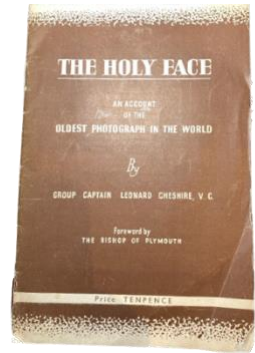


My Shroud Library

By Andrew Willie

I first encountered the Turin Shroud as a teenager and dismissed it as a fake, as I did other relics. Coming to Monmouthshire to work as Assistant Archivist, I became aware that a pamphlet had been produced by Newport printer, R.H. Johns. Its author was Group Captain Cheshire, V.C., one of whose homes for the chronically sick, had opened in nearby Llanhennock. Its title was *The Holy Face, An Account of the Oldest Photograph in the World*. Though slight, it is still worth owning since its arguments are expressed with concision and clarity and its basic Shroud photographs are well selected.



In 1970, I sought ordination in the Church in Wales and spent three years from 1971, two reading Theology and Religious studies at Cambridge and all three training for the Anglican Ministry at Ridley Hall. I was ordained on the Feast of St Matthew, 1974. My title was Newport Cathedral itself and though I was there only five years, I managed to serve under two remarkable Deans. I still thought the Shroud was a fake until with my second Dean I went to see David Rolfe's film, *The Silent Witness*. It was not a showing at a posh London Cinema, but in a morning programme at a downtown Newport porn cinema, now replaced by flats. A French film with a salacious title was advertised as showing later. Queuing outside by the advert in a dog collar took some courage; but I was glad to be there, especially when converted to thinking the Shroud genuine by David's brilliant film, aided by a Sunday Times colour magazine article and Ian Wilson's first Shroud book, published in 1978.

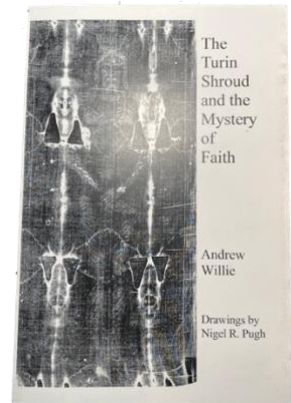
My earliest Shroud Newsletter is dated June/July 1997. That might seem as if I pithered where interest in the Shroud is concerned: not so. I started in the 1970s to acquire my Shroud Library and later engaged Dr Michael Clift to speak on the Shroud on two occasions. The first was to the Cathedral Friends, on whose Executive I served: the second, for three addresses in a Good Friday one hour's devotion at St Pierre's Golf Club Church in my second incumbency. When I advertised these addresses, a Catholic parishioner gave me Mgr. A.S. Barnes' fine book, *The Holy Shroud*, published in 1934.

Later, Rex Morgan, Australian author of the beautiful *Shroud Guide*, while in Britain came to see me and gave me both the Guide and papers he had written.

In May, 2010, my wife and I travelled by train to Turin for the exposition and came to understand why Italians speak of "an audience" with the Shroud as we moved in procession to pause especially close to it. Looking back towards it as we left Turin Cathedral, I was moved to echo St Thomas's words, when faced with the risen Jesus in

John 20 vs 28., *My Lord and my God.*

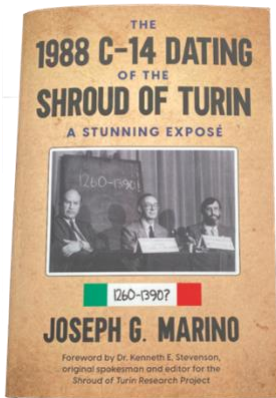
Shortly afterwards, I was fortunate to discover a horde of second-hand books on the Shroud in the SPCK/Welsh Church Bookshop, in Cardiff. They had been used by a science college for a project on the Shroud and I gradually acquired most of them to use for my Good Friday three hours devotion which I preached on the Shroud as vicar in St. Mark's, Newport in 2011. This formed the basis of my own book, *The Turin Shroud and the Mystery of Faith*. More recently I have also found a valuable resource in the bookshops of Hay on Wye, not far from our Abergavenny home. My Library is very useful. I have two problems: my inability with a computer and deafness. Therefore to have hard copy in a Shroud Library has been a great help, especially since I have been part of the Newsletter editorial team. Providential co-incidence has been at work.



