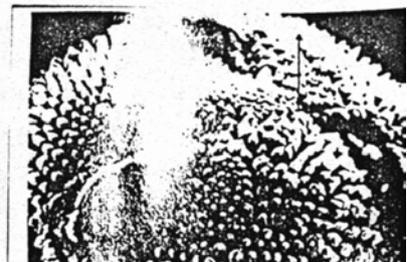
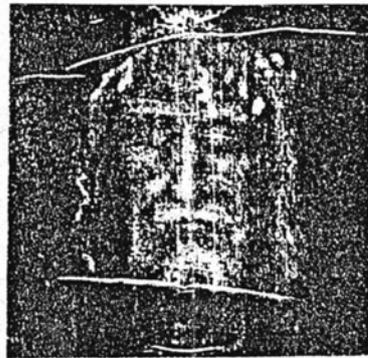
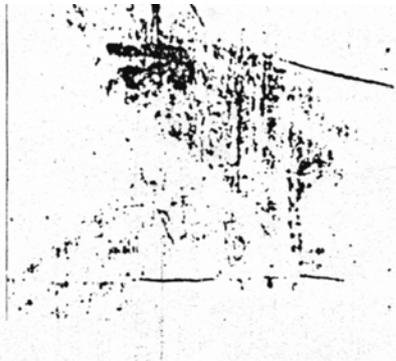
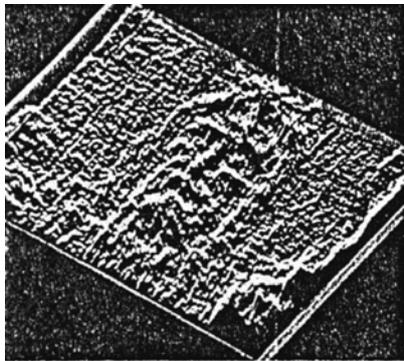


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A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN
edited by REX MORGAN
Author of PERPETUAL MIRACLE and SHROUD GUIDE



EDITORIAL

The 49th issue of SHROUD NEWS is a little late because I felt it important to include some comment on the recent Carbon 14 results which have been so widely publicised. I have therefore suspended the usual practice of bringing to our readers a selection of different items and have devoted the whole edition to a summary of the C14 situation as it appears to stand.

Amongst the items held over are my meetings with sindonologists in Italy, further work on the Templecombe panel, a report on my visit to a Shroud exhibition in Rome, an exciting development from France in connection with the South East Asia Research Centre for the Holy Shroud, reviews of half a dozen new or newly acquired Shroud books and videotapes, an extraordinary secret meeting in Europe with a sindonologist from behind the Iron Curtain, a further visit to the Roman catacombs in connection with my work on the artist Thomas Heaphy and a number of communications from all over the world for likely publication in the newsletter.

In December we reach the 50th edition of SHROUD NEWS and I should say in advance that I doubt that we can get it out much before the end of December or, more likely, early January. There is a wealth of material in hand including several important follow-up papers to the carbon dating exercise and I trust, therefore, that SHROUD NEWS adherents will understand if it is late and that they will be rewarded with a "bumper" edition.

REX MORGAN

WORLD REACTION TO CARBON DATING A FARCE by REX MORGAN

When I was in Rome in October this year waiting, as it happened, for the official announcement of the C14 tests, I had many discussions with Italian Shroud experts following my having talked at length earlier in the year with a number of Americans on the possible outcome of the testing programme and the implications for future research, whatever the results might have been. From all over the world Shroud experts (and however one might define that term it certainly appears to exclude almost all media writers and their editors) agreed that with the enormous corpus of scientific, historical and, for that matter, religious research into the mystery which has gone on now for hundreds of years, we knew that the Shroud could not be medieval.

I should clarify what I mean by saying that there is immense evidence for there having been in existence since about the time of Christ, a piece of Palestinian linen which had enwrapped a crucified and beaten male body and that it had on it stains of real human blood and an inexplicable image of a man representing the historical Jesus Christ. There is no other known example of such a cloth and, certainly, for nearly two thousand years a cloth of this description has at least been regarded by many people to be the burial cloth of Jesus.

NOT CONCLUSIVELY PROVED

That such a cloth did exist is indisputable: what may now be in dispute is whether the cloth at Turin is it. There have been various historical theories put forward over the years suggesting that the original cloth was destroyed, or is somewhere other than in Turin, and the 1988 C14 results, which we all now know, add weight to that theory for if the Turin Shroud were to have been conclusively proved to be of 14th century origin (and I do not believe that it has been conclusively proved) then the original has either been destroyed or is otherwise concealed from us and a substitute is what has been at Turin cathedral since the Middle Ages. But even the cloth of Turin continues to defy all scientific attempts to duplicate it or explain the method of image formation on it.

NOT GOOD ENOUGH

It is not good enough to say that a forger made it during a time when fake relics were big business if we cannot also say, five hundred years later, how he did it.

It is not good enough to say that it was produced by painting or by rubbing a compound over a bas-relief because it has no trace of pigment to indicate this.

It is not good enough to say that pressing a piece of cloth onto a "hot statue" produced a kind of scorch mark resulting in the perfect image we see at Turin -- it just doesn't work.

It is not good enough to say that some exudation from the corpse of a man, conveniently flogged, crucified, and wrapped up in 1300 produced the image in a manner which shows only the vaguest impression to the naked eye and anticipates the photographic negativity process by five hundred years and encodes as well three dimensional information which still cannot be explained by the very scientists who discovered that characteristic in the 1970s.

