

ICMA Master Carvers Series

A resource for discussion and information.

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13 The Facet Master (1089-1123)

John James

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The capitals discussed here may be examined in larger format in vols. 3-5 of *The Ark of God*, and his full *œuvre* will be published in volume 7.

This is number 13 of an on-going series describing Early Gothic carving masters for discussion and comments

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Mogneville south chapel (a-)

1103

The Facet Master (1089-1123) and the story of Mogneville

These are very characteristic designs with two or more facets on each side. In later work they may be slightly concave. The lower two-thirds is undecorated. Crockets are curled and almost symmetrical. This amplifies the collection of faceted capitals in v.3-58/59.

The documents indicates that the Lessay choir aisle would have been carved around 1090 and the construction chronology for Saint-Martin-des-Champs suggests that the chapel dado would have been carved around 1123.ⁿ These would seem to have been his first and last jobs, giving Faceter a working life of about 33 years. Allowing for the decline in construction due to the First Crusade, his thirty-seven campaigns could be stretched across these years.

To establish an initial order I spaced them equally at about 8 months apart. This gave a preliminary chronology and led to being able to divide his *œuvre* into nine phases. This led to refinements in the dating, which led to a better understanding of his progress over time.

These are unspectacular yet competent capitals, and perverse enough to avoid being photographed, for they seldom appear in the many studies of the period. Even Maylese Bayle in her monumental study fails to include any of them in her monograph.ⁿ They do not conform to any canon of carved work, and being without more than the lightest decoration have merited little attention. Yet it is exactly this singularity that separates them from the general, and therefore points to an individual carver.

I have found facets in over a hundred individual stones, and I would be surprised if I missed any in the Paris Basin while making the Survey. These are all the faceted capitals to be found in the region. It is a rich *œuvre* from which much may be deduced. It will be my purpose to extract as much information as possible from this large collection.

They are not scattered over a wide area. Except for two works in Normandy and the little churches of Bonnesvalyn and Fleury-en-Bière, they lie exclusively within walking distance of the Seine and Oise rivers west of Paris. He laboured twice at Bonnesvalyn, perhaps three if one of the first slightly-uncharacteristic capitals was his, which suggests this may be near where he was trained, perhaps even his home town. After all, it lies just north of the Marne escarpment and its magnificent quarries.

His *œuvre* can be divided into eight distinctive phases by characteristics. I will set them out before describing each one.

The eight phases

Phase 1 before the Crusade. The central facet is extended as a block up to the astragal. The crockets are spiral, usually beautifully executed. The sides of the middle facets give the impression of being parallel. The example is in the choir of Lessay.

Phase 2 1102-03 Similar extension of the central panel, with larger crockets that have an extension underneath like a keel. The example is in the nave of Villers-Saint-Paul.

Phase 3 1104-06 The extension of the central panel is decorated, usually in a delicate manner. The example is in the apse of Verneuil-sur-Seine.

Phase 4 1106-10 The central extension is removed and the crockets are joined by a triangular space that may be decorated. The edges of the 'v' and the crockets are emphasised with delicate nailheads. The example is in the north aisle in the nave of Bury.

Phase 5 1110-13 The 'v' is long and emphatic, enlarged crockets may be floral, and plates may be concave. The example is in the south transept of Cambronne-lès-Clermont,

Phase 6 1113-15 Toned down so the plates are less concave, the crockets less sumptuous and with strong nailhead decoration around 'v'. The triangle at the top may be left empty. The example is in the north transept of Cambronne-lès-Clermont,

Phase 7 1116-20 No more decoration and a plain 'v' between the plates. The design has been reduced to its simplest and plainest with large keel crockets. The example is in the nave clerestory of Bury.

Phase 8 1120-23 Undecorated except for lots of variety in the crockets. The example is in the upper storey of the tower at Noisy-le-Grand. In his last two jobs the edge of the astragal has been enlarged to fit into the top of the 'v'. The example is in the apse dado of Saint-Martin.



Phase 1 (Lessay)



Phase 2 (Villers-Saint-Paul)



Phase 3 (Verneuil-sur-Seine)



Phase 4 (Bury)



Phase 5 (Cambronne)



Phase 6 (Cambronne)



Phase 7 (Bury west clerestory)



Phase 8 (Noisy-le-Grand tower and



the Saint-Martin-des-Champs apse dado)

Possible earlier work

It is generally believed that the nave of Cerisy-la-Fôret would have been constructed during the last two decades of the eleventh century. There are three capitals that may have been carved by Faceter as a young man still discovering himself and his manner [b]. The fact that he carved three of the largest tells us he was well-regarded by his contemporaries and already a master among men.

The facets are clearly marked, as is his concern with how to fill the central space when it was such a large stone. There are some curved 'V's at the top with either a flat plate underneath a pair of full-height curved plates or a shorter pair with a curved upper frame. In other respects these are what one could expect from a younger Faceter. It is worth noting the size of the crockets with their keels, and the decoration of the upper middle zone is similar to more sophisticated designs in Gassingcourt fifteen years later. There is a curious device of a post up the corner under the crocket [b2].



Cerisy-la-Fôret WN3n(a)

1089



Cerisy-la-Fôret WN4n(a)

1089

There is a slim possibility that the two rather crudely carved faceted capitals in Brévands nave were also his, carved before Cerisy [r2,3,4]. They have 8- and 12-sided facets with dimple and keel crockets.

At Bonnesvalyn, far away on the other side of Paris, there is also a shaft under the corner crocket. It is on the right face of the capital [b2]. There are facets on each corner, but the 'v' between them has been taken to the abacus. If this was by Faceter, he did not later use either the cleavage or the reversed *énchancré*. Both items are extremely rare in northern France.

The curled crockets have a dimple on the underside rather than the keel [arrow in b2]. These two ways of completing the bottom of the crocket are found in most of his carving.