Many academic disciplines are involved in Shroud study: Forensic Science to determine the nature of injuries and cause of death and to analyse bloodstains, Radiation Physics, to date an object or an image and possibly discover how it occurred; History, with rational speculation to fill any gaps; Art, since the Shroud has a pictorial image; Natural Science, Philosophy and Theology, since the Shroud relates to Creation and to God; Ancient and Modern Languages, also very important in terms of discerning the meaning of translations and how inevitably different interpretations can lead to different versions of the Truth.

Shroud books in these disciplines include: Joe Marino's *THE 1988 C-14 Dating of the Shroud of Turin*; *The Jesus Microbiome* by Stephen J Mattingly, Ph.D, Roy Abraham Varghese with Foreword by N.V Perricone Ph.D.; Andrew R. Casper's *An Artful Relic*; Francesca Stavrakopoulou's humanist book, *God, an Anatomy*, Colin J. Humprey's on the *Mystery of The Last Supper: Reconstructing the Final Days Of Jesus* and Frank O'Hara's *Jesus Christ After Two Thousand Years, The Definitive Interpretation of His Personality*.

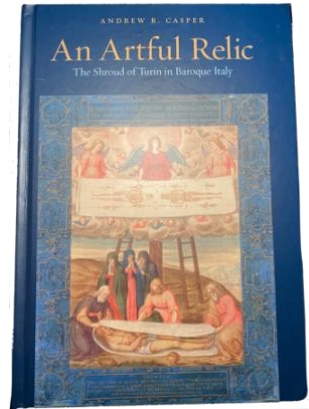
Joe Marino is owed an enormous debt by everyone interested in the Shroud for the way his website has made available to all desiring it, the continuous investigation to which the Shroud has been subject. His very long book [773 pages] on the carbon dating of the Shroud to between 1260 and 1390 could be regarded simply as a useful archive of



documents he has collected, were it not for his own extremely pertinent comments. The book's sensational title and cover-design, both the work of the author, for me disguise its fine scholarship. The title? *The 1988 C-14 Dating of The Shroud Of Turin, A Stunning Expose*. My favourite quoted document is a letter from Ian Wilson to all BSTS. members and written in September 1988, in response to unconfirmed rumours about the carbon dating, yet to be announced [p.434]. Acknowledgements include thanks to *Michael Lewis Kowalski for his input on the book's press release*. Michael, our Newsletter's Managing Editor, is preparing his own book on the Shroud dating evidence for publication.

The Jesus Microbiome [2021] also has a subtitle, *An Instagram from the First Century*. Both Microbiome and Instagram are new words: the former means a small, distinct major habitat for the bacteria, seeds and minute living organisms the Shroud's bloodstains naturally acquired initially and over centuries: the latter tells that in our society dominated by computers, images express more than words - as was the case before printing existed. That said, words are still needed to *explain* the blood stains on the Shroud and especially the authors' conclusion [p.268] that *The image, as we have it, could have formed only if he went through the sequence of actions depicted in the Passion narratives within the timeframe recorded there*. It is not surprising that one of the Chapters is headed, the Fifth Gospel, so important are the gospel narratives in terms of the formation of the body image. Our Lord's facial image, though inevitably fuzzier, is basically the same on the Oviedo face cloth [sudarium] wrapped around His head before He was carried to the Tomb [Mark Guscin is thanked for his work in this matter.] Before being placed in the Shroud the Corpus was also subject to the cleaning and anointing rituals which the Jewish Law required prior to burial. The aim of the book is to argue a case for how the image was created. The authors believe very strongly that Our Lord was raised from the Dead and cite Jewish writers who, strangely enough, agree with them: but they do not suggest how the resurrection might have taken place. They question the involvement of physicists only in the dating process but fail to see that involving biologists only, in analysing the Shroud image, they might be committing similar errors of bias. **Appendix 1** features photos of Microbiome experiments. **Appendix 2** contains a number of documents attesting to the Shroud's presence in Constantinople. The book may tempt readers to wish to rewrite Professor Hall's famous soundbite, "*Someone got a bit of linen, faked it up and flogged it*", as, *Scientists snipped bits from Christ's Shroud, for blinkered boffins to rubbish it* - or something similar. For the best Pro-Shroud soundbite, sent to the Editor by September 30th, a copy of my book will be given, post-free.