It is not good enough to say that a medieval forger gathered together forty or fifty

pollens from all parts of Asia Minor and Europe coincident with the known travels of the original Shroud and sprinkled them on his cloth to add authenticity to his creation in case a twentieth century palynologist should analyse them.

It is not good enough to say that the astonishing congruencies of the Shroud image with numerous works of art depicting Christ over fifteen centuries are mere coincidence.

It is not good enough to say that a medieval creator set up machinery to produce a burst of intense radiation to make a scorch-type image on his cloth in order to simulate the possibility of a resurrection-from-the-dead phenomenon, whether miraculous or natural such as a thunderbolt or seismic energy release coincident with recorded occurrences at the time of Christ's entombment.

It is not good enough to say that a medieval forger thought up the theory that post mortem body heat increases after a violent death and that he set up a hot corpse or New York-made plastic mannikin daubed in just the right amount of blood, sweat, myrrh and aloes to produce a cellulose degradation of the fibrils of his cloth to form an image.

It is not good enough to say that a medieval man (or woman) carefully went to tombs in Israel to obtain the very rare form of limestone, aragonite, and deposited it in the foot area of the cloth to complete the illusion that it was from a first century Jewish tomb in Jerusalem.

It is not good enough to say that some medieval genius thought of placing leptons of precisely the reign of Pontius Pilate on the eyes of his victim to produce traces of their image on the cloth discernible only through a microscope and with sophisticated enhancement photography.

It is not good enough to say that his anatomical and medical knowledge enabled him to produce clotted blood serum in exactly the historically correct locations on the cloth, before he created the image to guide him, which would subsequently fluoresce in the correct spectrum when a twentieth century super-scientist would subject the stains to ultraviolet light about which the Middle Ages knew nothing.

It is not good enough to say that a medieval forger obtained thorns known to have grown in Jerusalem at the time of Christ in order to produce precisely matching bloodflows from such a species on the head of the man in his image.

It is not good enough to say that the forger had the capacity to introduce a Jewish pigtail hairstyle and the bent knee of post crucifixion rigor mortis, both of which factors can only be interpreted from the image through a twentieth century three-dimensional analysis machine.

It is not good enough to say that a medieval creator was able to make foldmarks in the cloth which long pre-date the fourteenth century and match exactly the evidential folding of the cloth over a much longer period.

Despite all these things which are not good enough we might have to accept as good enough that the independent testing programme carried out with blind tests by three highly expert carbon dating laboratories, all sworn to secrecy for the duration and all getting the same results, show that what they tested was cloth of medieval origin. But were the tests blind? Were the tests carried out by undisputed experts? Were they

conducted in secrecy? Is the absence of collusion undisputed? Did they test the Shroud of Turin? Was the test itself a conclusive test of age? Is a carbon 14 test on its own the final arbiter in the matter?

Let us examine some of these questions in the light of what we now know about some of the celebrated C14 testing programme of 1988.

UNRELIABILITY

At the conference of C14 experts from several different countries called in Turin, in October 1986 and subsequently, by the custodians of the Shroud to discuss the possibilities of taking samples from it and dating them, many objections were raised to the proposed protocols. C14 experts warned of the unreliability of the test and the need for using both methods of carbon dating (the accelerated mass spectrometry method and the proportional counting method) and all warned that samples should be taken from several sites on the cloth owing to its checkered history and the very high risk of contamination of the carbon content which could give a false date. It was finally agreed and announced to the world that there would be seven laboratories concerned in the programme using both methods. It was also made clear that the test would be double-blind: that is to say that each laboratory would receive samples of both the Shroud and other pieces of linen of known age to act as controls on the accuracy of their work and none would know which samples were what or even if they had a Shroud sample.

OPEN TO CRITICISM

Later it was announced, inexplicably, and to the considerable ire of the excluded laboratories, that only three would be employed to undertake the test, all of whom use the relatively new accelerator method and none of whom use the much more tested, yet slower, countdown method. This produced a great deal of acrimony among Shroud watchers of the world and the scientists themselves. Dire warnings were published by a number of experts from several fields who had knowledge of carbon dating matters.

Dr Robert Otlet of Harwell, for example, said, "It is most unfortunate (to have reduced the number of labs to three on the grounds of preservation of the cloth) - entirely unnecessary when you put the amount of material to be taken in context. It will lead to a result which will be wide open to criticism and sadly will not be seen as definitive."

ONLY ONE SITE

The furore died down to some extent and in April 1988 representatives of the three laboratories, Arizona, Oxford and Zurich, gathered in Turin for the well-documented removal of the sample to be divided and given to each of them.

Close examination of the video film of the sampling taking place shows an impressive series of activities made somewhat absurd by the meticulous use of forceps and gloves one minute and bare hands (with dirty fingernails in some cases) the next. Close observation of the film also reveals that the sample was taken from only one site on the Turin cloth, namely at the bottom left hand corner of the frontal image area. It has been pointed out that this must be one of the most contaminated areas of the cloth since, apart from the rough handling of it we see in April 1988, it is

also precisely where thousands of hands would have grabbed it over the centuries for holding it up for display, for carrying it and even, as it is alleged, for fixing it with thumbtacks to a piece of board for a television performance in the seventies.

It has also been pointed out that it is a likely area which could have been scorched by the known fire of 1532 which would have radically altered the carbon content of the fibres being tested. As if this site were not inefficient enough, it is also adjacent to the site where a previous sample was taken for examination by Professor Gilbert Raes in 1973 (which examination concluded that the cloth was of Palestinian origin and probably 2,000 years old).