The crossing and the room under the tower were built around 1090, probably before rather than later. It would seem logical that he would have been engaged on the two Norman jobs, Cerisy and Lessay, at about the same time, and then he moved east to Bonnesvalyn. It may be significant that Brévands, Bonnesvalyn and Lessay have rib vaults.

In the nave there is one capital with large and very pointed keels and a lop-sided scroll on the crockets [b3]. The space between the facets has been creatively explored in a similar way to Cerisy. I therefore presume it was carved about the same time.



Bonnesvalyn crossing ES1n(a) front

1091



Bonnesvalyn crossing ES1n(a) right side

1091



Cerisy-la-Fôret north nave

1090



Brévands nave to the west

1090



Brévands EN1e

1090



Brévands EN1w

1090



Bonnesvalyn nave WS3(a)

1090

1089

1090

DRAFT

Phase 1 (1091-1095) before the Crusade

1091

The earliest two capitals in the full Faceter manner are those in the lower walls of the choir of Lessay [r1,2]. The central pane extends into the astragal and the spiral crockets have dimples on the underside.

The evidence of the documents shows they would have been carved around 1090.n Malcolm Thurlby wrote “there seems nothing incompatible with a 1098 completion of the choir at Lessay”,ⁿ and quoted Eliane Vergnolle: “La construction de l’église fut sans doute entreprise peu après 1080; en 1098, Eudes de Capel...fut enterré au milieu du choeur, quie était probablement achevé”.¹

The assumption that the crossing and its vaults would have been substantially finished by then is reasonable, particularly in view of the gathering evidence that rib vaults were in use in northern France in the 1080s,ⁿ more than a decade before those in Durham.

These capitals are sophisticated and accurately carved, with clearly defined edges and exact intersection of planes. Though not perfect, the scrolls in the crockets are masterful with sharp edges and remarkably even finish to the inclined helical surfaces. The level of skill shows that Faceter had carried out considerable work before this, and I am going to suggest that his home may have been in the region between the Marne and Soissons.

1093

The crossing of Jouy-le-Moutier would have been after Lessay. The capital is similar and there were once rib vaults here, before the height of the church was raised. He also worked on the uppermost storey of the tower that sits immediately above the crossing. Though I could not access the north face, he did four face stones on the other sides. Being in his earliest manner with the central face projecting upwards into the astragal suggests



Lessay choir aisle 1092



Lessay choir aisle 1092



Jouy-le-Moutier crossing ES1nw(a) 1093



Jouy-le-Moutier tower (3)



Jouy-le-Moutier tower level (3) 1095

that the crossing and the tower were both constructed in the one massive campaign. The only difference is that the keel crockets in the tower are a little more elongated and point downwards, as at Villers-Saint-Paul.

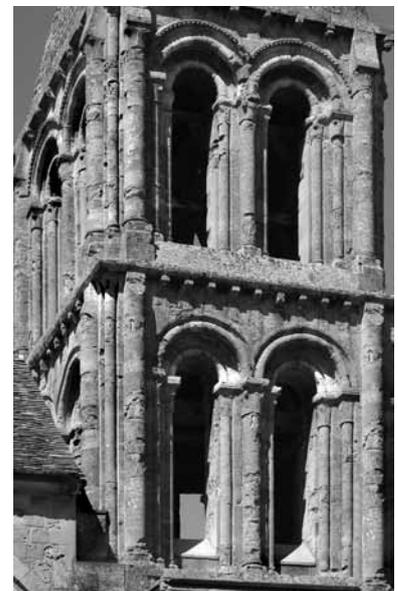
Nevertheless I have doubts on whether Jouy was before or after the Crusade. From Faceter’s detailing alone it could be either way. The chronology for the Comet Master also indicates an earlier time, though the question of the date for this important work should be left open until more masters who worked at Jouy have been examined.

DRAFT 1094



Maule crypt 1094

In between he also carved in the crypt of Maule, a surprisingly large church to the south of the Seine [r1]. Very like Jouy in form, with clearly defined planes and fairly small spiral crockets. These are the only capitals I have found that could have been carved by Faceter before the Crusade.



Jouy-le-Moutier upper two levels of the tower

Phase 2 (1102-1103)

The central facet was still extended to the top of the block, but the crockets were made proportionally larger. In other respects there was little change over this period.

In earlier pieces in this *Master Carvers Series* I have described the work of Gripple and the SS Master working in the nave of Villers-Saint-Paul. They would have had unacceptably long working lives if their capitals had been carved before 1100. In Faceter we now have a third man in the same workshop. All three point to a time immediately after funding resumed following the Crusade and together indicate a date around 1102 [r1,2]. One capital has keel crockets, one has dimples and little fronds and one has a double-height scroll of leaves that may have been carved by another as the design is unique [b3].

1102



Villers-Saint-Paul

1102



Villers-Saint-Paul WN5e(a)

1102



Villers-Saint-Paul

1102

1103

The south wall of the Bury nave was probably next [r2]. There is one capital that is not as tall as the adjacent capital under the doubleau that was also by Faceter visible in the illustration of the whole pier [r3]. An infill block was set over it to raise the smaller capital to the same height, marked at bottom end of the line with an arrow, suggesting that the template had been changed and that there had been a break in campaigns.

Also, the doubleau capital is in the later manner of Phase 6, as there is no central panel to extend into the astragal. This raises the interesting possibility that the southern entry doorway, with its worn yet delicate carving, may have been built to the top of that capital before any of the later work in the nave [arrow r4].^{garden wall} The interior foundations may have been laid and the piers started, but this was the only interior capital to have been carved in this campaign. The corner of the draught lobby on the inside of the portal is just visible on the right in the photo [r3]. The capitals to the south door lie two courses below the internal capitals, and may have been part of the same campaign as the smaller capital by Faceter. I would date the south door and this lone capital to Phase 2 in 1103, and the other to the third campaign in Phase 6 in 1113, ten years later. These campaigns have been explained in Gripple.

