

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Richard W. Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context and Translation*, Philadelphia, University of Philadelphia Press, 1996, paperback, 236 pages.

Until now Geoffrey de Charny, the fourteenth century Frenchman with whom, in European history terms, the Shroud mystery effectively begins, has had no voice outside the rarefied world of those able to read mediaeval French. All that has been changed with the publication of this long-awaited book.

For among those interested in chivalry Geoffrey de Charny's *Livre de Chevalerie* has long been recognised as one of the pioneer and seminal works on this subject. Now, thanks to Oxford University's **Elspeth Kennedy**'s translation of this into clear, modern English we can for the first time hear Geoffrey speak across six and a half centuries. Although, as has long been known, the *Livre de Chevalerie* contains no reference to Geoffrey's ownership of the Shroud, even so it provides volumes on Geoffrey himself. It gives us a window on his mind.

And if we ask ourselves, is this a man either mendacious enough to have wilfully commissioned or conspired in a forging of the Shroud, or gullible enough to have been deceived by some trader in religious relics, neither appears to be the case. Lacking in the vanities of so many of his age, Geoffrey comes over as a thoroughly realistic and down-to-earth individual who very matter-of-factly sets out the hardships of the life of a professional soldier, not least of these, seasickness on ocean voyages. Although he was clearly very devout, this went far deeper and sounder than any outward-show-type piety. In a message that might have been directly addressed to Cardinal Saldarini during his recent troubles, he wrote 'You must never be cast down by the inevitable setbacks you will receive in life.' With equally commendable level-headedness he went on 'Although to be a successful knight physical fitness is important, if a good wine is offered, accept it gladly in moderation [This was a true Frenchman! Ed.].' He continued: 'Never believe in achieving everything by your own strength alone. The truly wise man gives thanks to God and to the Virgin Mary for any successes he may achieve.'

Elspeth Kennedy's translation is preceded by a sixty page historical introduction by **Richard Kaeuper**, Professor of History at the University of Rochester, New York State, ironically the very same university at which **Harry Gove** (co-inventor of the method used to radiocarbon-date the Shroud - see next review), is Emeritus Professor of Physics. Kaeuper's introduction includes the soundest and most detailed account of Geoffrey's career of anything written so far, and satisfactorily establishes him as a son of Jean de Charny (of the Mont-Saint-Jean de Charnys), and his wife Marguerite de Joinville, daughter of the famous chronicler.

Among the surprising new information provided by Kaeuper is that after the battle of Morlaix in 1342 Geoffrey was taken prisoner to Goodrich Castle in England, where his captor was Richard Talbot. An English letter patent of October 1343 describes him as

having 'gone to France to find the money for his ransom', attorneys having apparently been appointed to receive Geoffrey back into captivity on his return. Since he evidently did not return, someone apparently paid Geoffrey's ransom, and he was knighted the very next year.

Another intriguing insight into Geoffrey's mind is the undeniably mediaeval retribution that he exacted upon Lombardy-born Aimery of Pavia, the man who betrayed him in his attempted recapture of Calais on New Year's Eve, 1349. After returning from serving his second known term of imprisonment, directly thanks to Pavia, Geoffrey conducted a daring night raid on the traitor's castle, reputedly finding him in bed with his English mistress Marguerite. Taking him captive to St.Omer, there he decapitated him, quartered his body, and displayed it on the town gates. As Professor Kaeuper drily adds: 'To show that all this was a private matter and not a part of the business of war prohibited for a time by the current truce, Charny took possession only of Aimery himself, not his castle.'

Professor Kaeuper does not fail to mention the Shroud in his section on Geoffrey's piety and lay independence, soundly noting that 'exactly how and when the Shroud came into Charny's possession remains tantalisingly unknown'. But he wisely shies from getting too enmeshed in the controversy himself, simply noting in passing that: 'many of the problems associated with the Shroud would be resolved by the suppositions that the cloth was of Eastern manufacture, that Charny obtained it while on crusade in 1345-6, and that he considered it a splended icon, an aid to devotion, rather than an actual relic from the life of Christ. He would not then have felt any need to mention it among the relics of his church at Lirey in his correspondence with the papacy; his possession of the Shroud as icon need not have aroused any controversy at all. Only later, when his widow and the clerics at Lirey blurred the crucial line between icon and relic, did an episcopal investigation lead to charge and countercharge.'

