



DOMAINE MARQUIS D'ANGERVILLE

2012 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

BACKGROUND

It is quite something to be able to say that some of the vineyards, which comprise today's Domaine Marquis d'Angerville, were once owned by the Dukes of Burgundy. Clearly the historic owners were either enormously perceptive or incredibly fortunate in acquiring such formidable sites. The Domaine lies right at the very heart of Volnay, a portfolio of really beautifully positioned parcels.

More recent history, drawing in today's incumbents, saw the property being left to Sem, Marquis d'Angerville, by his uncle Eugène du Mesnil. Eugène had died without direct descendants. Sem took over in earnest at the end of the 19th century, just after the phylloxera crisis had decimated the vineyards. Grasping the mettle, knowing that the task would not be easy, he was determined, above all, to produce honest, high-quality wines here.

His first task was to get to grips with vineyards, which were in desperate need of restoration. He replanted with specially-selected Pinot Noir vines – stage one. He also questioned the, at best, *laissez-faire* attitude of the established merchants (*négociants*). The established norm, at that time, saw the *négociants* taking care of both the *élevage* and bottling of all wines. For the Marquis, it made no sense whatsoever for him to take meticulous care over his vineyard and harvest only to pass the results of his labours to someone else – particularly when he questioned their scrupulousness.

Stage two – a bold move: as a result of his concerns, he felt forced to begin not only *élevage* and bottling but also to commercialise the vines himself. This was rather a shock to the time-honoured rules of play at the time, whereby everything went through the traditional merchant houses.

Given the solidarity and innate conservatism of the region, we should not underestimate just how courageous and risky this was and, indeed, it created a deep rift between the Domaine and the *négociants*.

In time, however, even the most cynical came to respect the Marquis' decision and his rationale.

As we turn towards more recent times, Sem's grandson Guillaume d'Angerville suddenly had to take up the helm, in 2003, upon the unexpected death of his father, Jacques d'Angerville – a man held in the highest regard, just as his father before him.

For Guillaume, a banker based in Paris, these were particularly big shoes to fill and at such an awful time personally. Not only did he have to handle dealing with his grief but now also faced a stratospheric learning curve.

Fortunately Guillaume was not alone. He had the help of his brother-in-law Renaud de Villette, who had worked with Jacques for a great many years. He also made an inspired appointment in talented François Duvivier as *régisseur* (manager).

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since 2003 and Guillaume has been meticulous in questioning all aspects within the vineyard and cellar. He now runs the Domaine, balancing a modern edge with a profound respect for tradition. The fundamental philosophy centres on a desire to sustain the Domaine so that it might be passed on to future generations in a perfect state. This goal underpins all vineyard practices so chemicals have long since been condemned to the past and in 2006 the Domaine began the process of conversion to biodynamic viticulture which is now completed.

This is a truly exceptional estate with a wonderful rapport between respect for tradition and an openness to change.

2012 VINTAGE NOTES

"Volnay was particularly hard hit in 2012 with two hailstorms, explaining record low yields, but the quality of the vintage will be remembered long after the small crop will have been forgotten."

GUILLAUME D'ANGERVILLE

January 2014

We are at the beginning of a new year and naturally feeling optimistic. Reflecting on what Guillaume D'Angerville has had to say about 2012, he is indeed striking a more positive chord than one would expect given that he is speaking of 2012 in the knowledge of what 2013 subsequently presented – more devastation – but that is a story for another time.

Guillaume is correct in his assessment that 2012 will be remembered for so much more than its tiny production. Indeed, by virtue of its rarity, allied to its innate and impressive quality, it may well become something of legend.

The beginning of the growing season was largely benign, with a mild December – indeed – higher than normal temperatures. January was also mild but then February called a halt to the rather gentle start of the year. It was extremely cold with record low temperatures and many days below zero. March then brought in unseasonably warm conditions so that growers anticipate, as in 2011, a precocious year.

Capricious, April delivered really heavy rains – 40% more than average and a staggering 77% more than in 2011. By now thoughts of an early harvest were in reverse and everything seemed set for a late vintage, reinforced by conditions in May, also wet, though with average temperatures which, at least allowed the vines to resume growing. Flowering started at the beginning of June but rain, once again impeded success. Quantities clearly would be reduced but poor flowering was as nothing to the effects of the violent hailstorm of 30th June.

With great economy of words, not to say understatement, Guillaume simply states *"Damage was significant"*.

July saw little improvement with cooler temperatures, fewer hours of sunshine and yet more rain – ideal conditions in fact for the onset of disease. Mildew had arrived early in the growing season and became particularly active in June and July, just as the vines need all of their reserves for flowering and therefore more susceptible. Both the leaves and the grapes were attacked in one of the most badly hit vintages in living memory. On a more positive note, mildew's cohort, oidium was more limited and more easily controlled.

There were a few days of high temperatures at the end of July before hail lashed back at Volnay on the 1st August, less violently than in June but nonetheless further stressing the recuperating vines.