Alternatively, Faceter could have carved the smaller capital for some other place and left it lying in the shed waiting for a use. Against this possibility I am aware it was carved in his earliest manner, and for a different height than any of the other capitals in the nave.

From Bury Faceter went to Mogneville. There are six groups of capitals reflecting at least 8 construction campaigns. Faceter was employed to carve capitals at Mogneville on three occasions over a number of years. I intend in the next three pages to examine the history of this little church in some detail as the phases of construction determine the order of Faceter's changing style, and this will order the phases of his design in other buildings.



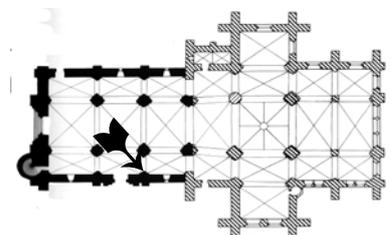
Bury Ws2nw(a) one smaller capital

1103



Bury Ws3n,nw(a)

1103 and 1113



Bury plan, Ws3 marked by arrow

DRAFT



Mogneville crossing looking north and east

The history of church of Saint-Denis at Mogneville

The church was designed for two chapels flanking a larger central apse, with all three opening off the crossing and adjacent bays of the transept. Both lateral chapels were replaced by rectangular additions, the north in the 1230s and the south later in that century. The presence of the tower over the crossing protected the three entry bays from further restoration.

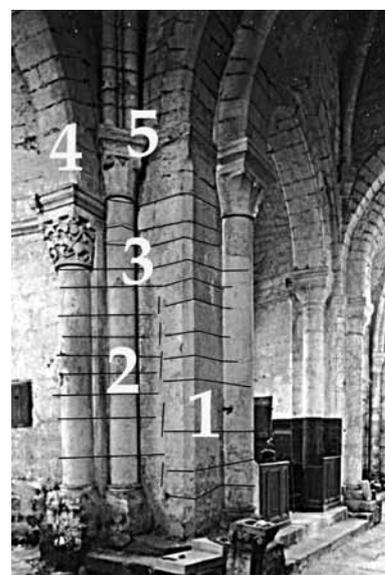
Though the junctions in the piers are complex, by following courses and seeing how they align with the capitals and arches which are at different heights, we can arrive at a picture of its history.

This is an annotated photo of the south pier of the north chapel [r1]. It includes the entry arch into the chapel (4) and the arches of the crossing [r1]. The masonry joints are marked with thicker lines, and the vertical lines mark the junction between the crossing pier and the shafts of the chapel entry. This shows that the lowest 10 or so courses of the crossing were built first (campaign 1). As some courses above that, more or less level with the capitals, were built together (3), therefore the shafts under this that support the chapel entry arch and the rib were built after the crossing pier and before the level of the capitals had been reached (2). In campaign 4 the chapel entry arch was built, and after it the capitals under the crossing arches (5).

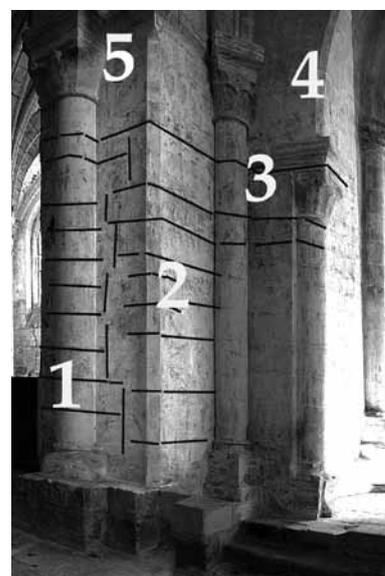
This may sound disorderly, yet we can imagine the process of decisions: firstly to have a crossing (pier 1), secondly, and later, lets add to that a pair of flanking chapels (shafts 2), thirdly lets make the crossing taller than the chapels and thus we have to put up the chapel capitals next (3), and finally lets get the crossing completed (5). As the dateable part of the construction, being the capitals, belong to just after the Crusade, it is possible that the first, more limited decision, was taken before 1095, and when work resumed the plans were more ambitious.

The situation is similar on the south [r2]. The masonry for the crossing was first with the vertical joint this time on the western face, rather than the northern, as on the other chapel. The southern stonework was next (2), and it continued over and connected into the earlier work at the level of the chapel capital (3). The chapel entry arch was next (4) followed by the capitals to the crossing (5) and for the ribs over the south transept.

This means that the capitals flanking the entry into the chapels were the first group and those around the crossing and over the rib shafts formed the second group. They were not parts of the same campaign as the entry arches into the chapels had to be set up, given time for the mortar to set, and the formwork removed before the next team of masons could be called



Mogneville EN1 pier with campaigns marked



Mogneville ES1 pier with campaigns marked

in. During the span of time between campaigns 3 and 5 the first carvers moved off to work elsewhere and a new group were appointed. The Facet Master was in both. In Group 1 he carved the southern capital in a manner typical of Phase 1 [b3].



Mogneville SC-sL(a-)

1103



Mogneville NC-n(a-)

1103



Mogneville SC-eR(a-)

1103

In Group 2 most of the capitals of the crossing were by the one master [b1]. In the western piers there are vertical joints on the side of the nave that separate these two programs. The crossing and its arches were built in one action to be the stabilizing factor for the rest of the work.

There are two identical capitals by Faceter [r2], one on the north side of the north chapel entry, and another under the entry into the apse. Both are visible in the large photo on the previous page, marked by arrows. As we shall see, they both belonged to Phase 4 in the development of his designs, and were an experiment in decorating the upper part of the central plate.

I would interpret this as indicating either that Groups 1 and 2 were contemporaneous or that the arch over the entry into the north chapel was erected in two stages. The lower voussoirs against the crossing pier would have been first, and the rest on the other side had to wait until there were more funds, a not uncommon practice.

