

A French Empire ormolu mantel clock with standing figure of cupid holding bow and arrow, supported by a spherical clock drum with stars on an octagonal plinth base decorated with putti, garlands and trophies, above a stepped and moulded base raised on classical feet.

The case created between 1804-1810 by Claude Galle in Paris, the original eight day twin barrel movement with silk suspension and count wheel strike on bell is signed in the front on the white dial enamel "Tarault a Paris, Feaubourg Saint-Honore' n.24", with Roman hours and with blued steel Breguet hands. (Nowadays at this address there is the Hermes flagship boutique).



Claude Galle (1758–1815) and Tarault, Paris 1804–1810.

Height: 17.71 in. (45 cm)

Width: 7.48 in. (19 cm)

Depth: 6.30 in. (16 cm)

A related, almost identical clock signed 'Galle 9 Rue Vivienne' is in the collections of the Museo de los Relojes, now Museo de Atalaya, Inv.N.58, Jerez, Spain. It is mentioned and illustrated in:

• Ottomeyer, H.; Pröschel, P., *Vergoldete Bronzen – Bronzearbeiten des Spätbarock und Klassizismus*, München, 1986, p.708, fig. 27.

Conditions: The clock mechanism and the gilding have been preserved in very good conditions. The clockwork has been professionally cleaned and serviced by our clock maker and is in a perfect working condition. It comes complete with the pendulum and key.

Claude Galle (1759–1815):

Claude Galle was born at Villepreux near Versailles, but moved to Paris in his youth to begin an apprenticeship under the *fondeur* Pierre Foy. In 1784 Galle married Foy's daughter. Following the death of his father-in-law in 1788, Galle took over the workshop, which he transformed into one of the finest of its kind with a workforce of about 400 craftsmen. Galle promptly moved the business to Quai de la Monnaie (renamed Quai de l'Unité) and from 1805 operated from 6 Rue Vivienne. First listed in the trade registers in 1784, he was received as a *maître-fondeur* in 1786 and promptly gained the first of many commissions from the Garde-Meuble de la Couronne under Jean Hauré from

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1786–88. He is known to have collaborated with Pierre-Philippe Thomire, amongst others, and was responsible for the majority of bronzes d'ameublement supplied during the Empire to the Château de Fontainebleau. Other Imperial commissions included the supply of numerous vases, ewers, light fittings, figural clock cases and other fine bronze furnishings for the palaces at Saint-Cloud, the Trianons, Tuileries, Compiègne, Rambouillet palaces, as well as a number of Italian palaces including Monte Cavallo, Rome and Stupinigi near Turin. Yet despite numerous important commissions, Galle was often in debt, partly on account of his lavish life-style and also since many of his clients, such as Prince Joseph Napoleon, failed to pay him. After his death, Galle's business was reopened and prospered under his son, Gérard-Jean Galle (1788–1846). His work can be found among the world's finest collections including those mentioned above as well as the Musée National de Château de Malmaison, the Musée Marmottan in Paris, the Museo de Relojes at Jerez de la Frontera, the Residenz Munich and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.