

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Was Geoffrey de Charny ever a Prisoner in England in 1342?

From Père A.M. Dubarle, o.p. of the Couvent Saint-Jacques, Paris (translated from the French by the Editor).

Professor Richard Kaeuper's introduction to Geoffrey de Charny's *The Book of Chivalry* as reviewed in Newsletter no.45 contained information of which I was previously unaware: a letter of October 1343 speaking of 'Geoffrey de Charniz, knight, lately taken prisoner in Brittany, gone to France to find the money for his ransom', and apparently awaiting his return to England [*Calendar of Patent Rolls* 1343-45: 130]

Such temporary releases, with the individual concerned promising to return, are not unusual. The French chronicler Froissart cites several examples. But what surprised me is that in this very same part of his Introduction (pp.5-6) Professor Kaeuper reproduced other quite contradictory historical information, without either explaining this or even acknowledging that he did not know how to explain it. A good historian ought to have at least recognised the problem.

This is that in September 1342 Charny was taken prisoner and sent to England (Kaeuper's pp.5-6). In 1343 he was knighted. In the last months of 1342 Charny was part of a French army which went to the aid of Vannes, at that time besieged by the English. For this he rejoined the Lord of Castel-Villain. Although Kaeuper does not quote the source, we can find this in Froissart's chronicles T.III, 200, p.32, also in a variant (a manuscript of Amiens which mentions the lord of Castel Villain in command of Charny, t.III, p.241). Geoffrey de Charny's recorded presence in a French army at the end of 1342 therefore is incompatible with his deportation to England. It suggests that he either was quickly released (or managed to escape), very soon after his capture.

Kaeuper quotes **P. Savio's** article 'Ricerche sopra la Santa Sindone' in the review *Pontificium Athenaeum Salesianum* (1955), p.121, concerning a letter to Charny from king Philippe VI in June 1343. In this the recipient was addressed as 'knight' The reference in the Archives Nationales is accurately given by Kaeuper (JJ 1174, no.357). But he omits the most interesting part. This is that the king's letter is in reply to a petition from de Charny asking for financial help building a chapel at Lirey.

Geoffrey's petition, and the reply of the king addressing him as a knight (one imprisoned in September 1342), is actually from France. But nothing suggests that this request for money was anything to do with the payment of a ransom. It solely concerns the construction of a church.

It is therefore regrettable that Professor Kaeuper has not given more thought to the incompatibility of the different items of information which he has put together. This casts doubt on the value of the letter he cites mentioning de Charny having gone to France to find the money for his ransom. I do not think that it is simply a mistake of date between

the French and English documents, but that Charny's deportation to England in 1343 simply never took place.

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[Editor's note: Père Dubarle has also very kindly supplied information helpful to a chronology of the Shroud up to and including its ownership by the de Charny family. This is along the lines of chronologies for 1694- 1898, and 1452-1509 published in earlier issues of this Newsletter. Further chronologies will appear in later issues whenever space allows]

Those Contentios 'Coins over the Eyes'...

*From Italian numismatic expert and author **Mario Moroni***

In the letter 'Doubts concerning the Coins over the Eyes' which appeared in Newsletter 45, pp.36-8, **Dr. Antonio Lombatti** states that the coins discovered inside two skulls in the cemetery at Jericho are insufficient evidence that the coins had originally been placed on the dead man's eyes, since one skull was found fractured. He quotes Rachel Hachlili's statement that it is 'impossible' for coins to fall down into an undamaged skull, but does not take into account the scientific objections of the Hong Kong-based archaeologist **Bill Meacham**, who soundly rejects Prof. Hachlili's conclusions [*Biblical Archaeologist* vol 45, no.1, March 1986] Moreover Lombatti wilfully disregards my experiments demonstrating that the falling of coins into the skull is only possible through the upper eye sockets and *not through the mouth*. [Mario Moroni 'Pontius Pilate's coin on the Right Eye of the Man of the Shroud, in the Light of the New Archaeological Findings' *History, Science, Theology and the Shroud* St.Louis, Missouri, June 22-3, 1991, pp.276-301, fig 6 & 7].

