

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

THE ASSIST NEWSLETTER vol. 1, no. 1

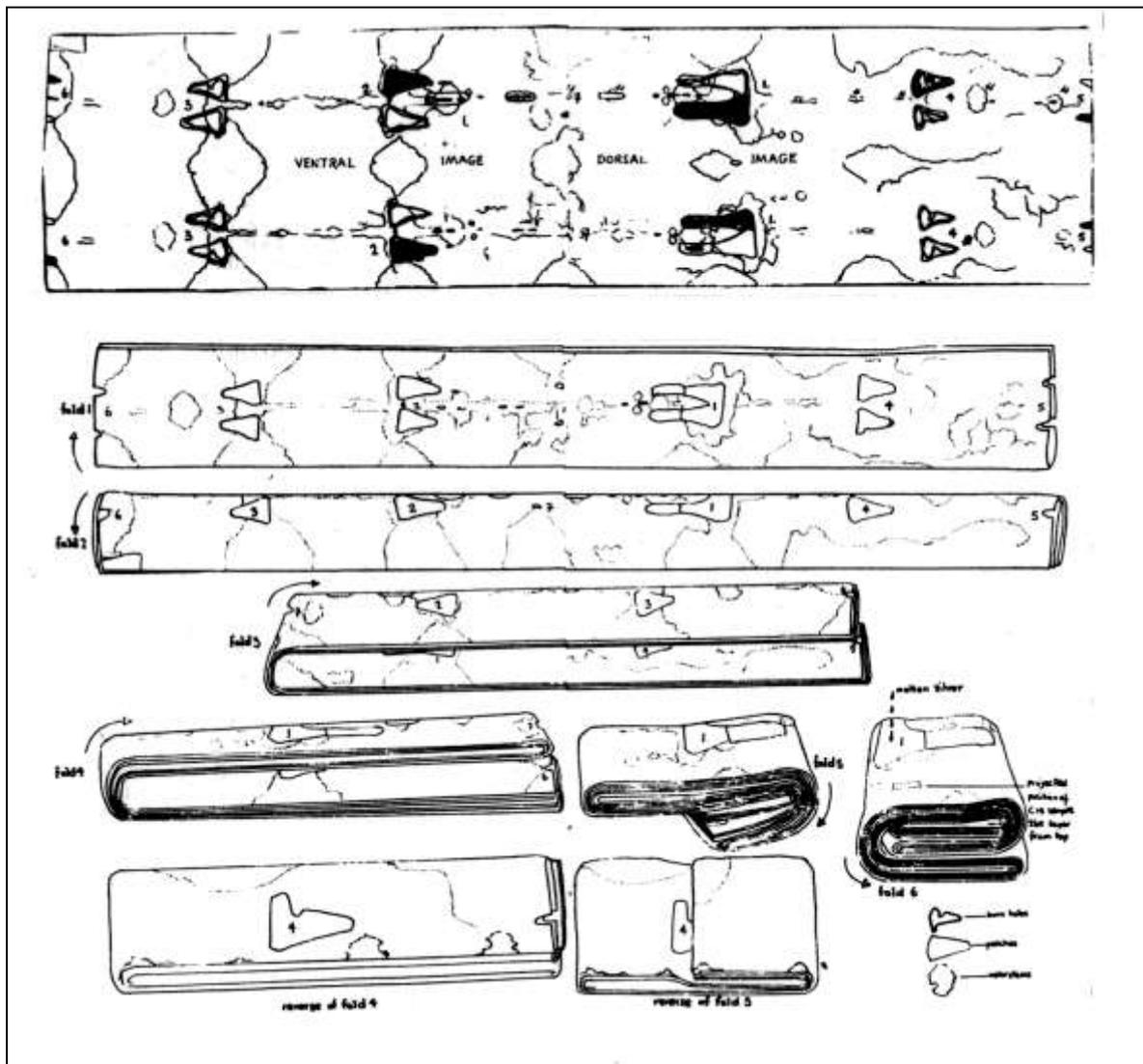
It is a great pleasure to announce a newcomer to Shroud publications, *The Assist Newsletter*, which will be available to subscribing members of ASSIST, at a cost of \$15 for those in N. America and \$18 for those elsewhere. (Address for enquiries: "The ASSIST Newsletter, Box 91 James Way, Granite Springs, NY 10527, USA.) The first issue, which comprises eight A4-ish size pages, includes features on the acquisition and verification of the Max Frei collection, an article by Paul Maloney "Is the Shroud of Turin *really* mediaeval?", and a "position statement" criticising procedural irregularities in the carbon dating, and arguing that this has not proved the Shroud to be the work of an artist. The next issue will include a report on a Christ portrait on a 7th. century Byzantine tremissis with some 20 features that seem derived from the Shroud, including a line connecting the eyebrows to the pupils "exactly matched on the Shroud due to a weaving flaw in the cloth"; also the text of a document "A Request for New Tests on the Turin Shroud" presented earlier this year to Archbishop Giovanni Saldarini, the new Archbishop of Turin.

