The horologist Jean Jodin (1713-1761), and his daughter *(RStL Nov. 2021)*

Introduction

This article deals with Jean Jodin (12 June 1713 - 3 March 1761), a Geneva-born watchmaker (*horloger*) who was a well-known and competent artisan in Paris and Saint-Germain en Laye during three decades. Jodin also authored a somewhat controversial book in 1754, entitled "*Les échappemens a repos comparés aux echappemens a recul*" [Dead-beat escapements compared with recoil escapements].

Too often, discussions about horological figures of history focus on their technical achievements and innovations, their professional antecedents and influences, and the impact that their work had on the practice and business of horology, during their lifetime and in the decades which followed. These descriptions of horological lives fail to convey the social and personal milieu in which these watch/clockmakers plied their trade, raised and supported their families, often during very difficult and turbulent times (epidemics, wars, economic collapses, political crises, technological upheavals, etc.).

Given this, the article will also discuss Jodin's family, and in the second half, will focus on his (in)famous daughter Marie-Madeleine (1741-1790), who demonstrated a feisty character throughout a most interesting life, where the roles of actress, philosopher, and feminist, intersected and overlapped.

A couple of watches signed by Jodin are hereby presented for illustration of the kind of work he (and his younger brother Pierre) produced, in the mid-eighteenth century. Both appear pretty typical of what was being produced in Paris at the time. Although this isn't obvious from these photos, the descriptions of the watches on the source sites indicate that one features a verge escapement, the other a cylinder. This suggests that the former may be the work of Jean's brother Pierre, also an *horloger* in Paris, and the latter by Jean Jodin himself, since as we will discuss in this article, he greatly favoured the cylinder escapement in his works.

Figure 1 Jodin watch - described as having a verge escapement so likely by his brother Pierre

Figure 2 Jodin watch no. 352 from Science Museum in London, cylinder escapement thus likely from Jean

Family History

Some of the facts about Jodin's family history and life were collected in a most fascinating biography of his daughter, Marie-Madeleine (1741-1790), written by historian Felicia Gordon (Ashgate Publishing, 2001). These details form a backdrop to Jodin's life, prior to publication of his book in 1754, and provide insights into the kind of life he led, both professionally and personally.

Tardy's *Dictionnaire des horlogers français*, renowned for its breadth but not necessarily the depth with which it summarizes the life and work of hundreds of French watch/clockmakers, has this to say about Jean Jodin:

> Jodin, Jean. St-Germain en Laye. At the factory. The title of Master was refused to him in Paris. In 1754, he presented to the Royal Science Academy a watch with two balance wheels designed to withstand shocks and he published, the same year, a text on this watch and his "*treatise on dead-beat escapements compared to recoil escapements*". Master in Paris in 1758. Died in 1761. He signed [his timepieces] *Jodin à Paris*.

Jean Jodin's father Louis was born around 1680 from a Protestant family that had originated from Blois, France. Around 1704, Louis moved with his wife Marie Lenoir to Geneva, as part of the drawn-out exodus of Huguenot artisans from France following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, which had made life difficult in France for workers of protestant faith, and their families. Many of these sought opportunities and a better life in cities and countries more favorable to the protestant religion (Geneva, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, England, etc.). Marie also came from a watchmaking family, the famous Lenoir's of whom several were prominent in the Paris area, and held prestigious roles of "*horlogers du Roi*".

The Jodin's had three surviving children: a daughter named Clermonde (born 1710) and two sons, Jean Louis (born 1711) and Pierre (born 1715). Both sons followed in the family watchmaking tradition, and were likely apprenticed under their father or other watchmakers in Geneva. Both moved to Paris seeking greater opportunities, the elder Jean arriving there sometime in 1732, where he worked under his maternal uncle, Jean-Baptiste Dutertre (1684-1734), who had, like Jean's father, married into the Lenoir family and was another very famous Parisian watchmaker.

In Lyon, in 1734, Jodin met Marie-Madeleine Dumas Lafauzes, a young widow who also came from Calvinist family roots. They married and had one child in 1741, a daughter named Marie-Madeleine. More will be said later about Jodin's intimate family life.

Horological career

Having been trained as a watchmaker in Geneva, and not in Paris, Jodin was not allowed to be recognized as a watchmaker following his stay with Dutertre. This meant that he was not able to open up his own shop and sell horological timepieces under his own name. Only watchmakers that had completed their apprenticeship in Paris, or were the son of a recognized Parisian watchmaker, were entitled to this title. Jodin suffered professionally and financially from this

restrictive statute of the *Corporation des Horlogers de Paris*. It was only in 1758, after lengthy and costly legal challenges on his part, and recognition from his book and presentations he made to the *Académie royale des sciences*, that he was finally conferred the title of *Maître horloger* [master watchmaker].

Unable to open his own shop after his arrival in Paris, Jodin likely became a proficient worker for some of the established French horlogers (in Paris and elsewhere), and plied his trade in this manner for many years, to sustain himself and his family. From 1748 to 1757, Jodin managed the workshop of Jean-Baptiste Baillon de Fontenay (1715-1772), a very well known and proficient watchmaker who became very wealthy in this business. Baillon had a store on Place Dauphine in Paris, where many of the most influential and wealthy clients would come purchase some of the finely decorated watches and clocks that were produced in a workshop he owned in Saint-Germain en Laye, a community located about 20 kms west of Paris.