What is most important of all, but which has thus far received scant attention, is that the sample was cut from what was largely a strip of cloth added on to the Shroud itself, we know not when -- or perhaps now we do. This added strip of linen has been a matter of conjecture with scholars being unable to determine precisely whether it was a similar piece of cloth added in order to even up the visual symmetry of the central image or whether it could have been part of the original cloth, removed at some time in its history and sewn back again to match its original position. Nevertheless this appears to be what has just been carbon dated.

CONTAMINATION OF CLOTH

None other than Professor Giovanni Riggi de Numana, who actually removed the sample, reveals one of the most startling and incredible pieces of evidence about this whole issue in his new book *RAPPORTO SINDONE* published in Rome in mid-1988 by 3M Edizione. In this excellent book Riggi describes the scientific work of 1978 undertaken by the STURP research group of which he was a notable member. In an appendix he describes the taking of the sample on 21st April 1988 and tells us in part (on page 166):

"At four thirty on 21st April work began on the Shroud and lasted for about 16 hours from the removal of the Shroud from the altar in the chapel. Around ten or eleven o'clock after long consultation among textile experts and the controllers and under the supervision of the guests, I was given permission to cut about eight square centimetres from the cloth in the same area where in 1973 a sample was taken by Professor Raes. This was eventually reduced to about seven square centimetres *due to contamination of the cloth with threads of different origins which even in small quantities could cause variation in the dating due to their being of later addition.* The 7cm by 1cm fragment thus obtained was later divided into parts amongst which were three equivalent parts weighing about 50mg to be put into three coded containers."

MASSIVE MISCHIEF

Thus there is every likelihood that each sample tested contained later cloth added to the Shroud. One scientist has commented that the site chosen was extraordinary to the point of being unbelievable if one is trying to get an accurate carbon dating for the cloth. "Poor carbon dating," he said, "has done a massive mischief."

So we have it, virtually from the horse's mouth, that what was cut was, at least partially, not original Shroud material and who knows how much of the intrusive contaminant fibre remained in the samples which were subsequently "dated". Some commentators have claimed that as much as two-thirds of the sample consisted of the added-on piece of cloth.

LEAKS

How expert were the laboratories conducting the tests? At least one of them, Zurich, is known to have produced a result during a test run to assess its suitability for ultimate candidature for the Shroud test, which was 1,000 years out! This same laboratory, despite its oath of secrecy, allowed a well-known sceptic of the Shroud, Reverend David Sox, to be present during the testing and to know the results obtained in Zurich. Not only had Sox, many years before, in collusion with noted Shroud-basher, Dr Walter McCrone, attempted to secure, surreptitiously, the Raes sample from Raes himself (who immediately sent it back to Turin once he had appraised McCrone's quite unsatisfactory carbon dating proposal) but Sox is also believed to have leaked the Zurich result to the media well before the official announcement of the results, indeed, before Oxford in England had even conducted the tests, and fired the major controversy around the world over the existence of leaks at all, let alone the medieval date.

BREACH OF SECURITY

This in turn led to accusations and cross-accusations amongst the laboratories and the Turin authorities until the source of the leak was identified. But already the world media had latched onto this story and despite the denials of any officially agreed date by all labs at that time (although it turned out that the leaked information was correct) the whole world virtually knew that the result was going to be a medieval date. Regrettably, this known and documented (by Sox) breach of security by Zurich allows for the allegation of the possibility of collusion amongst all the laboratories as to the result of the tests. In this regard Dr Michael Tite of the British Museum and supervisor of the test collation programme said on 27th August, "Results from each testing centre have been circulated to the others with a proposal for a co-ordinated date on the Shroud from the samples, but I haven't heard from anyone yet."

NEVER HEARD OF

It is also understood that the Arizona laboratory invited one of the excluded laboratories to witness its work on the samples with the implication that the outsider might have generated part of the advance rumour about the medieval date. Later, in Britain, a Dr Richard Lockett of Cambridge University, of whom no-one connected with Shroud studies seemed to have ever heard, claimed to have been given information by the Oxford laboratory. He said in the London Evening Standard on 26th August, "I think that as far as seems possible the scientific argument is now settled and the Shroud is a fake. I suppose there will be certain people who will never want to believe it but it seems unlikely these tests could be 1,300 years out." He also said, "Laboratories are rather leaky places."

Professor Luigi Gonella, Scientific Advisor to the Cardinal of Turin commented, "In the twelve years that I have been working on the Shroud I have never heard of Professor Lockett." Professor Edward Hall, head of the Research Laboratory at Oxford, speaking in Adelaide, Australia, on 30th August said rather more forthrightly, "I don't know who the hell Dr Richard Lockett is - he's nothing to do with us. If it is a fake, it is a remarkably good one and how they did it is very mysterious."

For several days in late September and early October I was in contact with Professor Gonella in Turin as it was thought that the official announcement might be made during my Roman sojourn. Gonella was rightly distressed that any leak of information had taken place through at least one of the laboratories which had led to accusations against him and/or the Church along the lines that the results were being tampered with. He explained that he was in the process of advising the result formally to the Pope in Rome after which time the announcement would be made either from the Vatican Press Office (with whom I was also in daily contact) or from Turin. In the event the announcement was made about ten days later when I had decamped to other parts.

