Marjorie Post.

### **42. Swelley**

17 place Vendôme

A perfumer that also dealt in fine embroidered evening gloves.

### **43. Van Cleef & Arpels**

22 place Vendôme

The first Van Cleef & Arpels boutique opened here in 1906 as a family business among brothers-in-law. During the 1900s, the firm became renowned for its superior examples of jewelry inspired by nature, animals, and whimsical figures such as ballerinas and fairies.

## **FRIENDS AND FAMILY**

### **44. The Honorable Hervé Alphand (1907–1994), French ambassador to the United States, 1956–65**

122 rue de Grenelle

Marjorie Post retained the address of her friend, Ambassador Hervé Alphand, who presented her with the Legion of Honor on view nearby. Prior to his ambassadorship, Alphand served as Charles de Gaulle's financial and economic advisor in the French Committee of National Liberation during the Second World War.

### **45. Princess Emily Cito- Filomarino di Bitetto (1883 or 1884–1974)**

86 avenue Henri Martin

Born Emily Stuart Taylor in Tuxedo Park, New York, she married Prince Carlo di Bitetto of Naples in 1923. Princess di Bitetto had a jaw-dropping collection of Cartier jewelry and split her time between Rome and Paris. Besides her

friendship with Marjorie Post, she was an attendee at Elsie de Wolfe's famous 1939 Circus Ball at Villa Trianon, in the village of Versailles.

**46. The Honorable Henri Bonnet (1888–1978), French ambassador to the United States, 1944–54**

23 rue de Verneuil

Appointed ambassador by General Charles de Gaulle as France emerged from the shadow of the German Occupation, Bonnet ensured strong diplomatic bonds in Washington during the critical recovery years. Bonnet and his fashionable wife, Helle, were both among Marjorie Post's Parisian contacts.

**47. Emmanuel, Duke of Chaulnes (1908–1980)**

168 boulevard Saint-Germain

The 12th Duke of Chaulnes was the son of Theodora Mary d'Albert (née Shonts; 1882–1966), who was from a prominent New York–Washington, DC family and was part of Post's social circle. The family owned a château from the 1600s, Dampierre, close to Versailles.

**48. Eleanor Post Close (1909–2006)**

53 rue de Monceau

Eleanor Post Close was Marjorie Post's second daughter and a passionate devotee of music. Following in her mother's footsteps, Eleanor became a collector of French fine and decorative arts, filling her homes in Paris and in Vauxsur-Seine, northwest of the French capital, with assorted treasures.

Image is on label.



*Historic photo of Eleanor Post Close's home in Paris*

**49. The Viscountess de Faramond de Lafajole**

7 avenue Frédéric-Le-Play

Another of Post's titled French friends of American origins, the Viscountess de Faramond, was born Ivy Langham to a British American family.

**50. Louise Moreau (1921–2001)**

66 avenue Henri Martin

Born Louise Mont-Reynaud in Grenoble, France, she began her political career at the end of the Second World War. She was elected mayor of Mandelieu-La Napoule in 1971.

**51. Countess MK (Mary Koutouzow) Tolstoy (1884–1976)**

3 avenue du Président Wilson

Born Mary Frothingham in New York, she married author Leo Tolstoy's relative Count Alexander Golenischev-Kutuzov-Tolstoy (1867–1914) in 1910. After her husband's death, she worked for various couturier firms including Germaine Lecomte and Molyneux, and she was a prolific artist and writer.

**Section Label**

Consumers like Marjorie Post and her family seeking luxurious fashion in turn-of-the-century Paris might choose to visit some of the more established haute couturiers such as Charles Frederick Worth, Jacques Doucet, or later firms with visionary women at their helm, such as Callot Soeurs and Paquin. They might also select a more leisurely visit to the innovative new emporiums of taste, *les grands magasins*—department stores such as the famous Au Bon Marché.

Image is on label.



*Post in her Marie Antoinette costume, ca. 1904*

**Platform Label**

**AU BON MARCHÉ**

In 1852, Aristide Boucicaut (1810–1877) and his wife, Marguerite (née Guérin; 1816–1887), took over a small, twelve-employee haberdashery that had been founded fourteen years earlier and transformed it into a flourishing retail and social center, Au Bon Marché, offering more than two hundred types of objects and providing eighteen hundred jobs. They invited customers to browse with little pressure to purchase, standardized their prices, offered a mail-order catalogue and their own in-house shipping department, and featured a working perfume fountain, billiard room, art gallery, and free buffet. Au Bon Marché also provided forward-thinking employee benefits.