Andrew Casper is speaker on the Shroud as *An Artful Relic* at the current Exhibition on the Shroud, *Mystery and Faith: The Shroud of Turin* at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. As the title overall is so very similar to that of my own book I asked whether the Museum might be interested in having a complimentary copy to read with a view to ordering, if suitable, copies to sell. The reply was that they had enough books already. That will not stop me, however, from recommending Casper's book [2021] which I received from my elder daughter as a Christmas present, along with additional books of Renaissance drawings. The latter ably illustrate Casper's central thesis: that the Shroud image as it came to Turin would have seemed to



have reflected beautifully the technique of the sketches of the Italian masters, sketches which, because of their ethereal character, seemed to some contemporaries often of more artistic value than finished pictures. The result was that artistic tropes were applied to the Shroud, which became regarded as a painting, though not made with human hands. The book is subtitled, *The Shroud of Turin in Baroque Italy* and so concerns the response of Italian artists and worshippers: it says nothing of the Sudarium at Oviedo Cathedral in Spain, while speaking briefly [p41] of the relic of the corporal from Bolsena on which a host supposedly bled, which is displayed at Orvieto Cathedral in Italy. Though the Italian word means Old Town, I have been unable to trace the meaning of Oviedo, a name almost similar. All such relics were thought symptomatic of the Risen Christ's Eucharistic presence. This was affirmed by Shroud copies, especially in Rome, and also by the separate Mandyllion and Veronica: Casper writes well about all these as befits a survey of Baroque Italy, but is careful not to confuse them with the Shroud. His own visit to the Shroud like ours was in May 2010 and he speaks of it with disappointment [the experience for him would be nothing like an exposition in the Baroque era, after all.] For us it was just organised to perfection.

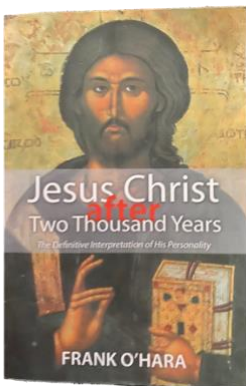
Some will feel that Francesca Stavrakopolou's *God, An Anatomy*, [2021] should not be here. I ordered it before publication date because I thought from its title, it must be a book on the Shroud and the man it housed. How wrong I was! The author is Professor of the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Religion at Exeter University and also a Humanist. Her book is well written, witty, with some "adult" content, beautifully illustrated and copiously indexed. It is also very selective in detailing Judeo/Christian traditions. Thus for her the Pentateuch and the Old Testament history books, both composed during and after the Exile to Babylon, were not reflecting tradition but a new, different view of God: thus the Philistines with their God, Dagon, were actually defeated by an Ark which contained not stone inscribed with the law given to Moses, as in 1 Samuel 4 and 5, but the usual and expected statue of a God, in this case YAHWEH. There are only two

mentions of the Shroud. One concerns a Michaelangelo statue in the Italian town of Bassan, abandoned at completion because of a fault in the marble. The Christ figure is naked and looks away from the cross in his right hand towards the world the Cross and Resurrection have saved; his left hand touches one end of the rolled up Shroud. [p.91 and Plate 6]. The “bloodied shroud” is also mentioned, in passing, on p.141, among many other relics, thought typical of an almost pagan idolatry, and so, in the end, it is dismissed. The result is a failure to identify *Christos Pantokrator* with the Shroud image: indeed, using white haired images of *Christos Pantokrator*, Jesus is identified with Daniel 7 references not to the *Son of Man*, as normally in Christian tradition but with the *Ancient of Days*. At least in *The Observer*, Richey Thompson of Humanists UK is quoted as saying of David’s latest film, “*The carbon dating could show it was from the time of Christ but it is still a stretch to go from that to seeing it as proof that he rose from the dead.*” - Yet a retired civil court judge, on reading my book, had said, “*If the Shroud and its detractors had come before me, I would have found for the Shroud.*”

A Burst of Conscious Light [2021] conveys the views of the Shroud of a Dr. Andrew Silverman, a Buckinghamshire-based medical doctor with an interest in physics. It explores Near-death experiences, the Shroud of Turin and the Limitless Potential of Humanity. Silverman tells us how in the 1980’s a school friend showed him a recording of David Rolfe’s award winning, *Silent Witness*, and how as a result, he became fascinated by the Shroud, researched it and lectured about it at international conferences. He not only rejects the 1988 carbon dating but also produces brilliant summaries of mainstream scientific work on the Shroud, always giving credit to those involved. One of his concerns is with the link between matter, the human brain and the mind: this he sees as a different entity from the brain which continues living after death; hence his interest in the Shroud and its image. Apart from biblical accounts of Our Lord’s trial, torture, approach to Calvary and Crucifixion, scripture does not interest him, except where it gives him a basis for exploring the enormous potential of humankind: he does not accept the modern scientific myth that human beings will be replaced by artificial life, nor does he seem interested in why the man in the Shroud lived on earth, which is central to faith.