HARD TO CONCEAL

Thus it seems that all three laboratories could have been responsible for leaked information, the point being that their credibility must therefore be brought into question or at the very least it cannot be said that all three honoured their obligation of secrecy. Added to this, the tests were not in any way blind since, for some unaccountable reason, the overseer of the test programme, Dr Michael Tite, advised the known dates of the control samples to the laboratories. Armed with this information and the obvious peculiar weave of the Turin cloth, each lab knew exactly which sample had been taken in April which, again, does not exclude the possibility (although one cannot say it happened) of collusion to announce any result they cared to for whatever motive.

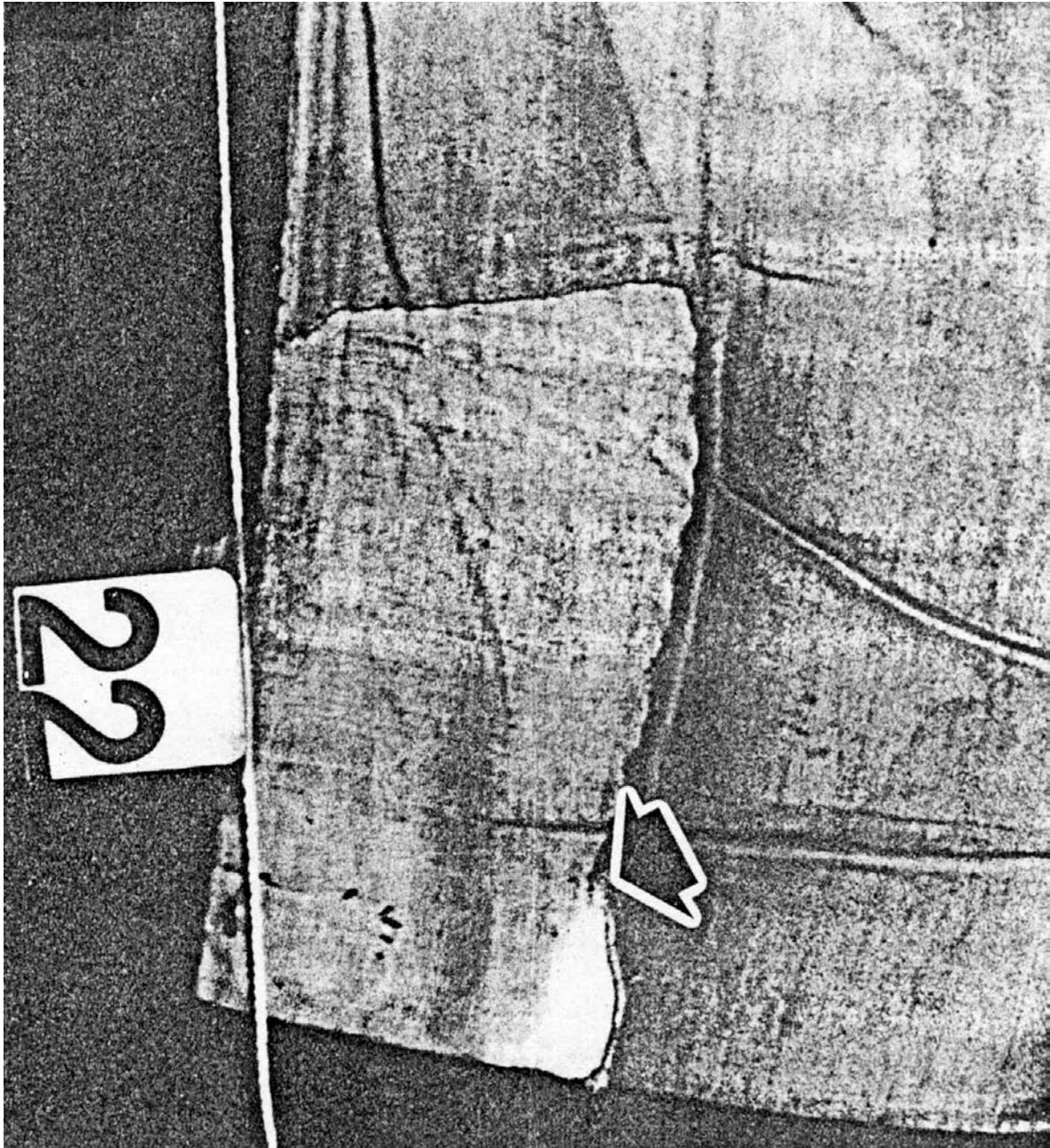
Indeed, Dr Paul Damon of the Arizona laboratory said: "It's pretty hard to conceal (which sample is the Shroud) because it has a very distinctive weave." And Tite himself said on 21st September: "The trouble is that the cloth of which the Turin Shroud is made is very distinctive. Although it's a possible weave both for the Middle Ages and the time of Christ it's not very common in either. One was not able to get control samples which combined the known age aspect - or one could remove a large enough sample to do conventional radio carbon dating - and have that weave as well, and to be linen."

The controls (as reported in THE GUARDIAN on 21st September) included a piece of Egyptian mummy wrapping from around the time of Christ dated by conventional radio-carbon techniques and another from a Christian burial in Nubia nominally dated to about the 11th century. There were also shreds from a cope from a chapel in France which could be dated very precisely to around 1300. Scientists experienced in historic material would have recognised the one from Turin almost immediately.

Tite went on to say: "One had to decide whether to make it strictly blind: one could have made it very much more difficult by unravelling the samples. It would then have been much more difficult to decide which was the Shroud. But then it would also have been much more difficult to clean and pretreat it."

