

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I write with reference to the article by Allan Mills in the June edition, Issue No.69. I e-mailed Allan five weeks ago to discuss some of what he said, but to date have not received a response, and I would like to broaden the discussion. Allan says on page 17 that " this does not mean the original Shroud images are photographic negatives in the usual sense, for they are not modulated in terms of the brightness of a given feature of the subject. Instead, the intensity of the Shroud image appears to be controlled by the distance the cloth would be from a supine body when it is considered to be draped loosely over it and not tucked in. The tip of the nose is therefore in contact, and is the darkest part of the frontal image. No effect is visible beyond a distance estimated to be 40 mm."

I have viewed two negative images to which I have access, and in neither is the tip of the nose the darkest part. It is the same as the moustache, beard and eyebrows. The darkest parts are the bloodstains on the forehead, hair, right wrist and left forearm. Conversely, these are the brightest parts of the positive image. Does anyone have any ideas why bloodstains react in this way? I would also like to point out that the medieval French reweave which occurred in the area of the Shroud from which the 1988 carbon-dating samples were taken, was done with cotton, which was dyed to match the colour of the linen. I am very surprised that none of the laboratories involved in the carbon 14 analysis in 1988 detected this fact, since I would expect microscopic analysis of such samples to be an elementary part of the scientific protocol.

I wonder if Edward Hall, if he was alive today, would confess to being a fake scientist. I have long held the view that the Shroud image is a normal photographic negative, caused by a flash of light which was powerful enough to generate the heat required to singe the image on the linen fabric. I do not know how the flash of light was generated, nor do I expect to know this side of the grave. I also expect to continue to be amused, when commentators on the Shroud continue to assert that they do not understand how the image was formed.

May I take the opportunity to thank Michael Clift for his kind service to the Society.

Patrick Cushley.