

The Shroud in Nice 1537: how long did it stay?

By Hugh Duncan

The Turin Shroud moved home many times in the first two hundred years after its appearance in Lirey in the 1350's until it settled in Turin in 1578. One such stop over was in Nice France, where a church (l'Eglise St. Suaire) was built in memory of the Shroud's exhibition from the Bellanda Tower in 1537. This church still exists today and is run by a Shroud brotherhood, Les Penitents Rouges. In over a dozen of the neighbouring village churches are paintings of the Shroud that were created to commemorate the stay of this relic in the area. In 2009 the brotherhood re-enacted the Shroud's exhibition from the same tower in Nice.

How long did the Turin Shroud stay in Nice? A good starting point is to look at Ian Wilson's timeline of the Shroud: on 7 May 1536, the Shroud was exhibited in Milan, having already been in Piedmont and Turin in the previous year. By 1537, it had been taken to Vercelli to keep it safe from the invading French. Then on Good Friday 29 March 1537, it was exhibited from the Bellanda Tower in Nice. The next mention in the history of the Shroud is when it is in Aosta in 1540 and then Vercelli in 1541 and 1543. When I asked Ian he kindly gave me the following quotes about the Nice exhibition:

To Nice Pope Paul III (Alexander Famese, 1534-1549), had gathered the monarchs Charles V (1500-1558) and Francis I (1534-49) in the hope of pacifying them in their vying over issues of prestige and territories. It seems that the Shroud was shown privately to these three illustrious personages then exhibited in public 29 March 1537.

Alfonso Salmeron, S.J., (1515-85), in his Commentaries on the Gospels, cited in Chevalier, has two references to the presence of the Shroud in Nice, of which one is very specific: In die Sabbati sancti venerabiliter toti populo spectanda proponitur (effigies Christi):

The outcome of the Pope's mediation was not peace but only a truce (15 June 1538). Unfortunately this did not last for the agreed period (ten years) but was interrupted in the fourth year, granting however at least some respite for Charles III of Savoy.

This was translated from the Italian of Don Luigi Fossati, *La Sacra Sindone, Storia documentata di una secolare venerazione*, Torino 2000, p.84.

Ian also sent me references for the later period 1540 to 1541 when the Shroud went to Aosta then Vercelli:

1. The Shroud in Aosta in 1540. (Luigi Fossati's La Santa Sindone, Elledici, 2000)

During the time of truce Carlo the Third (Charles III) had the possibility to move with greater freedom and in February 1540 [the Shroud] was in Aosta when Gion Giorgio Massara the Second laid down his testament in favour of his son Emanuele Filiberto. The Fresco depicts the Holy Shroud being held up by the three bishops and can be found in via Tellier. This could be a sign of the permanence of the Holy Shroud in the city of Turin and was kept in the custody of the monks in the collegiate of Santa Croce or Sant'Orso (NB collegiate is a type of church).

The reference above was in Italian, and kindly translated by one of my Italian students, Giovanni. It is cited as coming from *'Immagini del culto della sindone in piemonte, in AAVV, La Sindone di qua daimonti, Torino 1978 pp63-64'*

2. *The Shroud in Vercelli. In 1541 the Holy Shroud was in Vercelli, privately kept, without being exhibited to the general public. The Shroud was not held in the same reverence as in Savoy; however, in 1578 Turin understood its religious importance.*

This was in the same Italian reference sent by Ian Wilson from his timeline of the Shroud's history. It is cited as coming from '*Vedi P. SAVIO Ricechr storiche sopra Santa Sindone Torino 1957 pp 303-305 L'Ostensione della Santa Sindone Torine 1931 LXVI e p.75*'

The fact that the Shroud was in Aosta in 1540 and Vercelli in 1541 means that it cannot have been in Nice from 1537 for the following six years. Certainly not continuously, though of course it could have been moving back and forth.

Henri Sappia's Nice research from 1902

In the Nice archives, there is a series of publications on the history of Nice. Articles about the Turin Shroud were serialized in the magazine 'Nice Historique' in 1902, with the information pertaining to the Shroud's actual stay in Nice coming from No.14 dated 1 November 1902. The author of the series is Henri Sappia to whom we must thank for collecting much of this information together a hundred years ago, thus saving us a lot of time! The articles were in modern French, which I have translated, apart from some direct quotes which came either in the form of 16th century French, Italian or Latin (where I needed help making sense of those!). In order to differentiate my comments from Henri Sappia's and his quotes, all his are in italics.