Dr.Lombatti also omits to report the discovery in Jerusalem of the *undamaged* skull of 'Miriam the daughter of Simon' in an ossuary of a tomb of the High Priest Caiaphas. A coin of Herod Agrippa I (AD 40-45) was found inside Miriam's skullcap [see next letter: Ed.]. I should make clear that the finding of one or two coins in a skull is very unusual, since any coins placed on a dead man's eyeballs will very easily slide into the coffin as the body decays. But that coins should have been present in three skulls at least serves to corroborate the existence of the imprints of two Pontius Pilate coins visible on the man of the Shroud, on his right eye and left eyebrow respectively.

I do not understand why some consider the imprints of the *lituus*, or auger's wand, on the first coin, and the *simpulum*, or libational ladle, on the other, to have been electronically manipulated by professors Tamburelli, Balossino and Baima-Bollone, when the imprints of these symbols and some of the lettering are readily visible to the naked eye, and can be photographed with a conventional camera. Regarding the letters Y CAI, that is, the letter C instead of K for KAICAPOC as indicated by Professor Francis Filas, it is a matter of

common knowledge that there are many minting errors to the coins issued by Pontius Pilate.

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From Louis de Figueiredo of São Paulo, Brazil:

Professor Antonio Lombatti's letter on the 'coins over the eyes' in the last Newsletter was very interesting, but no mention was made of what exactly the coins were doing inside the skulls. In this regard, please note the following translation of an article 'In the steps of Jesus of Nazareth' by **Prof. Carsten Peter Thiede** of Paderborn which appeared in the Portuguese-language edition of 30 *Giorni* , published in Rome Sept 1993:

The tomb's contents are of decisive importance. Not only a most splendidly ornamented ossuary, which according to its 'Joseph Bar Kaiaphas' inscription must have belonged to the Caiaphas mentioned in the New Testament and by the historian Flavius Josephus, but also a smaller container, in which were the remains of another member of the family, whom the inscription identifies as Miriam. In this instance the cranium was complete. Under the palate [see discrepancy with letter above] was a well-preserved coin of Agrippa I, who ruled between 41 and 44 AD. The placing of a coin in the mouth was a pagan custom, based on Greek mythology, the idea being that it was the payment to the boatman who ferried the dead across to Hades. During the time of Jesus and the earliest Christians the family of the High Priest was following a pagan custom in open and direct contradiction of the faith of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Therefore when this group demanded that Jesus be executed as a traitor to the faith of the patriarchs, it was the most blatant type of hypocrisy imaginable.

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New Light on the Mandylion-Shroud Connection?

From new member **Athanasios Dimitriadis** of Greece

I am a new member of the BSTS, the first from Greece, as they tell me, and I will come straight to the point. I have found two more positive clues indicating a relation between the Shroud and the so-called Mandylion of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The first is in an Eastern Orthodox liturgical book called the 'Menaion', that is, the Monthly Calendar. For the date of the 16th August, the Feast of the Holy Mandylion, there appears in this the following passage:

'When you were alive you imprinted your face on a *sindona*, and when you died, at the end of your life, you entered a *sindona*' To me this suggests an indirect but positive correlation between the *sindon* or Shroud and the Mandylion.

The second clue is from the Dodekabiblos or Twelve Books of Dositheos, vol XI, chapter B, p.20, ed. B. Rigopoulos: 'Theophanes and Kodinos [? writing indistinct] say that when Michael the Paphlagonian was emperor [1034-1041 AD] there took place a litany in which the first of the emperor's brothers carried Jesus's letter to Abgar, and the second the *spargana* of Jesus'. *Spargana* literally means swaddling clothes, but in the liturgical language of the Orthodox Church there is the concept of *entaphia spargana* which means burial wrappings. Since we would normally expect the Mandylion to have accompanied the letter of Jesus to Abgar, my interpretation is that the Mandylion and the *entaphia spargana* or burial wrappings were one and the same.

