

1791 Jean-Baptiste Poirson & Louis Capitaine

Following the creation of France's eighty-three departments in 1790, an atlas containing circular maps of them was issued in Paris by Nicolas François Le Vachez. In addition to the maps there was another circular plate but with text (see below): a table entitled *Division de la France en 83. départemens*, with the signatures 'Mureux invenit, Bellanger sculpsit'.

These plates were all engraved individually and inserted between 124 pages of letterpress. The engraved title-page has the title on a banner, with the undated imprint at the foot. However, the Bibliothèque Nationale dates publication to 1791.



The maps have a diameter of 75 mm. and usually have full hand-colour. They include a general one of France and were mostly drawn by Jean-Baptiste Poirson (1760-1831), although Louis Capitaine was responsible for twenty-six*. These roundels were printed within rectangular frames, 95 x 130 mm., but not always orientated correctly, with a number at top left and the name of the department at top centre. The map titles are within their borders, together with the author's signature and the publisher's imprint.

Some of the maps have the engraver's signature at the foot, mostly below the border but sometimes within it: *Haute Loire*, has 'F. Berlin' and *Haut Rhin* has 'G. par Berlin'; *Bouches du Rhône* and *Gers* have 'Ecrit par Besançon'; *Basses Alpes* and *Corse* have 'Gravé par Chaumier' but *Isere* and *Somme* have 'Chaumier Fecit'; *Ardennes*, *Cantal*, *Nievre* and *Pyrénées Orientales* have 'H'; *Aube*, *Calvados*, *Côtes du Nord*, *Finistère*, *Morbihan*, and *Vosges* have 'Gravé par P.F. Tardieu'.

Except for the map of France and the plan of Paris (see below), their titles are in the style of *Département de l'Ain divisé en neuf districts*:

Carte g[é]o. de la France, divisée en ses 83 départemens;

*Ain; Aisne; * Allier; Hautes Alpes*; Basses Alpes*; Ardeche*; Ardennes*; Arriege*; Aube; Aude; Aveiron; Bouches du Rhône; Calvados; Cantal; Charente; Charente Inférre.; Cher*; Correze*; Corse*; Côte D'Or; Côtes du Nord; Creuse*; Dordogne*; Doubs*; Drome*; Eure; Eure et Loire*; Finistere; Gard*; Hte. Garonne; Gers; Gironde; Herault*; Ille et Villaine; Indre*; Indre et Loire; Isere; Jura*; Landes*; Loir et du Cher*; Haute Loire; Loire Inférieure; Loiret; Lot; Lot et Garonne; Lozere; Mayenne et Loire; Manche; Marne; Haute Marne; Mayenne; Meurthe; Meuse; Morbihan; Moselle; Nyevre*; Nord; Oise; Orne;*

Carte du département de Paris divisé par districts et cantons;

Pas de Calais; Puy de Dome; Hautes Pyrenees; Basses Pyrenees*; Pyrénées Orientales; Haut Rhin*; Bas Rhin; Rhone; Haute Saone; Saône et Loire*; Sarthe; Seine et L’Oise; Seine Inferieure; Seine et Marne; Deux Sevres; Somme; Tarn; Var; Vendée; Vienne; Haute Vienne*; Vosges; Yonne.*

Subsequently, a new edition of this work was published, but in a different, miniature format. It consists of just the plates, lacking all the letterpress pages, and also without the illustrated title-page. Instead, the atlas is fronted with the circular engraved table from the first edition and includes another circular plate of text: *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, with the imprint of Le Vachez and the signature 'gravé par Bellanger'. The maps are now without the rectangular frames, numbers and names of the first edition.

Atlas national des 83. départements. Paris, Nicolas F. Le Vachez, (1791).

Division de la France en 83. départemens. Paris, Nicolas F. Le Vachez, (1792).