P.212-In 1536 the Duke of Savoy Charles III was forced to abandon Chambery and his estates in the Alps. He took the Holy Shroud from Chambery to Turin, the occupation of this city by the French seemed imminent. Then he took refuge in Vercelli while his wife and son were already in Nice. It was then that Charles took the Shroud to Nice (Tomaso Chiuso, la SS Sindone page 51). The historians and the documents consulted do not explain clearly whether the Shroud was carried directly from Turin to Nice or transported from Turin to Vercelli and finally to Nice. It is certain that by the spring of 1537, the Shroud was already in safekeeping in the Nice castle (Chateau Drap). Giofredo assures us of this in his 'Histoire des Alpes Maritimes' in the 19th book, year 1538 column 1337.

P.212-There is a strange comment by the famous Jean Calvin in 1543 in the first edition from Geneva of his 'Le Traite des Reliques': 'it is time', he says, 'to speak of the shroud-there are half a dozen towns at least, who have the shroud, such as Nice, the one that was transported from Chambery who has more so, shown they have been painted to order. For as one shroud is burnt, another is found the next day. One says surely that it is the same one, even had been, but the paint is still so fresh that the liar values nothing as if there he had no eyes to see with.' While it is clear that Jean Calvin doubted the authenticity of the Shroud, his mention of it being in Nice is important.

P.213-Charles III, also known as Charles the Good came to see his son Emmanuel Philibert and his wife Beatrix of Portugal. She died in the castle of Nice on 8 Jan 1538 and was interred in the Cathedral of Holy Mary of Place, beneath the chapel of Saint Barthelemy edified in 1499 by Monsignor Barthelemy Chuetti, Bishop of Nice (Giofrido Nicaea Civitas, pages 196 and 202 edition, de Turin 1658).

P.213-The Canon Pierre-Michel de Villarey in the chronological series of bishops of Nice, where he speaks of Monsignor Jerome Arsago: 'il vescovo ebbe la bella sorte insieme ad altri vescovi di mostrare il SS Sudario alla presenza del duca, della corte e di un numerosissimo concorso di popolo e di forestieri.'

P.213-The Baron Louis Durante on page 365 of his second tome (after 1847) on 'L'Histoire de Nice' wrote: 'the Bishop (Jerome Arsagus) hit by calamities in which the country was menaced, obtained the pity of the Duke Charles for an exposition of the Shroud to pray for help from God. The archbishop of Turin gave his consent-the Holy Linen was received in the Chateau Drap and carried in a baldachin in a procession to the Nice Cathedral (a baldachin is a cloth canopy that is fixed or carried over an important person or sacred relic. According to the online Merriam-Webster dictionary the word baldachin comes from Italian and by coincidence the first use of it was in 1537!). The clergy and the brotherhood were walking barefoot, while people followed wearing sack cloth or covered in ashes. On 29 March 1537, Good Friday, the Shroud was exposed and venerated by the faithful from the top of the Bellanda Tower, which dominates the Ponchettes Rocks. The crowd that came from the surrounding area to assist in this religious ceremony was as numerous as the grains of sand on the beach!' The suggestion is that Louis Durante affirmed that he pulled all his details from the Milon family papers, though Henri Sappia seems to want to refer to them as 'unknown manuscripts'.

P.213-Another writer, Jean-Baptiste Toselli (1805-1885) in his 'Precis Historique de Nice' in the first tome, first section, chapter 20 on page 121, says: 'Charles III for reasons of security, sent all his crown jewels, contracts and other most important papers from his archives including the precious relic of the Holy Shroud, all being locked away in the Bellanda Tower'. On page 123, he added; 'Monsignor Jerome d'Arsage, wanting to implore heaven by praying to be free of all these calamities, got the Duke's permission to exhibit the Holy Shroud to the public. On Good Friday 29 March 1537, the exposition was venerated by the faithful from the top of the Bellanda Tower which dominates the Ponchettes Rocks and the remains can still be seen today. It is useless to tell of the huge crowd that hastened from all parts to assist in this religious ceremony.'

P.214-The professor Pie Renacaspi wrote an historical styled novel based in the 16th century and published it in Turin in 1897 by the typography of Saint-Joseph (degli artigianelli). In chapter 16, page 86, he says; 'quando la Santé Sindone fu posta in salvo nel castello di Nizza, M Geronimo Arsago la espose dalla tore Bellanda, il Venerdì Santo del 1537, ch'era appunto il 29 di Marzo.'

