

THE FIRST OBSERVANT CHURCH OF SAN SALVATORE AL MONTE IN FLORENCE

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to John

The late fifteenth century church of San Salvatore al Monte stands just below San Miniato in the green hills to the southeast of the city of Florence. The remains of a once extensive convent that was almost totally destroyed in the siege of 1529 still exist behind and flanking the church (Fig. 1). In this photograph, taken from the northeast, one can see a sloping roof to the right of the church that ties together a series of rooms that will be the subject of this article.

The earliest history of San Salvatore was written in the late sixteenth century by Fra Dionisio Pulinari in his *Cronache dei frati minori della provincia di Toscana*.¹ This was an official account commissioned by the Minister General of the order, and as such we can assume it to be as reliable as Pulinari could make it. Yet, since exact dates are rarely included, its usefulness is limited, particularly with regard to the early history of the site.

Pulinari, though not expansive about San Salvatore's early years, gives some important information. His account begins:

*Il secondo luoco della Provincia nell'ordine di quella, ma che fu il nono, che si prese, fu quello di San Salvatore presso a Firenze, fuori della porta, che si chiama San Miniato, il cui sito, con un gran palazzo e giardino, Luca di Iacopo del Toso, gentiluomo fiorentino, pura, libera e semplicemente il diede e donò a fra Niccolò Uzanio, Vicario e Commissario nella Provincia di Toscana di fra Giovanni Stronconio, Vicario Generale, nell'anno del Signore 1417, ma dal principio dell'Ordine 211 a dì 20 Febbraio. Dove fu fabbricata una piccola e divota chiesa, col luoco conveniente, in onore del Salvatore del mondo e del beato padre nostro S. Francesco: ...*²

We learn, therefore, that the convent was founded only in the fifteenth century, that the first church was dedicated to San Salvatore and San Francesco, as is the present one, and that a private residence existed on the site when the friars took it over.

A notarial act which details the contents and conditions of the gift confirms Pulinari's information about Della Tosa. This unpublished document may well have been the convent's original copy of the transaction.³ It is dated 20 February 1417 (1418)⁴, and in it Della Tosa gives the friars:

*unam domum magnam cum magno habituro sive plures domos contiguas cum palchis et volta sub terra et supra terram et loggia et curia et viridario et pratello cum mureciuolis circum circa sitam in dicto populo Sancti Miniatis loco dicto (blank) quibus omnibus rebus donatis ...*⁵

The friars are given the land for the purpose of "erecting, founding, and constructing on it a convent and church⁶ on the condition that" this convent and church ... be constructed within one year."⁷ If, for any reason, the church and convent could not be built, the donation was annulled; the property and buildings passed to the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova to which they seem to have belonged prior to the donation.⁸



1 San Salvatore al Monte, view of choir and nave from the north-east. Flanking the church to the right (north), is a structure that is here identified as the main chapel and nave wall of the church built in 1435.

The Della Tosa gift is also mentioned in a notarial document in the Florentine State Archives⁹ that, like the first, was previously unknown. It exists in three copies, dated 31 March 1419 in which the rector of Santa Maria Nuova, Michele Fruosini, confirms and approves the donation of the land to the friars.

A final document from this earliest period contains additional information. On 9 July 1419, Martin V in a bull authorized Cardinal Adimari to settle a dispute between the Observant friars and the Olivetan monks of San Miniato concerning Della Tosa's donation. The buildings at San Salvatore are referred to in it as *casamenta seu hospicii*.¹⁰ Therefore, by July 9th, 1419, the friars were in possession of the Della Tosa property; since the words *casamenta seu hospicii* imply an institutional rather than private function, they had probably already begun its transformation into a convent.¹¹ Nothing more is known about this dispute.

Pulinari tells us that the friars built a small church and a "place"¹²; he does not refer to the dates of either of these undertakings. In fact, immediately following his mention of these early buildings, he enters into a discussion of Cosimo de' Medici and his relationship to the friars. He begins by saying, *Ma in processo di tempo*, (i. e. sometime later) Cosimo decided to build the friars a new church and convent, which, however, they refused.¹³ I will demonstrate in a future article that this did not occur until shortly before mid-century. Thus, Pulinari's information does not suggest any date for the early

church. It could have been begun in 1419 or closer to mid-century. The Della Tosa donation did stipulate that the property be converted into a church and convent within a year after the donation. Yet surely this refers to church and convent in an institutional sense; this condition could be satisfied by modifying the existing structures to suit new purposes rather than constructing new buildings. In sum, we have no precise information concerning the date of the early church.

One piece of well known information was considered relevant to the early building program at San Salvatore, although it is not really helpful. In 1839, Gaye published a note: *1430- Convento di Fiesole e di San Francesco al Monte si fabbricano*.¹⁴ Gaye identified his source merely as *Spoglio Strozzi*. Commentators who used this information, therefore, were aware neither of its correct source nor its exact contents. Some felt it signalled the beginning of a new building phase; others that it was a restoration date for the 1419 church.¹⁵

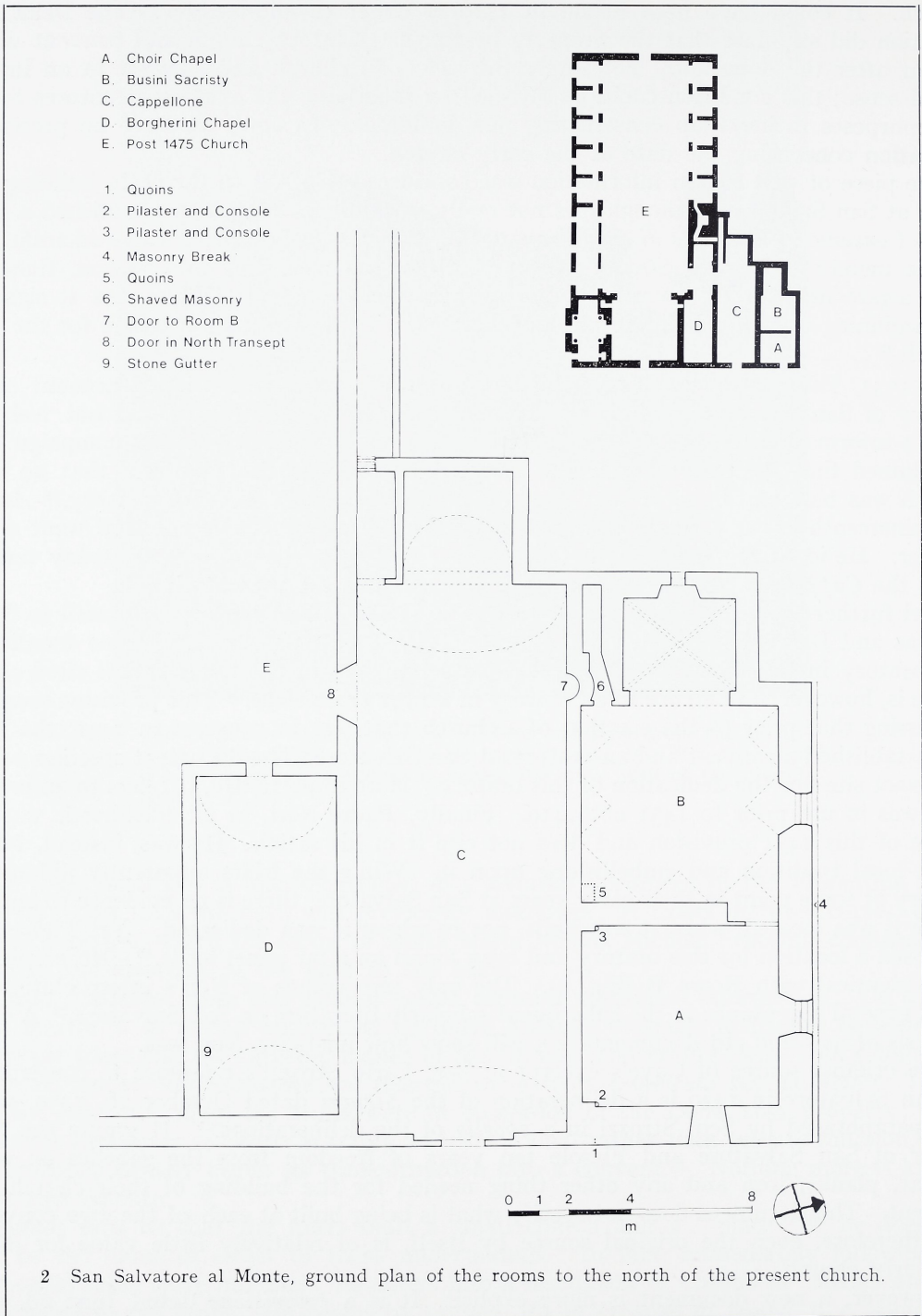
In 1933, Padre Damiano Neri published the most recent and detailed account of the history of San Salvatore. Neri, in disagreement with several others, did not feel that Gaye's information referred to the beginning of a major church building campaign. He maintained that the early church was completed and in use by 1419 and that no other church was built until the present one was begun in the late fifteenth century.¹⁶ In the mid-nineteenth century, Berti had proposed the same hypothesis¹⁷, but Neri went a step further. He identified the church of 1419 with the long rectangular room, today referred to as the *Cappellone* (Fig. 2: Room C), to the north of the present church.

