

CORRESPONDENCE

(1) From Père Dubarle, Paris.

The French Dominican monk Père Dubarle of the Couvent Saint-Jacques, Paris, has recently drawn attention to an interesting illustration in the 14th. century Skylitzes Manuscript in the National Library of Madrid [see front cover of this Newsletter]. Reproduced in Professor André Grabar's *Seminarium Kondakovianum* article "La Sainte Face de Laon et le Mandylion dans l'art orthodoxe", 1935, this shows the scene of the arrival of the Mandylion of Edessa [identified by some as one and the same as the present-day Shroud] in Constantinople in 944.

The then reigning emperor of Constantinople, Romanus I Lecapenus, is shown embracing the image, and as remarked by Dubarle "In the miniature the Holy Mandylion is represented as a cloth folded four times, bearing the image of Christ." This seems supportive of the 'doubled-in-four' concept of the Shroud-Mandylion identity. However there is one jarring feature: the face of Christ appears as if leaping out of the cloth to greet that of the emperor. Clearly this illustration deserves further study.

(2) From the Revd. Kim Dreisbach, Georgia, U.S.A.

Responding to the comments in the last Newsletter on Stephen Murray's *Building Troyes Cathedral: The Late Gothic Campaigns*, Kim Dreisbach writes:

"Having acquired the book on inter-library loan, I was amazed to discover some additional facts which may throw new light:

- (i) Thanks to the efforts of the Fourth Crusade's . Bishop Garnier de Trainel "the stock of precious relics owned by the bishop and chapter of Troyes Cathedral was enriched through several important acquisitions made in Constantinople (i.e. those of St. Helen of Athyra, a fragment of the True Cross, the skull of St. Philip, the arm of St. James the Great, and a dish used at the Last Supper."
- (ii) The Troyes Cathedral derived some of its revenue from relic-collecting boxes "placed in proximity of relics on display." The cathedral was also dependent on extraordinary revenues such as "gifts... made for a specific purpose, for example, for the reconstruction of the upper nave after the 1389 collapse."

From the above it would seem logical to assume that:

- (a) The bishops of Troyes, including d'Arcis, had more than a casual knowledge of the extent and revenue-producing potential of relics brought back to France from the Fourth Crusade. That knowledge might even have included information about the location and nature of the Holy Shroud.
- (b) So long as the Troyes Cathedral had its own 'untainted' stock of relics, there was no need to become involved in a dispute over the display of the Shroud at Lirey. After all, Lirey was only a humble collegiate church, not a cathedral with a whole stock of 'undisputed' relics.

- (c) However, what if those who made the pilgrimage to Lirey were flocking in enviably large numbers, and making substantial monetary contributions, just at the time that the Troyes diocese was involved in huge expense occasioned by the need for major repairs to the cathedral? Could it be that in charging Lirey's dean with 'fraudulent intent... for the purpose of gain', the d'Arcis memorandum is in reality a projection of Troyes cathedral's own need for revenue? Both the fact that Bishop Henri of Poitiers had showered praises on Geoffrey de Charny on the inauguration of the church at Lirey on May 28, 1356, and the fact that d'Arcis fails to name the genius who somehow possessed such technical skill to fabricate the 'false relic', suggests that d'Arcis's motives were something less than purely spiritual. Not only his ego, but his treasury was in sore need of being bolstered precisely at the time he penned his infamous memorandum of 1389

I would greatly appreciate hearing from those of you who would care to make comment on the above speculations regarding the d'Arcis Memorandum."

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(3) From the Mayor of Lirey, France

The moat of Geoffrey I de Charny's fortified house at Lirey is still in existence as part of the lands of a farm just over the road from the church of Lirey, and in response to a request from Ian Wilson the Mayor of Lirey, M. Continant, has kindly sent a xerox of a gazetteer entry on Lirey that includes an 18th. century plan of the house and moat. This is shown below.

[photo].

The original exists as part of the archives of the French department of the Aube, and it is hoped to obtain a better copy in the near future.