P.214-J H Steinbruck in the 'Recueil d'Etudes sur Nice et ses environs' published in Leipzig in 1891, by the printer F P Brockhaus on page 86 talks of the Bellanda Tower and says 'it was there that in 1543, after the lifting of the siege that the Holy Shroud was exhibited in view of all the inhabitants of Nice, carried in a procession from Turin. Now these comments seem a little confused and contradictory. According to previously quoted sources the Shroud had left Nice by 1540 if not earlier. Plus, a procession from Nice to Turin would have been a major voyage, some 400km, though perhaps the lifting of the siege would have certainly been an event to celebrate and this would have allowed the Shroud to have come back to Nice having been elsewhere (in Turin in this case).

P.214-In the 'Guide des Etrangers in Nice' published in 1826 by the printers 'Societe Typographique' written on page 85 was: 'it was in the Bellanda Tower during the infancy of the Duke Emmanuel-Philibert that the state treasures were locked and it was from the top of the very same tower that on Good Friday 30 March 1537 The Holy Shroud that is now conserved in Turin in the chapel of the same name was exposed in view of the people. Some have pointed to the uncertainty in the date of Good Friday in 1537 as an indication that the Shroud was never exhibited in Nice. But what was the date of Good Friday in 1537, March 29 or 30?

In 1902, the author of 'Nice Historique' wrote to Giacobani at the Observatory of Nice to try and clear up the discrepancy about the exact date of Good Friday in 1537. On 4 October 1902, the Observatory of Nice replied and explained that due to the change from the Julian to Gregorian Calendar, Good Friday in 1537 was in fact 30 March and not 29 as stated by many historians.

P.215-Giofredo doesn't mention the exposition of the Shroud in his 'Histoires des Alpes Maritimes', nor in 'Nicaea Civitus' nor 'Nicaea civitus monumentis illustrata'. The authors of 'Nice Historique' in 1902 felt it unusual that the great historian the Abbe Giofredo would include a number of questionable and uncertain events but not a word about the Shroud exposition in Nice. And it wasn't because he didn't believe in its authenticity as he makes clear his belief in his 19th book the 'Histoire de Nice' column 1337, yr 1538.

P.215-Pope Paul III (Farnese) desired to bring Francois I and Charles V to conclude an enduring peace for the tranquillity of Europe. He obtained a congress between the two to take place in Nice. It was here through the intermediary of Charles V that the Pope was to demand of Charles III the Duke of Savoy that he gives up his castle to him during his stay in Nice for the duration of the congress for the interview between the two sovereigns. The congress did happen in June 1538, even though the two important sovereigns never met. But the Pope never stayed in the Nice Castle. The Duke's council refused this demand to the Pope and the Emperor.

In Nice Historique P215, a passage is quoted in Italian, which has been kindly translated by my colleague Guilia Johnson. It says: 'The answer, says Giofredo, of the Council was that the Duke should do everything possible in order not to give away the castle: to this end, he was given several written opinions regarding this decision; in one of these, several reasons were given, according to which it wasn't wise to introduce any foreign prince, nor the Pope. Among other considerations, there was a suspicion (doubt) that the Pope would want to get possession of the relic of the Holy Shroud, which had been stolen from Savoy and was at the time kept in that castle (in Nice), with other precious and most important things-and further to prove what we are saying, i.e. that the Holy Shroud was once kept here, we'd like to quote the words of this opinion, pronounced as it appears-by somebody who had been the Duke's Ambassador to the Emperor, i.e. by the King of France. The words are the following: primarily for the service of God that is the Holy Shroud, which reposes inside, and which it pleased God to fall into the hands of this house and that he believes that the said relic had helped to conserve he wanted as long as it pleased God to abandon it, neither proud for being such relic to no other living as long as it pleased God. Also the frustrating by the occasion that perhaps, the one without the grace of God such despair that he was able to contravene to his service....'

P.215-At the same time, writer Jean Badat in his 'Chronique Nicoise' 1516-1567 as well as Giofredo makes no mention of the Shroud exposition in Nice. The Shroud which had been carried in 1539 from Chambery to Turin first, then after Bouchage to Vercelli to Nice and a second time to Vercelli. That date 1539 seems odd. According to Ian Wilson's timeline the Shroud was taken from Chambery to Turin in 1535. Unless of course a repeat journey occurred a few years later.

