

DR. McCrone & THE VINLAND MAP

One of the reasons why Dr. Walter McCrone became so controversially involved in the analysis of Shroud samples following the 1978 testing was because of the reputation he had achieved `debunking' Yale University's Vinland Map. This map, when first brought to light in 1965, created a sensation because it seemed to show America as `Vinland', and to have been drawn c.1440, some fifty years before Columbus' voyage to the New World. Arguably, therefore, it provided the first cartographic evidence that Europeans had visited America substantially before the time of Columbus. Unfortunately for the map's reputation, in 1973 Dr. McCrone made an analysis of its ink and argued that it contained substances only developed within the last century. He dismissed it as a modern forgery.

However, according to an article of March 10 in the U.S. journal *Time*, McCrone's dismissal of the map may have been over-hasty. The ink has been re-examined by historian Richard Schwab and physicist Thomas Cahill, using a specially refurbished cyclotron at the University of California's Davis campus. By focusing a beam of protons onto any document, then analysing the spray of the X-rays emitted when the protons collide with the atoms of the ink and paper, a remarkable amount of data concerning the ink and paper's chemical composition can be obtained. According to Cahill, the Vinland Map's ink is genuinely carbon-based and "we feel that the question of the map's authenticity is once again open."