Guilmet Lighthouse Clock Automaton, Duplex escapement



The French firm founded by André Romain Guilmet made a series of clocks with industrial and maritime themes between c.1875 and the 1910s. Many of his case designs celebrated the accomplishments of the industrial revolution.

This is the smaller and rarer of the two different models of automaton lighthouse clock that Guilmet produced, of a design used to mark the entrance to a harbour. The larger versions are often constructed to mark shoals and reefs.

The eight-day movement is regulated with a duplex escapement, the balance forming the oscillating lens that reflects light at the top. This glass encased lens is constructed with a number of red vertical bars which oscillate at speed, giving the effect of a flashing light.

The case is cast in brass, the brickwork silver-plated and the rings gold-plated. To the base of the light bars the walkway has an intricate filigree gallery fence. The bi-metallic case is very appealing, and the revolving ‘light lens’ is mesmeric.

The white enamelled dial measures approximately 1.5 inch and is in perfect condition, with Roman numerals and original steel hands.

André Romain Guilmet

André Romain Philéas Guilmet was an inventor, best known for his mystery clocks in which a female holds her hand outstretched; pivoted on the hand is a clock pendulum which appears to have no impulse. He took out a number of patents between 1853 and 1887, some horological, others not. Some were in conjunction with other inventors, such as the bicycle chain (developed with Edouard Myer in 1868).

He also produced a series of clocks of an industrial nature between c.1875 and the 1910s. This

lighthouse is one, others include the steam hammer clock, beam engine automaton, mortar clocks.

This model is illustrated on page 257 & 258 of Derek Roberts' book, *Mystery, Novelty and Fantasy Clocks.* Not all were signed by Guilmet – in fact very many were not.

Guilmet's industrial clocks are novelty clocks of the highest standard.

Height: 25cms
Width and depth: 9cms
Overhauled and guaranteed for 3 years.