

SHROUD NEWS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN
By REX MORGAN - Author of PERPETUAL MIRACLE

Issue No. 10



1st January 1982



At left STURP chief photographer VERNON MILLER with author REX MORGAN at Santa Barbara, California.

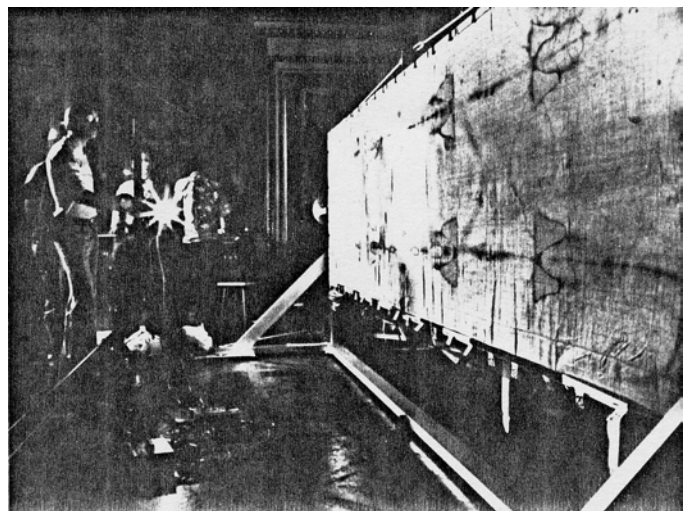
See page 7 of this issue for interview.

In background are John Jackson, USAF, and Ken Stevenson.

Photo: JOHN LEWIS, Brooks Institute

At right members of the Shroud of Turin Research Project under the direction of Vernon Miller set up the Shroud itself for exhaustive scientific investigation at Turin October 1978

Photo: BROOKS INSTITUTE OF PHOTOGRAPHY, Santa Barbara, Calif, USA



EDITORIAL

This is not the first time I have begun with an apology. Issue No 9 published in September 1981 and here we are at January 1982 with No 10. Pressure of agenda has been great and I hope my subscribers will be sympathetic.

Since the last edition much has happened. I had the privilege of a personal invitation to attend the congress at New London, Conn., USA in September. Unfortunately, and tempted as I was, the pressure of local matters prevented me from going although I have a personal assurance from Father Otterbein that he will send me whatever published material emerges. From press reports the conference was not without controversy.

I also received a direct invitation to attend the Italian convention at the end of November in Turin but commitments here at precisely that time made a visit to Europe impossible that weekend. If only SHROUD NEWS had tens of thousands of subscribers such firsthand experiences and their resultant reportage for my readers might become feasible!

I have much interesting material to bring to you as I can through SHROUD NEWS in 1982 and hopefully we can publish almost monthly.

1981 has been one of the most remarkable years in the history of the study of the Holy Shroud of Turin not only for the world and for all those involved with the direct work but for me as well.

During the year the first major event was the exhibition of photographic material in April at the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California which I was privileged to attend. This exhibit, as SHROUD NEWS readers know, was based on the immense scientific study performed at Turin in October 1978. As I said at the time I believe it was one of the most significant milestones in the history of the Holy Shroud. Many thousands had the chance to see the exhibition which was extended for months beyond the originally planned duration to meet the demand. The exhibition is now touring the United States.

There were two further major conferences on the Shroud held later in 1981. The STURP scientists came together at New London, Connecticut to reveal to a congress of more than 1,000 their latest

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findings. Reports of this congress have appeared sporadically in the world press and SHROUD NEWS awaits the material published at that time for review. The International Centre of Sindonology at Turin also held a major conference in November at which Italian scientists presented new material and again we await the published work.

A group of the STURP team visited Turin earlier in the year and a deputation visited King Umberto (the owner of the Shroud) in Portugal to report on American developments.

In April I had the great privilege of meeting many of the world's foremost Shroud experts, as reported in earlier editions of SHROUD NEWS. I was also able to interview many of them which has provided interesting material for the newsletter and for my next book on the Shroud on which I am currently working.

Throughout the year Professor Francis Filas has published new findings from his study of the coins over the eyes and this is an aspect of the Shroud study which is ongoing and fascinating.

Scientists are still unable to agree on the method of formation of the image but there still appears to be support for the instantaneous flash theory, contrary to the general weight of opinion I detected in April in California. As all the scientists continue to say, present scientific knowledge and techniques preclude definite proof of the nature of the image formation but what has been shown this year is that the cloth cannot be a forgery painted by some medieval genius as was the opinion of Dr Walter McCrone.