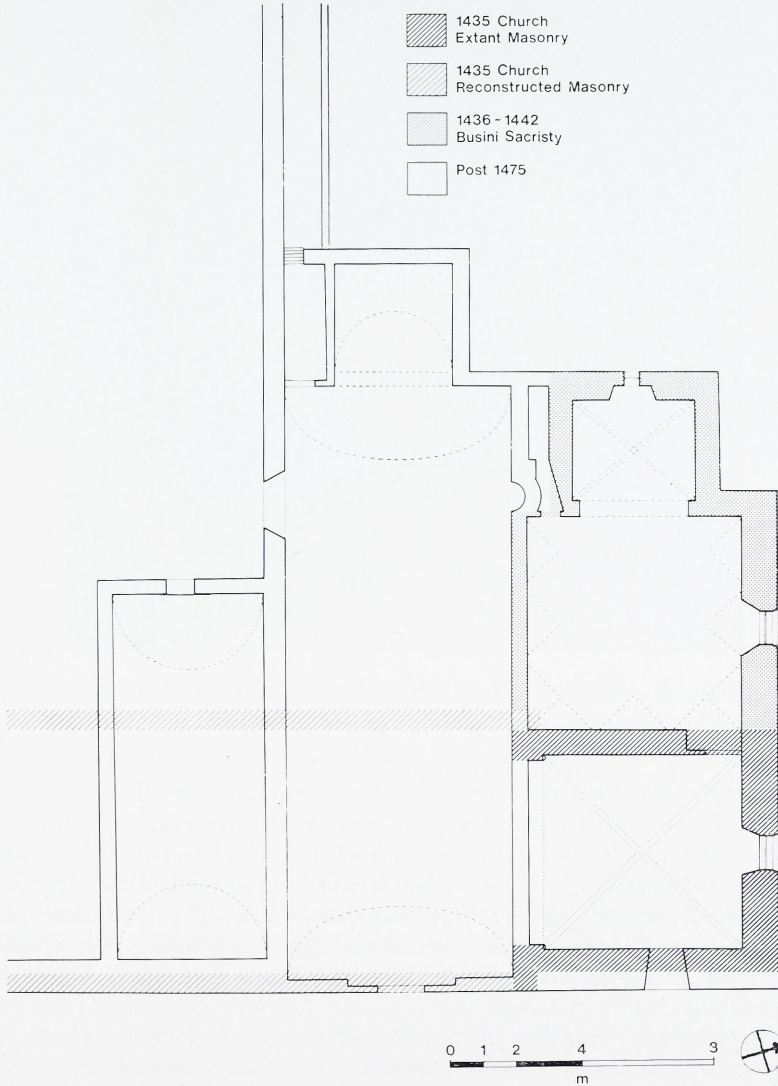
Neri further proposed that prior to 1419, the friars used an oratory dedicated to Saints Cosmas and Damian that had existed in the Della Tosa palace. There is no mention of this oratory in the description of Della Tosa's property in the notarial acts cited above. There is, however, a reference to an oratory in a 1431 *provisione*.¹⁸ This provision mentions in passing that prior to the erection of a church that was in progress in 1431, the friars had established a convent and an oratory at San Salvatore. The document specifies neither the exact site nor the dedication of this oratory. More importantly, it refers to an oratory that was in use prior to 1431 not 1419. Finally, Padre Neri, in all likelihood, was unaware of this 1431 provision and does not cite it in his article. He was, instead, following a local tradition and embellishing upon it. While the friars apparently did use an oratory at some point in their early years at San Salvatore, there is no evidence to indicate where it was located, when it was built, nor to whom it was dedicated. Yet Padre Neri proposed a location for this oratory and even found an altar panel for it.¹⁹ He considered it as identical with Room B (Fig. 2). The only importance of Neri's interpretation lies in its general acceptance in the subsequent scholarly literature on San Salvatore.²⁰ A closer analysis of new and old documentation will show how mistaken Neri was.

The original source of Gaye's excerpt of Sen. Carlo Strozzi's reference to construction at San Salvatore in 1430 is a deliberation of the *Signori* dated October 26, 1430, which was paraphrased by Sen. Strozzi in a *spoglio* of the deliberations.²¹ It grants the friars minor of San Salvatore and Fiesole ten years of freedom from the gabelles on wood, mortar, planks, iron and any other thing needed for the building of their church and convent. The document does not specify what is being built at each of the two convents, and therefore, even the original source by itself, is of relatively little value for dating the early church.

However, a new document is more explicit. It is a *provisione* dated June 28, 1431. It says:

Quinto et ultimo provisionem infrascriptam super infrascripta petitione ..., cum debita reverentia exponitur pro parte fratrum observantie ordinis et regule sancti francisci de sancto miniate





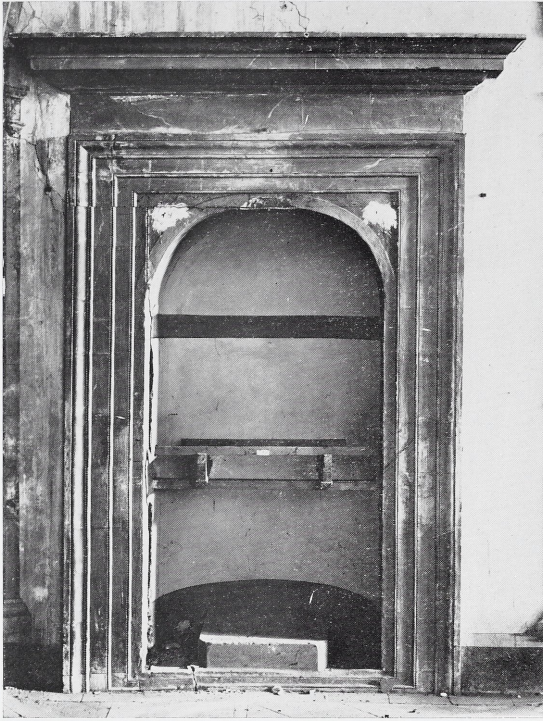
3 San Salvatore al Monte, reconstruction of the first church of 1435.



4 Interior view of the Cappellone, partial view.

in monte quod ut notum fore putant vestre dominationi ad reverentiam dei omnipotentis et Sancti Francisci ipsi mediante gratia eius et sequentibus elemosinis civium vestrorum devotorum eiusdem iam pluribus annis elapsis ordinaverunt locum mansionem ac oratorium prope sanctum miniatem predictum et construi inceperunt unam ecclesiam pro divinis officiis et aliis deo et beato francisco gratis celebrandis quam iam ad perfectionem murandi deduxerunt, Et quod sperabant eadem gratia et etiam mediantibus elemosinis eorundem et aliorum bonorum civium opus ad perfectionem perducere pro lignaminibus et aliis oportunitis pro ipsius ecclesie perfectione sed insurgente bello quod secum plurima incommoda et onera duxit et eosdem cives multipliter oppressit non facile iudicant pro presenti eosdem modo prosequi valere et eorum indigentis pro ipsius ecclesie complemento prout optarent occurrere. Et verentes dictis causis eosdem petitionibus vise stare et etiam optantes ut inceptum opus ad dei cultum et reverentiam et beati francisci ad finem suum perducatur putaverunt quod saltem pro expensis lignorum opera Sancte Marie del fiore vestre civitatis que copiam illorum habere dicitur eorum oportunitati presenti (sic) tempore pro parte provideret, ...

