

# Introduction to the carvers.

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These 'Master Carvers Series' papers identify individual carvers from the century before 1190. This has been done by examining capitals with similar templates and forms. Each group was carved over many decades and on many building sites that are occasionally spread across great distances. I am preparing to publish papers on over twenty individuals over the next year. There are details that link capitals with figurative sculpture, showing that the same men were employed for both tasks.

This approach could alter the whole tone of twelfth century medieval studies by describing the period through individuals rather than style, just as we do for the Italian Renaissance.

As my work is 'in progress' and as it is opening ground that could affect future studies in our discipline, it would be valuable for these papers to have the widest circulation and commentary. Therefore I would appreciate your advice and guidance on the ideas, the method of presentation, the language and any other matter that may intrigue you.

The analysis has to be pictorial rather than textual. As larger illustrations can be found in the five volumes of *The Ark of God* most of these capitals and details are presented in thumbnails.

The dates are tentative, though only to a small extent. I am using changes in competence and style to arrange the works of each master in time-sequence. Where a mode continued for longer than a reasonable working life I have attempted to separate the work of master and pupil, or father and son, or however we might wish to picture the transmission of skills and templates.

The discontinuous method of building of this time is essential to the success of this project. If each building had been completed by one master in charge of a fixed workshop we may have had one or two examples of each man's work and not be able to order them in relation to one another. Fortunately buildings were constructed in many campaigns and they left traces of themselves in many places

After separating the work of some thirty carvers the evidence shows they usually travelled to each site on their own, and only occasionally met previous workmates on other sites. This means, as the list in the box shows, that the combination of individual time-sequences set against the occasions they worked on the same sites can be used to establish a chronology for campaigns in other buildings where there were no such contacts.

By extending this procedure across many carvers and hundreds of campaigns, dates may be fine-tuned, even to the year. This has produced surprising dates for some important monuments such as the Notre-Dame churches in Etampes and Châlons, and for some sculptural portals such as Bourges and Provins.

In these studies references to photos are [r1] for the first on the right column, and [b2] for the second photo from the left under the text.

Please remember that as this work is research in progress I will no doubt be altering dates and attributions before the material is published, which may not be until 2014 at the present rate.

**Libraries and individuals my print and file these papers as long as accompanied by this sheet.**

## *Dating procedure illustrated*

I have listed a few campaigns in which The Duke, the SS Master and Strapper carved one or more capitals.

I have marked the three campaigns where The Duke and the SS Master worked together in red, and the two where the latter worked with the Strapper Master in blue. All five have been underlined for emphasis.

This means that the other works by them, set out in approximate time-sequence based on order, can be dated by being either before or after where they worked together.

Marked in bold are all dated campaigns, or where we can work out the date through detailed construction analysis as in Chartres. This adds to the precision for the dates of those campaigns in between.

1128	Bourges	south portal	SS
1128	Pontoise	choir walls	Duke
1130	Saint-Martin-Champs	choir piers (a)	<u>Duke SS</u>
1130	Saint-Martin-Champs	choir (c)	Duke
<b>1132</b>	<b>Saint-Denis 01</b>	<b>W-w</b>	<b>Duke SS</b>
1133	Aulnay-sur-Bois	east	SS
1134	Mans, le 02	south door	SS
<b>1134</b>	<b>Saint-Denis 02</b>	<b>X(a-)</b>	<b>SS</b>
1134	Saint-Germain-des-Prés	choir (a)	Duke
<b>1135</b>	<b>Chartres 01</b>	<b>WN-s(a-)</b>	<b>SS Strap</b>
1135	Noel-Saint-Martin 02	apse	SS
<b>1135</b>	<b>Saint-Denis 03</b>	<b>X (a)</b>	<b>SS</b>
1135	Santeuil 05	nave (t)	Duke
1136	Acy-en-Multien 05	nave (c)	SS
1136	Bouival 01	crossing	Duke
<b>1136</b>	<b>Chartres 02</b>	<b>WN(a)</b>	<b>Strap</b>
1136	Senlis castle	chapel	<u>Duke SS</u>
1137	Cauffry	crossing	Strap
1138	Etampes ND 08	N(c)	SS
<b>1139</b>	<b>Saint-Denis 07</b>	<b>chapel</b>	<b>SS</b>
<b>1140</b>	<b>Chartres 07</b>	<b>WN(2)</b>	<b>Strap</b>
<b>1140</b>	<b>Saint-Denis 09</b>	<b>E(u)</b>	<b>SS Strap</b>
1140	Uilly 02	crossing	Duke
<b>1141</b>	<b>Chartres</b>	<b>WS-n(a-)</b>	<b>SS</b>
1142	Paris Notre-Dame	E(a) walls	Duke
<b>1142</b>	<b>Saint-Denis 10</b>	<b>E(a) walls</b>	<b>Duke</b>
<b>1143</b>	<b>Blois, Laumer</b>	<b>choir (a)</b>	<b>Strap</b>
1143	Châlons ND	nave (a)	Duke
<b>1143</b>	<b>Saint-Denis 12</b>	<b>E(aw)</b>	<b>SS</b>
1144	Chartres 12	X-w(cw)	Strap