To this we can only comment that this might be entirely plausible if only we really could see the Shroud as just some icon. But such issues were necessarily outside the orbit of Kaeuper and Kennedy's book, and such a viewpoint, however inadequate, should in no way be allowed to detract from Kaeuper and Kennedy's very fine scholarly achievement. *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny* is a work that ought to be in the bookcase of everyone seriously interested in the Shroud and its origins.

Harry E. Gove, *Relic, Icon or Hoax? Carbon Dating the Turin Shroud*, Institute of Physics Publishing, Bristol and Philadelphia, 1996, 336 pages, including Index. 8 pages of colour photographs. Other b & w photographs scattered throughout text.

Several 'Shroudies' have expressed distaste at the egotism that author **Professor Harry Gove**, none other than the co-inventor of the AMS method used for radiocarbon dating the Shroud, exhibits throughout this book. Such distaste is in danger of missing the point. Having had a long albeit distant perfectly cordial acquaintance with Professor Gove, I finished reading his book feeling if anything substantially warmer towards him than I had

before, and it is a work that I heartily and unhesitatingly recommend to everyone, whatever their view on the Shroud's authenticity.

For what Profesor Gove provides is a breathless, authoritative, immensely readable blow-by-blow chronicle of the events leading up to, and immediately following the Shroud radiocarbon dating, events in which he was a key player and indeed, so far as Shroud 'history' is concerned, the second man to know that the carbon dating showed it to be mediaeval. From this point of view the book is worthy of a Samuel Pepys, and indeed must have been based on a day-by-day diarisation of all the meetings, discussions and phone call conversations to which Gove was party. And these were plenty.

Gove's introduction to the Shroud, and thereby his whole involvement with the carbon dating, came in June 1977 with an 'out of the blue' letter from none other than the Revd David Sox, at that time just about to become this Society's first General Secretary. *Time* magazine had just published an article about the breakthrough that Gove and colleagues had just made in enabling carbon dating to be done from samples a thousand times smaller than had been possible hitherto, Sox learned about this through a friend on *Time* magazine, and Gove reproduces on his page 16 the letter that Sox sent to him in 'strictest confidence' enquiring concerning his willingness to apply the method to the Shroud.

A little over a year later Gove was in Turin explaining to the Shroud Symposium of 1978 exactly what he could do. And so became set in train the tangled politics leading up to the carbon dating of 1988. Gove does not fudge his views on some of the individuals with whom he became associated. When he diplomatically invited the eminent scientist Professor Carlos Chagas of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences to chair a meeting of the laboratories, he earned such enmity from Turin's Professor Gonella that he lost any possibility that his Rochester laboratory might be among the three eventually chosen to carry out the test. He seems to have had no great affection either for his fellow physicist Oxford's Professor Hall, whose publicity-seeking he blandly chronicles. Extremely evident from Gove's book is just how badly the carbon dating laboratories, and particularly those using his new AMS method, wanted to do the Shroud carbon dating as a showpiece demonstration of what they could do. This is the only explanation for their highly emotional responses, first when Gonella caused a key meeting to be postponed; second when, apparently on Gonella's direct recommendation, the number of laboratories was peremptorily reduced from seven to three. Gove's international phone bill must have been huge.

As stressed, I found myself liking Gove in the course of his book, despite his views on the Shroud being so much the opposite to my own. What others have seen as egotism, I have preferred to view as a top-flight scientist expressing his opinions with great clarity, directness and vigour. Here is a man who passionately believes in the radiocarbon dating method he has developed, and who is justifiably contemptuous of many of the objections of those who continue as 'true believers' in the Shroud .

However what I found almost incredible, for a man of undoubted intelligence, is his answer to this question: 'If the statistical probability that the Shroud dates between 1260

and 1390 is 95%, what is the probability that it could date to the first century?' This is Gove's answer 'About one in a thousand trillion, i.e. vanishingly small.' Statistical niceties aside, in hard reality can any scientific test, however good, really be *that* infallible?

