

## Swiss watchmaking excellence

### Historic rediscovery: Henri Grandjean Observatory Tourbillon

**Mentioned in a reference book devoted to the Tourbillon, Henri Grandjean's "*El Cronometro Torbellino*" was a star attraction at the 1872 National Exhibition in Lima. It definitively links the name of the great Le Locle watchmaker Henri Grandjean to the Tourbillon complication.**

Thanks to this revelation, which came to light through meticulous historical research, the name Henri Grandjean now belongs to that ultra-niche circle of watchmakers and Maisons capable, in the second half of the 19th century, of manufacturing what was then considered the ultimate complication: the Tourbillon.

### Observatory precision, Leading tourbillon

With the distinguished name "*El Cronometro Torbellino*", this timepiece belongs to a family of ten rare tourbillon models tested at the Neuchâtel Observatory.

This exceptional Tourbillon made its first appearance in a catalog published by the auction house Dr. Crott Auktionen before being featured in 1992 in "*Das Tourbillon*," Reinhard Meis's famous reference volume.

***"El Cronometro Torbellino": Henri Grandjean presented this Observatory Tourbillon in 1872 at the National Exhibition in Lima, Peru***



### History revisited, more than 60 calibers

Among the discoveries unearthed by a specialist historian are two sales catalogs, copies of which are kept in the archives of the State Archives and the Public Library of Neuchâtel. Until now, collectors and enthusiasts of antique watches had attributed the manufacture of around 150 timepieces to the watchmaker Henri Grandjean during his lifetime.

However, the two volumes found in Neuchâtel, one in French and the other in English, present more than sixty calibers intended for Henri Grandjean's timepieces, covering four segments of manufacturing, including the most complex complications, served in original combinations in a variety of luxuriously decorated and engraved gold, silver, or steel cases. It is now accepted that a significant number of these pieces are still in circulation around the world.

## Henri Grandjean, museum legitimacy and auction best valuation

In addition to pieces found in major museums, such as the Château des Monts in Le Locle, the Patek Philippe Museum in Geneva, and the Royal Collection in England, Henri Grandjean watches are increasingly performing well in the world of global watch auctions. One example is this memorable and rare "Quarter Repeater" from the private collection of Dr. Helmut Crott, a world-renowned expert who was recently honored with the prestigious Gaïa 2025 award and who co-founded watch auctions with Oswaldo Patrizzi.

Thanks to Dr. Helmut Crott, Antiquorum ranked a gold pocket watch in the top ten of its November 5, 2022 sale, alongside nine other models from star auction brands, **selling for more than 290% of its** starting price! This timepiece, housed in a solid gold case of rare refinement, features an unusual configuration of eight watch complications, a testament to absolute mastery: retrograde perpetual calendar (flyback), chronograph, moon phases, quarter repeater with two hammers on two gongs, and dual time zone. Historical research has confirmed that this piece was also the star attraction exhibited by the great watchmaker Henri Grandjean, one of the most medal-winning figures of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at the 1876 World's Fair in Philadelphia.

High-resolution visuals & pictures  
<http://bit.ly/4n3Bn2T>

((Added Paragraph))

### Henri Grandjean, watchmaker and builder: from the Neuchâtel Observatory to UNESCO

The history of Swiss watchmaking excellence owes a lot to chronometer maker Henri Grandjean, who, along with other watchmakers, led the construction of the Neuchâtel Observatory, a watchmaking institution that the most prestigious brands still claim to belong to and which, from 1931 until 2022, broadcast the radio time signal throughout Switzerland.

In addition to his involvement as a member of the Swiss National Council, Switzerland also owes him a debt of gratitude for the master clock installed in Le Locle (the city of precision) thanks to the cable he had laid between the Observatory and the Le Locle Watchmaking School, an institution he also founded. Finally, among other architectural and sectoral achievements, he was responsible for the construction of the Quartier de l'An-Neuf (now known as the Quartier du Progrès), which in 2009 enabled Le Locle to join La Chaux-de-Fonds' application to have watchmaking urbanism listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site..