QUITE ENTERTAINING

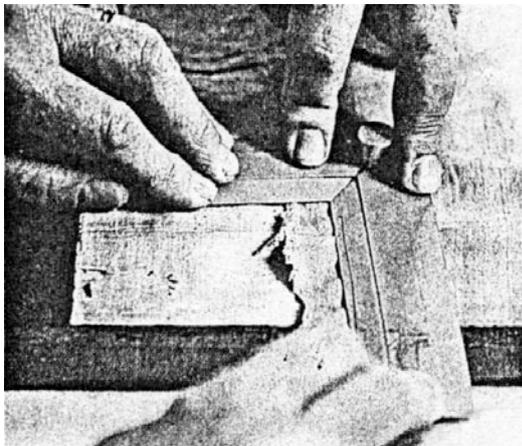
"It's been quite entertaining," said Tite blithely, "provoked quite a lot of media interest. I've never been involved in media interest before. I don't want to do it again, but if one was going to get involved, one might as well enjoy it. The thing that



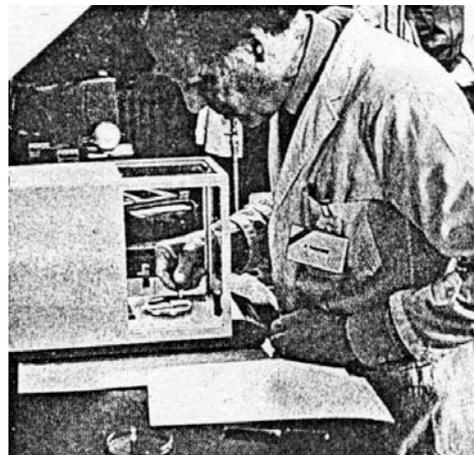
The corner of the Shroud from which the Raes sample and the 1988 sample were taken (pic: Vernon Miller)



Working on 21st April 1988: l to r: Cardinal Ballestrero;
Professor Testore; Professor Porrati; Professor Giovanni Riggi
(Pic: Riggi)



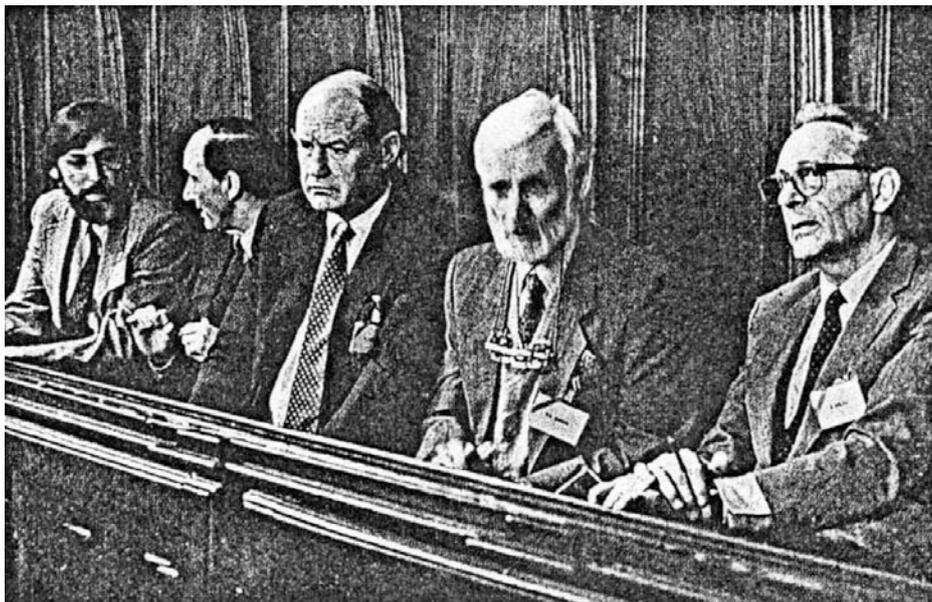
The sample site April 1988
(Pic: Riggi)



Professor Testore placing
the sample in an electronic
balance (pic: Riggi)



Detail of the fragment site [Pic: Riggi]



April observers: l to r: Hedges (Oxford); Donahue (Arizona);
Hall (Oxford); Damon (Arizona); Wolfli (Zurich).
[Pic: Riggi]

Picture: KENNETH MASON



Dr Michael Tite, co-ordinator of the C14 testing with (l) Professor Edward Hall and (r) Dr Robert Hedges of Oxford at their press conference following the official announcement of results

struck me when one saw (the Shroud) was that it was just too perfect. It's almost as if somebody had the book and said, right, we need the thorns round here and the marks there, etc. But then again everything seemed to be on there which should be there, which just seemed a bit too good to be true. It shows the crucifixion with the nails going through the wrists, which I gather is where they would have to go for the crucifixion to work, whereas in fact every other picture of that period shows them going through the palms of the hands."

A CIRCUS

Further doubt on the procedure was raised on 14th September by Professor Gonella who is quoted as saying:

"If testing proves it is medieval then there is a bigger problem because the techniques to make such an image did not exist in the Middle Ages. The image is the result of an oxidation-dehydration process but how and why it produced this image on the Shroud has not been explained yet. The real scientific problem is in the strangeness of this object. We have an object that should not exist.