Figure 3 Baillon Watch movement with probable verge escapement

As director of the workshop, Jodin was evidently instrumental in ensuring the quality of the many timepieces produced by the workers in Saint-Germain. But while Baillon enriched himself by the proceeds of the many timepieces bearing his signature and sold in his exclusive boutique, Jodin had to content himself with the salary of an employee, in spite of the key role he played in producing the luxurious timepieces.

While still employed by Baillon, Jodin wrote the text of his treatise which was eventually published in 1754. On page 43, he wrote "it's been fifteen years that I've conformed myself to [the cylinder escapement], in the pieces that I build, and that I have built for Mr. J.B.Baillon." It's clear from this statement that Jodin had realized the benefits of the cylinder escapement and used it since at least the early 1740's, as had some other watchmakers in and around Paris (Godefroy, for one, in his public debate with Pierre-François Le Roy in 1752-54, wrote that he

had been using the cylinder with great success for twenty-five years - i.e. the late 1720's, or only a few years after that escapement had been invented by Englishman George Graham, around 1725).

Not all Parisian watchmakers had taken as exuberantly to the cylinder escapement, especially the brothers Julien and Pierre-François Le Roy. Julien had obtained a movement from Graham containing this escapement, around 1728, but after several tests had pronounced himself against it, claiming that it required too much work to manufacture, and also needed frequent servicing (oiling in particular) to keep running well, as opposed to the older trusty verge escapement design. The debate between Pierre-François and Godefroy became a bit of a show-down between the old (verge) and new (cylinder) escapement designs, with each protagonist defending the merits and shortcomings of each. In his book, Jodin takes up the gauntlet and further praises the cylinder escapement, without naming the Parisian watchmakers (quite possibly Le Roy) with whom he had debated the subject in the past.

Eventually, as the taste for thinner and thinner watches took hold in France and elsewhere (for which the cylinder escapement was much better suited than the "vertical" verge escapement), the cylinder became more refined and increasingly used by French and Swiss watchmakers, totally displacing the verge after a few decades (though not in England, where the large solid verge-fusée watch prevailed for many more decades). The cylinder itself was later rendered obsolete by the domination of the lever escapement that ensued in the nineteenth century, and which continues to be used in mechanical watches to this day.

But around 1750, the debate raged on in various horological circles about which escapement was better to make a reliable and accurate watch. Traditionalists and more conservative watchmakers like the Le Roy's had tried the cylinder but favored the time-proven verge, while more "modernist" watchmakers like Godefroy, Jodin, and others favored the newer cylinder. There were also several other ingenious escapement designs that saw the light of day during that period, with many *horlogers* (e.g. Enderlin, Robin, Caron, Lepaute) vying to come up with the next great design that would sweep the industry (and bring them fame and fortune). None of these had the broad and lasting success of the cylinder, and later the lever.

Jodin's book certainly took on the flavor of a direct and verbose attack on the flaws of the verge, and greatly praised the benefits of the cylinder. It even included a chapter detailing quite clearly how a cylinder escapement (the escape wheel and cylinder arbor on the balance wheel) was manufactured, in part to try to dispel the traditionalists' argument that it was difficult and time-consuming to build.

Soon after Jodin' death, on 6 March 1761, the well-respected Parisian watch/clockmaker Jean-André Lepaute (1720-1789) published an open letter in the May 1761 issue of *Mercure de France*, which constituted a tribute to the departed *horloger*. Lepaute had written a similar letter upon the passing of the venerated Julien Le Roy a couple of years before. In the letter of March 1761, Lepaute praised Jodin, as perhaps only a fellow horologist could. He wrote that Jodin had early left Geneva, his homeland, to come work in Paris, where "he acquired the reputation of the most able finisher of watches, which is to say the most delicate part of horology". Jodin's respect among the watchmaking community was such that he was regarded as the first in his specialty. A

finisher is the all-important final craftsman who adjusts all the components of the watch, built and installed by other workers, and adds the critical escapement, thus turning the rough movement into a fully-working and accurate watch.

Lepaute said that Jodin, after working for a long time for Baillon, was "given the direction of a considerable number of workers that were employed at Saint-Germain en Laye; this factory of sorts could not have been given into better hands; he was its heart and mainspring. Ring watches, watches in four parts, cylinder escapements perfected and executed in a superior manner, all that was most difficult and most beautiful in horology came from Mr. Jodin, or was made under his care, and this went on for many years".