**Daytime ensemble**

Au Bon Marché (French, 1838–present)

Paris, ca. 1900

Wool-silk challis, silk cord, cotton crochet, silk and linen lace (dress)

Silk taffeta, silk cord, metallic thread (jacket)

(48.9.1–3)

This elaborately trimmed daytime gown and coordinating silk taffeta jacket echo some of the ornate architecture seen in the expanded Au Bon Marché store. Suitable for promenades, formal daytime visits or calls, or even teas, this ensemble was likely not ready-made but ordered custom. It probably belonged to Marjorie Post's mother, Ella Letitia Merriweather Post, who accompanied her daughter and her husband on several early visits to the City of Lights.

Image is on label.



*Grand staircase in Au Bon Marché, 1900*

Albert Chevojon (1865–1925), photo ca. 1900, Public domain, via Wikimedia Common

**Platform Label**

**MAISON BEER**

Image is on label.



*Post in her Marie Antoinette costume at her first Palm Beach home, Hogarcito, 1924*

Parisian couturier Gustave Beer (ca. 1855–1908) counted the women of Europe's courts as clients. A fashion history scholar himself, Beer incorporated traditional dressmaking techniques, materials, and silhouettes drawn from his studies of fashion plates from the late 1700s at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Beer's nostalgic design signatures are exemplified in Marjorie Post's gown, which features a draped polonaise-style skirt and a pointed



waist bodice. The Maison Beer (*maison* referring to a design house) endured for two decades following his death but merged with the Maison Drécoll in 1928. The name did not survive a subsequent, final merger with the Maison Agnès in 1931.



### **Marie Antoinette costume**

Maison Beer (French, 1886–1930s)  
Paris, 1904  
Modified in New York, 1924–26  
Silk faille, tulle, ribbons, linen lace  
(48.136.1–3)

During her summer 1904 visit, Marjorie Post purchased this rose-colored gown with romantic lace, ribbon, and handmade flower trims. Post wore it for her numerous turns as France’s most enduring icon of fashion, Marie Antoinette (1755–1793). The first time was at age seventeen, in 1904; other occasions included twenty years later at the 1924 Everglades Ball in Palm Beach and in 1926.

Image is on label.



Staff in courtyard of Maison Beer, ca. 1909

### **Platform Label**

### **CALLOT SOEURS**

Another storied *maison*, Callot Soeurs evolved from an antique lace and lingerie atelier. Four Parisian daughters of a lace maker originally established the shop before turning their focus to couture. The Callot sisters were part of a fin de siècle emergence of womenled fashion houses in Paris. The eldest sister, Marie Callot Gerber, served as *directrice*, or head designer, assisted by her siblings. Madame Gerber had a renowned sense of color and knowledge of textiles and was a font of global and historic references and inspiration, earning the house a reference in novelist Marcel Proust’s *À la recherche du temps perdu*.

Callot Soeurs weathered the death of Madame Gerber in 1927, when her son took over management and soon after moved the atelier to the more fashionable side of the Champs-Élysées at 41 avenue Montaigne. He also hired the avant-garde designer Louise Boulanger, known professionally as her contracted name, “Louiseboulanger,” who was recognized for her unique color palates and combination of unconventional materials. Boulanger’s tenure at Callot was short-lived, but an example of her work for the house is nearby. Callot merged in the late 1930s with the Maison Calvet, which closed in 1952.



### **Evening dress**

Callot Soeurs (French, 1895–1952)  
Paris, ca. 1908  
Cotton organdy, silk crêpe and satin, embroidery, glass beads, metal ornaments  
(48.22)

Image is on label.





*Models at Callot Soeurs salon, ca. 1910*

### Section Label

During the years between the world wars, wealthy foreign visitors like Marjorie Post flocked to Paris on repeat visits, often part of an extensive travel itinerary. Post likely enjoyed long visits to the city, especially in the late 1930s when she joined then husband Joseph Davies (1876–1958) during his ambassadorial posts in the Soviet Union and Belgium.