Eo tamen apposito et limitato quod valor huiusmodi lignaminis ut supra concedendi et dandi non excedat secundum comunem estimationem quantitatem florenorum centum auri sed usque



5 Door on the north wall of the Cappellone that led directly into the original Busini sacristy (see Fig. 2: no. 7).



6 Room B viewed from its chapel. This room was originally the Busini sacristy.

*ad valorem dicte quantitatis florenorum centum concedi et tradi possit ut supra et non ultra quoquo modo.*²²

The petition of the friars was accepted, and they were given wood from the *Opera* up to the value of 100 gold florins. The importance of this document, for our purposes, lies in its date. It reveals that in 1431 the church that existed prior to the present one, was in the process of construction and its walls were completed. Unfortunately, it does not mention when the church was begun. This would have depended, among other things, on the ease with which the friars secured donations from the Florentines. It might even have been begun as early as 1419. To date, there is simply no way to know. The date aside, however, the document indicates that initially the Observants managed to finance their construction through private donations and that only in 1431 with the outbreak of the war were they forced to request communal aid.

The donation of 1418 had called for the “foundation of a convent and church”. The provision of 1431 makes it clear that in fulfillment of the terms of that donation, the friars of San Salvatore had established a place, a home (i. e. a convent) and an oratory, and had begun the construction of a church. As a consequence, the church mentioned in 1431 must be the first church built on the site, and very likely the one mentioned by Pulinari in the opening section of his account. In other words, when the friars arrived on the site in 1418/19, they built a small convent and an oratory (or perhaps reorganized the Della Tosa palace to suit their needs). At some undetermined point after 1419, they began to construct a church whose walls were mostly finished by 1431. Prior to begin-

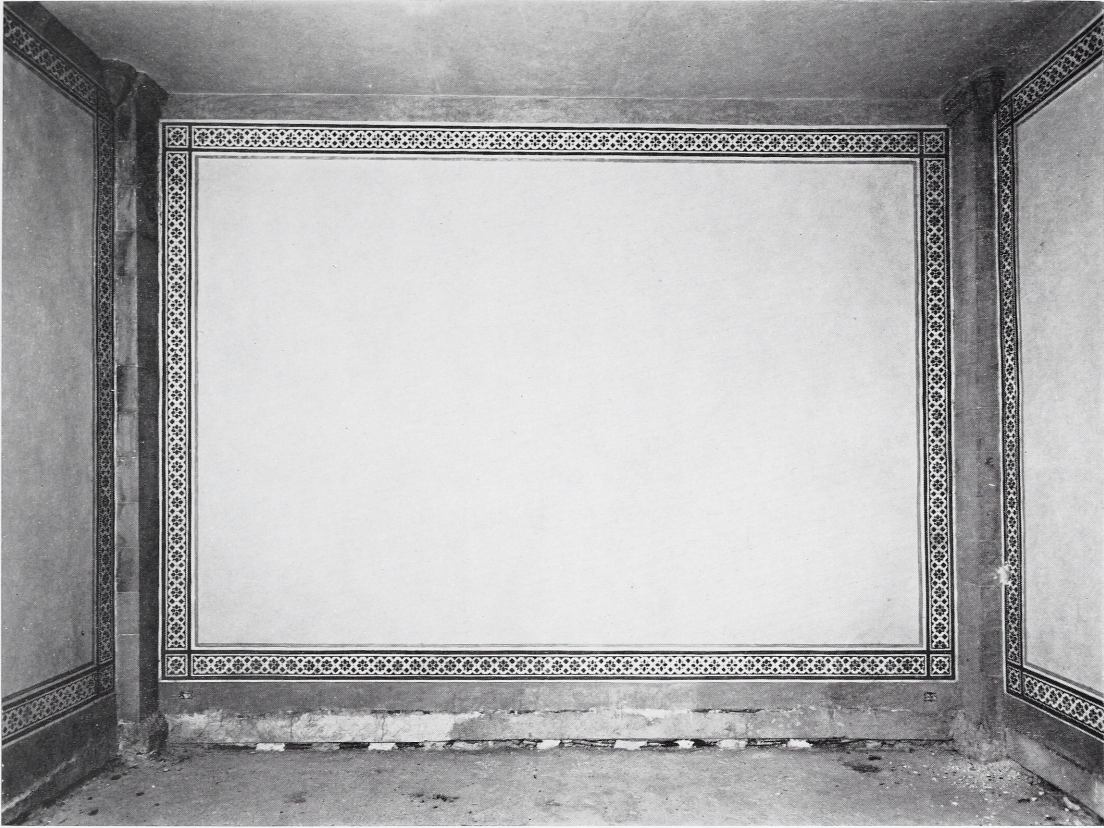


7 The chapel of Room B.

ning the church, and during its construction, the friars used the oratory they set up in 1418/19.

Another *provisione* dated February 25, 1434 (1435) adds more information concerning the early church and convent.²³ In it the friars once again ask for aid in the construction of their church. It is almost finished; all that remains incomplete is part of its roof. In addition, they report such an increase in the number of friars that the convent is overcrowded and inadequate. They would, therefore, like aid not only to complete the church, but also to build a new dormitory. They stress that they cannot undertake either of these projects without wood, and, as in 1431, they ask that they might be provided with it from the *Opera* of Santa Maria del Fiore. Their request is once again granted, this time up to the value of 150 gold florins.

So by February 1435, the church was almost complete. Since the walls were largely finished by 1431, it evidently took the friars over three and one half years to finish the roof. We do not know how much time was spent on interior work or furnishings. Neither are we given information concerning the type of roof constructed. Since neither provision mentions vaults, one might suggest that the church had a simple open trussed timber roof, common in mendicant churches in Tuscany and used in the second church at San Salvatore. However, this can only remain a suggestion; timber would have been needed to cover a roof above vaults as well.



8 Room A looking south. Room A is here identified as the original choir chapel of the church built in 1435.

In summary, we now know that the first church built at San Salvatore was completed in 1435, that it was in progress in 1430, and was probably projected several years before, and that prior to it the friars used an oratory. Finally, since the church of 1435 is the same as that mentioned in Pulinari, we also know that it was dedicated, as is the present one, to San Francesco and San Salvatore.

Is there any visual evidence to suggest where this church was located? Flanking the present church to the north are three rooms marked A, B, and C on the ground plan (Fig. 2). Of these Padre Neri identified Room B as a pre-1419 oratory of Saints Cosmas and Damian, Room A as a sacristy built by Tommaso Busini²⁴, and Room C as the site of the first church.²⁵ With the exception of Room C, they have never been measured nor drawn on any plan of San Salvatore.²⁶

Room C or the so called Cappellone is a narrow vaulted rectangular room with a chapel at its west end (Figs. 2 and 4). It has a Nerli family tomb dated 1497 in the chapel. The present vault is not the original one, which collapsed around 1655.²⁷ The architectural membering for the most part, is simulated. Generally, without its later painted decoration, its style fits that of the later church. We have no information concerning its function other than that it was a private family chapel of the Nerli.²⁸

Room B also has a small chapel at its west end (Fig. 2), of which figure 7 shows the basic form and architectural detail. It is roughly square and rib vaulted. The use of pointed



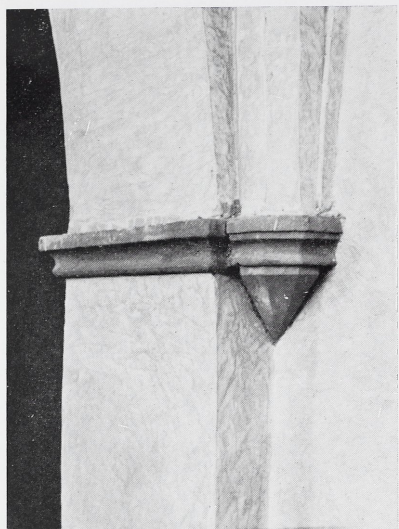
9 Detail of one of the pilasters and consoles in Room A (see Fig. 2: no. 3).



10 Detail of the rib and arch above the present ceiling of Room A. The ceiling is modern and these formed part of the original vault of Room A.

arches suggested to Padre Neri a date in the gothic period and prompted him to identify the chapel as the pre-1419 oratory of Saints Cosmas and Damian. The main part of Room B is nearly square and lunette vaulted (Fig. 6). Room A is a simple unvaulted space with two pilasters in either corner of its south wall (Fig. 2: nos. 2 and 3 and Fig. 8).

