

SHROUD NEWS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN
By REX MORGAN - Author of PERPETUAL MIRACLE



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Dr JOE WESLEY DICKERSON, MD, with author REX MORGAN at the Scientific Data Exhibition held at Brooks Institute of Photography, Santa Barbara, California, by the Shroud of Turin Research Project. Dr Dickerson is one of many Americans who have shown an influential interest in the scientific study of the Holy Shroud. An interview with him appears in this issue.

(Photo Credit: JOHN LEWIS, Brooks Institute, Santa Barbara, California)

EDITORIAL

This issue brings readers another episode from the interviews made at Santa Barbara, California, last year together with some updated information on the work of Professor Filas in Chicago and some news from the British Society for the Turin Shroud.

The Canberra Times has a weekly half-page written by a very witty journalist, Ian Warden. In the last three or four of his columns he has given attention to the Shroud but in a manner which hardly befits a man of his intellect (as I have written to tell him). There is a correspondence now going on about the subject in the Canberra Times which could be the subject of a review in this newsletter in due time. Regrettably Mr Warden only seems to have read about McCrone and is convinced by him without having read much else about the scientific work. It is to be hoped that Mr Warden will read some of the material I have sent him and perhaps make some less childish comments than he has.

A very encouraging new publication SHROUD SPECTRUM has been produced in America by the Indiana Center for Shroud Studies. The publication, of high quality, is intended for publication three times a year and leans heavily on the publication SINDON which is produced less frequently by the International Centre for Sindonology in Turin. There are to be translations of Italian work published by the Centre as well as other scholarly articles drawn from worldwide sources. If only SHROUD NEWS had a massive publication subscription we could envisage a journal of the quality of Shroud Spectrum.

Articles for Shroud News are ready on John West and Father Robert Nolan, both of whom are or were involved with aspects of the subject. In preparation is a review of Filas's latest cassette and filmstrip and the book The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail.

REX MORGAN

MORE INTERVIEWS FROM SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

During 1981 the American Shroud of Turin Research Project team held a remarkable exhibition of visual data at Santa Barbara, California. Rex Morgan was there at the invitation of the Brooks Institute of Photography and interviewed many Shroud experts at the time. Reports have appeared in SHROUD NEWS Nos 7, 9 and 10. The exhibition is now on tour in the United States, we have heard recently that an approach has been made to show it in London, England and dialogue continues between Rex Morgan and the American authorities to have it brought to Australia one day.

Here are more comments made in interview with notable people present at the opening exhibition last year.

Morgan: Mr Peter Skinner, you have had a great deal to do with the mounting of this exhibition. How do you, and Australian, come to be the Public Relations Director of the Brooks Institute of Photography at Santa Barbara, California?

Skinner: I came here last year in October and did a short course at Brooks Institute and subsequently I was asked if I would be interested in returning here for a year initially to look after the public relations department and that was too good an opportunity to turn down. So here I am.

Morgan: From what I have seen of this exhibition of the Research Team's work, you are doing an excellent job. Your involvement in this must have been peripheral in terms of the Shroud of Turin but what is your view of the whole subject? Have you found yourself caught up in it?

Skinner: Yes, most definitely. I didn't really have any specific views about the Shroud but after this exhibition and being so closely involved with the people who have worked on it and who are among the world's leading scientists and photographers I'm afraid it has convinced me that the Shroud appears to be what it is purported to be and there is nothing that science can do to prove that it's not. Science and space-age technology just cannot prove that it isn't the real thing.

Morgan: What, do you think, are the chances at some future time of making arrangements to bring this exhibition or one very like it, related to the team's work, to Australia?

More from Santa Barbara, California (contd)

Skinner: Ernest Brooks, the President of Brooks Institute, whom I first met in Australia in 1977, is very keen to return to Australia to visit and lecture and the Shroud photographic exhibition would be an ideal vehicle to achieve that end and as an Australian I believe it would be really great to see it happen in Australia. I think that seeing the exhibition is possibly better than seeing the real Shroud and even religious people, bishops and priests who have seen it, agree that to the layman the photographs and what photographic technology have done to the subject is better than seeing the Shroud because, as you know, the image is very faint on the actual Shroud. So I think to take the exhibition to Australia would be a marvellous way to bring knowledge of this religious relic to the people of that country.

An interview with Dr Joe Wesley Dickerson, MD, of Texas:

Morgan: Dr Dickerson, what is your interest in this whole project?