The three dresses from the 1930s and 1940s seen here represent the transition of French fashion from its originating established couture firms into a period of innovation with upstarts like Lucien Lelong, Jean Patou, Madeleine Vionnet, Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel, and Elsa Schiaparelli sweeping the city as older houses merged, closed, or lost their principal founders to old age. Following the Second World War, Paris asserted itself again during what most consider the “golden age of couture”—the time of Christian Dior, Cristóbal Balenciaga, and Pierre Balmain. That period is less represented in Hillwood’s collection today.

Image is on label.



Post photographed by Madame D’Ora (born Dora Kallmus; 1881–1963), Paris, 1933

### Platform Label



#### Wedding dress

Callot Soeurs (French, 1895–1952)

Louise Boulanger, designer (French, 1878–1950)

Paris, 1933

Silk satin, silk chiffon, reproduction silk velvet flowers  
(48.78)

Hillwood’s rare example of Louise Boulanger for Callot was purchased for the marriage of Marjorie Post’s daughter Eleanor to Etienne Gautier in 1933. Featuring a garland of handmade lilies across its surplus bodice, the gown also includes interesting design details such as dropped, boxpleated sleeves and a skirt set with bias-cut panels of silk satin. To commemorate the occasion, both mother and daughter were photographed by Madame D’Ora (born Dora Kallmus; 1881–1963), known for her portraits of French café society and its artistic circles.

Image is on label.



*Eleanor Close, photographed by Madame D’Ora for her 1933 wedding*

## Platform Label

Image is on label.



*Emlen Knight Davies in her 1939 wedding gown*



## Wedding dress

Maison Paquin

(French, 1891–1956)

Ana de Pombo, designer

(Spanish, 1889–1985)

Paris, 1939

Silk taffeta, velvet and wax flowers, satin ribbons

*Gift of Mia Grosjean, 2014, which she received from her mother Emlen Knight Davies (2014.12.10.1)*

Marjorie Post treated stepdaughter Emlen Knight Davies (1916–2014) to a custom wedding gown from the Maison Paquin in 1939 “after much thought and discussion.” When “Bijou,” as she was affectionately known, was planning her May 1939 nuptials to Belgian-born business executive Robert Grosjean (1908–1995), she was inspired by a gown she remembered Post wearing when they first met. Post was based in Brussels for the second ambassadorial assignment of her husband, Joseph Davies, and she even coordinated, with representatives from the Maison Paquin, an embassy fitting of the romantic gown, which features an eleven-foot train. The wedding took place at the estate of Senator Millard Tydings and his wife, Bijou’s eldest sister, in Havre de Grace, Maryland; the bride wore a historic Belgian veil, custom ivory-heeled satin shoes from Delman, and an antique fichu, or collar of lace, made for the 1832 royal wedding of Louise of Orléans and King Leopold I of Belgium, today part of the collection at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History, donated by Marjorie Post. Post also arranged an extensive trousseau for her stepdaughter, sourced in Paris, Brussels, and New York, some of which exists in the collection at Hillwood today.

[For more on the wedding, view the 3 minute film on the screen.](#)

## Platform Label

### MAISON PAQUIN

Image is on label.



*Entrance to Maison Paquin, 1934*

The Maison Paquin evolved from a lesser-known dressmaking firm, the Maison Paquin, Lalanne and Company. Isidore Jacob (1862–1907), one of its managing partners, was captivated by the talented Jeanne Marie Charlotte Beckers (1869–1936), and the two married, changed their name legally to Paquin, and established their own couture house at 3 rue de la Paix. Despite being the most successful and popular designer through the 1910s, the visionary Madame Paquin kept the house approachable and creative. The wedding gown nearby dates to the

tenure of Ana de Pombo, who became house designer when Madame Paquin's successor, Madeleine Wallis, left in 1936, the same year as Paquin's death. Two additional designers led the house during the war until 1945, when Colette Massignac assumed the role of creative director. Massignac was the one-time director at Hermès. She designed this Winter 1946 Beaded velvet gown with its full-figured silk skirt for Paquin, worn by Marjorie Post. Massignac remained at Paquin only until 1949; other designers succeeded her until the firm dissolved in 1956.



### **Evening dress**

Maison Paquin (French, 1891–1956) Colette Massignac, designer  
(French, active 1945–49)

Paris, 1946

Silk velvet, figured satin, beads, silk tulle  
(48.102)

Image is on label.