If contemporary I had impossible difficulties in ordering the work of four other buildings, and in particular the time-line of the two major building campaigns in Bury.



Mogneville EN1s(a) and NC-n(a-)

1107



Mogneville EN1w, ES1w, WN1e,s(a)

1107



Mogneville ES1sw(a)

1107



Mogneville NE1nw(a)

1107

Group 1 would have been carved in 1103, and Group 2 as part of Phase 4 in Faceter's development in 1107, a gap of about four years. This meant that the southern chapel was ahead of the north, and therefore that the entry arch in the south transept that was intended to give access to a future nave aisle, should be allocated to Group 3 [arrow r4].



Mogneville S-wN(a-) visible remnant

1109



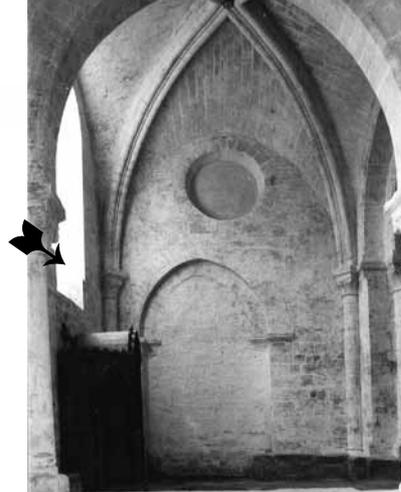
Mogneville S-wS(a-) visible remnant

1109



Mogneville south transept, door marked by arrow

The southern transept rib capitals would have been next, for the same reason as above, that the south was ahead of the north. None of the carvers of these capitals had anything to do with Faceter [b]. There is a small change to the frame of the window indicated by an arrow [r1]. This lines up with the framing around the voussoirs of the arch into the nave aisle mentioned previously, and suggests a pause in the work at the level of these rib capitals [b]. The rest of the wall with the ribs came later, and the little rose that is just like one in a nearby building where Faceter also worked, the north transept of Cambronne-lès-Clermont[r1].



Mogneville south transept looking west



Mogneville SE2nw(a)

1110



Mogneville SW2ne(a)

1110



Mogneville SW1se(a)

1110

Group 5 in the north arm was next, and this is where we meet Faceter again [r4]. It is now around 1110, some three years after his previous appearance in Mogneville. The extension of the central facet has disappeared, and the 'v' between the crockets has a deep cleavage and its frame has been decorated with nailheads that continue around the spirals of the crockets.

We have already met one of these capitals in the work of the SS Master in the *Master Carvers Series* number 2, where it was dated to 1102 [b1]. This was before I had realised the importance of the building recessions after the crusades. A small adjustment of both dates may have to be made in the final analysis, but am waiting on other masters before attempting this.



Mogneville north transept looking north



Mogneville NE2sw(a)

1111



Mogneville NW2se(a)

1111



Mogneville NW1ne Group 4

1111

Group 6 capitals in the apse, both those to the first piers and those on the eastern wall, are virtually the same, and all by Faceter. We can therefore argue that the whole of this bay was built as a single unit, at least on the level of the capitals. The splayed walls suggest a serious change in plan, for they considerably widened the apse.



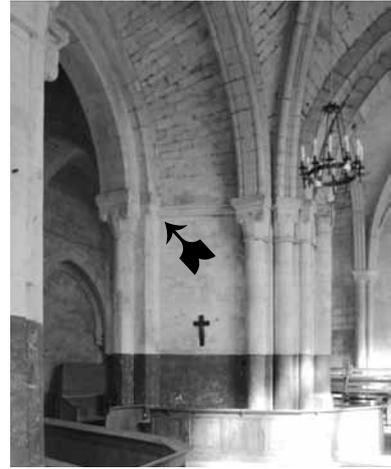
Mogneville ES2, EN2, Es3 and En3(a)

1115

In the first bay next to the crossing there are construction joints against the eastern face of both crossing piers [r1]. These show that the apse was built after the crossing. The apse imposts are similar to those in the crossing, north and south, but cut from narrower stones, showing more continuity of ideas than masters. On the south the picture is clearer: the choir impost butts up to the crossing impost and was therefore laid down later [arrow].

The history of the transept vaults and their ribs is just as complicated as the capitals, and does not concern us here. However, it is worth noting that the junction between the rib shafts and the crossing piers shows that the ribs were butted in later. On the outer walls the ribs are integral with the arch shafts. This shows that the outer walls of the transepts were begun after the arches over the crossing piers had been completed, while the two similar Faceter capitals show that the crossing had not been completed before the lateral walls were begun. In short, the break in construction lies between the crossing arches and the western rib capitals.

The construction order shows that Faceter's experiments with the upper extension of the central plane definitely preceded the use of the 'v' between the crockets, and that the long 'v' in the northern transept came before the flatter 'v' in the apse [r]. Having established that, we can proceed to follow the rest of his work.



Mogneville west bay apse, north side



Phase 3 (1104-1106)

1103

His capital in the entry to the south chapel at Mogneville was carved in the simple format he had used since Jouy [r1]. This was Phase 2 in 1103. In Phase 3 he eliminated the extension of the central plane and decorated the triangle in various ways. The first may have been in the apse of Verneuil-sur-Seine [b], where one has a simple unadorned 'v' but with powerful keel crockets, a second has a central facet that continues upwards, but with a projecting block at the top, while the third, the largest, has the head of a bearded man with a wide moustache.



Mogneville SC-eR(a-) Group 1 1103

1104



Verneuil-sur-Seine EN2 1104



Verneuil-sur-Seine EN1se 1104



Verneuil-sur-Seine EN1s 1104

1105

There are two in the base of the tower at Saint-Rieul in Louvres. One has a crude head with upturned moustache in which small crockets have been hurriedly hacked off [b1]. The other has a six-pointed star at the top and larger keel crockets [b2]. He seems to have been experimenting with ways to enliven the upper part and to decorate the centre.

