

OBITUARY

Professor J. Malcolm ('Taffy') Cameron

By Ian Wilson

For Australians Professor James Malcolm Cameron was the distinguished British pathologist who was chief prosecution expert in the notorious Azaria Chamberlain 'Dingo Baby' case. For swimmers he was a leading architect of the world-respected FINA doping control system. For aficionados of the Shroud he was nothing less than Britain's foremost medical specialist to advocate, from the authority of his nineteen years as the University of London's Professor of Forensic Medicine, that the Shroud's imprint is genuinely of an individual crucified in the manner recorded of Jesus Christ.

Born in Swansea in 1930, 'Taffy, as he liked to be called, died on April 29 of this year at his home in Kent, having outlived by four years his beloved Primrose, his wife since 1956. Although he received his medical training at Glasgow University, in 1963 he was appointed as lecturer in forensic medicine at London University, followed by the full professorship in 1973, which continued to his retirement in 1992. He was consultant on forensic matters to all three British armed services, for fifteen years served as General Secretary to the British Academy of Forensic Sciences, and was for twenty-five years editor of the forensic science journal *Medicine, Science and the Law*. He was a regular lecturer at police training schools, and in 1987 performed the first post-mortem on Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess. His work with FINA, with the British Olympic Association and the International Olympic Committee formulating anti-doping rules earned him the widest international respect and the FINA Gold Pin, the highest administrative honour in world swimming.

Shroud-wise 'Taffy' was broadly convinced by Dr. Pierre Barbet's pioneering medical researches supportive of the Shroud's authenticity. As early as the 1970s he was bold enough to affirm this publicly, on TV programmes, and in lectures and short articles. During the 1980's he took a great interest in the so-called 'Jospice Mattress', the enigmatic imprint left on a mattress cover by a patient who died at a hospice at Thornton, Liverpool. At his London Hospital office, filled with memorabilia of his career, he very warmly received the hospice's director, the late Fr. Francis O'Leary, and myself, and immediately laid out the mattress cover on his office desk for the first impromptu examination. During the same decade he unstintingly arranged for a number of colleagues at the London Hospital and the Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory to formulate proposals for a variety of high-tech forensic approaches to the Shroud, only sadly for these proposals to be brushed aside by Turin's Professor Gonella when the radiocarbon dating laboratories - bent on the publicity benefits of a totally clear-cut result - insisted that their procedure, and theirs alone, should be the one deployed. Undismayed, 'Taffy' kept up his association with the British Society for the Turin Shroud long after his retirement, and in the field of the Shroud was undoubtedly the British equivalent of the late Dr. Robert Bucklin in the United States. Sadly, on the British 'Shroud' scene, there now appears to be no-one even remotely matching his medical stature to take over his supportive mantle...