*Design for the Winter 1946 Maison Paquin evening dress from Colette Massignac*

© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

### **Wall Label**



*Suspended above:*

### **Umbrella**

ONM Paris (French, active 1950s–60s)

Paris, 1960s

Nylon, brass, reptile skin

(2014.11.5)



*Suspended below:*

### **Umbrella**

Denis Francet (French, active 1950s–90s)

Paris, ca. 1955

Nylon, brass, plastic

(2014.11.7)



*In stand:*

**Parasol**

DeWailly (French, active 1910s)

Paris, ca. 1915

Silk, wood, Bakelite, brass

(2014.11.1)

Ladies strolling the rue de la Paix during the 1800s carried delicate *ombrelles*, or parasols, to shade themselves from the sun, a distinction from the more utilitarian and large *parapluies*, or umbrellas, which were meant to keep a person dry in precipitation. Like many of the small luxurious accessories seen here, these were domestically made goods included in a legacy of exceptional artistry in France. Centers of production included Aurillac, a town in south-central France, and, of course, Cherbourg, the northern coastal town that inspired the iconic colorful 1964 musical *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*.

Marjorie Post cared for her sensitive skin, ordering products from Rogé Cavallès in the boulevard Haussmann, and was famous in Palm Beach for completely covering herself under shade.

Image is on label.



Post with a printed sunshade in hand, British Embassy in Washington, DC, ca. 1960. She wears her Parisian antique ruby hummingbird brooch, on view nearby.

Label on rail.

Image is on label.



Palais Galliera, Musée de la mode de Paris

Martial advertisement featuring shirtwaists, jabots, belts, and at-home attire, December 1901



*On shelf:*

**Jabot collar**

Martial (French, 1893–1902)

Paris, ca. 1900

Linen needle lace, silk satin

(2023.3)



**Belt**

Martial (French, 1893–1902)  
Paris, ca. 1900  
Corded silk, steel-cut beads, velvet, silver, leather  
(2014.6.7)



**Blouse**

Pache (French, active 1940s–50s)  
Paris, ca. 1947  
Silk satin, cotton embroidery, mother-of-pearl buttons  
(2023.2)

Clothing during the early 1900s was costly, and women found unique ways to freshen and enliven their ensembles, such as adding a handmade lace collar or unique belt or sash. Martial was a lingerie and accessories firm located on the rue de la Paix, counting Cartier, Paquin, Worth, and others as its neighbors. In 1902, the firm merged with Armand, known for coats and luxurious at-home-dresses.

Shops that sold handmade lace items, lingerie, and handkerchiefs also offered other delights like hand embroidered silk blouses and beautiful printed scarves.



**Frame, with miniature of Marjorie Post**

Verger Frères, workshop (French, 1872–present)  
Paris, ca. 1930  
Retailed at Cartier (French, 1847–present)  
Malcolm Rae, miniature painter  
(American, active 1920s–50s)  
New York, ca. 1940  
Agate, gold, enamel, nephrite, rubies, watercolor on ivory  
(21.119.1–2)



**Chevalier, Légion d'honneur (Legion of Honor)**

France, 1957  
Enamel, gold, silk moiré  
(18.78.1)

Marjorie Post received the Legion of Honor from Hervé Alphand (1907–1994), the French ambassador to the United States, on August 7, 1957, in recognition of her contributions to hospitals during the First World War and her patronage of French decorative arts. Alphand's residence is among the entries in Post's address book.

Image is on label.



Reprinted with permission of the DC Public Library, Star Collection © Washington Post  
*Post receives Legion of Honor medal, 1957. She wears pieces from her zircon and diamond jewelry suite, on view nearby.*



### **Legion of Honor rosettes and ribbon bars**

Maison Boullanger (French, active 1866–?)

Paris, late 1950s

Printed paper, adhesive, tissue, silk, copper  
(2023.6.1-5, 2023.7.1-28, 2023.8.1-22)

When worn, with rosettes, the Legion of Honor was suspended from ribbon bars attached to the awardee's apparel.



### **Backgammon board and accessories**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)

Paris, early 1920s

Wood, leather, cardboard, Bakelite, metal  
(2014.17)

### **Section Label (label on rail)**

## **JEWELRY**

Marjorie Post's devotion to history and exceptional artisanship was aligned with the mythology of Paris as the center of cultural commerce and its reputation as the fashion capital of the world. This legacy was earned during the seven-decade reign of Louis XIV (1643–1715), who, together with his superintendent of finance Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683), established guilds and workshops, developing the French economy and nurturing its artisans. Indeed, many of the *maisons* and other firms seen here and elsewhere in this exhibition are still active today, or existed for decades, serving prestigious clients and accruing reputations of excellence. And Post was one of those clients, visiting milliners, buying custom jewelry, and looking for centuries-old royal treasures.

