

EDITORIAL

Thanks to Mel Gibson's film about the Passion of Christ, there has been something of a renewed interest in the Shroud and the death (and dare I say resurrection?) of Jesus of Nazareth in general. Thanks to this, a documentary about the Shroud of Turin and the Sudarium of Oviedo was filmed, edited and aired on Channel Four between the last edition of the newsletter and this one. I have included a couple of reviews of the documentary in this edition, along with my own thoughts about Gibson's film.

The original intention with the documentary was to include part of my own research on the Image of Edessa and its possible links to the Shroud in the archives of Mount Athos. Accordingly, I flew to Athens and in the midst of a terrible snowstorm took off to meet director Alex Hearle in Thessaloniki. That night saw the worst storms and coldest temperatures for over 100 years in Greece. When we set off for Mount Athos early the next morning, we were advised not to take the more direct mountain road as it was blocked by snow. We headed north, and apart from a bitterly cold wind seemed to be making good progress.

However, about 50 kilometres from Ouranoupolis, the roads were suddenly covered with snow and ice, even at sea level, and we were reduced to crawling along, skidding all over. We realised that we would be late for the boat, and so called the Athos Pilgrims' Office to ask them if possible to get the boat to wait (there is no other way into Athos). We came sliding down the road into Ouranoupolis about ten minutes late, just in time to see the boat leaving port. My own time schedule was very limited, and despite reaching Athos for a few hours the next day there was no way to get to any of the monasteries where I had worked. The whole episode was therefore edited out of the finished product, although on the way back I interviewed Alex about the film, and am pleased to be able to include the interview herein.

Also included in this edition is a fascinating article about Shroud copies, by one of my Spanish colleagues from the Centro Español de Sindonología. Daniel Duque has spent many years tracking Shroud copies down and summarises for us the highlights of his research.

While at the Shroud Congress held in Richmond, USA, in 1999, I heard an excellent presentation by one of the congress organisers, Diana Fulbright, related to the forelock, one of the Vignon markings. The paper daringly challenged accepted knowledge about this detail, visible on many Pantokrator icons but surprisingly not present at all on the Shroud image. I am pleased to be able to publish Diana's full paper here, with all the images to show exactly what she is talking about.

Along with the usual section with news from Turin, and a Who's Who on Barrie Schwartz, the name behind THE Shroud web site, this edition should have something for everyone. Just as the edition was going to press, I managed to include an article on the Shroud Museum in Turin written by Bruno Barberis. Bruno is also included in a Who's Who interview – after trying to rewrite the section into a narrative style piece, I decided that the Who's Who section is better left as personal interviews, so that the people involved effectively speak in their own words. As always, I am always open to your ideas and suggestions and enjoy hearing from everybody.