

EDITORIAL

Thank you all very much for the warm welcome so many of you gave my first effort at editorship. The consensus of opinion is roundly in favour of the continuation of a paper newsletter, so here it is. It will also appear online at shroud.com shortly.

I am often conscious that scientists can tend to get bogged down in the physical nature of the cloth and the formation of the image, and lose sight of its meaning and effect. I am therefore grateful to Peter Leitch for his interesting discussion of the nature of biblical prophesy, a comparison between Jesus and Joseph (of multicoloured coat fame) and a consequent link to the Shroud. Sadly the length of his original article meant that it had to be seriously edited to fit in this publication. I am grateful to Peter for allowing this, and am very happy to suggest that members write to him directly, at peterleitch2009@googlemail.com, if they would like him to send them copies of the paper in its entirety. Another BSTS member, Philippa Foster, has contributed her own thoughts comparing ordinary physical light with divine light, and the Shroud with acheiropoieta such as the Tilma of Guadalupe.

From the historical perspective we have a paper by Pam Moon on the German renaissance artist Lucas Cranach the Elder, whom, she argues persuasively, may be the painter of the Shroud of Lier, a copy of the Shroud of Turin from a time before the great fire of 1532.

Back on the scientific side Hugh Duncan has written an account of a painstaking and remarkably satisfactory attempt to produce a copy of the Shroud by scorching cloth with a soldering-iron, and I enclose a review of the evidence of pollen on the Shroud. In 1978 palynology was in its infancy, and an authority on the subject such as Max Frei was widely considered incontestable. Since then his work has been reassessed from various points of view, but although it is open to justifiable criticism,

sufficient remains to maintain some credibility as to a Middle Eastern origin for the Shroud

A number of interesting articles have appeared online recently, and due attention will be brought to them. In particular Pam Moon has been developing the hypothesis that contaminated water may have contributed to the discolouration, and possibly the disintegration, of some parts of the Shroud, necessitating repair.

And an apology. For reasons I can't begin to understand I inexcusably attributed the book *Holy Bones, Holy Dust* to the wrong author. It is of course by the distinguished classical historian Charles Freeman, and a jolly good read it is too.

Finally, I have received a heartfelt plea from Reggie Norton, our treasurer, for someone to take over the task of maintaining the finances of the Society. It is not very onerous, but Reggie feels that he cannot guarantee continuity for ever, and that it is time to pass the baton on. If anyone would be prepared to do so, please get in touch with him at reggienorton@talktalk.net, or by writing to The Hideaway, Hatford Down, Faringdon, Oxfordshire, SN7 8JH.