Image is on label.



Photographed by Bob Davidoff

*Post at the Palm Beach Red Cross Ball in 1968, wearing her historic ruby demiparure. She paired it with a coordinating tiara loaned for the occasion from her friends at Van Cleef & Arpels. Her Legion of Honor is also visible among her many other orders near her left shoulder.*

For her personal jewelry collection, Marjorie Post was attentive to color, artisanship, and historical provenance. The pieces here represent her loyalty to Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels, as well as her interest in assembling custom sets, illustrated by the set of zircons and diamonds she began building in New York with de Sedles and completed with coordinating necklace, brooch, and bracelet via the boutique jeweler Joël Helft in Paris. The pendant brooch at the center of this display was purchased at Cartier London and features seven carved Mughal emeralds, including one engraved with an inscription referencing its previous owner, a servant of Shah Abbas II (r. 1642–66) of Persia, who probably received it as a gift or plunder from the Mughals. Post acquired the 1800s *demi-parure*, or partial set, of rubies and diamonds from the New York shop of antique dealer A La Vieille Russie in 1956. She had an eye for French artisanship noticing this dazzling ruby, diamond, and emerald hummingbird brooch at a London antique jewelry dealer in 1952.



*Left group:*

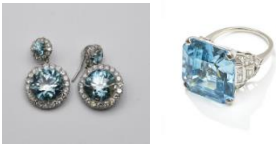
**Necklace, bracelet, and brooch**

Joël Helft (French, active 1920s–1930s)

Paris, 1939

Zircons, diamonds, platinum

(17.72.1, .2, .5)



**Earrings and ring**

Purchased from de Sedles (American, active 1920s–70s)

New York, 1936

Zircons, diamonds, platinum

(17.72.3, .4, .6)



*Center group:*

**Necklace**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)

New York, 1950

Amethysts, turquoises, diamonds, gold, platinum

(17.67.1)



**Pendant brooch**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)

London, 1923; purchased, New York City, 1925; remounted, 1928

Emeralds, diamonds, platinum, enamel

(17.75)



*Right group:*

**Demi-parure of earrings and necklace**

Probably French, 1800–1825

Rubies, diamonds, silver, gold

(17.71.1–3)



**Brooch**

Van Cleef & Arpels (French, 1896–present)  
Paris, 1969  
Rubies, diamonds, gold, platinum  
(17.80)



**Hummingbird brooch**

Paris, ca. 1890  
Rubies, diamonds, emerald, gold, silver  
*Museum purchase in honor of Ellen Charles's 80th Birthday, 2017 (2015.3)*

**Sub-section label (label on rail)**



*On shelf:*

**Hat**

Maison Caroline Reboux  
(French, active 1870–1956)  
Paris, 1895  
Handmade lace, silk flowers, tulle, velvet, ostrich feathers, wire, buckram  
(2012.9.27)



**Fan**

Probably Paris,  
1900s  
Bobbin lace, mother-of-pearl  
(49.22)



**Hat**

Madame Georgette (French, active 1900–1940)  
Paris, 1910  
Oxidized lace, ostrich feathers, silk velvet ribbon, taffeta flowers  
(2012.9.6)



**Handbag**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)  
Paris, 1946  
Seed pearls, doeskin leather, platinum, diamonds



### Gift of Dina Merrill Hartley 1993 (49.4)

Caroline Reboux (ca. 1840–1927) was known as *la reine des modistes*, or queen of the milliners. The flower-covered hat (*far left*) by Reboux evokes the silhouette of a toreador, worn by Spanish bullfighters and popular in fashion during the mid-1890s, when a revival of Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen* starred the acclaimed French soprano Emma Calvé (1858–1942).

Post's youngest daughter, Dina Merrill (born Nedenia Hutton; 1923–2017), received this delicate seed pearl handbag by Cartier Paris from her father, E. F. Hutton (1875–1962), for her 1946 wedding to Stanley M. Rumbough Jr. (1920–2017). Hutton took advantage of the firm's personalization services and had the sentiment "For you, darling, to carry on your way to happiness. Love always, Pappy" engraved on the bag's platinum frame.

Image is on label.



