

THE FRENCH

REVOLUTION 1787–1804

2ND EDITION



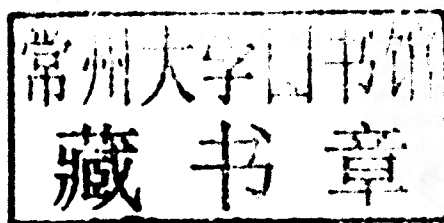
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P. M. Jones

The French Revolution 1787–1804

Second edition

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PEARSON EDUCATION LIMITED

Edinburgh Gate
Harlow CM20 2JE
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Tel: +44 (0)1279 623623
Fax: +44 (0)1279 431059
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Chronology

1763

- 10 February** Peace of Paris ending the Seven Years War.
December Fiscal crisis, Laverdy is appointed Controller General.

1766 Lorraine is ceded to France.

1774

- 10 May** Death of Louis XV.
24 August Turgot is appointed Controller General.

1775

- 11 June** Coronation of Louis XVI, grandson of Louis XV.

1776

- 12 May** Turgot is dismissed.

1777

- 29 June** Necker is appointed Director General of Finance.

1778

- February** France enters an alliance with the American colonists.
10 July France declares war on Britain.

1781

- January** Publication of Necker's *Compte rendu au roi*.
19 May Necker is dismissed.

1782

July A third *vingtième* applicable to the years 1783–86 is introduced.

1783

3 September Peace is agreed between France, the American colonists, Spain and Britain.

2 November Calonne is appointed Controller General.

1785

10 November France signs a treaty of alliance with Holland.

1786

20 August Calonne submits to the king a package of sweeping reform measures.

26 August A trade treaty ('the Eden Treaty') is signed between France and Britain.

1787

13 February Death of Vergennes.

22 February Opening session of the Assembly of Notables.

8 April Calonne is dismissed.

1 May Loménie de Brienne is appointed *chef du Conseil royal des finances* (subsequently Principal Minister).

25 May Dissolution of the Assembly of Notables.

June/July Provincial Assemblies reform goes ahead, as does grain trade deregulation, and the conversion of the *corvée* into a monetary tax.

6 August King enforces registration of the land tax and stamp duty reforms by means of a *lit de justice*.

15 August Parlement of Paris is exiled to Troyes.

September/October Foreign policy crisis triggered by the civil war in the United Provinces; Prussia sends in troops in support of the Orangeists.

28 September Return of the Parlement of Paris from Troyes.

19–20 November King agrees to call an Estates General by 1792. Enforced registration of a 420 million livres loan. The Duke of Orleans is exiled and two *parlementaires* are arrested.

1788

3 May The Parlement of Paris publishes a statement regarding the 'fundamental laws' of the kingdom.

- 8 May** Lamoignon, the Keeper of the Seals, issues the 'May Edicts'.
- 7 June** 'Day of the Tiles' in Grenoble.
- 5 July** Loménie de Brienne agrees to call an Estates General for the following year.
- 16 August** Admission of partial bankruptcy.
- 25 August** Loménie de Brienne is dismissed. Lamoignon, the Keeper of the Seals, also retires a few days later.
- 26 August** Necker is appointed Director General of Finance and agrees to a meeting of the Estates General in January (subsequently delayed until May) 1789.
- 25 September** Restored to office, the Parlement of Paris declares in favour of the 1614 model for the Estates General.
- 6 November** A second Assembly of Notables deliberates inconclusively for five weeks.
- 12 December** Memorandum of the Princes of the Blood.
- 27 December** Procedures for the convocation of the Estates General are agreed.

1789

- February/March** Rural unrest in Franche-Comté, Dauphiné and Provence.
- March/April** The drawing up of *cahiers de doléances*.
- 5 May** Opening session of the Estates General.
- 4 June** Death of the heir apparent.
- 17 June** Third Estate rename themselves the 'National Assembly'.
- 20 June** Tennis Court Oath is sworn.
- 23 June** In a *séance royale*, Louis tries to wrest the initiative from the Third Estate.
- 11 July** Necker is dismissed.
- 12–17 July** Paris rises in revolt; the Bastille fortress is taken by force.
- 16 July** Necker is recalled.
- 22 July** Murders of Bertier, intendant of Paris, and Foulon, mayor.
- late July/August** Great Fear; insurrections in many provinces.
- 4–11 August** Decrees abolishing the feudal regime.
- 10 August** Decree instituting the National Guard.
- 27 August** Promulgation of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen.
- 11 September** National Assembly votes for a 'suspensive' rather than an 'absolute' royal veto over legislation.
- 5–6 October** March to Versailles; return of royal family to Paris.
- 2 November** National Assembly votes to nationalise the property of the Church.

