



Jean Antoine Lépine

Exceptional Astronomic Regulator in the Shape of an Upside-Down “Y”, with Multiple Indications

Signed Lepine, Horloger du Roi, Paris, circa 1814

Astronomic Regulator of the upside-down “Y” type, with multiple indications.

Upper dial: hours of sunrise and sunset; hours, minutes and seconds; equation of time; full perpetual calendar; phases of the moon; signs of the zodiac; striking the hours and quarters. One-month power reserve and remontoir.

Height 64 cm / Width 32 cm / Depth 23.5 cm

Remontoir with two barrels, regulation visible in front of the Y under the dial; central hand beating half-seconds with micrometrically adjusted lever escapement characteristic of Lépine, compensated pendulum with oblong rods, gimballed knife-edge suspension.

The ring dial, with Roman numerals, allows the equation cam to be seen, two gilt hands indicate true time, while a steel hand indicates mean time.

Above, a polychrome enamel dial indicates the hour of sunrise and sunset, and thus the length of the day. In its centre there is a depiction of Apollo's chariot flying above the clouds with the rising sun in the background.

The Regulator is placed on a rectangular chased and gilt bronze base with a decor of foliage, scrolling leaves and aquatic flowers. There are three dials:

On the left, the date, the month, the year.

In the centre, the age and phases of the moon,

On the right, the days of the week with their astrological symbols, the signs of the zodiac with indication of the three decans. The perpetual calendar is driven by the striking train, fitted in the base.

Jean Antoine Lépine_ (1720 - 1814)

Became master horologist in 1762. Watchmaker to the King and the Garde Meuble of the Crown, he delivered thirty-six clocks to the royal administration. Lépine invented the watch calibre that bears his name, notable for the omission of the fusée (replaced by a toothed barrel) and the replacement of the upper plate and pillars by bridges. This made it possible to make flatter watches that were easier to dis-mantle. He invented the virgule escapement, invisible hinges for watch cases, a new type of repeating work and a system of keyless winding. He was the first to make watches with a setting and adjustment square on the movement side, and the first to use Arabic numerals for the hours as well as for the minutes.

Lépine was the son-in-law of Charles André Caron, Watchmaker to the King.

Lépine retired in 1784 and left his business to his son-in-law Raguet.