Dina Merrill at her 1946 wedding holding her Cartier handbag, a gift from her father, E. F. Hutton (right)



### Miniature of Marjorie Post in a Marie Antoinette costume

Edward F. Caldwell & Company, Inc., metalworker (American, 1895–1959): frame

C. E. Patino, painter: miniature

United States, 1927

Ormolu, enamel, marble, watercolor on ivory

(14.104)



### Fan

Probably Paris, 1800s

Watercolor and lithograph print on paper, mother-of-pearl

(49.23)



### Beauty patches

F. R. Arnold & Co. Importers (American, active 1866–1920s)

New York, ca. 1904

Velvet, adhesive, printed paper

(2023.5.1-24)

When Marjorie Post dressed as her favorite, Queen Marie Antoinette, for fancy dress balls or other social events, she was true to the beauty traditions of the French court in the 1700s, wearing a pompadour powdered wig hairstyle and adhering *mouches*, or tiny velvet beauty patches, to her face. She accessorized with a fan and memorialized the occasion with a handpainted miniature of herself in an ornate custom frame. Post also collected antiques associated with the doomed queen, such as the nearby copy of the portrait of her with her children.



**Pieces from two dressing table sets**

Keller (French, 1856–1950s)

Paris, ca. 1925

Silver gilt, glass

(12.608, 12.607)



**Carnet de Bal perfume and box**

Revillon Frères (French, 1723–1982)

Paris, ca. 1940

Glass, paperboard

Museum purchase, 2018 (2018.4–4a)



**Eye-shaped magnifying glass**

Hermès (French, 1837–present)

Paris, mid-1900s

Gilt metal, glass

(14.98)



**Case**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)

Paris, ca. 1920

Gold, lapis lazuli, mother-of-pearl, rubies

(11.187)



**Pin tray**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)

Paris, ca. 1935

Jade, silver gilt, enamel, rubies

(21.160)



**Lorgnettes**

Paris, 1900s

Gold, tassel, glass  
(11.208)

These small items would be suitable for a dressing table, scene of *la toilette*, a French beauty ritual. When she married E. F. Hutton (1875–1962) in 1920, Marjorie Post commissioned these custom sets of glass bottles, brushes, jars, and mirrors from the firm of Keller, which made everything from luxurious hunting knives to delicate Art Nouveau silver water decanters. Keller also provided toilette accessories for cases commissioned by Louis Vuitton. Post's favorite perfume, *Carnet de Bal* (meaning "dance card"), was produced by the famous French furriers Revillon Frères.

### Section Label

Marjorie Post's pursuit of French decorative arts from the 1700s developed when she lived in New York City at the beginning of the 1900s. Post had become a keen art collector from observing her father, C. W. Post, as he enhanced his collections with antiques acquired during travel. Post developed her own list of selected antique dealers in Paris, including Galerie Maurice Chalom and Jacques Seligmann & Cie.

Post particularly favored Galerie d'Art-Ancien, managed by Nicolas de Koenigsberg, and A La Vieille Russie. The latter, a favorite source for Fabergé, was established in 1851 in Kyiv but relocated to Paris in 1921. Its Parisian location closed temporarily during the Second World War and then reopened, until 1961. Like many other elite firms, A La Vieille Russie maintained a branch in New York, which is still operational today.

Several of the objects here celebrate the confluence of French and Russian design and history well preserved at Hillwood. Others also embody the spirit of France, such as the marble bust of writer and philosopher Voltaire (1694–1778), the Beauvais tapestry chair, and the porcelain sphinxes. All of Post's residences featured rooms or spaces in the French style; her bedroom, the most personal, always incorporated this theme.

### Sub-section Label (label on case)



*In case:*

#### Custom traveling case for the Orlov Service

Brussels or Paris, 1900s  
Leather, brass, wood, doeskin  
(2023.4.1–2)



#### Pieces from the Orlov Service

Imperial Porcelain Factory (Russian, 1744–1917)  
St. Petersburg, 1762–65  
Hard-paste porcelain  
(25.231.1, 25.236.1–2)

One of Marjorie Post's preferred Parisian antique dealers, Galerie d'Art-Ancien, tipped her off about these Russian court porcelain pieces from the 1700s, commissioned by Catherine the Great (1729–1796) for her favorite, Count Grigory Orlov (1734–1783). Post found them together with a custom-cavity compartmented leather travel case in Vichy, France, in 1937.