"The carbon-14 testing has become a circus because of unprofessional conduct. The truth is that all the labs wanted a piece of the Shroud for publicity. Some scientists always have an eye out for the television camera. Valid scientific testing could have been done by cutting only one piece from the Shroud but at the request of the participants three were cut so that each lab would test a part of the Shroud. The one-piece plan would have mixed the Shroud cloth with two others giving one piece of cloth to each lab with none knowing which was testing the Shroud. This would have been a true blind test. Instead each lab was given four pieces of cloth, one of which belongs to the Shroud, and was asked to test them without being told which was from the Shroud.

"Another concession given to the testers was to allow each lab to have a representative present when the pieces were cut from the Shroud because they said it would help their credibility if they were present.

"We accepted a scientific initiative and now we are subjected to abuse."

A GREAT AGE

A further weakness in the entire procedure has been emphasised by a number of commentators, namely that carbon-14 dating is not, as has been popularly advertised with more media hype than the end of the world, the ultimate test of genuineness of anything. Most scientists and art historians, archaeologists and conservators, working with old artefacts, as well as the carbon dating fraternity itself, say that one resorts to carbon dating only as a confirmatory test of all other evidence about an item whose date might be in doubt. The fact is, that in the case of the Turin Shroud, all the other evidence, physical, chemical, photographic, palynological, anatomical, historical, artistic, iconographic, etc, etc, points to its being of a great age and probably first century origin.

Thus even if a totally unquestionably uncontaminated series of samples from many sites on the cloth had been carbon dated by both methods and had come up with an undisputed medieval date, even this should hold little credence unless all the other evidence supported a medieval creation: and at this time in the history of Shroud study, it certainly does not.

FLAT ASSERTION

One of the world's foremost Shroud scholars, Ian Wilson, said recently after the formal announcement, in the newsletter of the British Society for the Turin Shroud:

"If there was one feature of the British Museum press conference that particularly astonished, and frankly annoyed me, it was Professor Hall's flat assertion, on the basis merely of the averaged '1260 - 1390 AD' dates quoted, that the carbon dates have overwhelmingly proved the Shroud's fraudulence. Effectively we are supposed to believe that on the basis of one single branch of science, nuclear physics, (and all involved with the carbon dating, including Gonella and Tite, were physicists), every other scientific and historical contribution to the subject must now be tossed aside as totally worthless. As Hall admitted, it did not matter to him that there remained no clear explanation for how some hypothetical forger created the Shroud's image. The laboratories' instruments had spoken, and that was it.

ALL-OUT WAR

"Few realise that instead of being totally dispassionate scientific institutions, the AMS laboratories are involved in an all-out war with their competitors, laboratories such as Harwell and Brookhaven which use the more conventional, but also more tried and tested proportional counter technique. In this war the Shroud is not a dubious artefact, work on which is almost beneath the laboratories' dignity, but rather a 'plum' project which all have been eager to be involved in because of the flag-waving opportunities offered for their competing techniques.

"What I cannot emphasise strongly enough is that the carbon dating test does not, as yet, justify anyone, least of all responsible laboratory scientists, claiming the Shroud's true date has been incontrovertibly proved to be the fourteenth century. Of course, with two and half million pounds sterling of public money invested in the Oxford facility alone, it inevitably suits Professor Hall and his colleagues to represent carbon dating as having the precision of a Swiss watch. But, as I have made clear elsewhere, carbon dates can be and sometimes are, widely more at sea with each other than the 95% confidence level already claimed in respect of the Shroud. We have already noted how the dates arrived at by Harwell, Oxford and archaeologists for the British Museum's Lindow Man differ by up to eight centuries.

DISCREPANCY BRUSHED ASIDE

"Carbon datings of the Thera or Santori volcanic eruption (thought to have happened around 1500 BC) vary between 2400 BC and 1100 BC. David Sox, in his new book, even disclosed that Professor Wolfli of the Zurich laboratory, when tying out a 50 year old tablecloth carbon dated this to 350 years old. Yet this latter discrepancy has been brushed aside as probably due to some interference from the detergents his mother-in-law had used when washing the cloth."

Another view on the validity of the official result was expressed in Britain by John Tyrer, a textile specialist:

'Under the circumstances (of the Chambery fire, the presence of numerous contaminants from handling, fungi, pollens, insect debris, etc on the Shroud) contaminants would inevitably damage the flax fibres themselves.

ADDITION OF CONTAMINANTS

"It would seem likely therefore, that the carbon 14 content of the Shroud will have been 'topped-up' by the addition of contaminants that were in it in 1532 from organic substances that were much younger than the Shroud since during the fire the intense heat inside the silver casket would have turned any moisture into steam, probably at superheat. Any contaminants on the folded cloth would be dissolved by steam and forced not only into the weave and yarn, but also into the very lumen and molecular structure of the flax fibres. For this reason the Shroud could be substantially older than the carbon dating suggests. In fact, bearing in mind the thermal history of the Shroud and the folded way in which it has been stored, carbon dating procedures would seem an unsuitable way of assessing its age."

Dr Anna Hulbert, a British artefact restorer who specialises in the restoration of medieval paintings, trained at the Courtauld Institute, and who helped, for example, with the restoration work in Florence following the 1966 flood damage said on 8th October:

CANNOT THINK OF ANY KNOWN TECHNIQUE

"I have worked on 14th century medieval paintings of Christ and have seen innumerable examples. I can never remember one which suggested the use of an archaeologically accurate Roman scourge as on the Shroud. Also, the marks of the nails are always shown on the palms, never through the wrists. I cannot think of any known technique used in the Middle Ages that would have permitted an artist to get the image on the cloth without penetrating the linen fibres. An artist would have undoubtedly felt that the more it penetrated the cloth the more permanent the image would be.