It is interesting to note that during 1981 several of the STURP team scientists are on record as saying they believe the Shroud to be genuine and an indication of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Such statements have caused a fuss amongst the STURP team who have tried to avoid discussion about religious aspects of the Shroud. There can obviously be no agreement on such things unless science itself can find more tools for proof.

Also during 1981 we have heard that the time for Carbon 14 dating draws ever closer. I was with Father Adam Otterbein in April at the very moment a journalist phoned him to comment on a report from Turin that permission had been granted for C14 testing to go ahead.

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This was not strictly accurate but the Turin authorities have agreed that the dating may be done just as soon as several laboratories can produce a foolproof *modus operandi* for the actual testing and consequent destruction of a very small piece of the cloth. There are numerous interesting and dramatic side-issues in the C14 saga. For example some interests were narrowly prevented from conducting such tests clandestinely as early as 1976 which is just as well because this, as it were, final proof of the age of the cloth needs to be made under the most scrupulously accurate conditions.

Another highlight of my year with the Shroud was to meet Professor Gilbert Raes in Belgium. It was he who first reported in 1973 on the actual textile itself for the Turin Commission of Enquiry. Since that time Raes has been all but ignored by everyone else involved in the studies which seems to me to be unjustified. Raes is a great scientist who contributed some of the earliest technical clues to the authenticity of the age of the piece of linen. I have a report to produce based on my lengthy discussions with Raes.

Numerous articles and several books on aspects of the Shroud have been published during 1981 and the world literature on the subject continues to develop and increase with great rapidity.

On a more personal note I have given many lectures in Australia during the year on the subject of the Shroud and my presentation always seems to be well received. Such presentations are important in the dissemination of information to as many people as possible so that whether they are believers or unbelievers they can at least give thought to the whole subject.

The most skilled audience to whom I spoke in 1981 was a post-graduate seminar conducted by the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Sydney. The participants were all postgraduate, in many cases post-doctoral students in theology and allied subjects. Needless to say I expected to have on my hands raging academic arguments from people who know a great deal more than I do about theology, religion, biblical studies, archaeology, ancient burial practices and every other discipline one might associate with the Holy Shroud. But to my surprise and that of Dr Bill Jobling, Lecturer in Biblical Studies and his colleagues, there was no such reaction. It was felt that the simple, objective explanation of

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the facts about the Shroud and its study as they were known to me at the end of March left little to argue about. I was indebted to members of the Department for further information I had not come across and access to articles from obscure journals which had not before come my way. These will be the subject of review in later issues of SHROUD NEWS. This meeting was an interesting challenge and there is considerable interest in the Holy Shroud at Sydney University, not only in the Department of Religious Studies, but, as I am discovering, from other faculties as well.

Through my lectures I often meet members of the audience who have some special interest in the Shroud and this way one builds up a remarkable collection of contacts who share, for one reason or another, this common interest. One such occasion was a lecture at St Matthew's Anglican Church in Manly, New South Wales, where I finally met Mrs O'Rourke and her sister of whom I had heard from another correspondent two years before. These ladies were nurses who had worked with Group Captain Leonard Cheshire in England and therefore knew Josie Woollam, the girl whose terminal illness appeared to have been arrested by visiting the Holy Shroud as a child through Cheshire's efforts. (Readers will recall that this is the only recorded instance of any curing property associated with the Shroud other than the record of King Abgar V being cured in 57 AD and it is important to state that the Catholic Church makes no such claims for the Shroud having miraculous properties.) I look forward to interviewing these two ladies in due course.

It was another exciting experience to have a brief chat with Cheshire himself when he was in Sydney later in the year. I shall report on this discussion shortly.

So in 1981 many new developments and dramatic announcements have been made in connection with the Shroud. Many new controversies have arisen, some of the old ones have been settled. Millions more people have been brought in touch with the Holy Shroud of Turin through widespread publicity in all kinds of media. I have had personal contact with many of the researchers in several countries. I have certainly made numerous new friends of various nationalities and many different backgrounds. My work has even been blessed by the Pope himself.

Editorial (contd)

As I write this piece on New Year's Day 1982 what resolutions can I make concerning my interest in the Holy Shroud?

As neither a Catholic nor a scientist but as one who has been inspired by the Holy Shroud, who has seen the object itself, who has been involved in its study, who has even been described in the media as an expert in matters concerning it, may I take this opportunity to resolve that in 1982 I shall try to meet more of the real experts as I pursue my travels (I think particularly of Ian Wilson and other members of the British Society for the Turin Shroud, Dr Max Frei in Switzerland and the great Father Rinaldi in Turin); that I shall try to renew my acquaintance with Otterbein in New York, with Filas in Chicago, with the Brooks Institute in California and with members of the STURP team all over the United States; that I shall try to get my second book on the Shroud written and published for my Australian readers and that I shall continue with better regularity and efficiency to bring out editions of SHROUD NEWS for the faithful band of supporters I have in this country and elsewhere bringing to them the latest Shroud information which comes to me.