1790

- February/March** Elections take place to create the new municipalities.
- 4 February** Rapturous support for Louis XVI when he visits the National Assembly.
- 26 February** Decree reorganising France into departments.
- 13 April** National Assembly declines to make Catholicism the religion of state.
- 22 May** National Assembly repudiates wars of conquest.
- 19 June** Decree abolishing hereditary nobility and titles.
- 12 July** Civil Constitution of the Clergy is voted.
- 14 July** Fête de la Fédération; celebration of the first anniversary of the revolution.
- 4 September** Resignation of Necker.
- 16–24 August** Decree reorganising the judiciary.
- October/November** Start of disturbances among slaves and free blacks in Saint-Domingue.
- 27 November** Decree imposing an oath on the clergy.

1791

- January** New tax system takes effect.
- 10 March** Pope condemns the Civil Constitution of the Clergy; links with the Holy See are severed.
- 2 April** Death of Mirabeau.
- 18 April** Royal family is stopped from leaving Paris for Saint-Cloud.
- May** French forces occupy Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin.
- 15 May** Reubell's motion to grant some civil and political rights in the colonies.
- 20–21 June** Royal flight from Paris.
- 16–17 July** Petitioning and a 'massacre' in the Champ de Mars.
- 22 August** Slave revolt in Saint-Domingue.
- 27 August** Declaration of Pillnitz is issued.
- 14 September** Louis XVI accepts the new constitution; annexation of Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin.
- 1 October** First session of the Legislative Assembly.
- 9 November** Measures against *émigrés* (vetoed by the king).
- 29 November** Measures against non-oath-swearing priests (vetoed by the king).
- December** Arguments for war begun to be debated in the Jacobin Club.

1792

- 1 January** Legislative Assembly decrees the beginning of the 'era of liberty'.
- 18 January** Comte de Provence is deprived of his rights to regency.

- January/February** Sugar and coffee disturbances in Paris.
- 9 February** First measure to seize *émigré* property.
- 4 April** Decree granting full rights to free blacks.
- 20 April** War is declared on Austria.
- May** Reports of military setbacks reach Paris.
- 27 May** Deportation of non-oath-swearing priests is voted (vetoed by the king).
- 20 June** Armed demonstration in the Tuileries Palace by the Paris Sections.
- 28 June** Manoeuvres by General Lafayette against Parisian 'agitators'.
- 11 July** Legislative Assembly declares 'the fatherland in danger'.
- 25 July** Publication of the Brunswick Manifesto.
- 10 August** Insurrection in Paris; deposition of Louis XVI.
- 2–6 September** Massacres in the prisons of Paris.
- 20 September** Victory over the Prussians and the *émigrés* at the battle of Valmy.
- 21 September** National Convention votes to abolish the monarchy and to declare France a republic.
- 6 November** French victory against the Austrians at the battle of Jemappes.
- 11 December** Start of the trial of the king.

1793

- 21 January** Execution of Louis XVI.
- 1 February** France declares war on Britain and Holland.
- 24 February** Decree to recruit an additional 300,000 troops.
- 7 March** France declares war on Spain.
- 9 March** Despatch of *représentants en mission* to the departments.
- 10–11 March** Start of the uprising of the Vendée.
- 18 March** French suffer a reverse at the battle of Neerwinden.
- 4 April** Defection of General Dumouriez to the Austrians.
- 6 April** Establishment of the Committee of Public Safety.
- 31 May–2 June** Insurrection in Paris; expulsion of Girondin deputies from the Convention.
- June/July/August** 'Federalist' revolts in the departments.
- 24 June** Constitution of 1793 is approved.
- 27 August** Toulon is surrendered to the British fleet of Admiral Hood.
- 5–6 September** Pressure is exerted on the Convention by the *sans-culottes* in order to secure implementation of the 'popular programme'.
- 17 September** Law of Suspects is passed.
- 29 September** Law of the General Maximum is passed.

- 10 October** Decree of 'Revolutionary Government'; the Constitution of 1793 is put into abeyance until peacetime conditions prevail.
- 16 October** Execution of Marie-Antoinette.
- 30 October** Closure of women's political clubs.
- 31 October** Execution of 20 leading Girondin deputies.
- 10 November** Dechristianisation in Paris; cathedral of Notre Dame becomes a Temple of Reason.
- 4 December** Passing of the Law of 14 Frimaire II formalising 'Revolutionary Government'.
- 5 December** First issue of *Le Vieux Cordelier* appears; start of the Indulgents Campaign.