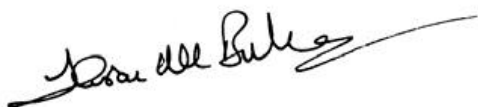
August, at last, presented warm temperatures, which lasted through September and allowed harvest, which began on the 20th, to be carried out in good weather.

We had all anticipated a much reduced crop and, in the end, yields were in the low teens per hectare as opposed to the estate's normal – 35hl/ha.

In its totality, 2012 represents about a quarter of a normal crop and yields here at the Domaine are low, in any case.

Devastating though this may be, the final quantities being so reduced assured the ultimate quality of the wines which are aromatic, characterful, beautifully balanced and very lovely indeed.

Given that this is a shared exclusivity, Guillaume has been as fair as possible, with much reduced allocations, thus our offer is from a very limited range of the holdings listed below – just four wines.



ALISON BUCHANAN

January 2014

DOMAINE MARQUIS D'ANGERVILLE HOLDINGS

PREMIER CRU VINEYARDS	HECTARES	AVERAGE AGE OF VINES (YEARS)
Volnay 1er Cru Clos des Angles	1.07	40
Volnay 1er Cru Fremiet	1.57	30
Volnay 1er Cru Champans	3.98	35
Volnay 1er Cru Clos des Ducs	2.15	45
Volnay 1er Cru Caillerets	0.65	10
Volnay 1er Cru Taillepieds	1.07	35
Volnay 1er Cru	N/A	35
POMMARD		
Pommard 1 ^{er} Cru Combes-Dessus	0.38	30
VOLNAY		
Volnay Villages	0.54	
Meursault 1 ^{er} Cru Santenots	1.04	

2012 TASTING NOTES

(By Adam Brett-Smith)

VOLNAY 1ER CRU FREMIET

Fremiet is a significant 1.57 ha parcel lying about 100m above Les Angles on a steep, stony slope facing south-east, on the Pommard side of Volnay. The soil is very shallow limestone set over rock, denying access to nutrients except to those vines which forage deeply with their roots. This accounts for an attractive briny minerality we find here. The 2012 vintage presents lovely fruit on both the nose and palate, perfumed with attractive purity, soft and fluid with good density, weight and length.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

17 - 18

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2016 – 2026+)

£275/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

VOLNAY 1ER CRU CHAMPANS

The Domaine has 3.98 hectares here – about 4/10 of the appellation – which include a number of different soil types. These, in turn, produce a complex set of ingredients from which to forge the finished wine. The vineyard is next to Les Caillerets, closer to the village and the d'Angerville holdings traverse all of the profiles of the slope. The steeper, upper area has very thin topsoil over limestone – this contributes elegance. Lower down, deeper soils contribute body and structure. Guillaume vinifies everything together so that the wine starts to marry from the outset. This is all about charm and seduction. The nose offers warm, brooding red fruit compote with nuances of liquorice, toffee, mocha and butterscotch. The palate is generous, plump and ripe, supported by lovely, well-integrated, grainy, fine tannins. Attractively balanced, elegant, with good length – a lovely wine.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

-18

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018 – 2028+)

£330/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

VOLNAY 1ER CRU CLOS DES DUCS MONOPOLE

This beautifully-sited, walled vineyard is essentially the back garden of the d'Angerville house, wholly owned by the family – a monopole. It comprises some 2.15 hectares, which can be traced directly back to the Dukes of Burgundy. The soil here is chalky and stony with a lot of white clay, on a brilliant southeast-exposed, well-draining slope. A rather incongruous mound of earth, topped by a tree, offers some protection from the elements – the product of excavating the cellar some generations back. It was certainly lack of money, rather than intuition, which led to the mound being left there, but it was nonetheless fortuitous. Lustrous ruby, this offers briary, raspberry, strawberry, arterial fruit and cream on both the nose and palate. The palate is intense, focused and taut, slightly “wild”. The fruit profile is lovely, beautifully balanced, supported by well-integrated tannins – elegant and long.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

-18

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2028+)

£200/CASE OF 1 MAGNUM, IN BOND UK

MEURSAULT 1ER CRU SANTENOTS

A leesy nose, with notes of honey and an expressive savoury perfume. The palate is taut and coiled up like spring. More flesh will come with time. Good length, a wine that will develop well.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

17

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2015 – 2018+)

£295/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

14 - 16 A VERY GOOD TO EXCELLENT WINE

16 - 18 AN EXCELLENT TO OUTSTANDING WINE

18 - 20 AN OUTSTANDING TO LEGENDARY WINE

Wines are judged within their peer group, eg. *Villages*, *Premier Cru*, *Grand Cru*. A definitive score of a young wine is almost impossible.

We usually offer a spread (eg. 14-16) that relates to a potential to achieve a higher mark. A '+' adds further to that potential.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes.

TO ORDER

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