DRAFT



Louvres, Rieul 1105



Louvres, Rieul 1105

1106

One capital in the nave of Gassincourt follows this development with a range on each face of motifs placed in the upper centre [r,b]. One is the head of a man with a moustache. This would have been the last in Phase 3.



Gassincourt nave

1106



Gassincourt nave detail

1110



Gassincourt nave



Gassincourt nave

1106



Gassincourt nave

1106

Phase 4 (1106-1110)

1107

These attempts to enliven the medallion were finally resolved by eliminating it altogether, and instead Faceter emphasised the upper curves and used decoration to bring attention to the upper part of the capital.

The three at Mogneville from Group 2 include an identical pair, one in the north pier of the north chapel and its brother on the south side of the north-east crossing pier [r2]. In them the cartouche has been split into three parts. This capital has just been discussed on page 7.

The third is in the south chapel, and was designed somewhat in the exploratory manner of Cerisy-la-Fôret. The upper area has been hollowed out and the space framed with a thin curlicue [r3]. This approach did not appeal and was not used again.

1106

At Bury, not far along the road from Mogneville, the construction campaigns have been discussed in the piece on the Gripple Master. After the carving of a capital just inside the south portal in Phase 2, the next campaign in 1106 involved four capitals on the north side of the nave. The decorative inserts above the 'v' place these in Phase 4, which is the period during which he was experimenting with ways to handle the triangle between the crockets. One was a diamond with a concave centre, another a delicately carved five-pointed leaf that looks a little like a cross [r4]



Mogneville EN1s(a) Group 2

1107



Mogneville SC-sl(a-)

1106



Bury nave detail above 'v' of WN3

1106



Bury WN4sw(a) campaign 2



Bury WN4se(a)



Bury nave WN3(a) campaign 2

1106



Bury nave WN3(a)

1106

Adjacent is a detail of a crocket from Bury to show the mature form that bulges up into the corner of the astragal and droops to a keeled edge at the bottom, and the carefully carved spiral and little decorative baubles around the curves [r1]



Bury Ws1(a) crocket with nailhead decoration

The second level of the tower at Bruyères-sur-Oise was being built at this time. Both the Duke and Gripple were also on the team. Considering their time lines, I would have been happier with a slightly later date, but we can sort that out later. Meantime we can see that the Faceter capital on the left has a little medallion at the top, while the one on the right has the central panel carried up to the astragal [b]. Both have slightly keeled crockets. The designs would tend to place them earlier in Phase 4, rather than later.



Bruyeres-sur-Oise tower level 2

1108

In the little church of Puiseaux-le-Hauberger in the same region with two Faceter capitals in the apse [b1,2]. A medallion at the top of one is just like Bruyères, and on the other a little decorative foliate like Bury.

In the nave of Gaillon-sur-Montcient, only a short distance north of the Seine, there are three, one with a little medallion [r2]. They are very like Puiseaux, and I would date them close to each other [r3].



Gaillon-sur-Montcient nave Wn3

1109



Puiseaux-le-Hauberger ES2w

1108



Puiseaux-le-Hauberger ES2w

1108



Gaillon-sur-Montcient nave Wn3

1109

At this stage the Facet Master was being stimulated by the possibilities available within the strict limits imposed by his template. Even where the facets were slightly curved inwards, he never abandoned the concept of setting out the forms with eight or more planes. However, where one might think he would then stick to decorating only the upper part of the stone, his work at Montmartre opened some very different concepts.

Queen Adelaide retired to Montmartre abbey in 1134. The choir has been dated after that from the document that states “the church and the abbey we constructed”.ⁿ Yet the unaccented gloom of the side chapels and the aisle capitals on the north side of the nave are definitely from twenty or more years before that. With Faceter and Strapper-Père so clearly represented this part could not have been built in the 30s. The experimental handling of the upper parts of the lateral facets would place the north aisle of the nave into a date close to 1110. It was an old foundation at the time that Queen Adelaide moved in.

1108

1109

DRAFT

1110

One is certainly his, with the slightly concave facets, a keel-crochet, and nailhead decoration [r1]. Only the scoop on the top of the facet, next to the crocket, is uncharacteristic, though not very different to the patterns across the face of the facets in Bury.

There are two intriguing capitals at Montmartre. One has no facets, but is rounded yet in other respects has the Faceter keel-croquets and the little medallion at the top [b1]. The other has facets, but instead of croquets the plates have been lowered and figures sit on the top [r2,3]. There are the remains of an animal on the left, a thrusting figure in the middle and on the right face a truncated head with wings that belonged to another figure. These two collations may have been by assistants influenced by the master's schema.

It should be noted that the facets are somewhat like broadleaf, but with a difference: they are not forms that could be decorated into leaves, which was the case with most simpler designs, nor are they rounded or conical. They are planes with edges kept as straight as possible, and it is this straightness that would make it difficult to turn into foliage.



Montmartre WN4(a)

1110



Montmartre WN1n(a) right upper face

1110



Montmartre WN1n(a) front upper face

1110



Montmartre WN3w(a)

1110



Montmartre WN1n(a)

1110

Phase 5 (1110-1113)

1110

The supports for the northern ribs at Mogneville belong to group 5 where the 'v' has come into its own [r4]. There are no medallions. The form has become plain, just a simple 'v' hanging off the keel-croquets. The element that characterises this phase is the length of the 'v', more like a cleavage than a division. The nailheads form a delicate bracelet around the edges, more like cloth than stone.

The other faceted stone in the north has no decoration [r5]. It is extremely plain, with a small 'v' and keel-croquets, more like an archetype for the Facet Master than one of his richer layouts [r4]. We have met these simpler one before among the more complex, as in Bury north, Montmatre and in Verneuil and Mogneville north. These could all have been by an associate, or a pupil, or they could have been simply the 'basic' or signature model.

