

MONUMENTA

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*Baveno, S. Gervasio e Protasio & S. Giovanni**

In connection with the baptistery of Novara, it is interesting to study the baptistery of S. Giovanni at Baveno (Novara). This baptistery adjoins the parish church of SS. Protasio e Gervasio. An inscription to the left of the choir of the latter edifice states that the church was consecrated in 1843.

The interior of SS. Protasio e Gervasio was entirely made over at this epoch. Nothing of the ancient Lombard church remains but the portal of the facade and a fragment of the north wall. It is evident that the church was constructed of rather coarse ashlar, of which the roughly squared blocks are laid in courses frequently departing from the horizontal. The mortar-beds vary from one to three and a half centimetres in depth, with the average of about two. The portal, in three orders, has a roll-moulding and several small mouldings. The capitals are adorned with foliage. One is cubic and carved with leaves. The facade has simple arched corbel-tables supported on pilaster strips, but the arched corbel-tables of the north flank are double. On the facade are the remains of a fresco representing St. Christopher, beneath which a Roman inscription is used as second-hand material. The campanile, constructed of rubble, is earlier than the church, but has been much made over. It was characterized by arched corbel-tables separated by pilaster strips into groups of three or more. The church may be assigned to c. 1135, and the campanile to c. 1050. From inscriptions it is evident that the existing choir was erected in 1607, the sacristy in 1747.

The baptistery was restored in 1795 and 1888, and the west portico was added in 1628. All this is recorded in inscriptions still extant. From all these reconstructions the edifice has emerged having lost everything ancient except its plan and a few corbels. The plan is peculiar and recalls ancient Roman monuments. Externally, the lower story is square, but internally, an octagonal area is surrounded by niches alternately rectangular and se-

* Testo ripreso integralmente da: A.K. PORTER, *The lombard Architecture*, Yale University press-H. Milford, New Haven-London 1915-1917, vol. III, p. 106.

micircular, so disposed that a semicircular niche is placed in each corner. The upper part of the structure above the niches of the ground floor is octagonal. The vault is lobed, and has wall arches of rectangular profile, segmental in elevation. The corbels which support these wall ribs are carved with classic heartleaf motives, and appear to be about contemporary with the capitals of the principal portal of the church. The baptistery also may in consequence be ascribed to c. 1135.