May I wish you all a peaceful and happy New Year in these troubled times.

REX MORGAN

FORTHCOMING TELEVISION PROGRAMME

One cannot often advise in advance of a television programme, such is the immediacy of the media. But the well-known Reverend GORDON MOYES of the Uniting Church in Australia, one of this country's most sought-after speakers recorded an interview with REX MORGAN recently for his programme TURN 'ROUND AUSTRALIA.

The programme is to be broadcast in New South Wales over Channel 9 (Sydney) at 8.30.a.m. on SUNDAY 14th FEBRUARY 1982. We have no information about country or interstate hookups.

The half-hour programme contains several interview sections on the Shroud interspersed with music and comment by Gordon Moyes. Whilst Morgan does not consider it an 'in-depth' discussion one observer at the studio said that it was very good.

WHAT THE SCIENTISTS TOLD ME - 2

THE SECOND OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES FOR SHROUD NEWS BASED ON FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS WITH SHROUD SCIENTISTS by REX MORGAN

SHROUD NEWS' No 9 contained the transcript of interviews made in Santa Barbara, California in April 1981 with Dr Samuel Pellicori a research physicist and member of the SHROUD OF TURIN RESEARCH PROJECT (STURP).

This article deals with discussions which took place with VERNON MILLER. Miller is the head of the Industrial/Scientific Department of the Brooks Institute of Photography and has been the chief photographer of the STURP team. During 1978 when the team conducted its exhaustive investigation into the Shroud itself at Turin, following the public exposition of the cloth, Miller co-ordinated the photographic work and the majority of photographs which emerged from that study and which have been published worldwide were taken by him. The following report is based on taped interviews made at Santa Barbara.

Q: Mr Miller, the Shroud of Turin has been considered by many people down through history to have been the burial cloth of Jesus. Where has the Shroud been for the last two thousand years?

M: Well, it can only be documented for about six hundred years. It was first noted in history in an exhibition in Lirey, France in 1350 and from that time the itinerary is very clear and well-documented but prior to 1350 there was no mention in history at all.

Q: What kind of condition is the Shroud in?

M: It is in excellent condition, surprisingly good condition under the circumstances of its storage. It is very pliable; there is hardly any infestation of any kind.

Q: In your opinion is it possible that it could date back to the first century?

M: Yes, textile experts have examined the linen and it is not inconsistent with linen produced in the first century.

What the scientists told me (contd)

Q: Could you say conclusively that the Shroud was the burial cloth of a crucified person?

M: Scientifically I could not say that. It appears that way to me and all tests show that it is a natural image. It certainly bears all the marks of a crucified man. I believe that it is the natural image of a crucified man.

Q: This is an opinion rather than scientific deduction?

M: Yes, there is no conclusive proof at this time so that we could categorically say that it is the image of a man.

Q: Do you agree with Sam Pellicori that natural degradation of the cellulose in the linen cloth caused the image to appear?

M: Yes, that seems the most logical to me.

Q: How do the physical characteristics of the image fit the physical features which have been described about Jesus in writings?

M: Well, almost perfectly. All the marking described in the scriptures at the crucifixion are on the cloth. There are some surprises: the pinning of the hands is through the wrist bones and not through the palms as depicted in western art and tests have been made to show that the tissue in the palm of the hand would not support a man of this size and weight. The only logical place to pin the man is through the wrists. What has been described as a crown of thorns is rather like a cap of thorns on the back of the head, on the dorsal image. There is very little blood on the frontal image except for the described marks; they are all there including the spear wound.

Q: Have any other shrouds survived this period of history?

M: Nothing like the Shroud of Turin anywhere. There have been shrouds described in history -- all of them painted. They were kept in chapels as objects of worship. The purpose of the painting was to keep the impression of a body as an object of reverence.

What the scientists told me (contd)

Q: Mr Miller, how did you become involved in the study of the Shroud?

M: I was first approached by a former student of mine, Barrie Schwartz who introduced me to Don Devan from Santa Barbara and was the co-ordinator of the photography effort in the age processing at the Jet Propulsion Lab so I became involved in 1977.

Q: Your photographs appeared in the National Geographic Magazine How did that happen?

M: The National Geographic were interested in the story for some time before the investigation and they went to Turin to take photographs but were not permitted to go into the laboratory. I used their equipment and made the photos for them.

