

Story of a Carriage Clock

I would like to add to the description of the carriage clock Lot 356 sold at the Auktionen Dr. Crott on 11 May 2019 ('From the Auction Room', *Hf* October 2019).

To clarify, this is not an English-made carriage clock but one *retailed* in England by James Grohé of 7 Wigmore Street, London. It would have been manufactured for him by Hologue Frères of Saint Nicolas d'Aliermont near Dieppe, France and their trademark, the initials H.L., will almost certainly be found stamped on the front plate of the movement. The Hologue brothers, Jean-Francois and the younger Louis, were fine makers of carriage clocks, having taken over the Saint-Nicolas-d'Aliermont business of their father Jean-Baptiste in the mid-1840s, following a short period when Jean-Francois worked alone as *Hologue Fils*. They supplied both *blancs roulants* (rough movements) and complete clocks to many of the top makers of the period including Paul Garnier, Moïse Bolviller, Athanese Bourdin, Georges Moser, Aubert & Klastenberger, Leroy et Fils and Pierre Drocourt. They would sometimes utilise the Garnier *chaff-cutler* escapement in their movements whether the clock in question was to be supplied to Garnier or others. One example, movement serial number 5280, is a lacquered inkwell clock stamped with the H.L. mark and signed for Georges Moser but with no indication of the Garnier name nor the *P.G. Breveté* stamp as is usually placed on movements when this escapement is employed. They were awarded a bronze medal at the Paris Exposition of 1855 for which the catalogue entry reads: *Hologue frères, à Saint-Nicolas-d'Aliermont (Seine-inférieure) – pendules de voyage; mouvements roulant pour horlogerie*, Jean-Francois Hologue having previously been awarded a bronze medal at the 1849 Paris exposition.

Regarding the clock being discussed, the serial number 2155 as punched on the backplate of the movement is that of Hologue whilst the number 2609 is the Grohé stock number and will be found on the rim of the underside of the base where it would have been hand engraved rather than punched. This

number sequence runs in correlation with known signed Hologue clocks supplied to Grohé that I have examined as follows: Hologue serial number 2078 is signed for Grohé with their stock number 2586; 3979 has the Grohé number 2714; 4224 has the Grohé number 3754 and 4436 has the Grohé number 3768.

In 1875 the Parisian carriage clock maker Alfred Drocourt took over the Hologue Frères workshops, having been supplied by them since his father Pierre opened his first premises at 3 Rue Coutures-St-Gervais in 1853. He carried on the contract with Grohé and continued the clock numbering system inherited from Hologue with clock number 6649 having the Grohé number 3852. I have recorded a further twelve carriage clocks signed for both Drocourt and Grohé with the last being Drocourt number 20564 engraved with the Grohé stock number 4368 and with the signature on the dial now *Grohé, Pennington & Typke Successors, Wigmore Street, London* following the takeover of the business by the latter partnership.

The clock as sold at Auktionen Dr. Crott has all the attributes as one supplied by Hologue, including certain unique case detailing along with the design of the fine engraving that is near-identical to that seen on other clocks made by them, including those housing movement serial numbers 2114 and 2443. The dial can be firmly attributed to the *émailleur* (enameller) Adolphe Mojon who took over the business of his father-in-law Aimé Petremand having married his daughter Lise-Olympe in 1844. All the dials fitted to Hologue Frères carriage clocks that I have examined are signed to the rear with the Mojon mark up until the 1875 takeover. A short while after this date dials were supplied to Drocourt by Émile Jeannet who had worked alongside Mojon at Rue de Temple, Paris. Indeed, Adolphe Mojon was a witness at Jeannet's wedding in 1855 and signed the certificate alongside another great carriage clock maker Henri-Louis Jacot Descombes, more well-known to collectors by his shortened name Henri Jacot.

James Grohé was originally supplied with clocks and ornaments by Raingo



Figure 1.

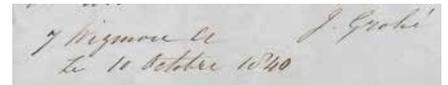


Figure 2.

Frères from their address at 11 Rue Saintonge, Paris which was re-numbered 41 in 1851. Further research suggests that it is quite probable that Pierre Drocourt worked alongside Raingo prior to 1853. He lived in a townhouse just a few steps from their workshops at 8 Rue Saintonge alongside several other *horlogers* and it was here that his son and successor Alfred was born in 1847. If so, that connection may well explain how Hologue Frères, who had a close working relationship with Pierre Drocourt, were to go on to provide Grohé with carriage clocks. Drocourt himself then went on to supply various British retailers, many of whom had been previous clients of Raingo Frères including not only Grohé but Joseph Silvani of Brighton, William Payne of London and Aubert & Klastenberger of London. This is witnessed by a most interesting batch of letters I have in my archive dated from 1840 and written to Raingo from each of these retailers when confirming or making orders and includes a wonderful signed letter from James Grohé requesting a small commission of the latest porcelain service *en verte* (in green), **Figures 1 and 2**.

After extensive research through the Saint Nicolas archives I was able to obtain the 1904 sales details of the

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Drocourt property. As a result, I've now been able to pinpoint the location where the workshops and house were situated and therefore where this clock was made.

For more information on the relationships of the various makers and retailers mentioned, as well as my research into the various dial makers used by some of the leading carriage clock makers of the period, visit www.extence.co.uk where summaries of my research are available via the various exhibition catalogues and articles. There is a detailed analysis of the engraved gorge carriage clock 4224 with Grohé number 3754 which can be used for comparison.

My research into the carriage clock makers of the period, notably the Drocourt and Jacot families and their associates the Baveux and Hologue families and, by association, those carriage clocks signed for Bourdin and Moser, is still ongoing. I would be most grateful to hear of any clocks that readers may have by these makers to add to my database.

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