

RIPOSTE BY PROFESSOR HALL

Professor Teddy Hall, the recently retired Director of the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit, has written a vigorous response to John Tyrer in the latest (January 1990) issue of *Textile Horizons*. According to Hall:

"It is true that organic contamination of a fabric can provide an erroneous date. This could in particular be true where an object is very old (greater than 10,000 years) and has been contaminated by modern material. However where the object is comparatively young, a massive contamination would be required. Calculations show that a modern contamination amounting to 65% of the mass of the Shroud would be necessary to give a date of 1350 to a fabric originally dating from the time of Christ. Moreover a great deal of trouble was exercised by the three laboratories in the cleaning process ... Some of these processes were comparatively severe and some 20% of the mass was dissolved from the surface to ensure that no modern contamination was present. We believe that any such contamination would have been less than 0.1%."