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Another Shroud-like 'Man of Sorrows'?

From **Isolde Wigram** of Lingfield, Surrey

Some years back I wrote to you about the 'Man of Sorrows' miniature in the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry [see Newsletter no.38, pp.16-18 - this information was inadvertently not attributed to Isolde Wigram at that time - Ed.]

I have now found another version of this type of representation of much the same date (see over). It is what in Byzantine art was called the *Basileus tes doxes*, and in the West 'the Christ of Pity', showing the figure of Christ half-length rising from a coffin-like tomb with his hands crossed in front of him in the characteristic pose associated with the Shroud.

This version is in Hexham Abbey, in the chantry chapel to Abbot Leschman, who held office from the 1470s to c.1495. As it is a chantry chapel, no doubt the painting dates from a little later, but probably no later than 1500, and therefore the very period that the Christ of Pity became popular in the West. I only knew about the Hexham version through a friend (who knew nothing about the Shroud), who sent me a postcard of it because we are both interested in Richard III and the 15th century, and Abbot Leschman must have been exactly contemporary with Richard III.

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'One of the greatest scandals'?

From **Hugh Fitzpatrick** of Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs:

I have been a recipient of the BSTS Newsletter for some years and have found it an excellent source of information. While I have never been able to get to any of the Society's functions or meetings, and therefore have never met, for example, you or Dr. Clift, I have felt closely in touch with Shroud affairs and also a closeness to other devotees of the Shroud. I await with interest how Ian Dickinson is going to expose you as 'one of the greatest scandals to appear in the history of the Shroud' If that wasn't hurtful, it would be funny. Those who like myself feel they have already come to know you, albeit long-range, will be totally unmoved by the nonsense of it. Please keep the Newsletter going. It plays an invaluable part in Shroud affairs. P.S. As I have had two major eye operations inside the last two weeks and have to write this with only one eye open, it must show a certain amount of determination to encourage and 'console' you in hard times!

Hugh Fitzpatrick
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From **Rex Morgan**, Editor, Shroud News (Australia)

Naturally I regret that you interpret my publication of Ian Dickinson's remarks as actionable upon me, but I must say I had not regarded what he said as any more than a scholarly difference, and I had not really read the footnotes closely. I certainly apologise to you for any hurt my action may have caused you, and will of course provide an appropriate apology in *Shroud News* no.102.

Rex Morgan
PO Box 86, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia
[that apology has since been published, and Rex Morgan is duly thanked, Ed.]

Can You Help?

Donald Smith, a new BSTS member from North London, has written inviting any *Newsletter* readers with the requisite specialist knowledge to get in touch with him to discuss a hypothesis he is working on that the Shroud was first a Jewish 'Tallit'. Otherwise known as a *pallium* or *himation*, the measurements he gives for this are 118,4 cm by 444 cm - proportions of one to 3.74, rather than one to four as in the case of the Shroud. Working with 444mm as the Roman cubit and 555mm as the 'legal' or 'Talmudic' cubit, he proposes that the Shroud's original length was 10 Roman or 8 Jewish cubits. He maintains that the Shroud is lacking a second seam with identical 'hem' and two corners,

besides those known not to be original. He believes that all four corners, with 'gams' (letter-like forms created in *appliqué* ribbon) were cut away. The two corner patches we do have are unequal in length, according to him, because an end-strip of similar width to the seam and 'hem' combined was also, and last of all, removed. It was also these strips, he suggests, which made it possible to tie it as a 'bag'. Anyone wishing to share ideas, comments, etc. on Donald Smith's hypothesis (a new one in Shroud research!) should contact him directly at 60 Grove End Road, London NW8 9NH, fax (0171) 266 5424