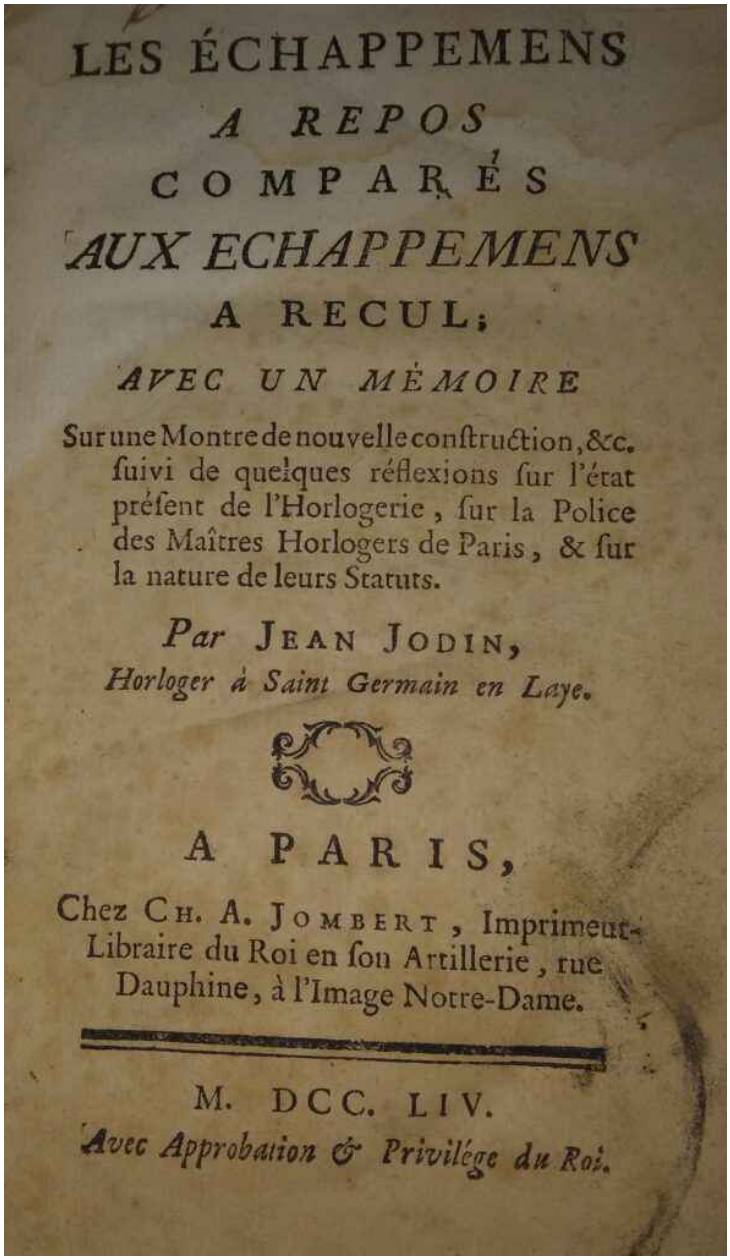
However, "tired of this solitude" (working in the remote center of Saint-Germain), Lepaute added that Jodin "came back to Paris in 1754, hoping to work under his own name, and to collect the fruit of the esteems that his works had conferred to him". Clearly, Jodin had had enough of working under someone else (Baillon) who benefited financially from the care and quality that he put into his work. He wanted some recognition for himself and the financial rewards that would come from having an established name and workshop from which to sell his own wares, in Paris.

Lepaute went on to say that Jodin "used all his knowledge, obtained from his experience in the delicate work of his Art, to compose his treatise on escapements", where he "did not occupy himself to describe all sorts of escapements, but went right to the heart of the matter, choosing Graham's [deadbeat] escapement, which seemed to him the most perfect, and the verge escapement which is the most common, and compared, examined in detail, showed the advantages and defects and difficulties of execution associated with each, and proved how the deadbeat [cylinder] design was better than the recoil [or verge], and how Graham's in particular excelled over those who had preceded it".

Lepaute added that "a few years later, Jodin made a watch that went a month between windings, which was a masterpiece; all the perfection of the Art was needed to succeed in this kind of timepiece that until then had been unsuccessful, due to the difficulty of execution, which always resulted in a bad work. This tour-de-force gave him as much honour as his book, and earned him the support of many distinguished persons".

It was natural, after these late life achievements, that the *Communauté des Horlogers de Paris*, as Lepaute concluded in his letter, "awakened by [Jodin's success], used its rights to receive Jodin among its ranks in 1758", whereupon the older *horloger* "started to benefit, both in the public and at Court, from the esteem that he had benefitted for so long among the practitioners of his Art". Soon after, alas, and having barely enjoyed his newfound advantages, Jodin suffered a leg injury that turned into gangrene that killed him on the 6th of March, "almost at the peak of his life, to the great regret of all those who love horology".

Jodin's book (1754)



LES ÉCHAPPEMENS
A REPOS
COMPARÉS
AUX ECHAPPEMENS
A RECUL;
AVEC UN MÉMOIRE
Sur une Montre de nouvelle conſtruction, &c. ſuivi de quelques réflexions ſur l'état préſent de l'Horlogerie, ſur la Police des Maîtres Horlogers de Paris, & ſur la nature de leurs Statuts.
Par JEAN JODIN,
Horloger à Saint Germain en Laye.
A PARIS,
Chez CH. A. JOMBERT, Imprimeur-Libraire du Roi en ſon Artillerie, rue Dauphine, à l'Image Notre-Dame.
M. DCC. LIV.
Avec Approbation & Privilége du Roi.

Figure 4 Title page of Jodin's book, 1754 - Author's copy

Granville Hugh Baillie (1873-1951), in his formidable *Clocks & Watches - An Historical Bibliography* (NAG Press, 1951), described Jodin's book in some detail. He wrote: "the first 125 pages are devoted to setting out the defects of the verge escapement and the advantages of the cylinder", and added that "the three plates [in the book] are well drawn, but the matter is nonsense". Having read Jodin's book, Baillie's dismissal of Jodin's arguments on the relative merits and shortcomings of verge versus cylinder escapements as "nonsense" seems a bit harsh.