The case is not original to the service but was probably created during the 1900s when pieces from the service were exhibited throughout Europe.



On wall at right:

**Portrait of Marie Antoinette and children**

After Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, painter (French, 1755–1842)

Probably France, after 1787

Oil on canvas

(51.8)

Marjorie Post purchased this portrait of Marie Antoinette in 1937 from Galerie d'Art-Ancien while visiting Paris. Originating from a Russian collection, the small portrait of the queen and her children is after the larger original, now conserved at Versailles, that was completed by Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, the queen's favorite portraitist. Post first hung it in the gallery of the Brussels residence of the US ambassador to Belgium (1938–39).



On platform at right:

**Armchair**

Beauvais Tapestry Manufactory (French, 1664–present)

Paris, ca. 1755

Walnut, tapestry

(31.68)

Post acquired this Beauvais armchair (part of a set of four) for her New York home in 1920 from New York-based interior decorating firm William Baumgarten & Co. She also featured the set at the US ambassador's residence in Brussels. The set represents scenes from Jean de La Fontaine's *Fables*.

Established during the reign of Louis XIV by his minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, with some state support, the Beauvais Tapestry Manufactory catered to the French aristocracy and the export market, rather than the king.

**Wall Label**



Top row:

**Bust of Voltaire**

After Jean-Antoine Houdon (French, 1741–1828)

France, 1800

Marble, bronze

Gift from the Estate of Joseph D. Tydings, 2019 (2019.5)

Voltaire was a leader of the Enlightenment and is often credited with instigating the French Revolution. Marjorie Post was especially drawn to the sculpture, purchased from Galerie d'Art-Ancien, because she was told it had belonged to Empress Catherine II of Russia (known as Catherine the Great). The two prominent figures of the 1700s enjoyed a friendly relationship via correspondence. Voltaire admired Catherine's intelligence, leadership, and

dedication to advancing the arts and science in Russia, while the empress benefited from his approval in Western Europe and appreciated their thoughtful exchanges.



**Watch**

Esquivillon Frères & De Choudens (active 1770s–1830s)  
Paris, ca. 1780  
Gold, enamel, diamonds, glass  
(16.5)

The theme of letter writing, a lost romantic art today, might have driven Marjorie Post’s interest in the French pocket watch from the late 1700s. Several other examples from her collection feature epistolary imagery, and she herself was an ardent preserver of such ephemera via her scrapbooks.



**Cigar cutter**

Cartier (French, 1847–present)  
1911  
Gold, enamel  
(11.27)

Marjorie Post received this cigar cutter from Cartier Paris as a 1971 Christmas gift from her friend Serge Obolensky (1890–1978), a Russian-born aristocrat who became a US military officer and then a business executive. In his note accompanying the gift, Obolensky refers to it as “a little Cartier bibelot which was given to me in 1911 at the Christmas tree by my aunt Princess Youssouppoff at St. Petersburg. I think it could look quite well in the small things of your collection.”

Image is on label.



Alfred Eisenstaedt/The LIFE Picture Collection/Shutterstock  
*Post and her friend Serge Obolensky, walking in Hillwood’s gardens, ca. 1965*



*Bottom Row:*

**Gold and turquoise box**

Carl Helfried Barbé (German, b. 1777)  
St. Petersburg, ca. 1810  
Gold, turquoise  
(11.104)

As a dedicated collector of hardstone and gems, Marjorie Post must have delighted in this exceptional bezel-set turquoise cabochon box acquired from A La Vieille Russie in 1954.



### **Pair of sphinxes**

France, late 1800s–early 1900s

Biscuit porcelain

(24.168)

The sphinxes also evoke themes of friendship and connection, as they are believed to be modeled after French court personalities of the 1700s. This set was purchased in 1961 from Alavoine, an interior design firm of French origin based in New York. Additional, large scale sets can be seen in Hillwood’s gardens.

Image is on label.



Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, photographed by Erik Kvalsvik  
*Sphinx statues in Hillwood’s gardens today*

### **Section Label**

AU REVOIR!

Marjorie Post’s passion for Paris leaves visitors to Hillwood today with more than a postcard or small souvenirs tucked into luggage; her collection is a celebration of centuries of French design.

***We hope that you will enjoy more displays connected to this exhibition throughout the mansion.***

Image is on label.



*Photos of Parisian landmarks in Post’s scrapbook detailing a visit to Paris in the 1930s*