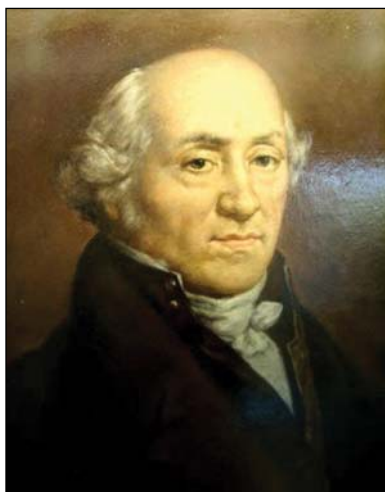


The Pendules de Voyage, *Alias The Carriage Clock, Alias The Travel Clock*

by Ken Hogwood (FL)



Abraham-Louis Breguet (1747-1823), a French watchmaker, evolved a watch into a true carriage clock near the end of the late 1700s and early 1800s. However, these clocks were complicated, very expensive, and therefore, not affordable for most people.

Not until about 1830 would a pendules de voyage—or a carriage clock as we commonly call it today—be made inexpensively enough that the middle-class traveler could afford to own one. The invention of an escapement that could be reproduced mostly by a machine increased production and lowered the cost. This two-plane, chaff-cutter escapement was patented by Paul Garnier in 1830. Now semiproduction carriage clocks were produced by the hundreds by Paul Garnier and other French clockmakers.

Carriage clocks were being made in France, England, Germany, and other European countries by the mid-1840s by many clock companies, further reducing the cost of these “traveling clocks,” and travel they did!

My Japy Frères et Cie (Japy Brothers and Co.) SN #906 (Figures 1-7) was made in its factory at Badevel or Beaucourt, France, about 1855.

Figure 1.



Figure 2.



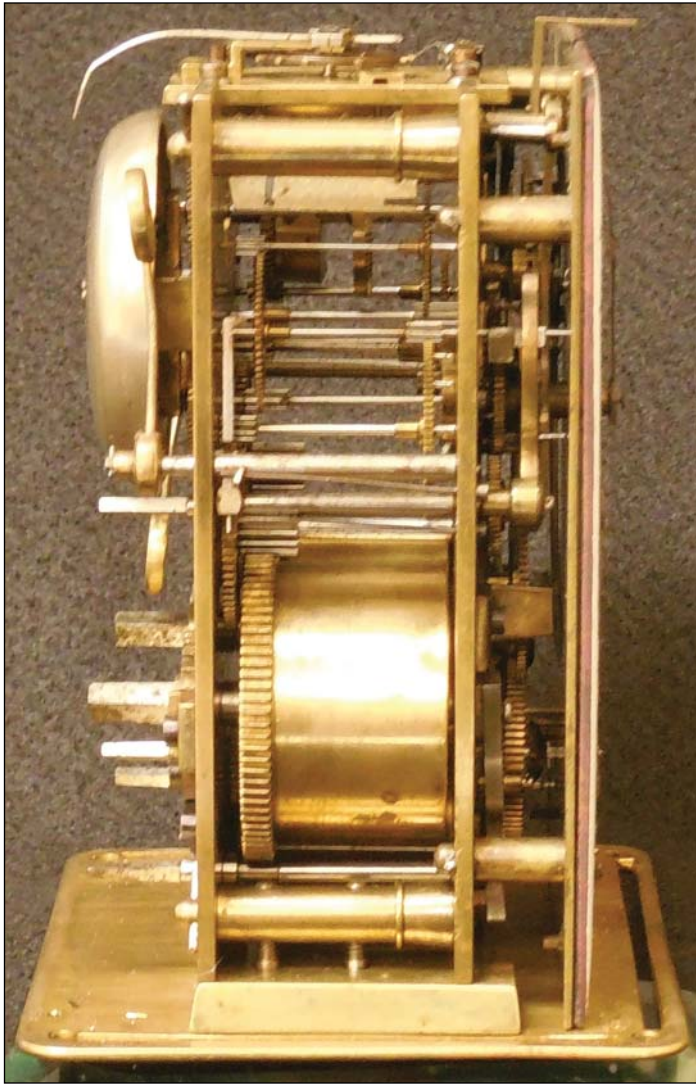


Figure 3.