In fact to his credit Gove himself does acknowledge, in his conclusion, that although 'all the reasons.. that have been advanced for the age of the Shroud being younger than 1325 years range from the highly improbable to the ludicrous' there is 'one alone, at least so far [which] merits further consideration.' He then refers to the Round Table held at San Antonio, Texas, on September 2 and 3, 1994 to which he was invited to study Dr. Garza-Valdes's claims concerning the bioplastic coating observed surrounding the Shroud fibres. As may be recalled, our Newsletter no.39 published Dr.Dan Scavone's account of Professor Gove's apparent firm recognition of the substantiality of this coating and the possibility of it having seriously skewed the radiocarbon dating result, then in issue no 40 Professor Gove's disclaimer that 'Scavone may have read too much into comments I made' To this may now be added what Professor Gove says in his book:

Microscopic examination showed a definite halo or bioplastic coating of varying thickness around the fibres. The UTHSCASA [University of Texas Health Science Centre at San Antonio] researchers established that the acid-base-acid cleaning method employed on Shroud samples by the AMS carbon dating laboratories left the bioplastic coating intact. They conclude that this coating added carbon 14 to the Shroud cellulose thus causing the AMS carbon date to be too young. How much too young has not yet been established and indeed will not be easy to establish. Research on the question is continuing.

So quite apparent is that Professor Gove accepts that a bioplastic coating 'of varying thickness' is definitely there. He also seems to accept that the pre-treatment procedures used by the three radiocarbon laboratories would not have been able to remove this. The only issue remaining is the degree to which that coating, undeniably of material substantially younger than the linen proper, could and would have skewed the carbon date.

To this non-scientist reviewer those 'thousand trillion to one' odds do seem to have shortened a little....

Robert Babinet 'La profession de foi des derniers templiers' *La Pensee Catholique*, March/April 1996, pp.49-74

This is a highly scholarly article that examines closely the charges brought against the Knights Templars, their confessions concerning the mysterious 'head of a man with a large beard' whom they were said to have worshipped, and the hypothesis of this Editor that this 'head' may have been one and the same as our Shroud.

Babinet ably dismisses some of historian Malcolm Barber's objections to this hypothesis, and is on the whole very supportive that the Templars' head and our Shroud were one and the same. While justifiably doubtful of a genealogical connection between the Templar Geoffrey de Charnay and the Lirey Geoffrey de Charny, he notes a Templar priest Milo de Charny as being of the same Burgundian family as the Lirey Geoffrey's father Jean de Charny. Babinet's article deserves a lengthier, more independent review than can be provided by this (inevitably biased!) Editor, and this it is hoped will appear in the next Newsletter.

Gino Moretto, *Sindone, La Guida*, Editrice Elle di Ci, 1996. 80 pages, profusely illustrated throughout in full colour. 15,000 lire.

There is a quality to Italian colour printing that always seems to exceed that of other European countries, and this publication, by **Gino Moretto**, Secretary of Turin's International Centre for the Turin Shroud, mostly has it in full measure.

There are graphic colour reconstructions of every aspect of Jesus's Passion and crucifixion, colour photographs of the various locations associated with the Shroud's history, including a detailed view of the interior of the Shroud's 'sepulchre' inside the Bertola altar; colour photographs of the 1978 testing; of **Pope John Paul II** kissing the Shroud in 1980; a fine colour photograph of the Shroud's new display case before its ruination in the fire, and much else.

What is a pity, therefore, is that an unrivalled opportunity to include a really good full length colour photograph of the Shroud's natural appearance - something that should have been the Guide's number one priority - has been missed. Immediately following the front page there is a double pull out section revealing what appears to be a full-length 'colour' photograph of the Shroud a full 30 inches wide.

But the 'colour' is in fact merely an artificial sepia rendition of Enrie's black and white photograph of 1931. As the Guide has now been put out of date by the fire, it is to be hoped that a new, updated version might remedy this blot on what is otherwise an extremely fine publication .