The south arm in Cambronne-lès-Clermont also has a plunging 'v' and with a little element inserted where the medallion used to be [b1]. He experimented with decorative foliage instead of croquets. The equally decorative capital in the Fitz-James crossing would be contemporary [b2].



Mogneville NW1ne Group 4?

1110



Mogneville EN1nw(a) Group ?

1110

1112

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Cambronne south

1113



Fitz-James crossing

1112

Here he introduced multiple lines around the crockets that fade away as they reach the point of the 'v'. In both the medallion has a similar form.

In the western tower at Morienvall the uppermost level also has one of these capitals [r1]. The nave and lower parts of this tower had been built in the later 1080s, followed by all levels of the eastern towers. This program was halted by the Crusade, and was not recommenced until 1104 with the construction of the choir squeezed in between the eastern towers. The completion of the western tower would seem to have been the last step in the abbey building program.



Morienvall W(3)

1110

Phase 6 (1113-1115)

In this phase the decorative elements were softened, the depth of the 'v' reduced and the importance of the facets brought to the fore. He was returning to earlier principles that emphasized the unique form of his capitals rather than decoration that had had a tendency to take over and dominate at the expense of the basic simplicity of his original concept.

In the next campaign on the capitals in the south aisle at Bury he downsized the importance of the 'v' frame [b]. In the same campaign he carved a capital in the clerestory over the opposite aisle [r1]. At both levels his stones are next to ones by Gripple and Aviateur.



Bury clerestory WN1(c)

1113

1110

1113



Bury south nave aisle WS2sw(a)

1113



Bury Ws1ne(a)



Bury Ws1

1113



Bury WS1

1113

There are two capitals in the confused centre of Ully-Saint-Georges, confused as there have been so many changes it is hard to disentangle either their intentions or the restorations.

1114



Ully-Saint-Georges crossing

1114



Ully-Saint-Georges crossing

1114

The north arm of Cambronne came next [b]. The more extreme movement in the 'v' has been softened further. It is unusual that nearly all the capitals in this campaign at Cambronne were by Faceter.

DRAFT 5



Cambronne north transept NE1nw(a), NW2(a), WN1n(a) and NE2(a)

1115

1115

In the apse in Mogneville all the capitals were by Faceter [b]. As described above, the apse was added onto the earlier crossing with walls that opened out to enlarge the width. He placed greater emphasis on the weightiness and the decoration of the upper curves and crockets, one of which has little fronds [r1,b1] while all the others have keels.

In this apse and in Cambronne north every capital was carved by the same master. They are among the few campaigns anywhere in which this happens. It suggests he had a high reputation at this time, perhaps acting as master mason, though the profiles do not confirm this.

We might call this his classical period. In it he found a balance in which the facets, the decoration of the upper curves and the spaces occupied by them are pleasant and well-proportioned.



Mogneville ES2, detail of crocket leaves



Mogneville ES2

1115



Mogneville EN2



Mogneville east wall of apse ES3



Mogneville EN3

Phase 7 (1116-1120)

1116

In Phase 7 he took the process of simplification further while the enhancement of the frame around the 'v was reduced or eliminated altogether. Though worn, you can just make out the facets on the lower windows to the Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex. The right-hand capitals on each side of the window seem to have facets, though the weathering obscures the crease between the planes [b,r]. Some of the others have parts that rise to the astragal, which could suggest an earlier date for the window.

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Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex XN(aw)

1116



Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex XN(aw)

1116

1117

Epône, a little town on the south side of the Seine, not far from Mantes, placed an octagonal tower on its square base around 1120. This would have been one of the first octagonal towers anywhere in France. It is usually associated with the work of Count Galleran around 1150 [v:1758-60], but the capitals make it clear that his gift was for the upper storey and the spire. This middle level belonged to an earlier period.

The Facet Master carved two capitals with minimal medallions and dimpled crockets, thus placing it contemporary with the Saint-Leu gallery and Puiseaux [b1,2]. Little decorative niceties were placed above the ‘v’ while the decoration along the ‘v’ itself was removed.

The curious little arches over the corners that ‘join’ the openings do not have parallels anywhere else [b3]. They seem to have been an attempt, in this most original scheme, to give some visual solidity to the corner. It shows how tentative the use of the octagon still was, because the strength and sharpness of the corner in a square tower construction was lost in the octagon. These little arches suggest that the octagon form was not yet seen as a totally comfortable solution in its own right.



Epône tower, lower octagonal section 1117



Epône tower (2)

1117



Epône tower (2)

1117



Epône tower detail at corners

1117

1117

Its hard to say, but the lower level of the Nery tower may have been built at this time or somewhat later. It has one tiny capital closest to some of the equally thin stones at Bury, and were lightly incised chevrons in the arch. It sits over the barrel-vaulted entry into the apse, forming a sort of crossing that contains capitals by the Duke and the SS Masters from around the same time. The rest of the tower and its great spire come from the middle of the century.

We could define the plan-form at the base of most of the previous phases as having three facets per face, in which the central one was often the largest. From here on this would change. As at Epône, the central one was eliminated so there was a crease at the centre instead of a plane. This meant he divided the face of the block into eight parts with creases up the corners and in the middle.

The division was not made on the underside of the block as would have been normal. This was not possible as the circular abacus projects further than even the corners of the facets. This meant he had to set out the geometry for the facets from the face of the block. The normal geometric process of drawing intersecting lines through the centre of a circle could not be done here. The sides had to be set out from outside the abacus. Having mastered this difficult task it is easy to see why he kept using it wherever he went.

During these last five years of his working life the Facet Master continued to simplify his work, eliminating unnecessary details and using a cultivated artistic sense that was by then his nature to produce austere and rather modern capitals.