I will begin my interpretation of these rooms with Room A.²⁹ Figure 9 shows the southeast pilaster (Fig. 2: no. 3). Next to this pilaster is a console. The juxtaposition of the two elements is awkward. The consoles suggest a rib vault, but then what explains the pilasters beside them? As can be seen in Figure 8, this room was recently restored; the ceiling is modern. Above this modern ceiling and under the roof (visible only from the outside) are the remains of a hexagonal rib of a vault with a large arch flanking it to the left and a smaller arch to the right (Fig. 10). The rib and arches exist directly above the pilaster and console marked no. 3 on the ground plan. This means the space was originally covered by a ribbed vault resting on an hexagonal shaped console in each corner of the room.³⁰ The pilasters, which are only found on one side of the room, supported the large arch that was visible in fragmentary form above the ceiling. The pilasters and arch suggest that the wall between the pilasters was originally open. They would have functioned as a boundary between this room and another to the south. The opening was in all likelihood walled up at the latest by the



11 Detail of one of the pilasters and consoles at the opening of the chapel of Room B.



12 The crypt under Room A, partial view (from west).

late fifteenth century, since the Cappellone, which now exists south of Room A, has a tombstone dated 1497 in its chapel.

Room A, therefore, was a roughly square rib vaulted room, one wall of which was open to the south, and that opening was framed by two pilasters supporting an arch — just what one would expect to find in a chapel of a church. This reconstructed chapel, although much larger, must have been similar to the chapel of Room B. The description given above holds equally true for both. Figure 11 shows a detail of the juncture of the arched opening of the chapel in Room B and a rib of its vault. The juxtaposition of console and pilaster is similar to that in Room A, where, however, the arch and pilasters were made of dressed stone.

The relationship between the two elements is less awkward and better thought out in the chapel of Room B. An attempt was made to assimilate the moulded impost of the pilaster and the mouldings of the console. In Room A the two elements stand out abruptly. The impost of the pilaster is about two thirds the height of the console beside it, and at least twice as high as the moulding surmounting the console. This means that the horizontal of the impost is abruptly terminated. The result is the isolation of both the console and the pilaster. Originally, this would have been less disturbing because some measure of balance and continuity would have been achieved by the continuation of the two pilasters and four consoles in the arch and ribs.

The comparison of the chapel of Room B with the suggested reconstruction of Room A would seem to suggest that the identification of Room A as a chapel is tenable.³¹ However, there is another piece of evidence: the existence of a crypt directly under Room A. The crypt is vaulted and approximately the size of Room A (Fig. 12). There are four wooden covered tombs in the floor.³² Access to it was gained by two means. Figure 12 shows a door on the east wall, now walled up, which originally communicated with the convent. The door is gothic in detail, like the chapel above it. Figure 14 shows the exterior northern wall of Rooms A and B. The arched door in the foreground opens



13 The crypt below Room B (from east).



14 The exterior northern wall of Rooms A and B.



15 Detail of the masonry break on the northern exterior wall of Rooms A and B (see Fig. 2: no. 4).

16 Detail of the quoins on the east wall of Room A. These originally defined the exterior northeastern wall of the nave of the 1435 church (see Fig. 2: no. 1).

into the crypt. This crypt supports the identification of the space above it as a chapel and probably as a burial chapel.

Is it possible to go further and suggest that this chapel was the main chapel of a church which ran on a north-south axis, that is, perpendicular to the present church? There are several pieces of evidence that, when added together, make this hypothesis attractive. First, a very prominent string course runs along the exterior northern wall of Room A.³³ It stops approximately at the point where the interior wall divides Room A and Room B (Fig. 2: no. 4). What cannot be seen in Figure 14, but is visible in a detail (Fig. 15) of the masonry just below the point where the string course stops, is a break in the masonry. In other words, the wall to the right of the break was added later. This hypothesis is further confirmed by another observation which unfortunately is not evident in either photograph. The string course, it seems, did not originally stop at this point. It turned sharply at a right angle perpendicular to this wall and continued around what would have been the western wall of Room A. Since the wall to the right of the break (and the string course) is the exterior wall of Room B, it seems safe to conclude that Room B was added after Room A was completed. In other words, Room A was initially a separate, self-contained space whose exterior was a simple squarish box. This is a common form for the exterior of the choir of small, single-nave Tuscan churches.³⁴

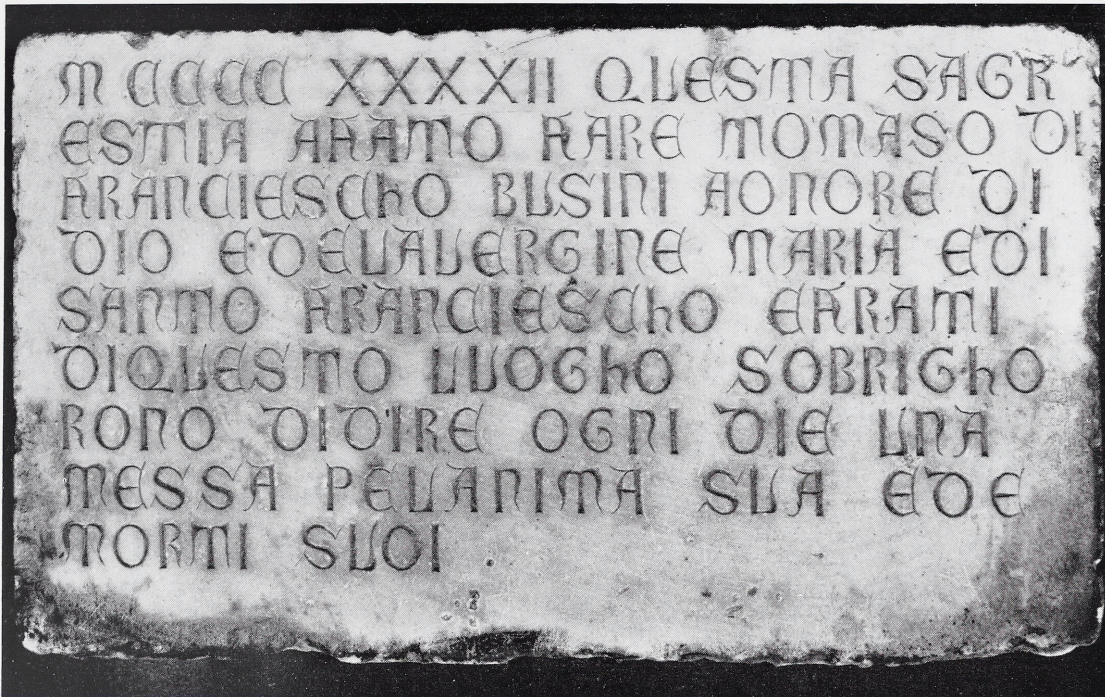
Up to this point we have a chapel which is plausibly located on the liturgical east end of a church, but is there any indication that there was indeed a church that continued on to the south? Two other fragments of evidence make the existence of such a church



17 The eastern wall of Room A. This wall was originally an exterior wall.

plausible. One is easily visible. It is the presence of quoins at the juncture between Room A and the Cappellone on the east wall (Fig. 2: no. 1 and Figs. 16 and 17).³⁵ They are also visible, though less clearly, from the exterior to the right of the oculus of the Cappellone (Fig. 1). A similar set of quoins can be seen in a less easily accessible spot. Above the vaults of Room B approximately at point no. 5 indicated on Figure 2 are the fragmentary remains of corner quoins.³⁶ As can be seen in Figure 2, or perhaps more easily in Figure 3, these quoins were located on the northeast and northwest corners of a building that continued to the south of the reconstructed chapel. The eastern wall of Room A, today an interior plastered wall, was formerly an exterior one; at some later point, it was thickened and plastered. Figure 17 reveals a large, if irregular, break where the original wall ended, and Figure 1 shows the indentation of this wall at the juncture of the Cappellone and Room A. The existence of exterior quoins, the indentation of the wall, and the fact that Room A was once a freestanding box on its northern exterior, all demonstrate that the structure must originally have looked like the reconstructed ground plan in Figure 3. All the evidence taken together supports the conclusion that these two sets of quoins defined the northern corners of the nave of a church at the juncture of the choir chapel. Figure 3 shows the ground plan of the church reconstructed on the basis of the preceding visual evidence.