Baillie's erudition and knowledge about horological history and literature deserves respect, but Jodin's position on the escapement debate that raged in some circles of horological science in France during the mid part of the eighteenth century, probably deserves a deeper look. One thing that can be said is that Jodin writes admirably well, and communicates his views clearly and in an engaging style, that conveys the considerable hands-on experience that underlies everything he has to say.

On the subject of verge versus cylinder escapements, the author has previously written about a rather interesting public debate, during the period 1752-1754, that occurred in the pages of the *Mercure de France*, between Parisian watchmakers Pierre-François Le Roy (brother of the more famous Julien), and Louis(?) Godefroy. [*See: Pierre-François Le Roy: The lesser-known brother of Julien Le Roy, NAWCC Watch & Clock Bulletin, Nov/Dec 2020 - a PDF version of this (and all my other published articles) is on this site.*]

No doubt, Jodin was very well aware of this contemporary debate, which may have in part inspired him to write and publish his lengthy treatise on the subject in 1754, in which he firmly placed himself in the cylinder camp, as had done Godefroy. In parts of his treatise (pages 27 and 91 particularly), Jodin alluded to "one of the leading Parisian horlogers" (which may be Le Roy) about whose approaches to balance wheel construction, and usage of the verge escapement, Jodin clearly opposed.

Interestingly, the publication of Jodin's book engendered a somewhat public debate with the mathematician and astronomer Jerôme Lalande (1732-1807), who had recently become a member of the illustrious *Académie royale des sciences* in 1753. Lalande had commented on the book in the *Mercure de France* of August 1754, suggesting that a mere artisan, no matter how skilled, would not possess sufficient knowledge to write about the merits of different watchmaking concepts and escapement designs. Jodin took offence to this condescending criticism from a much younger academician and retorted in the second edition of his book, in 1756, that Lalande felt entitled to tell others how to make a watch, while being himself clearly unable to do so.

It might be a valid comparison that watch escapement debates in the eighteenth century (and other escapements were also compared and debated as they came out from the minds of creative horologists), were similar to what we have seen in the twentieth century about different aspects of automobile design (diesel vs gasoline vs electric engines; manual vs automatic vs CVT transmissions; etc.). During the eighteenth, watches and clocks were some of the most sophisticated machines of their time, and inventors, artisans, and "scientists" found much to debate about their various elements.

Following is a description of the main sections of Jodin's book, and some of its more interesting aspects.

The lengthiest part of the book (pages 1-125) consists of a brief historical review of escapements in clocks and watches, during which Jodin referred to Henry Sully's more fulsome discussion of the subject in the 1737 edition of *Règle artificielle du tems*. Jodin's focus was mainly on the verge escapement, consisting of balance wheel with pallet containing two pallets at roughly 90

degrees angle to each other (the verge) and the crown wheel whose teeth (usually 13 but can be a larger odd number like 15 or more depending on the situation) interact with the pallets to control the winding down of the power source of the timepiece (either weight drawn down by gravity, or mainspring turning the train of wheels).

Once he had discussed the verge and especially its disadvantages, Jodin turned to the deadbeat escapement [invented by Graham around 1725], especially its implementation in what is referred to as the cylinder escapement. As Lepaute was quoted earlier in this article, Jodin compared the verge with the cylinder in a detailed sense, and his preference for the latter was clearly obvious, as he believed it was a better escapement than the older verge, and should be the focus for all watches built at that time and in the future. In order to dispel opinions from other watchmakers that the cylinder is more difficult to construct, Jodin even spent several pages describing how a horological worker would go about making a cylinder escape wheel, as well as the cylinder escapement (attached to the balance wheel).