The Church of the Holy Shroud in Nice

Sometime between 1584 and 1620 the Church of the Holy Shroud (Eglise St Suaire) was built in Nice, not very far from the Bellanda Tower, where the Shroud had been displayed in 1537. A brotherhood started up during this time and part of their devotion came to be for the Shroud. Curiously, a brotherhood still exists, as does their church, and they are called Les Penitents Rouges, so I paid them a visit and spoke with one of their members, Christian Borghese. He kindly gave me a copy of what information he had gathered from the Nice Archives about the Shroud's stay in Nice:

1536

Having decided to strip the Duke of Savoy of his States, the king of France picked up his furious assaults on Piedmont again. Seeing that he wasn't able to hold the principle city of the region,

Turin, March 11 1536, with his wife and all his family, escorted by 1600 infantry men he retreated to Vercelli, very quickly all the region fell under French control (1), the King of France was particularly eager to become master of the countryside of Nice. Then he (the Duke) sent the Duchess Beatrice his wife with his son Emmanuel-Philibert from Vercelli to Milan, in order that they were safe (2).... After having stayed there for about two months, the Duchess set herself up there, as if in a refuge, in the city of Nice, taking with her the aforesaid Emmanuel-Philibert and carrying her most precious jewels (3).

The duke was also in a hurry to put the most precious relic of the Holy Shroud in the shelter. For the first French attack in Savoy he had decided Chambery hardly safe to leave it there. It is also why he had it taken to Nice, where it was placed in the Castle and venerated there for many years, until things were sorted out with the French.

He also sent the most important documents from his archives here (Nice) so they would not fall into the hands of the enemy, documents still conserved today, a large part of them in the Royal tower of the aforementioned castle, there where the archives were deposited under a vigilant watch. He himself didn't wait long to follow the same route (4).

1537

According to a translation from Don Luigi Fossati's 'La sacra sindone, Storia documentata di ma secolare venerazione', Torino 2000 p.84, Pope Paul II had gathered the two monarchs Charles V and Francis I in Nice in the hope of pacifying them in their vying over issues of prestige and territories. According to G Casalis' 'Dizionario geografico-storico-commerciale degli stati de S.M. il re di Sardegna', vol XI Torino 1843 pp903-4, the shroud was shown privately to the Pope and the two monarchs, then exhibited to the public on 29 March 1537. The website titles this with the date March 19 1537. I wonder if this was a typo or was it the suggested date of the private showing of the Shroud? Plus the date of the exhibition is now known to be Good Friday 30 March 1537. It was displayed from Saint Elme Tower which was later reconstructed and called, the Bellanda Tower.

1538

The response of the council was that the Duke had to do his best requiring he not abandon the castle. On that subject, numerous written notices were given to him, and all outcomes with the same conclusion. One among them put forward various reasons, in particular that it was not good to introduce there the foreign prince that he (King of France) was, not even the Pope.

And he added that one was able to believe that the Supreme Pontiff not wanting to seize the distinguished relic of the Holy Shroud himself, which, transported from Savoy with his most precious belongings, was, then guarded in that castle. And so as to prove what we say, that is to say that the Holy Shroud had been guarded here during a certain time, we want to transcribe the actual words of this notice again, which appeared to have been formulated by someone who had been an ambassador of the Duke close to the Emperor, or even close to the king of France, see below (5)

'It seems that Monsignor, by too much obvious respect, is not able to return the fortress to anyone, whoever he is. Firstly, for the service of God that which is the Holy Shroud that reposes inside and that has pleased God to let it fall into the hands of his House, and he believes that aforesaid reliquary had helped it to conserve that which it would like to as long as it pleased God to abandon it, neither trusting in it, for being such reliquary and none other living person as long as it pleased god. Also, the frustrating this one for occasion that is perhaps the one would be without the grace of God such to despair that he would contravene for his holy service and least of his subjects that he has, that of the province of Nice (6)

Nothing about the Shroud is mentioned in the Nice archives again until 1551.

(1) Campana, l.10.

(2) Tons. Vita Em. Philib. l.1.

(3) Mem. du présid. Lambert.

(4) V. Agostino Solaro Sindone evangel. P.98. Monum. arch. castri Taur. Pingon. Sindone evangel. p.23.

(5) Arch. castri Taur.

(6) V. il Cusano, De' vescovi di Vercelli p.290 n.9 et p.293 n.1 d'où il ressort que le Très Saint Suaire a été un temps vénéré à Verceil.