SINDON, Journal of the Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia, New Series, no. 1, June 1989

Equally as encouraging as the appearance of ASSIST's Newsletter is the reappearance of *Sindon*, the prestigious official Journal of the Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia, publication of which lapsed following the death of the former editor and secretary of the Turin Centro, Don Piero Coero Borga. The first issue of the new series is introduced with messages by Turin's outgoing Cardinal Ballestrero, by the incoming Archbishop Giovanni Saldarini, and by the new President of the Centro, Professor Bruno Barberis. Among the contributions in Italian is an article by the pathologist Professor Baima Bollone on a case of crucifixion which occurred in Damascus in the year 1247; various articles on carbon dating; and a curious claim that there is a complete inscription in Hebrew on the man of the Shroud's forehead. There are several articles in English, including an excellent appraisal by U.S. scholar Daniel Scavone of the documentary evidence for the Shroud having been in Constantinople; a hard-hitting study "The Besançon Cloth" by Fr. Charles Foley; and an argument by U.S. pathologist Dr. Frederick Zugibe that the man of the Shroud had been washed. Subscription inquiries (details of costs are not immediately available) should be directed to: Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia, Via S. Domenico 28, 10122 Torino, Italy.

SHROUD SPECTRUM INTERNATIONAL, quarterly publication of the Indiana Center for Shroud Studies, issue no. 31

Besides a useful translation of 16th. century Archbishop Alfonso Paleotto's observations of the crown of thorns wounds on the Shroud, this issue includes a short but most important article by our own John Tyrer, "The Foldings of the Shroud in 1532". This is illustrated with drawings by Ross Spencer (also published in *Textile Horizons*), which reconstruct exactly how the Shroud must have been folded at the time of the 1532 fire (see below). It can be deduced from this that the area of the Shroud from which the sample was taken for carbon dating was 21 layers deep in the folded bundle at this time.



ARCHAEOLOGY 31, 1 (1989) and 2 (1989)

The two latest issues of the radiocarbon dating journal *Archaeometry* bring to light a curious quarrel over the Shroud carbon dating between Professor Teddy Hall of the Oxford laboratory and Professor Harry Gove of the Nuclear Structure Research Laboratory, Rochester, New York. Gove was the main inventor and developer of the Accelerator Mass Spectrometry carbon dating technique as used by all three laboratories who participated in the carbon dating.

In the first contribution "The Turin Shroud: An Editorial Postscript" Prof. Hall imparts the surprising information "In early 1978 I was asked by the Turin authorities whether radiocarbon dating could be used on the Shroud when other scientific tests were being undertaken during its exposition". He then goes on to give (1) a chronology of the events leading up to the taking of the samples in April 1988, with himself and the Oxford laboratory seeming to play a very key role; (2) a refutation of the various hypotheses for how the Shroud dating may have erred; and (3) some remarks on the apparently eminently satisfactory nature of the results achieved, with a final thank you to the Turin authorities "for their forbearance."

In "Letter to the Editor: The Turin Shroud" Gove responds:

"I feel compelled to present a more accurate historical account than did Professor Hall. His role in the enterprise, except as head of one of the participating laboratories, was never the leadership one his account might lead readers to believe ... one wonders what his purpose was in writing it"

Gove does not go so far as to claim that Hall lied in regard to the statement "In early 1978 I was asked by the Turin authorities...". But he strongly suggests that Hall's first involvement came only when Gove himself "stopped off at Oxford" en route to Turin in the October to tell Hall that the Rochester and Brookhaven laboratories "would make an offer to date the Shroud using a postage stamp size sample." And it would be very surprising indeed if "the Turin authorities" (Cardinal Ballestrero? Prof. Gonella?) had approached Hall at any time during the months leading up to the 1978 exposition, when even STURP received all too little communication.

Gove also does not hide his distaste that Oxford, Arizona and Zurich all consented to cooperate when the careful seven laboratory protocol agreed at the Turin Workshop of September 1986 was mysteriously scrapped, seemingly at Professor Gonella's instigation. In Gove's words "I knew the publicity benefits would probably be irresistible to some or all of the 'chosen' laboratories."

Gove also freely expresses his concerns that the exercise as revised might have produced results embarrassing for the method of which he was the main inventor:

"The new procedures seemed to me to be fraught with peril. If one of the three laboratories produced an outlier result as one did in the British Museum interlaboratory comparison it would be impossible statistically to identify it and the three measurements would all have to be included in the average thereby producing an incorrect result. As it turned out my fears were not realized. The three laboratories performed their measurements flawlessly and the final result is a public triumph for AMS..."

Bizarrely, it would seem more and more evident that in the laboratories' eyes the Shroud was a hotly prized test for the AMS carbon-dating method, rather than the AMS method a cool, wholly impartial test for the Shroud. This distinction is highly important, and we may well not have heard the last of it...