1794

- 4 February** Abolition of slavery in the French Caribbean colonies.
- 13–24 March** Arrest and execution of the Hébertists.
- 5 April** Execution of Danton, Desmoulins, Delacroix, Philippeaux and the *pourris*.
- 7 May** Decree establishing the Cult of the Supreme Being.
- 8 June** Festival of the Supreme Being is held in Paris.
- 10 June** Law of 22 Prairial II increases the conviction rate of the Revolutionary Tribunal.
- 26 June** French victory against the Austrians and the Dutch at the battle of Fleurus.
- 27 July** Coup of 9 Thermidor; overthrow of Robespierre and his allies.
- August/September** Relaxation of the Terror.
- 12 November** Closure of the Paris Jacobin Club.
- 8 December** The 75 deputies who had protested at the expulsion of the Girondins return to their seats in the Convention.
- 24 December** Repeal of the Law of the General Maximum.

1795

- 21 February** Formal separation of Church and State.
- April/May** Start of the 'White' Terror against revolutionary personnel in southern France.
- 5 April** Signing of the peace treaty of Basle with Prussia.
- 23 May** Exclusion of women from the assemblies of the Paris Sections.
- 8 June** Death of the son of Louis XVI (styled 'Louis XVII' by the *émigrés*).
- 24 June** Publication of the Declaration from Verona.
- 27 June** *Emigré* forces land at Quiberon Bay in southern Brittany with the assistance of British warships.

- 22 August** Constitution of 1795 is approved.
- October** Elections in progress to replace the National Convention.
- 3 November** The Executive Directory takes office.
- 16 November** Opening of the Pantheon Club.

1796

- 19 February** Production of *assignats* ceases.
- 26 February** The Executive Directory orders the closure of the Pantheon Club and all neo-Jacobin societies.
- 2 March** Bonaparte is appointed general-in-chief of the Army of Italy.
- 30 March** Gracchus Babeuf's 'Conspiracy of the Equals' takes shape.
- April/May** French forces win a succession of battles against the Piedmontese and the Austrians in Italy.
- 10 May** Babeuf is arrested.
- 16 October** General Bonaparte sets up the Cispadane Republic (subsequently merged into the Cisalpine Republic).
- December** General Hoche's naval expedition to Ireland ends in failure.

1797

- March/April** Significant royalist gains in the 'Year Five' elections to the legislative Councils.
- 18 April** Peace negotiations with Austria begin at Leoben.
- 27 May** Execution of Babeuf and his comrade Darthé.
- 9 July** General Bonaparte sets up the Cisalpine Republic.
- 24 August** Repeal of the laws of 1792 and 1793 against non-oath-swearing clergy.
- 4 September** *Coup* of 18 Fructidor V; two Directors are removed; elections in 49 departments are annulled and 177 deputies are purged from the Councils.
- 8 September** Merlin de Douai and François de Neufchâteau replace Carnot and Barthélemy as Directors.
- 30 September** Partial bankruptcy; two-thirds of the national debt is repudiated.
- 15 October** France signs the Treaty of Campo Formio with Austria.
- 12 November** Centralised tax-collecting institutions are established in each department.

1798

- 15 February** Proclamation of the Roman Republic.
- March/April** The neo-Jacobins make gains in the elections to the legislative Councils.

- 11 May** *Coup* of 22 Floréal VI; the election results of neo-Jacobins and other ‘firm republicans’ are set aside.
- 19 May** General Bonaparte sets off on Egypt expedition.
- 1 August** French expeditionary fleet is destroyed in Aboukir Bay by Rear-Admiral Nelson (battle of the Nile).
- August** Second unsuccessful attempt by French forces to invade Ireland.
- 5 September** *Loi Jourdan*; general conscription is introduced.

1799

- 12 March** France declares war on Austria (War of the Second Coalition).
- April** Legislative elections turn to the advantage of the neo-Jacobins.
- 9 May** Sieyès is elected to the Directory in the place of Reubell.
- June/September** War crisis; France loses nearly all of her conquests in Italy and Germany.
- 18 June** *Coup* of 30 Prairial VII; the Councils force through a purge of the Executive Directory.
- 5–20 August** Royalist uprising in the south west.
- 25–30 September** Military situation is stabilised by the French victory over the Austrians and Russians at the second battle of Zurich.
- 9 October** General Bonaparte returns to France.
- 9–10 November** *Coup* of 18–19 Brumaire VIII; Executive Directory is overthrown and replaced by a ‘Consulate’.

1800

- 17 February** Law providing for the administrative reorganisation of France; establishment of the prefects.
- 2 March** Partial amnesty for *émigrés*.
- 14 June** General Bonaparte defeats the Austrians at the battle of Marengo.
- 3 December** General Moreau defeats the Austrians at the battle of Hohenlinden.
- 24 December** Opera House (*machine infernale*) plot; Bonaparte narrowly escapes with his life.