Since the only church at San Salvatore prior to the present one was finished in 1435, it seems reasonable to conclude that it was identical to the one reconstructed above. It was a simple, single-naved church with one chapel at its liturgical east end. The chapel was vaulted, but the rest of the church was probably covered by an open timber roof.³⁷ The church was orientated on a north-south axis contrary to the normal liturgical one.³⁸ The choir chapel was on its longest walls 6.26 meters long and 5.88 meters wide (or 10.7 × 10.1 *braccia*) and the nave was approximately 7.30 meters wide (approximately 12.5 *braccia*). The length of the church is not known.³⁹



18 The original stone inscription stating that Tomaso di Francesco Busini built the sacristy.

That the church ran on a north-south axis is confirmed by some of the early maps or views of Florence. From the very beginning of my study, one thing about the Catena map (Fig. 19) was a constant puzzle⁴⁰: San Salvatore seemed to be aligned perpendicular to its present position. Unlike San Miniato, its façade directly faces the viewer.⁴¹ It was common for the artists of these views to rearrange major monuments, presenting them from more advantageous points of view, but their representations of San Salvatore hardly depict it as a monument worthy of such treatment. In the Catena map, and in an earlier view by Pietro Del Massaio,⁴² San Salvatore is depicted as a simple box-like structure with a single round arched entrance surmounted by an oculus. It looks, in fact, like a simple, small medieval church. The logical choice, in this area, for a cosmetic rearrangement would clearly be San Miniato and not this small and architecturally indistinguishable mendicant church.

The Pietro Del Massaio map was done in 1469. The first allotment of money for the foundations of the present church was paid out only in 1475⁴³, although a wooden model had been executed and money had been set aside for it as early as 1465.⁴⁴ The church Del Massaio had in mind was, in all probability, the 1435 church. Del Massaio's representation is very schematic and fragmentary. He obviously did not see it as a significant monument. The Catena one (Fig. 19) is more detailed and more interesting.⁴⁵ This map is considered to be a fairly close copy of the lost 1482 map of Francesco Rosselli.⁴⁶ We would, therefore, expect to find a representation of the church begun in 1475 and not the earlier one of 1435. Yet its basic form and even the details of the round arched door and oculus conform to the Del Massaio representation, and it too is clearly aligned perpendicular to San Miniato. Its form and orientation are those of the reconstructed



19 The Catena map. Detail of San Salvatore al Monte.

church of 1435, not those of the one begun in 1475 and still standing today. We now have a picture of our documented, but up to this point visually fragmentary, 1435 church.

It is not clear why the church of 1475 was not depicted in the Catena map. Pulinari tells us that after the foundations of the later church were laid and the walls had risen about two *braccia* above ground, work was temporarily interrupted because of the objections of the friars to the grandiosity of the new project.⁴⁷ Perhaps work on the church was not resumed until after 1482, or perhaps the artist merely copied an earlier map for this church. Whatever the reason, the important point is that the Del Massaio and Catena map give visual form to the church of 1435.

Another indirect support for the proposed reconstruction is the existence of a sacristy begun shortly before the completion of the church of 1435. It is well known and repeated in all the literature that in 1442 Tommaso di Francesco Busini had a sacristy built at San Salvatore.⁴⁸ A stone inscription recording this fact was preserved in the convent until at least 1933. Padre Damiano Neri records that in his time it was kept in the room in front of what he considered the oratory of Saints Cosmas and Damian, i. e., in Room A.⁴⁹ It was lost for some time, but has recently been found (Fig. 18).⁵⁰ It reads as follows:

MCCCCXXXII QUESTA SAGR
ESTIA AFATO FARE TOMASO DI
FRANCIESCHO BUSINI A ONORE DI
DIO E DELA VERGINE MARIA E DI
SANTO FRANCIESCHO E FRATI
DI QUESTO LUOGHO SOBRIGHO
RONO DI DIRE OGNI DIE UNA
MESSA PEL ANIMA SUA E DE
MORTI SUOI.



20 The stone gutter on the wall between the Borgherini chapel and the choir chapel of the present church of San Salvatore (see Fig. 2: no. 9).

While the fact that Tommaso Busini had built a sacristy at San Salvatore was common knowledge, the exact location of this sacristy was unknown. As will be seen below, the Busini sacristy continued to function as the sacristy even after the new church was built in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. At some later date, however, the sacristy was moved into the new church and located in the Nerli chapel.⁵¹ The sacristy was shifted at least once more, and today is located in the former Borgherini chapel to the left of the main chapel (Fig. 2: Room D). The peregrinations of the sacristy caused confusion, and ultimately the exact location of the one built by Busini was forgotten. Since Padre Neri found the inscription in Room A, he naturally assumed that Room A was the old Busini sacristy. It can be shown, however, that Room B was the Busini sacristy.

The most important and conclusive evidence comes from Stefano Rosselli's *Sepoltuario Fiorentino* written sometime in the mid seventeenth century.⁵² In San Salvatore he described and located several important rooms around the church. Among these was the Busini sacristy which evidently was still the functioning sacristy at that time. Rosselli refers to it several times. First, he says that *accanto alla Porta della Sagrestia* is the chapel of the Vernacci.⁵³ The door to which he was referring is that located in the north transept of the present church (Fig. 2: no. 8). He refers to this door again a little further on when he says that *fra la cappella de Borgherini e quella de Vernacci... a pie' della Porta di Sagrestia ...* is the tomb of Matteo di Antonio Adimari.⁵⁴ The Adimari tombstone still lies right before the door in the north transept. Since this northern exit from the church leads directly into the Cappellone, you might at first think that the Cappellone was the Busini sacristy. However, later Rosselli says, *Uscendo di Chiesa per la Porta del Fianco verso Tramontana* (i. e. the door previously identified as that to the sacristy) *s'entra in un ricetto o stanzone ...* (i. e. the Cappellone) which had a chapel in it with a Nerli family tombstone.⁵⁵ Obviously, if the Nerli were the main patrons of this room, it could not be the Busini sacristy. Unfortunately, however, Rosselli makes no mention of the

function of this room. At the very end of his account, Rosselli mentions the sacristy itself (without, however, specifying its location vis-à-vis the other rooms). He says, *La Sagrestia di Questa Chiesa, è fatta dalla Famiglia de Busini, e vedesi l'Arme sopra l'Arco della Cappella, et a pie' dell'Altare la loro Sepoltura, et accanto alla detta Cappella la seguente Inscrizione ...* (the Busini inscription quoted above follows).⁵⁶

These references help to locate the sacristy without a doubt. Rosselli, to recapitulate, has told us all we need to know. First, the sacristy was composed of at least two rooms — the room of the sacristy proper which contained the Busini inscription, and the chapel. Room B with its chapel fits this description. Second, Rosselli mentions the door to the Cappellone (i. e. Fig. 2: no. 8) as the door to the sacristy in two places, but not in a third when he specifically wants to discuss the Cappellone. The explanation for this is simple. A door in the north wall of the Cappellone (Fig. 2: no. 7) directly opposite the one in the north transept of the church (Fig. 2: no. 8) leads into Room B (Figs. 4 and 5).⁵⁷ It is walled up now, but it once provided direct access from the present church through the Cappellone into Room B. The door in the north transept of the church, then, led both into the sacristy and the Cappellone. Although neither the Busini inscription nor the tomb mentioned by Rosselli still exist in Room B today, a Busini coat of arms hangs on the wall above the entrance to the chapel — just as Rosselli described it (Fig. 7).⁵⁸

The information given us by Rosselli together with the evidence of the coat of arms and that of the relationship of Room B to the door in the north transept allow the conclusion that Room B was the Busini sacristy.

The location of this sacristy next to and communicating with Room A supports the reconstruction of that room as the choir chapel of the early church. It is traditional to place the sacristy in the liturgical east end to one side of the choir chapel.

The Busini sacristy was built for the 1435 church, and was later adapted to serve the present church. The inscription quoted above says that the sacristy was completed in 1442. Other newly discovered documentation shows that it was begun six years earlier in 1436 just at the moment when the early church was reaching its completion. In the 1442 *catasto* report of Tommaso di Francesco Busini the following statement is found: *Et piu one su mo(n)tte chomune fi(orini) 1000 i quali denari s'obrichorono a frati del obseranza de santo francesco che istano a Santo Miniato a mo(n)tte per anni dieci i(n)s(i)no d(a) febraio 1436 de quali danari sene fane una sagrestia a detto luocho chome si vede siche restorno i detti danari ... ubrichatti per an(n)i quatro e i resto per insino anni 5 o pe(n)siero ... di dagli loro a detto luocho per fornire intra fatto. Fi(orini) 37 soldi 10 ...*⁵⁹

Tommaso here declared that he had 1000 Florins in credits in the communal *monte*, the interest on which he had given to the friars of San Salvatore for a period of ten years beginning in 1436 so that they could build a sacristy. However, the friars had managed to have the sacristy constructed in less time, for six years later precisely at the time of the 1442 *catasto*, it was completed. In that year Tommaso was thinking of continuing his gift for another five years to enable the friars to furnish the sacristy. We do not know any more about the furnishings (if Tommaso decided in favor of giving them) or any further involvement on Tommaso's part in the sacristy or at San Salvatore in general.⁶⁰

The tomb of the Busini family mentioned by Rosselli indicates that the chapel was funerary. This is also supported by the existence of a crypt under the sacristy (Fig. 13) and by the inscription which requires the friars to say a mass every day for the soul of Tommaso and the dead of his family. The combination of sacristy and burial chapel found here is best known through the old sacristy at San Lorenzo built by the Medici or that of the Strozzi in Santa Trinita.

