



## Glorious Years: French Calendars from Louis XIV to the Revolution

22 March – 29 October 2017, Wed-Sun

Waddesdon Manor

**A celebration of the power of the printed image before photography, *Glorious Years* is an exhibition of 26 rare French calendars, never before seen on public display. This exhibition charts the evolution of these calendars (originally named ‘almanacs’) from their golden period under Louis XIV, through to the Revolution, when time itself was re-invented.**

Published in Paris in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, these striking prints featured major events, from royal weddings and births to victorious battles and peace treaties. At a time when the printed image was the most effective communicator, calendars were designed to both educate and delight. *Glorious Years* will examine how and why these prints were made and their role in propaganda, revealing much about the social, political and artistic world of the Old Regime.

As well as large single-sheet printed calendars, a number of bound pocketbook almanacs will also be on display. These small volumes were popular in the late 18th century, varying hugely in content. Ranging from official directories, listing members of the royal households, schedules for the postal service and carriage travel; to collections of songs, poems and illustrations. Some even included erasable paper for notetaking and recording gambling-related gains and losses. Not unlike modern-day smart phones, these conveniently sized pocketbooks were portable and perfectly suited to inform, distract and amuse.

Despite their popularity, these calendars have not survived in great numbers, making Waddesdon’s collection unique in the UK. Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild (1839-1898) was fascinated by social history and collected these calendars alongside other printed ephemera, such as trade cards and lottery tickets. The calendars on display have been conserved, remounted and digitised. They will be available to browse on the website.

**Curator:** Rachel Jacobs

**Exhibition images:** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7i8exp93g86ik3u/AAAi9FsT2Ely9D1NW8qxL19ea?dl=0>

**Exhibition page:** <https://waddesdon.org.uk/glorious-years-exhibition>

**Notes to editors:** <https://waddesdon.org.uk/about-us/press/notes-for-editors/>

### **Exhibition Product Range:**

To coincide with the opening of *Glorious Years*, Waddesdon will be launching a new product range inspired by the Francois-Gerard Jollain almanac overleaf. This new range features an umbrella, mug, glasses case with cloth and postcard and will be available to purchase in the Manor Shop and Online Shop [www.waddesdon.org.uk/shop](http://www.waddesdon.org.uk/shop) .

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#### **Picture captions:**

François-Gérard Jollain, Almanac Titled: 'The august portraits of the first born sons of our kings that have had the title of Dauphin', 1734; etching and engraving; 840 x 513mm; Waddesdon (National Trust); acc. no. 2669.3.17. Photo: Mike Fear © National Trust, Waddesdon Manor.

la Chaussée, Almanac Titled: 'The august alliance of the houses of Bourbon and Austria', 1771; etching and engraving; 717 x 537mm; Waddesdon (National Trust); acc. no. 2669.3.24. Photo: Mike Fear © National Trust, Waddesdon Manor.

Philibert Louis Debucourt, Almanac Titled: 'Republican calendar', 1794; etching and engraving; 508 x 409mm; Waddesdon (National Trust); acc. no. 2669.3.42. Photo: Mike Fear © National Trust, Waddesdon Manor.