Information from Nice Town Hall

On the advice of Christian Borghese, I sought further information from Nice Town Hall. This was through their website and the brochures produced by the 'Centre du Patrimoine' and this is a translation of the relevant points, regrouped into chronological order:

1537

Taking refuge in Nice with his wife Beatrice of Portugal, his son Emmanuel–Philibert and his treasures and his relic, Charles III pays in making a political choice. Since his accession to the throne in 1504, the Duke of Savoy was caught in a conflict which exceeded his weak forces and States, one which opposes the King of France Francois Ist who is none other than his nephew and emperor Charles V of Hapsburg, King of Spain, sovereign of Naples and Milan, Flanders, Austria and the New World, who is also his brother-in-law. After much hesitation Charles III chose Hapsburg, immediately the French troops invaded Savoy, crossing the Alps and occupying West Piedmont in 1536. As said the Duke came to stay in Nice, the only city in his States that housed his followers. And Pope III tried to reconcile everyone. He organized in spring 1538 a congress re-uniting the three princes. His initiative opened with a truce which didn't last long, even though the negotiations were long and delicate.

1538

Charles III stayed on his boat moored at Villefranche, refusing to meet Francois I who was installed in the castle of Villeneuve-Loubet while the Pope, lodging at the convent in Sainte-Croix on the site of the actual marble cross, tired out from incessant journeys back and forth. All the while ready to demand the unfortunate Charles III to give up the castle of Nice, each for his own ends. The Duke was only able to refuse by invoking within his walls the presence of the Shroud that God had exclusively entrusted his family to guard.

Miscellaneous

Below is a final collection of bits and pieces that I gathered of related events that were happening during the years when the Shroud might have been in Nice:

1538

A drawing of the Bellanda Tower was done, artist unknown. On January 8 1538 the Duchess Beatrix of Portugal dies and is buried in the Cathedral Holy Mary of Place. In April, some historians state this as an alternative month for the Pope's attempt to get the monarchs together. Most state that in June the Pope tries to get Francois I and Charles V to meet in the Chateau Drap to make a peace plan. It doesn't happen as Nice Council thinks the Pope is after the Shroud. By June 15 an agreement is signed as to who would get what lands.

1543

In July Francois I teams up with the Turkish admiral Hayrettin Barbarossa who joins the French flotilla at Marseilles. On August 7 the Turks attack and plunder the whole of Nice, apart from the castle. Barbarossa holds back waiting for the French to come. A week later on August 15, they arrive. This day later becomes a Feast Day with a procession through the streets of Nice to celebrate the lifting of the siege. There is a reference in a historical guide that was in my local village (Seillans) library, whose name I do not recall and the library closed some ten years ago, but I photocopied page 357 back then and in the history of Nice section, they talk about celebrating 15th August: '*the Penitents Bleus, carrying the statue of Notre-Dame-de-Sincaire, Madonna that protected Nice during the siege of 1543, is carried through the backstreets of the old town from the chapel in the Garibaldi square as far as the cathedral.*' It doesn't make it clear in the passage which cathedral it means but the one to Holy Mary of Place seems to be the only one around in the 16th century. A hundred years later the Cathedral of Saint Reparate was built and some time after that the Holy Mary Cathedral was in ruins. By September 6 Charles V's reinforcements arrive and end the siege of Nice.

If you recall, J Stein Beck in his 'Recueil d'etude sur Nice et ses environs' says that the *Shroud* was carried in a procession to celebrate the regaining of Nice from the French, whereas this reference says the statue of *Our Lady*. I wonder if a mix up has occurred over the years with the Shroud's procession actually being a mistaken version of the statue of Notre Dame de Sincaire's procession. Maybe both were carried, though my personal feeling is that it was the statue of Our Lady. I did wonder if the name 'Sincaire' was at some time mistaken for 'Saint Suaire', the French name for the Shroud, but Christian assures me that in the 16th century Nice dialect the Shroud would have been called 'San Sudari', while Sincaire means 'five sides' as in a tower.

Background to the Shroud related places in Nice

The Bellanda Tower was originally built in 1437 and called the Sainte Elme Tower. It was from this tower that the Shroud was exhibited on 30 March, Good Friday of 1537. The tower was destroyed in 1705 by Louis XIV. The present version was rebuilt in 1860 when Nice became part of France. It is found at the end of the Promenade des Anglais at the bottom of the coastal edge of the hill, known as the Ponchettes Rocks. It still has the truncated conic shape of the original tower, as can be seen from recent photographs compared to drawings from the time of the exposition.

