

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

H. A. MEEK, *Guarino Guarini and his Architecture*, Yale University Press, 1988;
STEPHEN MURRAY, *Building Troyes Cathedral: The Late Gothic Campaigns*, Indiana University Press, 1987

Neither of these recently published books is in any way directly on the Shroud; indeed the second one does not even mention it. But both offer some fascinating background insights of relevance to Shroud historical studies.

Meek's book has a full and beautifully illustrated chapter on how Guarini came to design the Holy Shroud chapel in Turin Cathedral. It explains how, back in 1578, it had been intended to build a special church for the Shroud, then how in 1587 the Shroud became lodged in a *tempietto* erected in the presbytery. Only in 1607 is there found the first indication of a plan to build the present-day Chapel.

Stephen Murray's book is a unique reconstruction, often through entries in account books, of the various vicissitudes in the long history of the creation of Troyes Cathedral. It contains several mentions of Henri of Poitiers and Pierre d'Arcis, the Troyesian bishops who figure so prominently in the allegations that the Shroud is a forgery. One of its most intriguing pieces of information is that at Christmas 1389, and therefore in what can only have been a very few days after Pierre d'Arcis had written and despatched his Shroud-denouncing letter to anti-pope Clement VII, the nave of Troyes cathedral suffered a very major collapse, followed shortly after by the fall of the great rose window of the north transept.

So at the time we know Pope Clement in Avignon to have been replying to d'Arcis's letter (6 January 1390), d'Arcis in Troyes was busy hiring a team of 30 workmen to clear away all the rubble. The prosaic reasons for the nave's collapse are ones of structural weakness as a result of too many interruptions during the cathedral's construction. But might d'Arcis have regarded it as a none too subtle message from God...? It is a curious thought that all this was happening exactly six hundred years ago this very month.

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While we have rarely reviewed Shroud News, a publication of similar production format to this Newsletter, Rex Morgan has devoted the entire content of the last two issues to the best available summary of all the papers at the Paris Symposium, and these are warmly recommended to all BSTS members. They can be obtained as back numbers at the very modest price of one Australian (or US dollar) per issue, but members should add at least another dollar to cover postage.