

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Noel Curren-Briggs *The Shroud and the Grail: A Modern Quest for the True Grail*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £10.95; 241pp.; 16 pp. black & white plates; numerous genealogical tables and index.

A serious, full-blooded study of the Shroud's so-called "missing years, between 1204 and its emergence at Lirey in the mid 1350s has been long overdue, and Noel Curren-Briggs provides this in full measure in his latest study, by far the most authoritative appraisal of the tantalising associations between the Shroud and the tangled traditions surrounding the Holy Grail, the fall of the Knights Templar, the legend of the Mass of Saint Gregory, and much more. As befits a professional genealogist, Noel Curren-Briggs has a masterly grasp of the inter-relationships of the blue-blooded families of western Europe and the Byzantine East during the Crusader period, and although he himself acknowledges many uncertainties and loose ends (and has been suggesting revisions to his ideas even before the book achieved publication), he concludes:

If I have done nothing else in this book, I think I can claim to have shown how closely related to one another were the men and women who had most to do with the Shroud between 1171, when it was first seen by King Amalric I and his entourage, right down to 1453, when Marguerite de Charny gave it to her kinsfolk, Duke Louis and Duchess Anne of Savoy. Is it merely coincidental that this historical family network is reflected in the romances? Can it be that the Shroud Mafia was the Grail Family?

Not least of the wealth of information in Noel's book is a useful appendix on the *incendium amoris*, or the heat phenomenon of mystics and healers, which he suggests may be relevant to the causation of the image, and "a subject for further investigation, but not by me."

Linda Cooper "*The Old French Life of Saint Alexis and the Shroud of Turin*", *Modern Philology* [a journal devoted to research in medieval and modern literature], University of Chicago Press, August 1966, pp.1-17.

The eleventh century Old French *Life of Saint Alexis*, generally recognized as the first masterpiece of French literature, contains the passage:

Then he [Alexis] went off to the city of Edessa
Because of an image he had heard tell of,
Which the angels made at God's commandment...

As Linda Cooper shows in this highly scholarly paper, the "image" referred to is none other than the Image of Edessa, and when the various versions of St. Alexis's life are studied, it makes a great deal of sense that this was one and the same as the Shroud. She cites, for instance, the Bollandist *Vita Alexius* which calls it "sine humano opere imago Domini nostri Jesu Christi in sindone", i.e. "an image of our Lord Jesus Christ made without human work on a *sindone*"; also the Latin Cod. Monac. Aug. S.Ulr. 111 "Edisse [venit] in urbem, in qua sanguinea domini serva[ba]tur ymago non manibus facta", i.e. "[he came] to the city of Edessa, in which there was preserved a blood-stained image of the Lord not made by hands". Both passages clearly refute arguments that the Image of Edessa was incompatible with the cloth we know today as the Turin Shroud.

Turin Shroud - Image of Christ?, Proceedings of a Symposium held in Hong Kong, March 1986, Hong Kong, 1987.

This includes the following papers: Peter Rinaldi, "Some reflections on the Shroud"; Ian Wilson "The Shroud and the Mandylion: A reply to Professor Averil Cameron"; Luigi Gonella "Scientific investigation of the Shroud of Turin: problems, results and methodological lessons"; William Meacham "Radiocarbon measurement and the age of the Turin shroud: possibilities and uncertainties"; Alan Adler "The origin and nature of blood on the Turin Shroud"; and Rex Morgan "The Holy Shroud and the earliest paintings of Christ". Copies of this publication are available from William Meacham, 259 Gloucester Road, 8-B, Hong Kong, price \$6.00 each, inclusive of sea mail postage (estimated 6-8 weeks), or \$8.00 via air mail.

La Sindone. Nuovi studi e ricerche, Atti del III Congresso Nazionale di Studi sulla Sindone, Trani, Edizioni Paoline, Milan, 1986; and La Sindone, La Storia, La Scienza, Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia, Edizioni Centrostampa, 1986.

These two lavishly produced volumes were shown to the Editor on a recent visit by Father Peter Rinaldi. Both in Italian, they are notable for the exceptional quality of the colour illustrations. The Trani volume includes an interesting article by Stefano Milillo on a copy of the Shroud made following an exposition on June 4, 1646. This was presented to the clergy and chapter of Bitonto, near Bari in southern Italy on May 25, 1659. There is also an interesting article by Dr. Stanislav d'Amore on the various calculations of the height of the man of the Shroud: Barbet (1936) 178 cm.; Vignon (1939) 180 cm.; Gedda (1939) 183 cm.; Judica-Cordiglia (1961) 181 cm.; Ricci 162 cm.; Bucklin 177 cm.; and Ferri 187 cm. 183 centimetres is equivalent to 6 foot. D'Amore offers as his contribution the height of 5 foot inches.