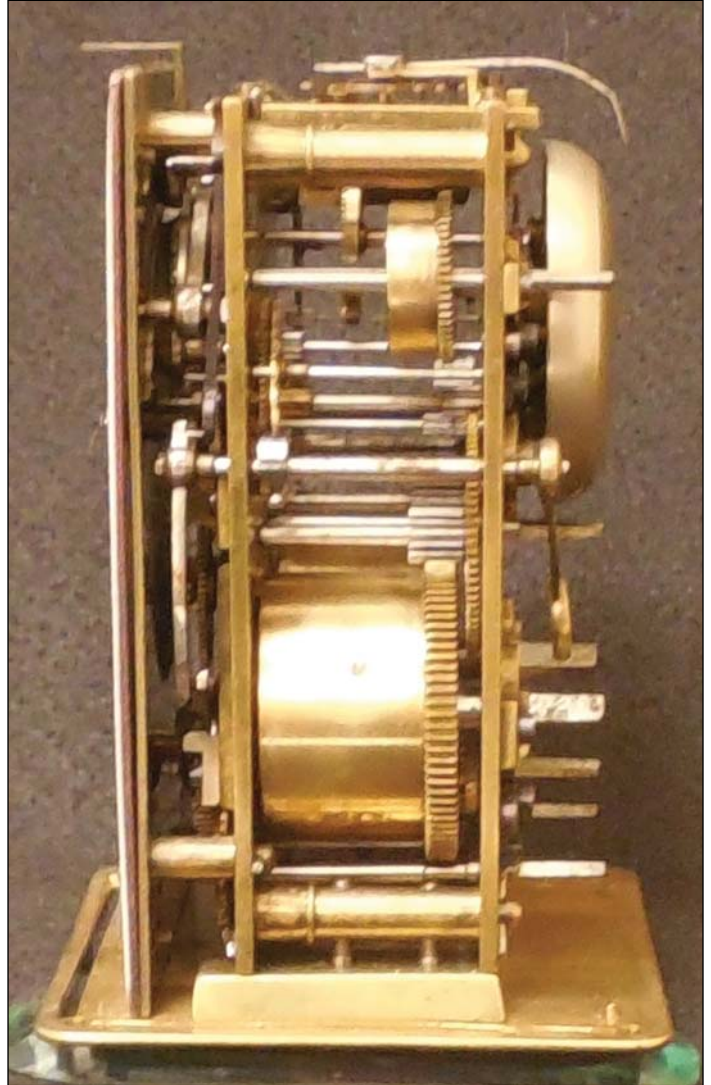


Figure 4.



Figure 5.

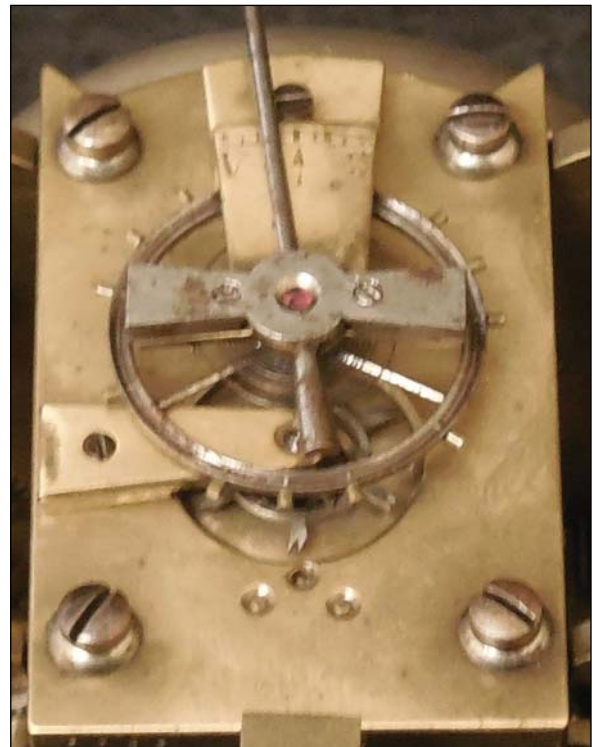


Figure 6.

These carriage clocks were made primarily for export to Paris, London, and other major markets around the world. Some were designed to appeal to the English speaking market, and others to French and even Asian markets, such as China and Japan. The operation “instructions” were sometimes engraved in the language of countries to which they were exported, but not always.

As travelers moved freely around the world by the later part of the 1800s, a “traveling clock/carriage clock” could have been purchased from a dealer in a European city and traveled home to many other parts of the world before leaving the possession of its original owner.