"The biggest puzzle for me is how an artist working in the 14th century, when light and shade modelling was just gaining importance in art, contrived to produce an image which relates entirely to the distance of the cloth from the model, and this with sufficient accuracy to be reproduced on the American VP8 Image Analyser.

ONE TOOL AMONG MANY

"Carbon dating, like X-rays or any other analytical technique, should be regarded as one tool among many. It is chiefly useful in the dating of undisturbed archaeological material. In the case of the Shroud, one should calculate carefully whether any of its known wanderings or adventures, such as the 1532 fire, could give a distorted reading to whatever date the radio carbon laboratories come up with."

And on the assumption (which is highly hypothetical but cannot be dismissed) that the Resurrection occurred from the Shroud, in a recent letter to NEW SCIENTIST, Bryan Kelly said:

"If the Shroud were genuine and if the Resurrection caused a burst of energy resulting in the activation of stable isotopes of carbon and oxygen only 18% more carbon 14 so produced over that present naturally in the cloth would provide a carbon date 1500 years later than the date of the original cloth."

Dr Robert Otlet of Harwell carbon laboratory confirms that a one percent increase represents 83 years and the same possibility was admitted by Hall at the British Museum press conference.

HUGE NUMBERS BELIEVED

It is very easy for the world's media-inhaling public to be told something is a fake. Huge numbers of people believed it when an unsigned draft of a memorandum of doubtful authenticity by a disgruntled medieval bishop was publicised by another bishop thirty years later and again early this century; huge numbers of people believed it when an American stage magician claimed he could reproduce the image by various means (although they do not meet the criteria applied to the Shroud image); huge numbers of people believed Dr Walter McCrone, a respected micro-analyst, when he said he had found red paint all over the Shroud, a finding which was subsequently totally discredited (but without any publicity); and now huge numbers of people have been told, with the most enormous publicity the Shroud has ever had, that the C14 test has "proved it a fake."

NO VESTED INTEREST

I am as willing as anyone to be convinced that the Turin Shroud is a man-made forgery of the Middle Ages. I have no religious interest in its being the authentic Shroud of Christ (although I would find that fact, if it were one, extremely interesting and compelling evidence for the truth of the traditional accounts of Christ, if not evidence of the Resurrection itself); I do not have to rely on my books or other writings on the subject (or any other subject) for my daily bread, so I have no vested interest in the matter, as some of the Shroud's detractors seem to. Indeed, if I may say so without appearing vulgar, my Shroud studies owe me a far greater sum than I owe them. So I have no personal interest in whether the Shroud is genuine or not, and even if the three laboratories had claimed a date close to the time of Christ I would not have claimed, nor have I ever done so, that it proves anything other than a greater possibility that the Shroud could be what thousands, if not millions, have believed it to be by tradition over two thousand years.

VIRTUALLY MEANINGLESS

I have to say, as objectively as I can, that this C14 announcement is virtually meaningless, indeed the world reaction to it is a farce, in the fascinating quest for knowledge about the Shroud unless or until all the other evidence can be shown to be fallacious; until someone can demonstrate, with all the resources now available to science (but they can't) how the image got onto the cloth, and if it can be proved that this was neither a natural nor supernatural process and was made by the hand of man, why then, was it done with such inexplicable and minutely detailed properties which we are only now on the threshold of understanding?

DOES NOT CANCEL OUT

Like many observers who know a little more about the Shroud and its study, sindonology, than the public at large or the reporters who write with their self-decreed authority on this and every other subject, I say that there were serious faults in the testing procedures which do not preclude having tested the wrong piece of cloth, which do not preclude the possibility of a colluded misleading date having been announced, which do not preclude having tested something which has had its carbon content seriously interfered with through its very history, and which tests were totally inadequate to be convincing. I share the view that the medieval result does not cancel out the enormous other sources of evidence to the contrary.

Indeed, some people have questioned why the Turin authorities appeared to have been so overwhelmingly supportive of the results of this one test. Some say that because the delay in official announcements after the (accurate) leaks from the laboratories suggested that the Church was going to tamper with the results they should immediately announce them with their total blessing. Both Gonella and Cardinal Ballestrero, the Shroud's guardian, appeared, from the way they were reported, to have written the Shroud off as a forgery.

SICK AND TIRED

Yet another view is that the Church (quite understandably) is sick and tired of being hassled about the Shroud by scientists and others, particularly in the last ten years and thus by appearing to support the recent test, irrespective of its demonstrably questionable protocol and result, aimed simply to throw off enquirers so that they can continue to test and probe the mystery in their own good time. Yet another theory is that had the Church of Rome appeared to dispute the result they would be seen to be supporting the view that the Shroud is, in fact, the burial Shroud of Christ (which the Church has never done) and thus lose its credibility as a religion in this modern age by basing its beliefs on such relics.

It is interesting that flamboyant Professor Teddy Hall of Oxford said: "Some people may continue to fight for the authenticity of the Shroud like the Flat Earth Society." It is a significant analogy in that if it is a medieval forgery it seems remarkable that at a time when a great number of people in fact believed, in their ignorance, that the earth was flat the forger had the advanced knowledge and capacity to do something we cannot do even today when we know, amongst other things, that the earth is round.

ANOTHER CHAPTER

Giovanni Luciano, one of the five keepers of the Shroud said: "Science progresses and who knows if in 30 or 40 years it will emerge that the carbon test is invalid."