While neither the church of 1435 nor the Busini sacristy exhibit any architectural innovations, they are not unimportant. The main concern of the Observant Franciscan was to follow the Rule of Poverty strictly as it had been set forth and exemplified by St. Francis. This affected their attitude not only towards their life and work, but also towards the architecture of their churches and convents. They preferred simple, unostentatious buildings that were neither excessive in size nor in decoration and were conservative in style.⁶¹ The Busini sacristy and the church of 1435 in their very simplicity must have conformed perfectly to the standard type preferred by the Observants in their architecture. In so far as they differ in both style and size from the later church, they serve as a contrast to it and make more intelligible the persistent opposition of the friars to the later church which, ironically, to our eyes has an austerity that seems to embody the very spirit of Franciscan simplicity.⁶²

NOTES

This article was originally submitted as a qualifying paper to the Fine Arts Department of Harvard University in 1975. My thanks especially go to Professor Ulrich Middeldorf who gave so freely and generously his time and expertise, to Hans Teubner whose help and suggestions were particularly valuable, and to Arch. Dario Melloni who drafted the two plans for me. Also invaluable was the aid and generosity of Padre Peruzzi, the Padre Guardiano of San Salvatore.

Finally, in a more general sense, I am grateful to Professor James Ackerman for his patient support and consistent encouragement in all aspects of my graduate career.

¹ Fra *Dionisio Pulinari*, *Cronache dei frati minori della provincia di Toscana*, ed. P. S. Mencherini, Arezzo 1913 (hereafter *Pulinari*). Pulinari was a friar at San Salvatore in the early sixteenth century. In addition, he relied heavily on an earlier history, now lost, of Fra Mariano da Firenze who lived in the convent in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. For more information about Pulinari and his sources see Mencherini's introduction.

² *Ibid.*, p. 186.

³ Franciscan Provincial Archive of Tuscany (hereafter APT), Piazza Savonarola, Florence. When I wrote this article, I was not allowed to enter the archive, but I managed to see a xerox copy of the document through the aid of Padre Peruzzi. The document originally came from the convent of Ognissanti to which the Franciscans from San Salvatore moved and lived after 1529.

⁴ It should be noted that a seventeenth-century chronicler, *Tognocchi de Terrinca* in his *Historia chronologica provinciae Etrusco-minoriticae*, ed. P. V. Checci and P. J. Calamandrei, Florence 1935, pp. 112-113, tried to suggest that the convent was founded in 1407 and quoted a Bull by Pope Gregory XII as supporting evidence. The Bull, however, makes no mention of San Salvatore, and Terrinca's arguments are not very convincing.

⁵ APT, Della Tosa Donation (no pagination).

⁶ *Ibid.*: ... *pro faciendo erigendo ordinando et construendo in eis unum conventum et ecclesiam fratrum minorum secundum regulam observantie et fratrum bone observantie regule beati francisci ...*

⁷ *Ibid.*: *Et predictam donationem fecit Lucas ... si et in quantum contingat ipsum conventum et ecclesiam in dictis loco et domo infra unum annum proxime futurum construi ...*

⁸ This seems to conflict with the idea that the house and land were given to the friars by Della Tosa. The seemingly contradictory double ownership of the property can probably be explained. For instance, if Della Tosa had a perpetual lease on the land from the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, then the proper title would have rested with the hospital, but Della Tosa would have had the right to turn his lease over to the friars.

⁹ ASF, Notarile antecosimiano, S 906, cc. 45r-v; S 905 (no pagination). I would like to thank Professor Anthony Molho for bringing these documents to my attention.

¹⁰ APT, Papal Bull, July 9, 1419 (no pagination). A document found only after this article had gone to print indicates that the controversy concerned the existence of a convent and church so close to San Miniato and the problem of parochial rights. The arbiter decided the friars had the right to build the church and convent, but without parochial rights. See APT, 27 July, 1419. I would like to thank Padre Bertagna for permission to consult the archive's inventory.

¹¹ The use of the word *hospicii* may help us understand the function of the place. A hospice can be a resting place for travellers as well as a place to care for the sick and aged. *Pulinari*, p. 186, tells us that the friars who moved into San Salvatore originally lived at the Ospedale del Ceppo which functioned as a hospice in both senses of the word. On Ceppo, see, *L. Passerini*, *Storia degli stabilimenti di beneficenza*, Florence 1853 p. 191, and *W. Limburger*, *Die Gebäude von Florenz*, Leipzig 1910, no. 253.

Another indication that the convent was important as a hospice comes from a significantly later document. In a provision dated 1450 (f. s.) the commune of Florence gave aid to San Salvatore to defray the cost of providing hospitality to a large number of travelling Observant friars. The document says that San Salvatore and the convent of Fiesole had a large transient population because almost every Observant friar who comes to or passes through Tuscany stays at one of these convents. ASF, Provvisioni Registri, 141, cc. 18r-v and 19r.

¹² The word, place, or *luoco* is the Observants' term for the houses in which their friars lived. They preferred this to the word convent which suggested the large houses of the Conventuals from which they wished to disassociate themselves. In the course of time, many of these *luochi* became convents, as in fact happened at San Salvatore, in spite of the protests of the resident friars.

¹³ *Pulinari*, p. 186.

¹⁴ *G. Gaye*, *Carteggio inedito d'artisti...*, Florence 1839, vol. I, p. 550.

¹⁵ Del Badia took it to refer to the continuation or restoration of work begun in 1418 (*I. Del Badia*, *San Salvatore al Monte*, in: *R. and E. Mazzanti and I. Del Lungo*, *Raccolta delle migliori fabbriche di Firenze*, Florence 1876, p. 13). Moise, on the other hand, saw it as the beginning of new building activity from 1430 to 1450 which involved a new church (*F. Moise*, *Santa Croce di Firenze illustrazione storico-artistica*, Florence 1845, p. 96). Berti, like Del Badia, felt that the date 1430 was not important for any major building campaign, that by 1419 the early church was finished and in use, and that no other church was built until in 1450 Cosimo de' Medici and Castello Quaratesi became interested in the convent (*G. Berti*, *Cenni storico-artistici per servire di guida ed illustrazione a San Miniato al Monte*, Florence 1850, pp. 122 and 124). Carocci merely said that in 1430 they were working on the convent (*G. Carocci*, *I dintorni di Firenze*, Florence 1907, vol. II, p. 202).

¹⁶ *Padre Damiano Neri*, *San Salvatore al Monte*, in: *Firenze Rassegna Mensile del Comune*, 2 (9), 1933, pp. 257-258.

The book by *P. Bacci*, *La Bella Villanella*, Florence 1960, adds nothing but new misinformation to the history of San Salvatore.

¹⁷ See footnote 15.

¹⁸ See below p. 279 where the document is discussed in detail.

¹⁹ For the altarpiece, see *Paatz*, *Kirchen*, vol. V, p. 66 note 53 where it is attributed to Rossello di Jacopo Franchi and dated to the first third of the fifteenth century.

²⁰ *Paatz* mentions not only the oratory of Saints Cosmas and Damian, but also the information that the "gothic" 1419 church is to be considered as identical to the space now called the Cappellone. He does say, however, that there are two theories concerning the location of early conventual structures. One is that suggested by Neri, and the other is that put forth by *E. von Stegmann* and *H. von Geymueller*, *Die Architektur der Renaissance in Toscana*, vol. IV, Munich 1890-1906, Cronaca, pp. 2-4, according to which these early structures and the early church are to be found in the remains of the bell tower and the southern chapels of the present church. Unfortunately, this area is presently covered with plaster so that this hypothesis can not be verified.

²¹ The original volume of *Deliberations* is no longer extant. Our knowledge of its contents comes from the *spoglio* made of it by Sen. Strozzi in the seventeenth century. See ASF, *Carte Stroziane*, 53 (2), c. 127 (new pagination 115r).

²² ASF, *Provvisioni Registri*, 122, cc. 129r-v.

