

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

RADIOCARBON DATING CONFERENCE

As notified in the last *Newsletter*, an important international conference to discuss recent advances and continuing problems with radiocarbon dating was held in Trondheim, Norway, June 24th to 28th. This was attended by Dr. Robert Dinégar for STURP, and by the Revd. Kim Dreisbach representing the Atlanta International Center for Continuing Study and Exhibit of the Shroud of Turin. From the Shroud point of view the most important paper presented was one by Richard Burleigh, Morven Leese and Michael Tite of the British Museum Research Laboratory "An Intercomparison of Some AMS and Small Gas Counter Laboratories". Because this paper is due for publication in *Radiocarbon*, and as yet awaits referees' comments, it cannot be quoted in whole or in part, a pity as it specifically refers to the Shroud as one of the prime artefacts for which the intercomparison was conducted. However, as reported by Revd. Dreisbach, one laboratory, Bern, was out of line with the others in the intercomparison of blind dating of textiles from Egypt and Peru, apparently due to the sample having been inadequately prepared prior to the dating process. In general, as reported by Dreisbach "the scientists with whom I spoke felt certain that on a 2,000 year old piece of linen accelerated C14 dating will be accurate within a one per cent error - even more accurate than was the case with the 3000 BC. Egyptian funerary linen supplied by the British Museum ... The major problem is no longer technological; but rather one of ecclesiastical diplomacy through the labyrinth of convolutions involving Turin, Rome, and the Vatican's Scientific Commission".

As soon as the Burleigh, Leese and Tite *Radiocarbon* paper has been published, a summary will be published in the subsequent B.S.T.S. *Newsletter*.