Dickerson: I am a graduate of the University of Texas School Of Medicine and have an ongoing interest in the fate of my medical school. Although I finished there in 1941 I was a clinical instructor there in the early sixties and I had a friend, Dr Steve Lewis, who was a plastic surgeon and chairman of the Plastic Surgery Department and he knew my fundamental interest in things religious. He told me they had some 'nut' named Bob Bucklin in the pathology department who was wrapped up in the study of a piece of cloth in Italy called the Shroud of Turin and that I ought to meet him. He said he thought we were both damn fools but we ought to get acquainted. Dr Bucklin was at that time Professor of Pathology at the University of Texas and that was the beginning of my interest and he referred me to some articles that he and other people had written and I just gradually developed an ongoing interest in it. Then this thing came up in 1977 and 1978 with Jackson and I went to Italy and saw it and have been deeply involved in it ever since. I might add that basically and fundamentally I believe in the essential truth of the Christian faith and am a member of the Episcopal Church.

Morgan: Dr Dickerson, what are your impressions of the exhibition we are seeing here in Santa Barbara?

More from Santa Barbara, California (contd)

Dickerson: The exhibition is superlative. It reflects the Shroud exactly as I saw it and as I personally interpreted it in my brief views of it in Turin. I was there right throughout the time of the work that was being done. I saw it many times and the basic thing I would like to emphasise is that nobody is doing anything here other than trying to prove how the image got onto the cloth and to date we cannot do it. Number two, I think the feeling of the matter is that this is an exercise in scholarship and not an exercise in dogma and number three is, if the workers can determine how the image was put onto the cloth I think there will be enough fallout to determine who the character may be.

Morgan: How long do you think it will be before we can come to that conclusion?

Dickerson: I have some broad reservations whether we'll ever have that answer. I'm going to say right now I'm like this like I am about cancer: I don't think we'll ever find all the answers.

And an interview with the famous Dr John Jackson, USAF, who first discovered with Eric Jumper the three-dimensional properties of the image:

Morgan: Captain John Jackson, you are known all over the world as perhaps the most spectacular member of the STURP team. It was your work with the VP8 Image Analyser which made the second major breakthrough in history on the Shroud. We might say the first was Pia in 1898. Since your work which we have seen on film and in many ways producing the three-dimensional image with the Image Analyser I now see that you have hooked into the equipment a colour television-screen for this exhibition.

Jackson: What that machine is doing is to take various shades of darkness in the Shroud image and to call them different colours so the electronics inside the machine automatically does this colour coding. Thus when you look at different colours on the image you are seeing an easily identifiable series of different shadings in the image.

Morgan: But has that helped in confirming some of the identification of the image itself and some of its chemical components?

More from Santa Barbara, California (contd)

Jackson: It's not really that useful in learning much about the chemical nature of the image or even the so-called three-dimensionality. If we represent the shading as vertical topographical relief you really find useful information.

Morgan: People worldwide are used to seeing you and Dr Jumper talking about that three-dimensional breakthrough but now that the nature of the image has been identified by members of the team as the product of cellulose degradation have you done any experiments with other images that you might have artificially produced by the same means to see if they produce a perfect three-dimensional image through your analyser as does the Shroud?

Jackson: The problem is that when you look at various processes that can cause an image with the kind of chemical characteristics that the Shroud has, you immediately have various kinds of problems associated with it because you firstly have to have a process that encodes distance information somehow into the shading but you have to do it in such a way that the resolution of the image is as sharp as it is. You talk about molecular diffusion or isotropic radiation those processes will form blurred images and that's easy to demonstrate. We have demonstrated it a number of times. The problem is getting the idea of an experiment that has the potential of encoding the distance information.

Morgan: So what you are really saying is that we still have a photograph of only one object in the world which will produce this effect?

Jackson: If there is another cloth, sheet or whatever that's like it I would sure like to know. I haven't run across another one that's like it anywhere.

Morgan: So we are still saying that the Shroud is unique? Jackson: Yes.

* * * * *

UPDATE ON FATHER FILAS

SHROUD NEWS readers have read several reports of the work of Father Francis Filas, Professor of Theology at Loyola University, Chicago. The reports are in issues 3, 4 and 8.

Filas, an independent researcher, identified the imprint of a coin of the time of Pontius Pilate over the right eye in the Shroud image and reported on his work in a monograph in June 1980. In May 1981 he discussed with Rex Morgan in Chicago the project of having his eye enlargements put through a VP8 Image Analyser, as Jackson and Jumper did with image photos, to see what 3D enhancement of the coin markings might result. We reported in Issue 8 the result of that work which was great success.