My Japy Frères clock proudly displays the engraving “Grand Medallion D’Honneur” (medal winner) of the 1855 Exposition in Paris (Figure 8). This clock tells the time of day, day of the week, and month of the year; it also has an alarm to wake its traveling owner and a repeater feature in case you didn’t count the chiming of the hour correctly. It also has a sweep second hand so you won’t miss a single second of the exact time.

However, it must be noted that at this time in our history, most activities, such as catching a train or coach or seeing a play, did not run on such exact schedules. Probably to be within the hour—and certainly the quarter hour—would have been sufficient for most people.

This multifunction clock would have impressed its original owner and would have demanded a much higher price than a carriage clock that only displayed the time of the day to the minute, as did a great many French carriage clocks made for export in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

My Japy Frères carriage clock has instructions for operation on the back and displays days of the week in English. This clock no doubt was exported to an English dealer, possibly in London, or even to a dealer in Hong Kong, which was ruled by the British Empire at the time.

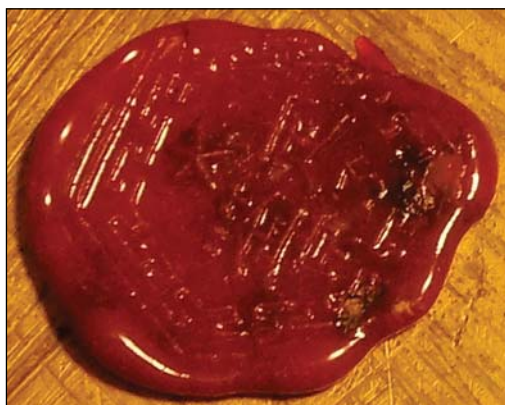
This clock has now traveled from France to maybe Hong Kong via England but would later find its way into mainland China. How do I know this? There is a red seal on the underside of the clock (Figure 9), which is an export seal placed there by the Chinese government that allowed the clock to be exported from China.



Figure 7, above. Figure 8, below.



Figure 9.



The People's Republic of China, more specifically the "Red Guard," mobilized by Mao Zedong in 1966-1967, confiscated foreign art objects as well as Chinese art objects from their upper-class citizens. Many Chinese books, ancient art paintings, and art objects were destroyed by the Red Guard, who were following Mao's teaching "out with the old."

Not until Richard Nixon's presidency in 1969-1974 did China reopen its borders to the free markets of the world by giving China a "most favored trade nation" status.

In the early 1980s the Chinese government opened the warehouses and began selling off some of these art treasures, which included antique clocks. A young man, Robert (Bob to most who know him) Crowder, was traveling back and forth to China during this period. He was allowed to buy some of the antique clocks from the government warehouses. Crowder bought about 20 clocks on each of his trips. About 25 percent of these clocks were carriage clocks. Crowder has a great personal clock collection, many of which are carriage clocks. The Chinese government stopped the sale of these art objects and clocks in 1991.

Bob and Shirley Crowder, NAWCC members, still make frequent trips to China to oversee the operation of his business, ProClocks, Inc., which makes fine replicas of famous antique clocks and exports them back to the United States.

On occasion Crowder will sell some of the antique carriage clocks he acquired in China in his younger days, and I have been fortunate to purchase a few from his private collection. This Japy Frères et Cie is one of

the clocks that has traveled almost around the world with several owners over the past 159 years, from France to England or Hong Kong, to mainland China, and finally to America.

This beautiful antique clock made by one of the best known carriage clock makers in nineteenth-century France is now in my carriage clock collection and is no longer for sale.

Acknowledgments

I thank NAWCC member Bob Crowder for his carriage clock expertise. I recommend *Carriage Clocks, Their History and Development* by Charles Allix.

About the Author

Many members know Ken Hogwood from his efforts to enroll new members in the new international online Chapter 195 "The Carriage Way" at NAWCC National events, Regional events, and Chapter meetings. He also serves as a director of Chapter 195.

Ken is a member of the Publications Advisory and Review Board for the *Watch & Clock Bulletin*. He is currently a member of Chapters 42, 154, 159, and 195 and has been a member of the NAWCC since 1999.

Ken is a collector, researcher, and restorer of antique carriage clocks. He gave a presentation on American carriage clocks at the 2012 Ward Francillon Time Symposium, which featured carriage clocks from around the world, and has published several articles for the *W&C Bulletin*. Ken also enjoys presenting PowerPoint programs, which he creates from his travels and research projects, at local chapter meetings.

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