

Editorial

This being the first time I have written as editor of the British Society for the Turin Shroud newsletter, I would like not only to all the welcome new members who have joined in the first months of 2002 and as such have, in a sense, started with me, but also to express my sincere hope that the newsletter will maintain the high standards set over the years by my predecessor, Ian Wilson. I have found it a fascinating and challenging experience to put the newsletter together (although I tend to think of it more as a journal – the term “newsletter” seemed more appropriate in its very early days).

The main news from the Shroud world over these last six months must surely be the International Congress organised by the French Shroud group CIELT and held, as is fitting, in Paris in the springtime. I myself was not able to attend, but I hope to be able to include a full report of the proceedings in the next edition of the newsletter towards the end of the year.

As promised in the last edition, a new section has been added, introducing different people from around the world who are involved with the Shroud in one way or another. This will help us to put a face and background to names we all hear from time to time. In this edition I have included Jorge Manuel Rodríguez, Vice-President of the Spanish Center for Sindonology (or in Spanish *Centro Español de Sindonología*, giving the initials by which the association is normally known, CES). The CES is one of the most active Shroud societies in the world, and it is a great honour for me personally to form part of its Investigation Team. Also included is Jack Markwardt from the United States of America, deliberately coinciding with the publication of his extensively researched article about the (in)famous d’Arcy Memorandum, so often quoted by people trying to show that the Shroud is a medieval painting, yet without taking into account all the evidence that shows it is most definitely not a painting. Age alone does not confer credibility on any document, something that people with little or no historical training so often forget. One day certain sensationalist anti-authenticity publications will also be old, but no truer than they are now. Jack’s article is truly excellent and was first delivered at the II International Conference held in Dallas towards the end of last year.

I have also included some reflections by Kim Dreisbach on Shroud studies and collections, and what direction they will or might take in the future. These thoughts are relevant to all of us in one way or another given that they affect all areas of Shroud studies and interest.

Now a word about Shroud publications. It is my own opinion (and I could of course be mistaken) that the market for “general” Shroud books is more than sufficiently covered, and until more direct research is carried out on the cloth itself or some other ground breaking discoveries are made, the details of what researchers are doing is best found in congress proceedings. Two such volumes are included in the new publication section, namely the proceedings from the congresses held in Dallas in 1998 and Richmond, Virginia in 1999.

This is not the case with the Sudarium of Oviedo, books about which are few and far between, at least in English (the Spanish market is quite logically much better served). Janice Bennett has written a book examining and explaining the latest research carried out by the CES Investigation Team, collected together in the travelling exhibition, which as can be seen from the photograph, recently came to my own home town of La Coruña.

STURP member Ray Rogers has made some comments on Stephen Mattingly’s paper, published in the last edition of the newsletter. Finally, news on the home front includes an exhibition by member and artist Norma Weller. The exhibition is called “New and Undisclosed Secrets of the Turin Shroud”, and can be visited from 2 to 5pm on Sundays from April to September or by appointment at any time, at 3 Albany Mews, Fourth Avenue, Hove, East Sussex. Norma’s telephone number for arranging visits is (01273) 775630.