

## NEWS

### NEW ARTISTIC CLAIMS FROM DUKE UNIVERSITY

"Duke Prof has Proof on Shroud" were the headlines in January this year in the *Durham Morning Herald* of North Carolina, U.S.A. Decoded, the story behind the headlines concerned a Duke University professor of psychiatry, Dr Alan Whanger, who has been conducting spare-time research on artistic aspects of the Turin Shroud.

Dr Whanger has devoted special attention to an encaustic icon of Christ Pantocrator in the St Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai. This is an icon which the US art historian Professor Kurt Weitzmann of Princeton has published in his definitive study "The Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai - 1e, Icons (vol 1)" Princeton, New Jersey 1976. Weitzmann dates this to the first half of the 6th century. Using twin projectors and polarized filters, Dr Whanger has superimposed the icon on the Shroud facial image (and vice versa), and finds 45 points of congruence which he claims as proof that the Shroud was the source of inspiration for the icon, and thereby around from at least as early as the 6th century. Additionally, Whanger finds 60 points of congruence between the Shroud face and that of Christ on a Byzantine gold solidus of the emperor Justinian II, struck between AD 692 and 695. On the basis of this evidence Dr Whanger supports the view that the Shroud was one and the same as the Mandylion of Edessa.

Dr Whanger is Professor of Psychiatry at Duke University, North Carolina. He is chief of the university's geriatric psychiatry service and a fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. In the early 1960s he was at the London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene prior to medical work in Rhodesia.

Slides illustrating Dr Whanger's claims will be shown at the BSTS meeting on June 25.