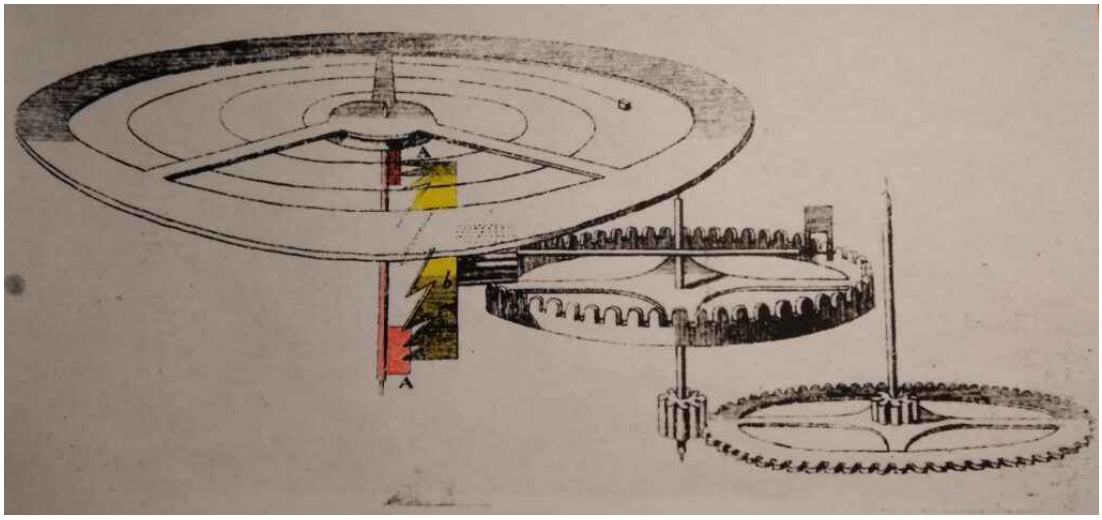


Figure 5 - Figure 3 from Jodin's book: the verge escapement

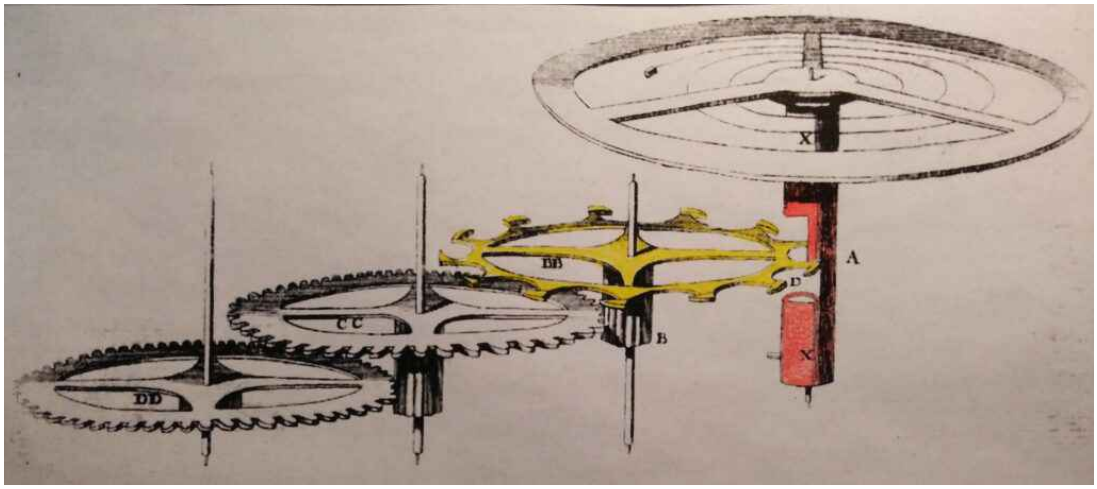


Figure 6 - Figure 1 from Jodin's book: the cylinder escapement

As can be seen from the two fine figures from Jodin's book (there are only three, the other one showing more details about the cylinder escape wheel), the verge escapement is more "vertical" in its layout, in that the escape (or crown) wheel is perpendicular to the axes of the other wheels in the watch train. This means that the verge watch can generally not be made as thin as a cylinder watch, which is one reason the cylinder eventually displaced the verge in French and Swiss watches, given the preference on the continent for slimmer watches. In England, the verge continued to dominate much longer, as there wasn't such a trend in the public for thinner watches. In both diagrams, one sees how the escape wheel (colorized here in yellow, by this author) interacts with the verge and the cylinder (in red).

The second part of Jodin's book describes a watch that he presented to the Académie Royale des Sciences on 16 March 1754. Clearly, Jodin was trying to come out from the shadows of being a workshop supervisor for Baillon during many years in Saint-Germain en Laye, by both publishing a book in 1754, and presenting a watch of his design the same year.

In his presentation, he wrote that "horological inventions can be considered from three points of view: the principle, the form, and the execution; and it is difficult to know which of these three is the most important. We can only show how difficult it is to bring each invention to a point of perfection, by the slowness of progress we have realized until now". He described the [non-cylinder] escapement of the watch he was presenting to the Academy as being inspired first by Dr. Hooke, who invented its earliest double-balance-wheel form in 1658, in London. J. B. Dutertre, he went on, improved on it by adding a second wheel to provide the rest. Jodin then mentioned having worked on watches developed by Dutertre's student and nephew, De la Roche, but that these were not exempt from variations. Jodin then described the principles that guided him in making an improvement on Dutertre's design, which he started building ten years earlier, in 1744. His direction of Baillon's workshop for many years prevented him from finalizing the movement, which was done at the end of 1753.

In constructing this new watch, Jodin expressed the wish that it could have proved useful in the determination of longitude, but that his experience of the previous ten years in portable horology had weakened his resolve. The two main challenges to him were (1) the effect of heat and cold on the spiral balance spring, and (2) the uneven impact of the air pressure on the balance, in different parts of the world. [Solutions to these fundamental problems, and others, would await the innovations, in France at least, by Pierre Le Roy and Ferdinand Berthoud, in the decades which followed.]

Jodin did not describe what impact the presentation of his new watch design had on the members of the Académie, and what subsequent developments he carried out in this regard, if any.

In the third section of the book, Jodin discussed the new escapement that had created some stir at that time (the double-virgule), and some debates between three watchmakers who all claimed it as their own: Pierre-Auguste Caron (future Beaumarchais), Jean-André Lepaute, and Joannes (or Jean) Biesta. In this case, the Académie Royale des Sciences had reviewed all the details and pronounced that Caron was in fact the inventor of this rather complex escapement, that was fiendishly difficult to construct, which in part explains why it did not gain favour among the horological community. This author has written on this subject in some detail in his two 2019

NAWCC articles devoted to André-Charles Caron, his son Pierre-Auguste, and his worker and later successor, Jean-Antoine Lépine (these articles are available to read on his site, timetales.ca).