And Cardinal Ballestrero himself said on 13th October: "These tests do not close the book on the Shroud. This is but another chapter in the Shroud's story, or, as some would say, in the mystery of the Shroud. After all this research we do not have any plausible answers to explain how the image of Christ was created."

And if, after all is said and done, and we are a long way from all being said and done, perhaps the editorial in the London Times of 14th October 1988 sums it up:

"Thus would a musician treasure a page from Beethoven's manuscript, an object both valueless as a scrap of paper and priceless as a link with the master. It would be disappointing to discover such a page was forged; but it would make no difference to the quality of his genius."

SHIFT TO HISTORIANS

So, if the tests were accurate then we have to ask the question: where is the "true" Shroud, the existence of which since the time of Christ is almost indisputable? Was it destroyed during one of its many escapades prior to or during the Middle Ages? Was the cloth at Turin something which was substituted either at the time of destruction to continue the tradition of its existence, or for some other reason and if so, where is it

now, and why? The onus of such a discovery moves sharply away from the scientists who, whilst they have provided us with a great deal of remarkable information about the object and have also, albeit unwittingly, I suspect, persuaded a large proportion of the world's literate (sic) to take no further interest in the matter, have yet to tell us the most intriguing question of all -- how the image was formed. The emphasis now shifts to the historians and in this regard as well as the scientific farce just observed, means that the mystery of the Shroud has only just begun, for those of us who are interested.

NOTHING HAS HAPPENED

In the light of this, SHROUD NEWS will continue to bring to its readers the same content of news, comments and articles on every aspect of Shroud study on the assumption that nothing has yet happened this year to advance the solution of the mystery either towards possible forgery or possible authenticity.



Cardinal Ballestrero and Professor Luigi Gonella making the official announcement of the test results at Turin, 13th October 1988

PETITION

One of the many experts dissatisfied with the recent C14 testing has asked several organisations such as ours to publicise the wording for a petition (or series of individual letters) to the Cardinal Archbishop of Turin to indicate the level of concern for the test to be done properly. Set out below is wording suitable for use either as a petition which readers may wish to pursue or for individual letters one might wish to direct to Turin. Should you wish, SHROUD NEWS will forward any such documents on your behalf if you do not wish to proceed independently.

**A PETITION TO HIS EMINENCE
CARDINAL BALLESTRERO,
ARCHBISHOP OF TURIN AND
OFFICIAL CUSTODIAN OF THE
HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN**

"We the undersigned have followed with great interest the scientific studies of the Turin Shroud. As scholars, researchers and enthusiasts of this unique object, we are dismayed by the impact of the carbon-14 dating and the near-universal tendency now to dismiss the Shroud as a medieval fake. We believe that there are many questions which deserve further research, and urge Your Eminence and other responsible authorities to permit such investigations to proceed as soon as they can be organized, hopefully by early 1989.

"In particular, we are most concerned that the true age of the Shroud may not have been established by the recent C-14 tests, because only one point on the corner of the cloth was sampled. We urge that further sampling be permitted of at least two or three other areas of the Shroud, and that this second round of carbon-dating be carried out under the supervision of specialists experienced in the field applications of C-14 dating. We hope that a wide array of sophisticated analyses will be conducted to ensure that the samples are not in any way anomalous or contaminated. Only with such comprehensive examinations can we obtain evidence on which to base conclusions regarding the possible authenticity of the Shroud of Turin -- which remains one of the most fascinating objects in existence.

We pray that Your Eminence will give urgent consideration to this petition so that the physical reality of the Shroud may be clarified without undue delay.

Name: _____

Country: _____

SHROUD NEWS began in 1980 when Rex Morgan, author of three books on the subject of the Holy Shroud (PERPETUAL MIRACLE -SECRETS OF THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN, SHROUD GUIDE and THE HOLY SHROUD AND THE EARLIEST PAINTINGS OF CHRIST) started putting together a few notes about current developments in sindonology (the study of the Shroud of Turin) for a small circle of interested people in his home country of Australia. He didn't expect it to go beyond a few issues.

The bulletin now reaches subscribers all over the world and because of its relatively simple method of production it can be written and produced and the information disseminated more quickly than most news-sheets of a similar kind or the more prestigious journals. It contains information, news, articles and illustrations gathered from sources of Shroud study worldwide through Rex Morgan's extensive personal connections with what has been described as the "Shroud Crowd".

Rex Morgan is a frequent traveller overseas and thus has the opportunity to keep abreast of latest developments in Shroud study and research. He was present at the world media preview of the Shroud itself in August 1978 in Turin, Italy and has met with numerous Shroud researchers in many countries. His quest for information about the Shroud has become, as he describes it, a "passionate hobby". He brought the world-famous Photographic Exhibition created by Brooks Institute, California, to Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Macau and during its tour it attracted more than half a million visitors. The exhibit has now been given to the non-profit making organisation, The South East Asia Research Centre for the Holy Shroud (SEARCH) of which Morgan is President. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the USA based Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin (ASSIST) and was a member of the scientific team which conducted environmental experiments in a Jerusalem tomb in 1986 (The Environmental Study of the Shroud in Jerusalem).

Our list of SHROUD NEWS subscribers continues to increase. We request a subscription in Australia of \$6 for six issues posted. SHROUD NEWS comes out six times per year. The USA subscription for 6 issues is \$US 6 (posted surface mail) or \$US 12 (posted airmail). Postage to other countries varies. ALL back issues are available at \$1 (US or Aust) each plus postage charges.

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