He was involved in a major way in the narthex gallery at Saint-Leu, carving more capitals than any one else [r3]. Was he therefore the leading hand? or perhaps the master mason?



Nery tower level 1

1117

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Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g)

1118

Though most of these capitals were recarved or in other ways restored, my impression is that they are fairly close to the originals. This is a richly decorated space that required considerable attention from the masons and ingenuity in forming the templates. For example the chevrons for the ribs, like those in the arch over the windows in the floor below, were carved with each 'leg' of the chevron on a separate stone. These sizes had to be calculated in advance. No fudging is visible at the junction with the boss [r1].

One of Faceter's capitals has a leaf instead of a spiral in the crocket, like the Mogneville apse [b1], and another has a very curious 'Maori' head [r2]. During this last decade of his life he seems to have been enjoying this beautiful balance between the plain forms and the decorative crockets.



Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g) 1118

1118



Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g)

1118



Saint-Leu external, window 1118



Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g) 1118



Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g)

1118



Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g)

1118



Saint-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g)

1118

1119

I would place the Fleury-en-Bière nave close in time to Saint-Leu from the plunge in the 'v' and the delicate little inserts placed above it [b]. The nave may have been one of the last fully groin-vaulted buildings in the Paris Basin [b3].



Fleury-en-Bière nave (c)

1119



Fleury-en-Bière nave (c)

1118



Fleury-en-Bière interior south nave aisle looking north

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Phase 8 (1120-1123)

Designs were increasingly simplified to pure form, unadorned save for some small variety in the crockets. These elements - the eight-sided base and the simplification of the 'v' in ways that are very like those at Saint-Leu - suggest that this was when Faceter returned to his possible home town of Bonnesvalyn and helped add the little polygonal apse onto the earlier crossing.

1120

There is only one capital that may have been his [b1]. I presume there had been a smaller earlier apsidiole that had been left in place when the crossing and tower were erected in the 1090s. The junctions are quite clear in the masonry.



Bonnesvalyn apse (aw)

1120



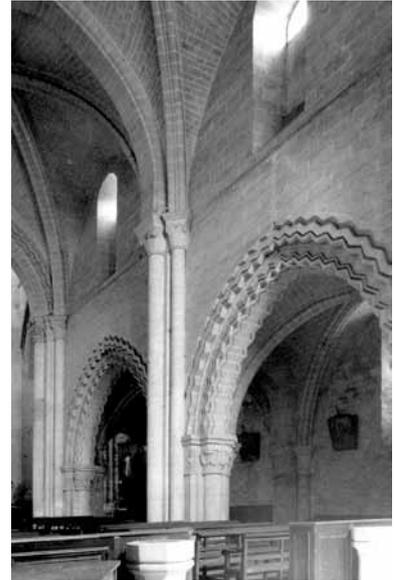
Bonnesvalyn apse

1120

1120

It may have been during this period of simplification that he returned one last time to Bury to complete the high vaults over the nave [b]. The many small campaigns in these churches indicate that funds were not readily available, and that construction had to wait on a good harvest, a successful inheritance or some other fortunate event that would stimulate gifts. Bury was begun just after 1100, and built over the next ten or twelve years, possibly one every couple of years.

Mogneville was similar with six groups of capitals and possibly ten or more campaigns over twenty or more years from the footings before the Crusade to the last of the transept vaults. Among the small churches this was the common story. Because if it the work of carvers was spread over great distances, and men were mingled in different combinations wherever they could gain work. This has made it much easier to sort out the attributions and their chronologies.



Bury nave clerestory vaults



Bury west clerestory

1120



Bury west clerestory

1120



Bury west clerestory

1120

What followed was work on a group of towers. Hard work for a man who would then have been around 50 years of age, climbing up the scaffolding carrying and erecting heavy blocks of stone and moving them into position. I have noticed that some of the other men also did more work on towers later in life, such as the Comet Master and Rameau.

In this phase Faceter helped build the uppermost stories at Bruyères-sur-Oise and Noisy-le-Grand [b].

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Bruyères tower level 3

1121



Bruyères tower level 3

1121



Bruyères tower level 3

1121



Noisy-le-Grand tower

1122

1122

For two reasons I have arranged the Saint-Martin-des-Champs chapel dado and the Foulanges crossing among his last works. Both have foliate crockets with leaves that sweep up and back. In addition, at Saint-Martin and Foulanges the upper space of the block has been extended downwards into the curves of the 'v' like a pair of eyebrows. This was the only time after Lessay that he brought the straight line of the upper edge downwards into the capital.

At Saint-Martin [r1] he was the only carver to use this detail, whereas at Foulanges it was employed by most of the men working on the crossing [r2]. I would assume that he picked up the idea there and carried it with him to Saint-Martin.

However, the presence of the Duke in both places suggests a different and earlier date for Foulanges, closer to 1115 than the 1120s, yet still within Phase 7 of Faceter's *œuvre*. The SS Master in Foulanges confirms this earlier date, and the presence of Gripple and Grégoire in Saint-Martin help establish the date for the latter in 1123. This question must remain open for a while longer.

Conclusion and chronology

Most of Faceter's carving was on small to medium-sized buildings. If we make a few assumptions this may give us some idea of how many of his works have been lost over time and, by extension, possible losses in general.

If an average campaign on a small building lasted say six months, and if he worked some 30 years, then we could estimate that we have lost about 40 percent of everything he worked on.

Except for short spells in Normandy to the west, Bonnesvalyn to the east and Fleury to the south, all his capitals are in the region of the Oise and Seine valleys. The sporadic use of ribs shows he was a carver who worked under another rather than being the master mason himself, for had he been we could have expected ribs wherever he worked.

In the recession during the Crusade he does not appear to have altered his style in any significant way. The long absence from the quarries and lack of projects does not seem to have affected him, not even in improving his techniques.