This rather lengthy section (pages 137-161) is not without interest, though Baillie in his review seems unimpressed, writing that "the discussion shows that [Jodin] has failed to understand the feature of Lepaute's escapement...". If this is the case, Lepaute did not hold it against Jodin given that he wrote a most generous tribute after his death, as was discussed earlier in this article.

In this third section, and as he had done in the first part of his book with the verge, Jodin again took the opportunity to compare this novel escapement (the double virgule) with the one he personally felt was vastly superior, Graham's cylinder. In part, because he felt the cylinder was more than up to the task of taking horology to the next step, and that it was probably wiser to stick with it, rather than try to train workers to make all sorts of other escapements [such as the challenging double-virgule]. Jodin concluded by saying that any new escapement, such as the one discussed in this section, "should be compared to the one [cylinder] about which theory had shown was the most perfect, and thirty years of experience had demonstrated its quality".

Jodin closed his book with a fourth section of 31 pages, entitled "Reflections on the current state of horology, on the policing and governance of the master-watchmakers of Paris, with some remarks on the nature of their statutes". Like the rest of the book, Jodin's views on the subject are expressed thoughtfully and in a very well written manner. Recall that this lengthy exposé came from a watchmaker who had been refused acceptance into the community of Parisian master watchmakers upon his arrival in Paris, because he had not received his training in that city. And as a result of this, he had to resign himself to being a worker who plied his trade under master-watchmakers (including Gudin and Baillon) for many years, missing out on the status and financial rewards that having his own workshop and store front, and his own name on his timepieces, would have conferred. Some of his comments and suggestions for improvements in the way the community is managed, and that the rules are written, have to be taken from such a perspective, although to his credit, Jodin adopts a positive and not a vindictive tone in formulating what he felt were worthwhile changes to the management of this trade.

As has already been mentioned, Jodin had for many years overseen the operations of a major watchmaking shop under Baillon, thus he was well aware of the challenges in finding qualified workers, and keeping them satisfied in their roles. As Baillie ably put it, Jodin also iterated that the standard of horological work and products had been eroded by the statutes having long limited membership to the community of master watchmakers to those having done their apprenticeship in Paris, or being the sons of established watchmakers.

As Lepaute indicated in the public tribute he paid to him after his death, Jodin did manage, as a result of his presentation to the Académie and the publication of his book, to finally be welcomed as a full-fledged member of the Parisian community of watchmakers, which allowed him to open his own shop and sell his own timepieces for a few short years, until his death in 1758.

Another positive outcome of Jodin's book was that it brought him to the attention of Denis Diderot, who was planning the production of his Encyclopédie and on the lookout for artisans who could write well about their trade. A certain collaboration and apparent friendship ensued

between the two men which, after Jodin's death a few years later, led Diderot to take an interest in mentoring his daughter through some difficult periods in her life.

Jodin's daughter, Marie Madeleine (1741-1790)

Now that the life and work of Jean Jodin have been presented, this article will leave the world of horology, pull the curtain and reveal interesting aspects of Jodin's life as a husband and father, and devote time to discuss the fascinating life that his daughter led in the ensuing decades after Jodin's death. It is obvious from the telling of this aspect of Jodin's life, that he had more on his mind, around the time of the writing of his book, and his return to Paris to work and live out the last few years of his life, than the merits of the cylinder escapement, and the state of horological practice in France. There were difficult periods in his home life that clearly concerned the older *horloger* as he pondered his and his family's future. And his return to Paris may well in part have been required by the need to attend to some of the challenges in his own family.

Much of what follows stems from an article and book written by Felicia Gordon, who researched the life of Marie-Madeleine Jodin, and delved into her childhood and upbringing, bringing forth aspects of her parents' lives that had not been previously discussed by anyone writing about Jean Jodin. This is a reminder to horological enthusiasts that there is a hidden side, consisting of both personal joys and turmoils, behind every horologist who is usually discussed in the literature with a focus on his professional life and achievements, and little else. These watch and clock-makers, workers and occasionally inventors, had to struggle with financial hardships, family dramas, social upheavals (wars, economic collapses, epidemics, etc.), and somehow make a living producing timepieces in a very competitive marketplace. Some examples of their work have survived bearing their name on them, and not much else is known about them.

Jean Jodin's wife Madeleine Dumas (Lafauzes was her name by her fist marriage) was born in the Provence region of France, of Calvinist parents who, like Jodin's, had sought refuge in Geneva. It is surmised that Marie Madeleine was an attractive young widow who caught the eye of young Jean (who was only 15 at the time), when they met in Lyon. It seems that after the death of her first husband, she was in prison for 2 years in Geneva for "libertinage" (probably prostitution).[1] Jodin evidently moved to Paris with his future wife, and started working for his maternal uncle, the respected *horloger* Jean-Baptiste Dutertre, who, like Jodin's father, had also married into the Lenoir family of *horlogers*. It appears that Jodin's relationship with Madeleine did not sit well with his family, she being older and of a questionable past. Jodin was given a choice between leaving her, marrying her, or leaving his employment with Dutertre. He chose to marry and their daughter, named Marie-Madeleine, was born in 1741, when Jodin was 30.