There has always been the interesting question that the marks are barely visible on the original Enrie (1931) photographs and yet they become clearer on fourth and fifth generation copies and/or on prints from washed out printing plates.

Late last year Filas sent a bulletin to Shroud watchers throughout the world giving the following information on this aspect of his work:

"How is it that the imprints are hardly distinguishable enough to make a case when one inspects the original Enrie prints, yet they do show up on second through fourth and fifth generation copies?"

Enrie in 1931 made two close-ups of the face: a full-size (identifiable by a 9-inch spread through the nose, between the two creases on the face); and an approximate 2/3 size (identifiable by a 6 - 9/16 inch spread through the nose, between the two creases on the face). The mistaken principle I used, and apparently everybody else in this field, was to go to the highest enlargement of the weave, in an attempt to get the clearest detail. But the Shroud fooled its friends again! I now can give you the known and accepted principle, justified by unanimous experience: The weave of the Shroud acts like the dots on a screen of a printed photograph. If we enlarge a "dotted screen" too closely, we get the dots that camouflage any imprints from the original photograph; but IF we enlarge the dotted screen without reaching the point of showing the space between the dots, THEN we have a fully filled-out enlargement, which we can enlarge again and again photographically and never get the obscuring dots again.

Update on Father Filas (contd)

"That is precisely what happened here. The half-dozen lithographs which first put me on the trail of the clear imprints of the Pilate coin(one of which is responsible for the very clear enlargement 5x life size in my film strip) --were good copies of the Enrie two-thirds face, NOT Enrie's full face. The hundreds of dollars spent in consultation with at least fifteen professional printers, engravers, photo people, computer camera experts, ALL were spent on trying to make the weave drop out of Enrie's original FULL face. High contrast and multiple generation enlarging did succeed in dropping out some of the weave and making clear theUCAI and lituus and clipped-coin to a partial extent, but nowhere near the clarity of the lithographs that faithfully reproduced Enrie's two-thirds face. Now, I have CLEAR enlargements made by Gamma Laboratories of Chicago (not made by myself, in case objectors raise the accusation that I alone get these results and no one else, as has already happened in the public prints): The case stands for itself on its own merits: The full-size Enrie face gives enlargements that make theUCAI and lituus discernible but only by reconstruction from the clear prints; the 2/3 size Enrie gives enlargements that not only make theUCAI and lituus discernible EASILY, but even the "U" with its faint limb on the reproductions is now clearly a full "U" !!!

SHROUD NEWS referred in Issue 11 to Filas's new filmstrip and taped commentary on his work and we expect to publish a review of it in a forthcoming edition. In the meantime here is some further information about it:

Titled PONTIUS PILATE COINS ON THE TURIN SHROUD, it is the 13th in the series of Filas filmstrips on biblical archaeology and geography produced and narrated by Professor Filas.

Filas said: "One of the reasons for issuing this filmstrip is that critics have sometimes distorted, sometimes suppressed, and sometimes caricatured the full argument for the coin identification on the Shroud. This filmstrip with its huge enlargements in color and black and white provides that direct proof. The international public can now decide for itself where the truth resides, independently of the sporadic attacks against the identification.

"New photographs never published before are on this filmstrip.

Update on Father Filas (contd)

"Most striking, and perhaps most convincing, is the superimposition of imprints from over the right eye of the Man in the Shroud, on to a coin of Pontius Pilate now in existence. The superimposition can be projected beyond 20 times life-size, because of its appearance on this filmstrip. The imprints of four Greek letters, a staff, and a diagonal boundary line on the Shroud fit the same letters, an astrologer's staff, and a parallel boundary line on the Pontius Pilate coin. This match is precise within 1/32nd of an inch (1 mm). The angles, the dimensions, the selection of four Greek letters and their order, together with the staff and the diagonal clip, all coincide.

"The filmstrip first summarizes the Shroud history and past scientific analysis. Then it shows how the coin imprints on the right eye fit historical Pontius Pilate coins. Two examples of misspelled UCAI coins (matching the unique misspelling on the Shroud) are presented for examination in extreme detail. The filmstrip also examines the evidence for a coin over the left eye, and concludes that no certain identification can be made in that area.