Eleven campaigns include work by other carvers I have already identified, each of whom has their own sequence from their individual design criteria independently of Faceter [r3]. Faceter worked with the Duke on six occasions, Gripple on seven, and Fanny and the SS Master twice. On three occasions he also worked with Strapper, but I do not yet have enough data on that master to determine his personal chronology.

When dovetailed into the work of Faceter the chronologies of each of these four masters has refined his dates and, more importantly, by clarifying the order in which his work evolved, has confirmed the phases of his creative life. With only the exceptions of Saint-Leu and Foulanges these have not turned out to be very different from those that emerged from the evolution of Faceter's own design changes.

For the period before 1120 I shall attempt to sort this out after I have completed Rameau (the carver who did a great deal south of the Loire), Bannière (who may have retired to Morienval) and the Old Duke. This will give me a base of eight master carvers and almost a thousand capitals to integrate into a chronology for many of the major buildings in that period. This is a realisable aim.



St-Martin-des-Champs axial chapel dado 1123



Foulanges crossing 1122

Companion carvers and their dates

Jouy-le-Moutier crossing (a)	Comet 1105
Villers-Saint-Paul nave (a)	SS 1102 - Gripple 1102
Montmartre north nave	Fanny 1105 - Strapper-Pere 1110
Bury nave north side (a)	Duke 1106 - Duchess, Gripple 1105
Fitz-James crossing	Duke 1106 - Gripple 1107
Cambronne south	Duke 1107
Bury nave south side (a)	Gripple 1110 - Aviateur 1110
Mogneville north (a)	SS 1102
Foulanges crossing	SS 1114 - Duke 1112
St-Leu-d'Esserent narthex (g)	Duke 1115 - Gripple, Aviateur 1114
St-Martin-des-Champs E(d)	Duke 1123 - Gripple 1122.

All works by Faceter, by Phases in date order

0	1088	Brévands	nave
0	1089	Cerisy-la-Fôret	nave (a)
0	1090	Bonnesvalyn	nave
0	1091	Bonnesvalyn	crossing, transepts
1	1092	Lessay	choir
1	1093	Jouy-le-Moutier	crossing (a)
1	1094	Maule	crypt
1	1095	Jouy-le-Moutier	tower 3
2	1102	Villers-Saint-Paul	nave (a)
2	1103	Bury	s portal and wall campaign 1
2	1103	Mogneville	chapels + arches group 1
3	1104	Verneuil-sur-Seine	east
3	1105	Louvres, Saint-Rieul	tower base
3	1106	Gassincourt	nave (a)
4	1106	Bury	north nave (a) campaign 2
4	1107	Mogneville	crossing (a) group 2
4	1108	Bruyères-sur-Oise	tower 2
4	1108	Puiseux-le-Hauberger	east, south
4	1109	Gaillon-sur-Moncient	nave
4	1110	Montmartre	north nave
5	1110	Morierval	west towers 3
5	1111	Mogneville	north ribs (a) group 5
5	1112	Fitz-James	crossing
5	1113	Cambronne	south (a)
6	1113	Bury	nave S (a), W1(c) campaign 3
6	1114	Ully-Saint-Georges	east (a)
6	1115	Cambronne	north
6	1115	Mogneville	apse (a) group 6
7	1116	Saint-Leu-d'Esserent	narthex (a)
7	1117	Epône	tower 1
7	1117	Nery	tower base
7	1118	Saint-Leu-d'Esserent	narthex (g)
7	1119	Fleury-en-Bière	nave (c)
8	1120	Bonnesvalyn	apsidiole
8	1120	Bury	nave 2-4 (c) campaign 4
8	1121	Bruyères-sur-Oise	tower 3
8	1122	Noisy-le-Grand	tower 2
8	1122	Foulangues	w crossing
8	1123	Saint-Martin-des-Champs	choir (d)

All campaigns by the Facet Master in date order



Cerisy-la-Fôret nave (1089)



Brévands (1090)



Bonnesvalyn nave (1090)



Bonnesvalyn apse (1091)



Phase 1 Lessay choir (1092)



Phase 1 Jouy-le-Moutier crossing



Phase 1 Maule crypt (1094)



Jouy-le-Moutier tower (1095)



Phase 2 Villers-Saint-Paul nave (1102)



Phase 2 Bury nave (1103)



Phase 2 Mogneville south (a-) (1103)



Phase 3 Verneuil-sur-Seine apse (1104)



Phase 3 Louvres, Saint-Rieul (1105)



Phase 3 Gassicourt nave (1106)



Phase 4 Bury nave (1106)



Phase 4 Mogneville north chapel (1107)



Phase 4 Bruyères-sur-Oise tower II (1108)



Phase 4 Puisieux-le-Hauberger apse (1108)



Phase 4 Gaillon-sur-Moncient nave (1109)

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Phase 4 Montmartre nave (1104)



Phase 5 Morienval west tower III (1110)



Phase 5 Mogneville Group 4 (1111)



Phase 5 Fitz-James (1112)



Phase 5 Cambronne south (1113)



Phase 6 Bury south nave (1113)



Phase 6 Ullly-Saint-Georges crossing (1114)



Phase 6 Cambronne north (1115)



Phase 6 Mogneville Group 6 (1115)



Phase 7 Epône tower II (1117)



Phase 7 Saint-Leu X(a) (1116)



Phase 7 Nery tower 1 (1117)



Phase 7 St-Leu narthex (g) (1118)



Phase 7 Fleury-en-Bière nave (c) (1119)



Phase 8 Bonnesvalyn apse (1120)



Phase 8 Bury west (c) (1120)



Phase 8 Bruyères tower level 3 (1121)



Phase 8 Noisy-le-Grand tower (1122)



Phase 8 Foulanges crossing (1122)



Phase 8 St-Martin-des-Champs dado (1123)

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