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1 Parent-Duchatelet in his 1837 book *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris* offers a number of 30,000 prostitutes before the Revolution, with the following precisions: "*Dans ce dernier nombre de trente mille on comptait les femmes galantes de tout genre, les ouvrières faisant ressource de leur coprs et les femmes de théâtre ; les femmes publiques, notoirement connues pour telles, faisaient plus de la moitié de ce nombre ; et de cette dernière classe, il y en avait neuf à dix mille qui trafiquaient dans les rues*." In the eighteenth century, "prostitution" was used to describe various extra-marital sexual activities by women, and not just sexual favours given out for money, as is the case today.

At the age of 9, young Marie-Madeleine was converted to Catholicism. This may have been to facilitate her schooling in Paris, but such conversions were encouraged by the French authorities at the time, as a means to phase out Protestantism in French society, and rewarded with an annual pension of 200 livres, which certainly contributed to the family income. In part because Jean Jodin found employment in Saint-Germain en Laye with Baillon, where his wife accompanied him, it was decided to leave their daughter in the care of his brother Pierre and his wife Marie, in Paris. The problems of his daughter seem to have started then. She had to be placed in several catholic convents for schooling, from which she was expelled time and again for rebelling against the authorities. In 1756, then aged 15, Marie-Madeleine was returned to her parents and more problems occurred at home, violent arguments with her mother. In a despairing letter written in 1757 to his sister-in-law, Jodin referred to his daughter as an "accursed child, and a "monster clothed in a human face". Jodin was evidently at his wit's end in dealing with his daughter, and was concerned at "seeing [his] good name publicly reviled". Recall that this is the time when Jodin was establishing himself as a respected horologist in Paris, having had success from his book and presentations he had made to the *Académie royale des sciences*.

As we saw earlier, Jean Jodin died of a complication of gangrene in his leg, in 1758, when Marie-Madeleine was just 17 years old. By all accounts, the horologist's death left his family destitute. This led to some rather troubling times for the widow, who was accused by members of the family, rightly or wrongly is difficult to tell, of having engaged in prostitution, and also of having engaged her daughter in the same activities, in order to live[2]. In 1761, the intervention of several family members resulted in the incarceration of mother and daughter in the infamous Salpêtrière institution, a hospital/prison for 7,000-8,000 women, which included many prostitutes. This experience had a profound effect on the life of young Marie-Madeleine, who never forgot it.

Astonishingly, less than a year after having been released from this institution, Marie-Madeleine became an actress with the *Comédie-Française*, a career that lasted from 1765 to 1774, which saw her enact leading theatrical roles in Paris as well as Warsaw, Dresden, Bordeaux and Angers. The theatre was a common landing place at that time for poor women or prostitutes. In addition to this, Marie-Madeleine benefitted from correspondence and mentoring from the philosopher and encyclopedist Denis Diderot (who may have had a hand in finding her an acting role), who had been a friend of her father. Diderot wrote her letters and encouraged Marie-Madeleine's continued education and free-thinking. Even as a child, she appeared to be a voracious reader – the inventory of her father's possessions after his death identified fifty books, and had evidently been well educated by the various convents in which she had been placed in her childhood, though expelled due to her angry and rebellious nature.

[Much more could be (and has been) written (see Gordon 2001) about the fascinating life of Jean Jodin's only daughter, but since the focus of this article is primarily the *horloger*'s life and career, only some highlights of his daughter's life are hereby presented.]

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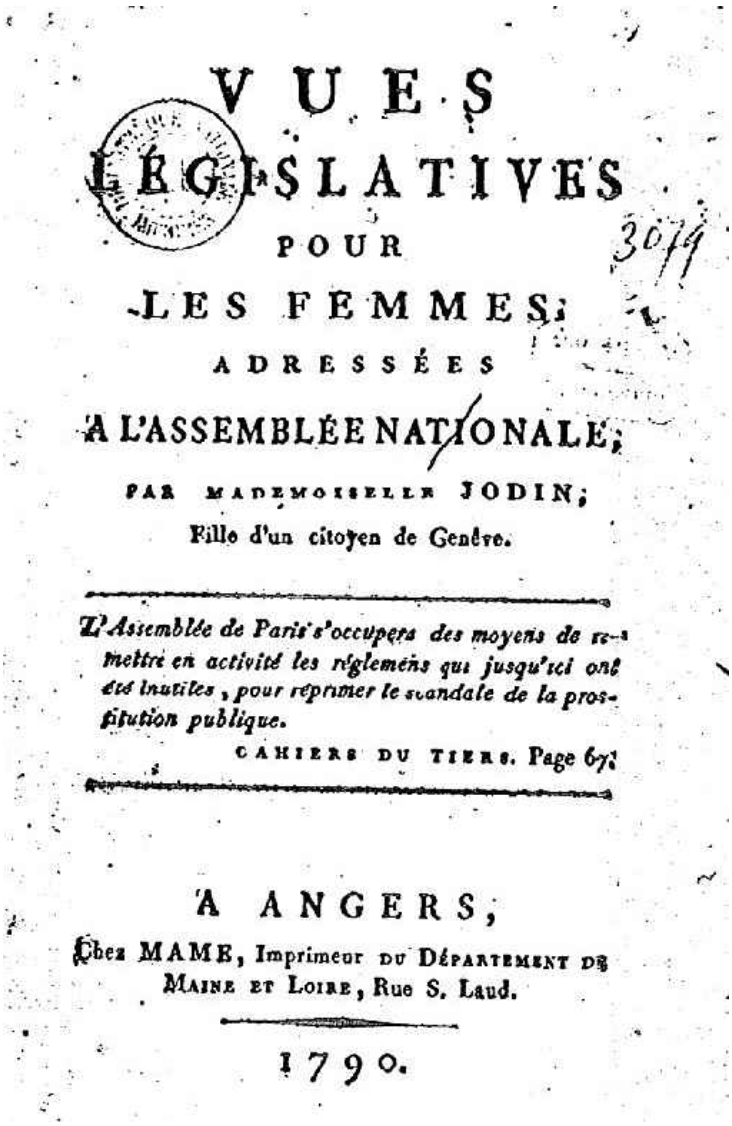
2 See reference in footnote 1 above. Prostitution was very common in Paris at that time (and even worse in London, by all accounts). Various women, for different reasons and in many circumstances, resorted to the "oldest profession" to make ends meet, and provide for them and their children.