In 1511, the future French King Francois I saw the Shroud and then again in 1516. It was on May 28 of that year that King Francois I set off from Lyon by foot to see the Shroud in Chambéry and got there on June 15. Had he been considering over the next 20 years trying to get

hold of the Shroud for himself, which is one reason why he attacked Nice? It is speculation, but personally I wouldn't be surprised.

The Bellanda Tower was originally one of the circular type 'turrets' that ringed the Ponchettes Rocks in Nice and were linked to each other with a city wall which protected the Chateau Drap. On the contemporary drawings of the tower of the time one can also see the castle itself, which sadly exists now only as a few ruins. It was destroyed at the same time as the Bellanda Tower in 1705.

The Cathedral of Holy Mary of Place on the hill next to the castle can also be seen in several of the drawings from the time and one in particular shows the floor plan. Sadly only the foundations of this cathedral still exist, but it is at present a working archaeological site. It was where the Shroud was housed and on part of the route taken by the Shroud on its procession through the streets of Nice.

Je suis le Linceul (I am the shroud) by Jacques Anquetil

Written in 1998 and is the story of the Turin Shroud as told by the Shroud itself is the book "Je suis le Linceul" by Jacques Anquetil. The author lists over 50 texts in its selected bibliography and four pages of the book are devoted to the Shroud's stay in Nice. Of interest is the following passage: *as soon as the Shroud arrived in Nice, the monks put it in the chancel of the castle's chapel. The Duke Charles III placed his box of treasures with the Shroud and asked his priest Jerome d'Arsage to guard them well. He did so by placing both in the Bellanda Tower and at the same time asked permission to exhibit the Shroud, which took place on the next Good Friday, 30th April 1537. The canons of the chapel showed the Shroud completely unfolded from the top of the castle tower that dominates the Ponchettes Rocks. There were so many people that one could not see a single pebble on the ground below, where the crowd, silent and meditative were gathered to see for only a few fleeting moments the Shroud of Christ. The priest remarked to the Duchess that the people of Nice, being too poor to buy or make the white cloak of the 'Penitents' each one of the faithful covered themselves from head to foot in ashes to resemble the white of the Penitents. The Shroud was returned to the tower. A historian of the time maintained that the Duke refused to welcome Pope Paul III into his castle as 'the Holy Shroud reposed inside and the Pope had not agreed new indulgences for the duke's chapel. There was an attempt in 1538 by the Pope to bring the French King Francois I and Charles V to Nice to make peace, but the people of Nice were opposed to their deadly enemy Francois I being in their city. The Shroud was moved into the fortress of the castle during this time. There is also the belief that the Pope was after the Shroud for himself. The Shroud remained shut away in the castle from the time of the treaty in June 1538 until the attack by the French and Barbarossa in 1543. The Shroud was smuggled out of Nice in great secrecy to the Cathedral St Eusebe in Vercelli, coming back to Chambery once peace had returned.*

This version of the Shroud in Nice supports the continuous stay from 1537 to 1543, without any mention of it having gone to Aosta or Vercelli during this time, as found in other documents. It is clear where some of the descriptions come from, but without a specific list of citations, one can only wonder if the author used a little imagination to fill in the blank parts of the story. He refers to a chapel in the castle, which may well have existed, but nothing of the Cathedral of Holy Mary

of Place which is mentioned by others, unless he meant the same thing.

Summary

- The Turin Shroud arrived in Nice in the spring of 1537 having come from Vercelli.
- It was displayed from the Bellanda Tower on Good Friday 30th March 1537 and not 29th as has been thought.
- This exposition was done to raise the spirits of the people of Nice who were experiencing the ever present threats of invasion by the French.
- The Shroud was taken on a procession from the Chateau Drap to the Cathedral of Holy Mary of Place and through the streets of Nice, carried on a baldachin and attended by barefooted supporters and innumerable locals, all covered in ashes to represent the Penitents' cape.
- The Shroud was still in the Chateau Drap during 1538 when the truce was being signed between France and Savoy on 15th June of that year, as attested by records in the Nice archives.
- It is unclear how long the Shroud remained in Nice but it was in Aosta by February 1540.
- Although some believe the Shroud was in Nice as late as 1543, it is not yet confirmed. If the Shroud was in Nice in 1543, it would have experienced the attack and invasion of Nice by the French, albeit for only a few weeks in the summer of that year. There is the story that the Shroud was smuggled out of the Chateau Drap by an aid of the Duke at the last minute, but that has yet to be verified too.