

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM B.S.T.S. MEMBERS

In the last issue of the Newsletter we invited members to contribute items or comments for this *Newsletter*. The following has been received from Michael Clift of 9 Glevum Close, Longlevens, Gloucester GL2 9JJ:

"There are some questions which I believe have not been asked and I wonder if anyone can suggest answers to them? Firstly, where exactly is the left hand of the image? Those prominent markings inferolateral to where it should be cannot possibly be fingers without either the left shoulder or the left elbow being dislocated and they clearly are not; they cannot be folds of a loin cloth because they slope in the wrong direction; and if they are scourge marks why are these particular one, so much more obvious than any of the others?

"Secondly, why are the water stains not directly over the fire damage? They are indeed so separated from it that one can fairly ask how was the fire extinguished?

"Thirdly, if we assume that the 1532 fire was accidental it is difficult to hold the same of the poker marks, yet these too are well away from the important areas. My suggestion is that if one is to damage a folded cloth the overwhelming temptation would be to thrust the poker through the middle of the panel; it would be perverse and even bizarre to concentrate on the edges and yet we knew it was folded at the time because of the repeated pattern of the holes. I therefore suggest that the pattern of folds at that time was different from the pattern in 1532 and I recommend that a search should be made for evidence of folds down the centre of the image in a coronal plane.

"Fourthly, why is the nuns' needlework so very inexpert? The stitches are amateurish and the patches are a botched job though inexplicably unusual effort seems to have been taken to pair off the curious shapes, as can be seen most obviously in the two which resemble a child's socks.

"Fifthly and finally, no-one seems to have noted the significance of the Gospel statement that some seventy pounds of myrrh and aloes were taken along at the burial. If one remembers that this represents 140 half pound packs of butter (and more if it weighs lighter) one cannot imagine that a simple anointing was intended. Perhaps they would have packed this material around the body as we might pack ice, and if so this would provide for the cloth to have been a flat plane in front so that action at a distance could produce the undistorted three dimensional image we have, but it would not provide for contact alone to be the origin of the image.

"I would welcome comments from fellow members.

Michael Clift"

Ian Wilson comments:

"The answer to Michael Clift's third observation is that at the time the Shroud received the so-called poker-boles (the pre-1532 burns), the Shroud was folded differently to the 48 folds of 1532. The four sets of triple poker-holes match each other up in descending order of penetration, and if a Shroud photograph is folded so that each hole overlies the other it can be observed that

the Shroud must have been folded only in four at the time this damage was sustained. Furthermore the holes occur at the dead centre of this arrangement, thus strongly suggesting that the damage was deliberate, as from "trial by fire." Other observations from members will be most welcome.