The culmination of Marie-Madeleine's emergence as a philosopher and thinker, was a treatise she presented in front of the French National Assembly, later published in 1790, entitled *Vues législatives pour les femmes* [Legislative views for women], which is seen as one of the first feminist works, and

> …a radical attempt to co-opt the language of separate spheres ideology in order to enable women to enter the public sphere in an honourable sense. Her quite practical proposals for a women's legislature, which was to have jurisdiction over women's domestic lives, would have dismantled the patriarchal power structure of the family, as well as allowing women to achieve public office. If moral reform was the ostensible purpose of her treatise and a necessary condition for citizenship, the recognition of women's rights was its fundamental aim. (Gordon, 2001)



VUES
LÉGISLATIVES
POUR
LES FEMMES;
ADRESSÉES
A L'ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE;
PAR MADEMOISELLE JODIN;
Fille d'un citoyen de Genève.

L'Assemblée de Paris s'occupera des moyens de remettre en activité les réglemens qui jusqu'ici ont été inutiles, pour réprimer le scandale de la prostitution publique.
CAHIERS DU TIERS. Page 67.

A ANGERS,
Chez MAME, Imprimeur du Département de Maine et Loire, Rue S. Laud.

1790.

On the title page of the published version of her book, she named herself "*Mademoiselle Jodin, fille d'un citoyen de Genève*" [daughter of a citizen of Geneva]. In spite of the difficult

childhood she had endured, Marie-Madeleine was always proud of the Genevan heritage that her father conferred to her. In his own book written 36 years before, her father had written:

> Shall I allow myself to say something about the industrial subjects of my republic [Geneva] and those of Switzerland, whose uninterrupted presence in [France] during more than thirty years, have contributed significantly to the perfection of our art? They have been continually employed by the greatest Masters in Paris to execute some of their finest works. Some have not limited themselves solely to execution, but have also nourished their own innovation, and given proof of their progress in theory by ingenious inventions of their own.

In her treatise, Jodin's daughter frequently mentioned Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who celebrated the citizens of Geneva in his own works. Felicia Gordon wrote that "[Jean Jodin]'s spirit of independence and a wider culture than that of the artisan's workbench was the principal inheritance he left to his daughter".

Marie-Madeleine passed away the same year that she delivered her treatise, at the age of 49. Like her father before her, she left a thoughtful piece of writing, the culmination of a lifetime of experience and reflection, which continued to influence readers in the feminist agenda (as her father had done in horology) for many years to come.

Chronological Summary

Date	***Event***
1704	Louis Jodin (father) moves with Marie Lenoir to Geneva
1711 June	Jean Jodin born in Geneva
1715 August	Pierre Jodin born in Geneva (marries Françoise Prévost)
1721-1731	Jean Jodin apprenticed watchmaker in Geneva
1732	Jean Jodin moves to Paris for work opportunities
1734	Jean Jodin marries Madeleine Dumas Lafauzes
1734	Jean Jodin not accepted as Master watchmaker in Paris
1734	Jean Jodin works for one or many Parisian watchmakers, including Baillon
1741	Jean Jodin has a daughter, Marie Madeleine, his only child

1748 – 1757	Jean Jodin directs Baillon's workshop in Saint Germain en Laye
1750 - 1756	Marie-Madeleine Jodin is in and out of several Catholic convent schools
1754	Jean Jodin publishes his book "Les Échappemens..." in Paris
1754 March	Jean Jodin presents "watch of new construction" to Académie Royale des Sciences
1758	Jean Jodin finally accepted Master watchmaker in Paris
1761 March	Jean Jodin dies in Paris (gangrene in the leg)
1761 May	Jean André Lepaute publishes a tribute letter to Jodin in the Mercure de France
1763 – 1764	Marie-Madeleine and her mother are jailed in the Salpêtrière
1765	Marie-Madeleine embarks on her acting career with la Comédie Française
1765 - 1774	Marie-Madeleine is a successful actress, performs in major European cities
1790	Marie-Madeleine publishes her feminist treatise “Vues législatives…”
1790	Marie-Madeleine Jodin dies (in Paris?)

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