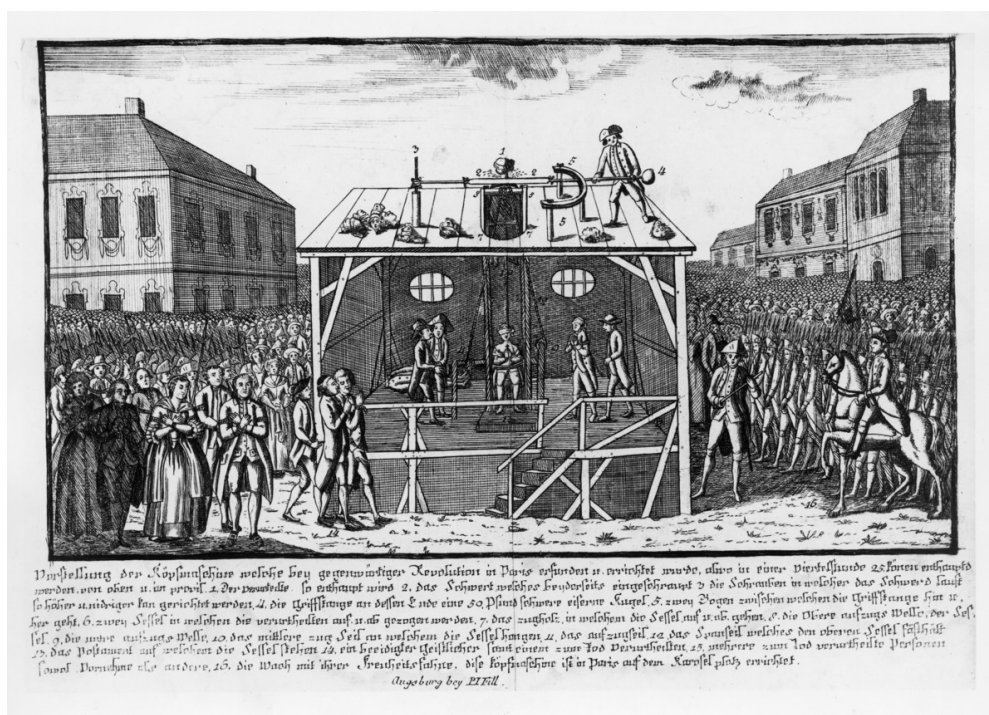


Mechanical Beheading Device built after a Design by Guillotin (1789)

Abstract

In designing the guillotine, French physician Joseph-Ignace Guillotin had actually hoped to make executions more “humane.” His invention would go on to become the symbol of the *terreur* and the principal means of executing enemies (or supposed enemies) of the Revolution. In 1798, it was briefly introduced in a number of German territories as well. This illustration, published in Germany in 1789, is based on a misunderstanding of Guillotin’s design. Here, the condemned man, who stands upright, is elevated onto a platform, where an executioner is ready to behead him with a sword mounted on a pivot.

Source



Source: Etching by Philipp Joseph Fill, 1789.

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Recommended Citation: Mechanical Beheading Device built after a Design by Guillotin (1789), published in: German History in Documents and Images,

<<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/the-holy-roman-empire-1648-1815/ghdi:image-2937>> [March 10, 2026].