

# Thierry

Guy Oldham & Pierre Hardouin

## (1) Pierre Thierry

(*b* Paris, late 1604; *d* Paris, 15 Sept 1665). He studied music with Florent Bienvenu, organist of the Ste Chapelle, and was apprenticed to Valeran De Héman in 1623. Between 1634 and 1636 he worked with Crespin Carlier at St Nicolas-des-Champs. Later he set up on his own and worked at Notre Dame, St Jean and St Gervais, Paris. He added a 4' stop to the Pedal of the St Gervais organ in 1649; in 1659–60, under the supervision of Louis Couperin, he added to the *Positif* a new 8' Bourdon, a 4' Flûte made out of the old Bourdon, a Nazard and a Tierce, as well as a fourth manual (an *Eccho* of three octaves from *c*) placed between those of the *Grand orgue* and the *Cornet séparé* and containing Bourdon et octave, Doublette, Nazard et tierce, Cromhorne and Cimballe. He also added the *A* to all the stops of the *Positif* and Pedal, and arranged that the *Grand orgue* to Pedal coupler could be engaged at the discretion of the organist (these changes presumably according to the instructions of Louis Couperin as well).

Thierry's most important organs were at the Hôtel-Dieu at Pontoise (1637–41), St Paul, Paris (1644–6), and the church of the Mathurins, Paris (containing the first combined wind-chest for the *Grand orgue* and *Récit*). In 1657, with Pierre Desenclos, he introduced a *Grand écho* division of seven stops on the organ at Rouen Cathedral. His masterpiece was the St Germain-des-Prés organ (1661; the *Récit* borrowed several stops from the *Grand orgue* by communication). On the death of Desenclos in 1664 he became *facteur du roi*. In addition to (2) Alexandre Thierry, two of his other sons became organ builders: Jean (*b* c1638; *d* Paris, Oct 1689), who built the organ at St Père-en-Vallée, Chartres; and Charles (*b* Paris, 15 Nov 1641), whose signature is on a *Trompette* pipe from the St Germain organ (now in the organ at St Merri, Paris).

## (2) Alexandre Thierry

(*b* 1646/7; *d* Paris, Dec 1699). Son of (1) Pierre Thierry. With the completion of the organ at St Séverin in 1675 (built in collaboration with his brother Charles), he established himself as the leading French organ builder of his time. The following year he made a new Cornet for the St Gervais *Cornet séparé* manual, replacing the mechanism for borrowing by communication the Cornet of the *Grand orgue*; between 1678 and 1684 he completed the chorus Tierce on the *Grand orgue* by adding a Quarte de nazard, and replaced the Flageolet on the *Positif* with a Larigot (soon after used by François Couperin in his famous *Dialogue sur les trompettes ... et le bourdon avec le larigot du positif*). As organ builder to the king, he worked at Saint Cyr (1686); St Louis-des-Invalides, Paris (1679–87); St Victor, Paris (1679; part now at St Germain-des-Prés); the abbey of Bucilly (part now at Aubenton); and St Eustache, Paris (1681–9: his masterpiece, incorporating a 16' Bombarde). Towards the end of his life, he worked with Hippolyte Ducastel (Notre Dame, Paris, 1691) and Robert and Jean Baptiste Clicquot (Anchin). His last work was at the Ste Chapelle, Paris (1697). His second wife, Marguerite, compiled a volume of organ pieces (published as no.25 of *L'organiste liturgique*, Paris, 1960).

## (3) François Thierry

(*b* Paris, late 1677; *d* Paris, 22 May 1749). Nephew and pupil of (2) Alexandre Thierry. He worked at Nemours (1703), St Gervais, Paris (1714; Trompette récit) and Rouen Cathedral (1717; his first 16' Bombarde), and built organs for Saint Germain-en-Laye (1709–10) and the church of the Cimetière des Innocents, Paris (1723; part now at St Nicolas-du-Chardonnet). He completely reconstructed the organ at Notre Dame, Paris (1730–33; apparently the first organ to be built with a separate *Bombarde* manual, of Bombarde 16', Trompette 8', Clairon 4' and Cornet V, all coupled to the *Grand orgue*). He later worked in the cathedrals of Reims, Beauvais and Tours, and advised the canons of Toul (1740). Andreas Silbermann worked for him between 1704 and 1706 (Orléans Cathedral; part survives in Fleury).

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