Q: Although the Shroud of Turin is a relic of the Catholic Church they have never actually said that this is the burial cloth of Jesus Christ. How did they react to the investigation and were they involved in it?

M: They were totally co-operative. It is somewhat of a surprise again that these tests were permitted at all.

Q: Would it ever be possible to prove without a shadow of doubt that this is the shroud of Christ?

M: I really don't think so in a scientific way. I'm sure that some people want to react to it in an emotional sense and a spiritual way but there is no scientific way of identifying the corpse. But a very circumstantial case has been built up for the Shroud of Turin being at the burial of a crucified man and that possibly with the aid of carbon dating its age could be substantiated within a hundred and fifty years.

Q: Some of the materials used in the research programme are on display here. Would you describe some of the exhibits?

M: They are mostly photographic. We also have a replica of the Shroud which was used in the film The Silent Witness. There are some computer generated photographs that are quite surprising. We have photomicrographs and the size of the images is impressive. They are

What the scientists told me (contd)

all full-size pictures so that you can compare your own body with the body in the Shroud. In all I think it's a very beautiful exhibition.

Q: And the three dimensional figure that was done with the help of computer and photography?

M: Not so much photography. The three dimensional model was made in the Air Force Academy by John Jackson and Eric Jumper and it consists of density scans which are plotted and each scan is laid out on top each other and forms the figure.

Q: Can you tell us about the technology of these coloured images which you have produced from virtually black and white negatives in some cases?

M: In all cases from black and white negatives. The method is that we photographed the Shroud through specifically narrow filters of 100 angstrom band widths. Those were then scanned with a microdensitometer and the densities were digitised to numbers which were recorded on magnetic tape and then played back through the computer in GPL in most instances. Then routines can be played that enhance the image in colours. One can then say that a specific band of energy would be recorded in one colour and another band in another colour and these enhancements reveal details too subtle to be seen otherwise.

Q: Some of the reproductions you have in the exhibit in these colours you have reproduced in fact indicate the nature of the material that would have produced that intensity on the energy band such as blood for example?

M: We analysed the colour spectra of the spear wound and then put the information into numerical form and asked the computer to show us all other spectra that were similar to that so what were revealed of course were the hand wounds from the crucifixion and all of the blood trailings that led up the arms and most of the scourge-marks across the chest and what indicates to me that they were surely bloodmarks is that they all have the same intensity and that has been correlated by the chemists -- indeed they have found traces of haemoglobin.

What the scientists told me (contd)

Q: What is your overall impression of the exhibition which, as we talk, is only twenty-four hours old?

M: I'm quite gratified. My effort working on this exhibit was to share this experience with as many people as possible and I'm pleased to have it occur here in my home town where I work. I am very proud of the work we did on the Shroud and I want my friends to enjoy the results as much as we have.

Q: I hope one day we shall see the exhibition in Australia

M: I should be very pleased to have it go to Australia

Q: I think this exhibition is the most significant thing which has happened publicly since the exposition of the Shroud itself in 1978, one of the greatest milestones in the whole history of the Shroud.

M: I think I agree with you. I was very privileged to see the Shroud and to inspect it under those conditions as close as we could. If you think of all the people in the world who don't have that opportunity it may be that through an exhibition such as this many more people can experience what we did.

Q: Vernon Miller, is the Shroud of Turin a forgery?

M: Probably not. At least from all the test results I have seen there is no indication of its being a forgery.

* * * * *

EXHIBIT FOR AUSTRALIA?

DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE BETWEEN REX MORGAN AND THE AUTHORITIES AT THE BROOKS INSTITUTE OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA FOR THE MAGNIFICENT VISUAL DATA EXHIBITION BASED ON THE SHROUD OF TURIN RESEARCH PROJECT TO COME TO AUSTRALIA. AT THE PRESENT TIME THE EXHIBIT IS TOURING AMERICA AND WE ARE HOPEFUL OF ONE DAY ARRANGING FOR IT, OR A REDUCED VERSION OF IT, TO COME TO THIS COUNTRY.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Please feel free to write to SHROUD NEWS with any comment about the newsletter itself or about the subject of the Holy Shroud. The newsletter now goes beyond our circle in Australia to several other countries.

FUTURE ISSUES

We have in hand several more scientific reports as well as much information gained since the Santa Barbara congress. This will be published in the next few issues as well as latest information as it becomes available.

PUBLICATION

All information and opinion published in this newsletter is given in good faith to pass on to interested persons, matters concerning the Holy Shroud of Turin. It is edited (and mainly written) by REX MORGAN and is published by:

THE RUNCIMAN PRESS, Box 86, P.O., MANLY, 2095, N.S.W. Australia.