

SHROUD RESTORATION DATA

First published in LINTEUM, the Spanish Centre for Sindonology magazine, 2002.

When – from 21 June to 23 July 2002.

Where – In the sacristy of the Cathedral of Turin, in absolute secrecy.

Who – A team led by Mechthild Flury-Lemberg, previously curator of the Abegg Museum, in Berne, Switzerland.

Authorisation - Proposed by the Archbishopric of Turin, with the consensus of the “Shroud Conservation Commission” appointed by Cardinal Saldarini in 1992 and with the authorisation of the Holy See.

Aims

- Remove the Holland Cloth backing and the 30 repair patches sewn on by the nuns in Chambéry (France) in 1534
- Study the back of the Shroud and produce the first “digital atlas” of both sides of the cloth
- Remove the organic remains, dust and dirt that had accumulated between the Shroud and the backing cloth
- Stretch the Shroud to iron out crease marks

Effects

- The triangular holes caused by the fire in 1532 are smaller and irregular. The patches used to cover part of the original cloth
- On the back of the Shroud there is no body image but there are bloodstains
- Scabs and other particles removed from the back of the Shroud have been put in sealed containers marked with coordinates, awaiting further scientific study
- Crease marks have been taken out with a system consisting of small lead weights. The Shroud has thus “grown”, and now measures 441.5 x 113.7 cm

Criteria

- Improve conservation conditions
- Summarise and catalogue samples
- Provide a suitable mechanical support system for the Shroud
- Observe and measure the back of the Shroud, difficult to do after the restoration

Objections made

- The restoration team could have been larger and more international
- Some data might have been irremediably lost