This provision and the one dated 1435 referred to below were kindly brought to my attention by Professor *Gino Corti*. Reference to this one was also obtained from an old manuscript inventory of the *Carte Stroziane*.

²³ ASF, *Provvisioni Registri*, 125, cc. 239r-v.

Nono provisionem infrascriptam super infrascripta petitione..., Reverenter exponitur vobis magnificis et potentibus dominis prioribus artium et vexillifero iustitie populi et comunis florentie pro parte fratrum observantie ordinis sancti francisci de sancto miniate in monte quod ut notum est omnibus ad reverentiam dei omnipotentis, ac beati francisci, faventibus ipsis, et mediantibus elemosinis eisdem tam publice quam privatim erogatis ecclesiam quandam in dicto loco edificaverunt quam pene ad perfectionem ed optatam formam extruxerunt. Et quod crescente devotione et affectione personarum ad eundem locum non minus quam edificia surrexerint (?), adeo multiplicavit annuente deo numerus fratrum in loco prefato ut etiam longe paucioribus mansionem et loca presentia suppetere posse non videantur. Ex quo non solum utile sed necessarium esse censetur novum dormitorium construere, et quod nedium possent dictum dormitorium facere sed nec partem tecti ecclesie que fieri restat perficere non possunt ex defectu lignaminis propterea opportuni Et quod ipsi optarent amore dei quod ipsis de elimosina lignaminis opportuni pro perfectione dicti tecti et constructione dicti dormitorii per vestram dominationem provideatur prout ipsi melius visum fuerit, Et sperantes ab eadem gratiam reportare decreverunt ad illam recursum habere et de consensu francisci dominici de spinellis et antonii tommasii antinori duorum ex venerabilibus collegiis vestre dominationis auditorum suorum ad predicta deputatorum et secundum ipso-

rum iudicium de singulari gratia et pro elemosina postulare prout inferius continebitur. Quare vobis dominis supradictis pro parte predicta devotissime supplicatur et petitur quatenus vobis eisdem placeat et dignemini opportune providere et facere solemniter reformari quod etiam absque aliqua fide de predictis vel ipsorum aliquo fienda seu aliter requisita vel alia solemnitate servanda operarii opere Sancte Marie del fiore civitatis florentie teneantur et debeant de lignis dicte opere conductis et seu conducendis florentiam vel prope florentiam amore dei et pro elemosina et adiutorio dictorum fratrum ad perficiendum opera et edificia de quibus supra dicitur dare et tradere et seu dari et tradi et concedi facere dictis fratribus et conventui ipsorum vel alii sive aliis pro eis recipientibus usque in quantitatem comunis extimationis et valute florenorum centum quinquaginta auri, Et sic si opus fuerit ad exitum camerarii dicte opere vel alterius super predictis deputati vel deputandi micti scribi et poni possit et debeat sine aliquo eorum preiudicio vel danno licite et impune sine aliqua solutione pro predictis fienda vel alia solemnitate servanda visa dumtaxat reformatione que super his facta fuerit qualibet oppositione cessante....

²⁴ This sacristy will be discussed below.

²⁵ Neri, op. cit. (see n. 16), pp. 257-258.

²⁶ Room C is included in Bartoli's plan. See L. Bartoli, La 'generazione' albertiana dei rapporti ne 'La Bella Villanella' a Firenze, in: L'Arte, XIII, 1971, p. 67.

The measurements for the ground plan reproduced here are my own. I would like to thank *Harriet Caplow, Peggy Haines, Amanda Lillie* and *Christine Günther* for their help in taking these measurements. The plan was drafted by Architect *Dario Melloni*.

²⁷ In the 1850's when Berti saw the Cappellone it had a wooden open beamed roof; on one of the beams was the date 1655 and an inscription referring to a restoration of the roof by the Calimala guild. There were also fragments of a vault visible, *Berti*, op. cit. (see n. 15), p. 129f. At some later point the roof was replaced by the present vault.

S. Rosselli, Sepoltnario Fiorentino, (mss. in the Biblioteca Nazionale, hereafter BNC, Magliabechiana, II, IV, 534), fol. 214v says of the Cappellone in the seventeenth-century, *che era in volta bellissima, che per minacciare la ruina fu battuta in terra, e ridotta a tetto intorno a 25 anni sono. In detta volta pare di ricordarmi che fosse l'arme de' Nerli, che si vede ancora nella cappella, che e in testa di detto stanzone, e nella loro sepoltura a piè di detta cappella, dove si legge ancora la seguente iscrizione: S. Descend. Tanais Francisci Philippi de Nerli 1497 ...*

²⁸ At some point it was a novitiate chapel. It could have had that function initially.

²⁹ I would like to thank Dr. *Hans Teubner* for his insightful suggestions concerning the reconstruction of Room A.

³⁰ The vault collapsed and one of the remaining consoles is quite worn (Fig. 2: no. 3). The room was probably left uncovered for a period of time. In view of this, it is not surprising that the other two consoles are missing.

³¹ Comparison with other buildings can also be made. The juxtaposition of a console supporting a rib with a pilaster supporting an arch can be found in the sacristy of Santa Trinita. The comparison is, in one respect, preferable to that with the chapel in Room B, since both Room A and the Santa Trinita chapel have arches, pilasters, and consoles all of dressed stone. However, the sculptural members of the Santa Trinita sacristy are richer and of a higher quality than those in Room A.

³² Two of these can be seen in Fig. 12. Examination of the interior of one of these tombs revealed a fairly deep rectangular space which was empty.

³³ Figure 14 shows the northern exterior wall of both Rooms A and B. The round arched door in the foreground is the entrance to the crypt. The window above it lights Room A. The two windows to the right belong to Room B and its crypt respectively.

³⁴ A few other things, which are perplexing, should be noted. First, the heavy string course on this northern wall is not typical of ecclesiastical architecture. It is more common to public or domestic architecture. Second, while the top window is a later addition, the one below it and above the door is probably original. Both it and the window outside Room B have a series of irregular, but none the less, distinct quoins marking the vertical boundaries of the window openings; neither has such quoins on its base. However, the window to Room A is abruptly intercepted by the string course above it. The resulting rectangular window is, like the string course itself, atypical. Windows in apses are usually arched. It could be that Room A was originally a tower in the Della Tosa palace. In this case, the friars would have reused the foundations and some of the masonry of this tower for their church, including a string course and a rectangular window. However, the piece of string course directly above the window to Room A is obviously a later addition. (This is clear on the spot, but not in the photograph.) It could have been added at the time of the upper window. So the string course may be part of a tower in the Della Tosa palace, but the window would be contemporary with the building of the first observant church. In this case, the window may have continued above the string course, interrupting it. When the later window was added, the original window was modified.

It is also possible that the string course, like the window above it is a later addition. At the point where it ends, mid-way across this northern wall, there are a series of corner quoins which begin only at the height of the string course and continue up to the roof. Yet, there are problems with this conclusion as well because the string course, as noted in the text, does seem to turn what would have been an exterior corner, and more importantly, the masonry of Room B, as will be seen below,

is early fifteenth century. What need would there be to redo only half of the building in a later period, and why put corner quoins (those above the string course) in the middle of a building. The problem remains unresolved, but does not essentially detract from the main point of the text, that Room A was an independent freestanding box, because this conclusion is based on the masonry break between Rooms A and B.