"After replying to the typical objections brought against the coin identification, the filmstrip concludes that the identification on the right eye is certain, and that it is adequate:

1. To authenticate the Shroud against suspicion of forgery
2. To date the Shroud at least to the time of the first century, if not to the exact years of the governorship of Pilate
3. To locate the origin of the Shroud as the Palestine of Pontius Pilate.

In November 1979, Father Filas first announced that he could identify the pattern over the right eye as agreeing with the historical pattern of coins issued between 29 and 32 AD. In July 1980 he issued his monograph presenting the evidence that there was less than 1 chance in a trillion cubed for these imprints to be random chance markings on the weave of the Shroud cloth. In June 1981 he published results of digitized image analysis, which pointed to the coin as a three-dimensional source. In September 1981 he released the evidence that the misspelling of part of the Greek name for Tiberius Caesar found

Update on Father Filas (contd)

on the Shroud, existed identically on a Pontius Pilate coin in his possession. This misspelling was a "C" instead of the "K" or *kappa* in the sequence, TIBERIOU KAISAROS, Greek for "Of Tiberius Caesar".

In November 1981 he announced that he had located a second Pilate coin of a different style than the first, but carrying an identical rare spelling of "CAISAROS", a misspelling hitherto unknown to coin experts.

And a final piece of information from Professor Filas. SHROUD NEWS readers will recall a reference to his discussion with Rex Morgan in May 1981 reported on page 3 of SHROUD NEWS No 8. In this report reference was made to Filas's speculation that there may be evidence of Paleo-Hebrew inscriptions on the cloth. He has submitted these marks for inspection by the most prominent authority on Paleo-Hebrew in America who has said that they could look like Paleo Hebrew but that there were such apparently different styles they did not make sense.

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THREE MILLION READERSHIP

The Australian Women's Weekly of 7th October 1981 carried a quarter-page article on Rex Morgan and his interest in the Holy Shroud. This was written by Jill Bowen and had been culled to this size from a three-hour interview and numerous black and white and coloured photographs which had led him to believe that the subject merited at least a double-page colour' spread.

The fact, however, that the Women's Weekly has a readership of three million is encouraging and it means that information about the Shroud, albeit a snippet, reached some more people whose interest in it might have been sparked by this piece.

RECENT NEWS OF THE BRITISH SOCIETY

Recent newsletters received from the British Society for the Turin Shroud indicate that a series of lectures was delivered in London last year. These included one on radiocarbon dating by Nick White who works with Professor Hall at an Oxford, England based laboratory on advanced equipment for radiocarbon dating. He discussed various methods of dating various substances and talked of the other international centres also working in the field. Mr White confirmed the view described in SHROUD NEWS and obtained by Rex Morgan in California last year that considerable work has yet to be done to perfect a method of dating samples from the Holy Shroud by several independent laboratories.

Another lecture was scheduled by Ian Wilson to deal with plant image formation based on the work of a Paris based biologist who has been studying images made by long-term pressing of plants.

SHROUD NEWS hopes to have more details of these lectures in the near future.

Some of the foremost British researchers in the study of the Shroud are members and office-bearers of the British Society.

In the most recent newsletter the following statement appears concerning the carbon dating question:

"The latest thinking seems to be for three laboratories simultaneously to do a small-sample carbon dating. Those currently favoured are laboratories developing small sample carbon dating facilities at Oxford, England; Geneva, Switzerland; and Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A. These laboratories are considered to be able to produce archaeologically the most reliable results, but as yet none of the three has fully perfected the new equipment and techniques."

As well as reporting the foundation of a new Shroud journal in the United States (soon to be in the SHROUD NEWS editor's hands) the British Society has announced that the next General Meeting on 14th April 1982 will include a discussion of research into the textile analysis of the Shroud by textile expert John Tyrer as well as showing the new Filas filmstrip.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Our list of subscribers is increasing and we welcome new readers to the circle. Subscriptions run at \$3.00 for batches of four issues.

MORE SUBSCRIBERS

Please encourage those of your acquaintance to join our subscription list. In this way we can only improve the newsletter in the future. Our four-issue subscription does not over commit either the subscriber or the publisher. We do not anticipate the demise of the newsletter at the moment!

CONTRIBUTIONS

Please feel free to write to SHROUD NEWS with any comment about the newsletter itself or about the subject of the Holy Shroud. The newsletter now goes beyond our circle in Australia to several other countries.

FUTURE ISSUES

We have in hand several more scientific reports as well as much information gained from international sources. This will be published in the next few issues as well as latest information as it becomes available.

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