

## EDITORIAL: 'THEY DIVIDE MY GARMENTS...'

Putting together this Newsletter is never easy. Some members are primarily interested in the latest scientific arguments, others in historical ones. As might be expected, many members are pro-authenticity, yet we do also have members who are uncommitted or outright anti-authenticity. In consequence your Editor is always having to make awkward judgments on topical but often disparate material in order to strike at least a reasonable balance.

An additional and far more serious problem, however, has been a recent markedly increased tendency among Shroud groups around the world to resort to the most ill-substantiated arguments in order to counter the carbon dating. Until now I have hesitated too overtly to draw attention to this because to do so is not only negative in approach; it also reveals the Shroud's proponents as seriously divided among themselves. This is to re-enact in the 20th century the shaming scene at the foot of Christ's cross, fulfilling in its turn Psalms 22:18 'They divide my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothes'.

Yet a canker allowed to spread only gets worse, and it is for this reason that I hope members will forgive the repeated 'this Editor' views expressed in this particular Newsletter, when normally I at least try (however inadequately...), to maintain a reasonable impartiality and anonymity. It hurts to censure individuals who are theoretically on my own 'side'. But at the root of the issue lies the need for the most scrupulous care and accuracy over datings used in evidence. If Shroud 'enthusiasts' cannot get this right on artefacts well understood within the historical domain, they lose all credibility and mandate for challenging the science of radiocarbon dating...