- ³⁵ These photographs are difficult to read. The door is the entrance to Room A. The wall was originally an exterior wall which at some point was widened and plastered.
- ³⁶ It was not possible to photograph these quoins. Those that exist are still intact, but they are only about four feet high above the top of the vault. They are interrupted by the roof which covers the vaults of the sacristy. Access to the area on the other side of the wall above the vault of the Cappellone would certainly reveal more evidence, but all entrance ways have been walled up, probably because the vault would not hold the weight of a person.
- ³⁷ No evidence of vaults has been found in the areas where the nave of the church would have been. It is possible that, if there were any, they were destroyed with the construction of the new church. It should be noted, however, that this form, vaulted chapel and wooden roofed nave, is common, in fact typical, for early Observant architecture according to *Hans Teubner*; see his dissertation, *Zur Entwicklung der Saalkirche in der Florentiner Frührenaissance*, Heidelberg 1975, p. 120ff. (hereafter *Teubner*).
- ³⁸ There are many Florentine churches that do not follow the east-west orientation: San Marco, the Annunziata, Ognissanti for example. In the particular case of San Salvatore, the change in orientation was in all likelihood due to the terrain. If the church had followed an east-west orientation, the whole north flank would have required heavy buttressing.
- ³⁹ According to *Teubner*, most Observant churches are three times as long as they are wide. If the early church followed this, it would be about 21.19 meters long. One piece of evidence, which is a mystery, is a stone cornice shaped like the exterior of a pitched roof (Fig. 20) and located in a space above the present sacristy on the wall that abuts the choir chapel of the later church (Fig. 2: no. 9). Initially it seemed that it might be the remains of the old roof of the 1435 church which would make that wall the facade of the first church. However, two observations work against this: first, the stones face the wrong direction and second, the resulting nave would be too short. Until further investigating it remains a puzzle.
- It should also be noted that there is a window presently located in the Borgherini chapel (Fig. 2: Room D) whose round arched form is common in early fifteenth century Florentine architecture and which is, according to *Teubner*, typical of Observant architecture. This could be one of the original nave windows of the 1435 church. (Fig. 1).
- ⁴⁰ There are several versions of this map, including one which is painted. For further information see especially, *A. Mori and G. Boffito*, *Piante e Vedute di Firenze*, Rome 1926; *L. D. Ettlinger*, *A Fifteenth-century View of Florence*, in: *Burl. Mag.*, XLIV, 1952, pp. 160-167; *J. Schulz*, *The printed plans and panoramic views of Venice*, in: *Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'Arte*, VII, 1970, pp. 7-109.
- ⁴¹ For its present orientation vis-a-vis San Miniato, see the Buonsignori map of 1584. Reproduced in *G. Fanelli*, *Firenze, architettura e città*, Florence 1973, Fig. 111, and *Mori and Boffito*, op. cit. (see n. 40), pl. XXIII.
- ⁴² Reproduced and discussed in *Mori and Boffito*, op. cit. (see n. 40), Pl. I, no. 3 and 4. The orientation is not as obvious here as it is in the Catena map.
- ⁴³ ASF, *Carte Stroziane*, series II, 51 (3), c. 35 (new pagination 42).
- ⁴⁴ This is well known and repeated in all the literature. See for example, *Paatz*, *Kirchen*, vol. V, pp. 50-51.
- ⁴⁵ Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett. Reproduced in *Mori and Boffito*, op. cit. (see n. 40), insert between pp. 144-145.
- ⁴⁶ The most recent treatment of this map is found in *Schulz*, op. cit. (see n. 40), p. 19.
- ⁴⁷ *Pulinari*, pp. 188-189.
- ⁴⁸ At times the date is erroneously given as 1444. For example, *Neri*, op. cit. (see n. 16), p. 258, and even *Paatz*, *Kirchen*, vol. V, p. 50.
- ⁴⁹ *Neri*, op. cit. (see n. 16), p. 258.
- ⁵⁰ When I first began work at San Salvatore, the inscription was nowhere to be found among the wall or floor plaques in either the present church or the other rooms. It was subsequently discovered by the Padre Guardiano in a pile of stone blocks.
- ⁵¹ The fact that the Nerli chapel once functioned as the sacristy can be deduced from two sources. First and most important, *Del Badia*, loc. cit. (see n. 15), p. 13, in his discussion of the Busini sacristy, which he assumed was identical to the room that functioned as the sacristy in his day (1876), reveals that he thought this room was identical to the room we now call the Nerli chapel. Second, in the plan of San Salvatore in *P. Laspeyres*, *Die Kirchen der Renaissance in Mittel-Italien*, Berlin and Stuttgart 1882, Pl. XIII, fig. 36, the entrance to the Nerli chapel from the south transept is totally walled up, while a door leading from the Nerli chapel directly into the choir chapel is shown. In addition, the entrance to the Borgherini chapel to the left of the choir (the present sacristy) is completely open. The combined evidence of the Laspeyres' map and *Del Badia*'s comments make it clear that in the 1870's and early 1880's the Nerli chapel functioned as the sacristy.

- ⁵² *Rosselli* (see n. 27 above) himself mentions the date of 1657 in the text of one of his discussions. However, the manuscript was probably written and researched over a long period.
- ⁵³ *Rosselli*, ms. cit. (see n. 27), fol. 211v.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 212r.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. 214v. For the rest of the quote concerning the Cappellone see note 27. This tombstone has been mentioned above.
- ⁵⁶ *Rosselli*, ms. cit., fol. 217r and v.
- ⁵⁷ This door was clearly added after the erection of the sacristy (Room B), but is probably contemporary with the present church. It is on axis with the door in the north transept of the present church but enters the sacristy from an awkward place. As can be seen in Fig. 2: no. 6, part of the wall of the apse of the sacristy was cut back to make the entrance possible. Finally, the shape of the moldings and size of the door matches those of the present church, not those of the sacristy.
- ⁵⁸ The coat of arms is obviously not fifteenth century, but there is no reason to suppose that the arms *Rosselli* saw were fifteenth century either.
- ⁵⁹ ASF, Catasto, 617, S. Croce, Gonfalone Leon Nero, 1442, c. 833v. I have changed some of the word divisions of the original to make the text easier to understand. For the words *s'obrichorono* and *ubrichatti* see *obbligare* in modern day Italian.
- ⁶⁰ The *catasto* of Tommaso's grandson, Antonio di Francesco di Tommaso, gives the date of Tommaso's testament and the notary who drew it up. Unfortunately, the testaments of the notary have not survived. Tommaso's testament might have provided more information about his relationship to San Salvatore. We do know from another source that he left stipulations in that will concerning the friars. The 1480 *catasto* reports of the above mentioned Antonio and his brother, Tommaso di Francesco, both list under their obligations the payment of 50 lire annually in perpetuity for a *pietanza* to the friars of the *osservanza di San Francesco* at San Salvatore due to the conditions of their grandfather's will. In addition, they say that in the same will it was stipulated that they give 200 Florins to the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, which was supposed to administer the legacy and give from it 7 1/2 Florins every year to the same friars for another meal. However, they report that up until the year of the tax declaration, 1480, the hospital had refused to accept the legacy. So Antonio and Tommaso had themselves continued to pay the 7 1/2 Florins in addition to the above mentioned 50 lire. ASF, Castato, 1005, I and II, S. Croce, Leon Nero, c. 67r and c. 679r.
- ⁶¹ On the Observants, see especially *I. da Milano*, San Bernardino da Siena e l'osservanza minoritica, in: S. Bernardino, Saggi e ricerche pubblicati nel quinto centenario della morte, Milan 1944, pp. 379-406. Some of their attitudes towards their buildings can be gleaned from a 1474 document in which they elect four friars to oversee the building activities of the order in the Tuscan province, and in which they draw up a plan for the church of San Salvatore. See *Pulinari*, pp. 187-188. The style of their architecture has been discussed by *Teubner*, op. cit. (see n. 37), pp. 120ff.
- ⁶² This will be discussed in greater detail in a future article on the later church at San Salvatore.

RIASSUNTO

L'articolo propone una ricostruzione ed una datazione per la prima chiesa del convento di San Salvatore al Monte. Oggi siamo soliti associare al nome di San Salvatore l'ampia e bella, anche se semplice, chiesa costruita dal Cronaca nel tardo Quattrocento. Questa è stata tuttavia preceduta da una costruzione ben diversa, i cui resti sono ancora visibili a nord della chiesa attuale. La chiesa primitiva si rivela come un piccolo edificio ad una sola navata probabilmente coperto da un tetto con capriata in legno e con una piccola cappella quadrata con volta a nervature posta all'estremità orientale. Una visione schematica di essa si può vedere nella pianta della Catena.

Questa prima chiesa risale agli anni 1430-35. Adiacente ad essa e stilisticamente simile vi era una sacrestia completata nel 1442 dalla famiglia Busini. Intorno al 1465 Castello Quaratesi aveva già destinato una somma di denaro per la costruzione di una nuova chiesa, che i frati francescani non volevano. La loro continua opposizione fu in seguito vinta da Lorenzo dei Medici e la nuova chiesa fu edificata.

La ricostruzione ha una doppia importanza. Primo, la chiesa ricostruita è conforme al modello preferito dai francescani nella loro architettura; secondo, proprio in quanto differisce sia nello stile che nelle dimensioni dalla chiesa odierna, contrasta con questa e ci rende comprensibile l'ostinata opposizione dei frati alla costruzione di questa nuova chiesa che, ironicamente, appare ai nostri occhi di un'austerità tale da interpretare perfettamente lo spirito della semplicità francescana.

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Sopr. Mon. Firenze: Fig. 1. - KIF (L. Artini): Figs. 2 - 20.