

## RADIOCARBON DATING - SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

For the latest concerning the radiocarbon dating accelerator developed at the University of Oxford, members are recommended to consult the article by D. Gillespie, J.A.J. Gowlett, E.T. Hall and R.E.M. Hedges entitled:

'Radiocarbon Measurement by Accelerator Mass Spectrometry: an Early Selection of Dates' published in *Archaeometry* 26, 1 (1984), pp.15-20. The Oxford laboratory has recently participated in a special check on reliability of radiocarbon dating results, organised by Dr Michael Tite of the British Museum Research Laboratory, and provided verifiably accurate dates from samples of 3rd millennium B.C. Egyptian linen. Recently, the laboratory has confirmed a previously disputed early date for the habitation of a Peruvian cave, dissociated a relatively modern datestone from otherwise genuine 17,000-year-old remains in Southern Egypt, and proved the originality of some fine Islamic doors in Oxford's Ashmolean Museum, previously thought heavily restored.

## RADIOCARBON DATING - A PRIVATE PLEA

A special, private plea for the Shroud to be radiocarbon dated has been made by a Californian, Donald Smith, author of a privately-printed book on the Shroud, *The Letter*. Smith argues that the Shroud from the outset was intended as a gift to 20th century technology, and that therefore the Church has an obligation to use that technology to the full in the cause of the Shroud's verification.