1801

- 8 February** Peace signed with the Austrians at Lunéville.
- 18 February** Law establishing special tribunals to try cases of brigandage without juries or appeal.
- 14 July** The Concordat with Pope Pius VII is signed.
- 23 July** Discussions on the Civil Code begin.

1802

25 March Peace treaty with Britain is signed at Amiens.

May Establishment of the Legion of Honour.

2 August Proclamation of the Life Consulate.

1803

18 May Resumption of war with Britain.

1804

1 January Independence of Haiti (formerly Saint-Domingue) is proclaimed.

9 March Arrest of the royalist plotter, Cadoudal.

15 March Promulgation of the Civil Code.

21 March Execution of the Duc d'Enghien.

2 December Coronation of Napoleon Bonaparte as Emperor of the French.

Who's Who

Barnave, Antoine: Barrister from Grenoble who played a prominent role in the Dauphiné revolt; a leading member of the patriot party from 1789–91; increasingly moderate in outlook thereafter, his moderate royalist sympathies would result in imprisonment and execution in November 1793.

Barras, Paul, Vicomte de: A disreputable army officer who was drawn into revolutionary politics for the pickings it offered; elected to the Convention, he was responsible for brutal repression in Marseilles and Toulon in the autumn of 1793; involved in the conspiracy against Robespierre in July 1794; returned to the Council of Five Hundred in October 1795; served as a Director from 1795–99; forced out of politics after Brumaire.

Bertin, Henri Léonard Jean-Baptiste: Secretary of State for Agriculture, 1763–80.

Billaud-Varenne, Jacques Nicolas: A schoolmaster turned lawyer, he first attracted attention as a radical member of the Cordelier and Jacobin Clubs; elected to the Convention in 1792 and to the Committee of Public Safety in September 1793, he acted as a spokesman for the extreme left; survived Thermidor, but was deported as a terrorist and never returned to France.

Brienne, Etienne Charles de Loménie de: Archbishop of Toulouse and Principal Minister, 1787–88.

Buzot, François: From a legal background, he came to notice as a patriot deputy in the National Assembly; elected to the Convention, his hostility to the Paris Commune and the Sections launched him into a short-lived career as a Girondin and a Federalist; escaped arrest only by means of suicide.

Cadoudal, Georges: One of the men who led the royalist rebels of the Vendée in 1793; subsequently involved in the *chouan* insurgency and the Quiberon Bay landings of June 1795; emigrated to Britain following the pacification of the west; participated in the 'second *chouannerie*' of

1799–1800; involved in the Opera House plot against Bonaparte of December 1800; returned to Paris for another covert operation against the First Consul in August 1803; betrayed and taken prisoner, he was executed on 25 June 1804.

Calonne, Charles Alexandre de: Controller General, 1783–87.

Castries, Charles Gabriel de la Croix, Marquis de: Minister for the Navy, 1780–87.

Collot d'Herbois, Jean Marie: Settled in Paris following a theatrical career in the provinces; involved in the uprising of 10 August 1792; elected to the Convention and recruited to the Committee of Public Safety following pressure from the Sections in September 1793; responsible for the savage repression in Lyons; conspired against Robespierre on 26–27 July 1794; deported as a terrorist in April 1795.

Couthon, Georges: A lawyer from Clermont-Ferrand who became a close ally of Robespierre in the Convention; despite disablement which confined him to a wheelchair, he undertook a number of missions; elected to the Committee of Public Safety in May 1793; fell victim to the Thermidor *coup* which resulted in his execution on 28 July 1794.

Danton, Georges: A lawyer by training who came to prominence as a Cordelier Club militant; deeply implicated in the uprising of 10 August 1792 from which he emerged to become Minister of Justice; a Montagnard deputy from 1792 until his execution in April 1794.

Desmoulins, Camille: Radical journalist, pamphleteer and Cordeliers Club militant, 1789–92; Montagnard deputy from 1792 until his execution in April 1794.

Dumouriez, Charles François du Périer: A professional soldier whose career blossomed into politics after 1789; briefly a government minister in the spring of 1792 before taking command of the Army of the North; victor at Valmy and Jemappes; loser at Neerwinden (18 March 1793); emigrated in April 1793 after a fruitless bid to lead his forces against Paris.

Fouché, Joseph: A member of the Oratorian teaching order in Nantes before the revolution; elected to the Convention in 1792; carried out a number of important missions, notably one that initiated the wave of dechristianisation in the departments; recalled to Paris in order to answer for his activities in April 1794; conspired against Robespierre, but survived the reaction after Thermidor; despatched as ambassador to the Cisalpine Republic in September 1798; returned to Paris in 1799 and was made Minister of Police following the Brumaire *coup*.