CIELT Revue Internationale di Linceul de Turin, issues nos 2, 3 & 4

The only Shroud journal published in French and English, these three most recent issues continue the high standard with which the publication began. Issue no. 2 includes an article by **Francis Consolin** supporting and adding to Professor Scavone's arguments concerning the Shroud/Grail link. Issue no. 3 includes a strong article by **Georges Salet** 'To put an end to Ivanov and Kouznetsov's theories', pointing out that in his view, as in that of the Arizona laboratory scientists, the experiments of these two Russian scientists

are not reproducible. He argues that it has not been demonstrated that a fire could modify the radiocarbon content of a cloth. Issue no. 4 includes an article by **Mark Guscini** on the Sudarium of Oviedo, and also a provisional programme for the Nice Symposium. Subscription enquiries should be addressed to CIELT, 50 Avenue des Ternes, 75017, Paris, France.

Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia, *Sindon* new series, no.8, December 1995, 142pp [this was received April 1997]

The Italian language publication of Turin's International Centre for Shroud Studies (popularly known as the 'Centro'), the quality of this publication is now very high, with many colour photographs. Some keynote articles are published in English as well as Italian, and every article has an English language summary. One of these is an account by Professor Bruno Barberis of the Centro's preparations for the 1998 exposition, including a special exhibition taking Secondo Pia's famous photograph as its starting point, and tracing the entire known history of Shroud-associated images back through the centuries. Another is an article by Turin theologian **Giuseppe Ghiberti** describing the German mystic Anne Catherine Emmerich's 'seeing' of the Shroud in her visions of Jesus's burial. Yet another article, fully in English, 'Pierre Barbet Revisited', is by New York medical examiner **Professor Fred Zugibe** of Columbia University, still well remembered for his talk to the BSTS some years ago.

Sindon's producers declare their aim from now on to produce an issue regularly every six months. According to a far from explicit subscription form, 'annual issues' will cost 100,000 lire each for overseas subscribers. Whether this means 100,000 lire per copy or 100,000 lire per year is not clear, but in any event it would be easier to deal in a currency with rather less noughts!

Subscription enquiries should be addressed to the Associazione Culturale Sindon, Via San Domenico 28, 10122 Torino, Italy.

Marie-Claire van Oosterwyck-Gastuche 'Le Saint Suaire et le radiocarbone: Preuves de la dérive des taux de radiocarbone dans la retaille prélevée sur le Linceul en 1988' in *Sel de la Terre* no.20, Spring 1997, Convent of La Haie-aux-Bonshommes

Marie-Claire van Oosterwyck-Gastuche, a Doctor of Science based at Aubignan, France, rejects any question that there might have been some substitution of the samples used for radiocarbon dating, as alleged by fellow-countryman Br. Bonnet-Eymard and others. Instead she argues that the combination of both heat *and steam* associated with the fire of 1532 may have caused the Shroud to be dated much younger than its true age. It seems possible that the steam element added to that of heat could have affected the C14 date, in

a way that has effectively been ruled out for heat alone. Marie-Claire's book *La Radiocarbone face au Suaire* is due to be published shortly by Editions F.-X de Guibert.

Thaddeus J. Trenn 'Silent Witness: The Turin Shroud as a Parable' Private publication, Christmas 1996, 25pp plus bibliography

Essentially consisting of reflections by **Dr. Thaddeus Trenn** (of the University of Toronto), on the enigma of the Shroud's image, any attempt to synthesise or summarise this short work would be to do it an injustice. Let just an extract serve as a 'taster' of the whole:

The Turin Shroud may be viewed as a parable for modern times. It seems heuristically to be pointing us beyond our own limitations to know. Throughout his early life Jesus spoke in parables which in Aramaic may be translated as 'riddle'. How apropos that he should have left such a magnificent conundrum for posterity. An enigma so tantalizing for science, but just beyond its grasp. A playful yet powerful parable to the sceptics of our day who examine closely with eyes enhanced by science, though they still fail to see. For if Jesus Christ was crucified, was buried in that linen cloth, and was resurrected while donning this quasi-undeveloped film, then these events must perforce be taken into consideration when scrutinizing the Shroud of Turin. To construe it as merely another piece of cloth is to fall victim to this ultimate parable.

It remains an enigmatic bequest... Believing in the Shroud for its own sake could turn into just another golden calf. Only by keeping priorities straight can we avoid this subtle danger. Indeed it may be considered the single most important problem for the Shroud. Whatever function it might have, the Shroud must not become the *object* of our faith or a *condition* for faith. Yet it may well validate for some of the earthly claims of Jesus Christ, no less than his many miracles performed in the presence of faith.'