David Rolfe in his keynote paper in the current newsletter rightly speaks of the sinful neglect of its calling by the Church. Several main elements make up the Church’s activities: its service of God and other people in worship, the sacraments, praying, preaching, loving and in exemplary action and behaviour. However, nowadays, the Judeo-Christian tradition found in the Gospels is sometimes ignored and too often Christians emulate the worst in the world in which they live, or lack the courage to confront its evil. National leaders often claim to be Christian, for example, but behave in ways which are the reverse of what Jesus taught. Dr Silverman sees no need for the concepts of miracle or for God. I have always seen miracle as God’s operating at the margins of what is possible and the story of the Fall in Genesis 3 as showing humanity in trouble whenever asserting autonomy from God.

The Mystery of the Last Supper, published in 2011, explores the two different accounts of the occurrence of Passover at the time of Our Lord's death: the first three Gospels describe the Last Supper as a Passover Meal; however according to John, this is not the case: Jesus' death on the Cross coincided with the slaughter of lambs in the Temple on the day of Preparation for the Passover Feast at sunset. For John, the Last Supper thus is pre-Passover. Professor Humphreys, Professor of Materials Science at Cambridge reconciles both accounts, by referring to two calendars in operation, one for Mainstream Judaism, brought back from exile in Babylon and the other from the Exodus in Egypt and used by Jewish sects. The Temple provided lambs for followers of both calendars. He also takes account of lunar phenomena to settle the debate as to when the Crucifixion occurred: it was not in AD 30 as some, myself included, have thought, but in AD 33.



The last book is a curious one, printed in the UK, published in the USA in 2013. It is by Frank O'Hara, an Australian who worked for the Civil Service in Britain after studying Maths and Statistics at London University; but who also was awarded a Baccalaureate in Theology at the Gregorian University in Rome and additionally a doctorate at King's College, London: the Anglican Professor Eric Mascall was his supervisor. The book is a much shortened version of his Ph.D thesis, but augmented by introduction and appendices. Central to it is the idea that Jesus is a translation of the Word of God into human form, with the Prologue, to St John's Gospel, especially, Chapter 1, verse 18, as the key text: *No-one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of*

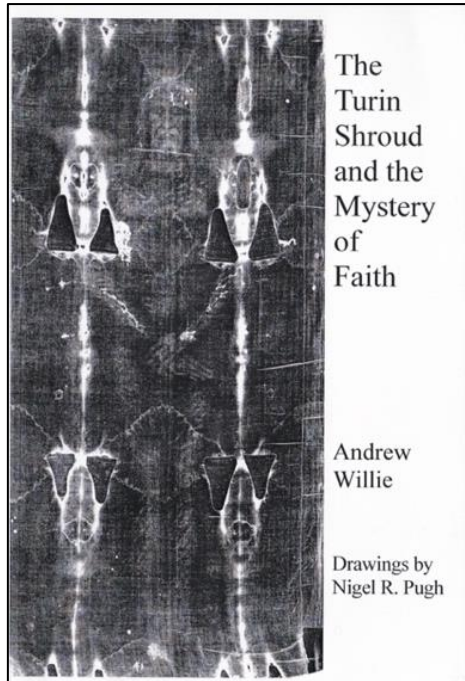
the Father, he has made known. For us, the most important part of the book is Appendix C, page 118 ff, **The Resurrection of Jesus Christ**. As a result of the carbon dating of the Shroud in 1988. O' Hara has been forced to reconsider an article he had written in 1974 for the Catholic Herald. His view expressed in this appendix is that the blood deposits on the Shroud, both as a result of suffering and then of the possible death of Jesus are so authentic, that the Shroud itself, where the blood stains are concerned, is likely to be an exact copy or if not, is the actual burial cloth of Jesus. As to the possibility of the body's resurrection, O'Hara notes that rigor mortis had set in, but asserts [p.124] *It is clear that the unique powers of Jesus remained with him and were enhanced. It was presumably by these powers that he ascended out of sight of the apostles, There his human history ends. He is now to be found in the suffering neighbor, in table fellow-ship and in the enemy's brutal sneer.*

My Library has given me a lifeline during the terrible current Pandemic, such that I feel it has to be a true gift from God.

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Canon Willie has also published his own book, *The Turin Shroud and the Mystery of Faith*, which is fulsomely endorsed by Dr. Rowan Williams and others. It is available through the BSTS for just £10 including postage within the UK. Send a cheque for £10 made out to British Society for the Turin Shroud to:

The Treasurer, BSTS, Brewood Vicarage, Sandy Lane, Brewood,
Stafford, ST19 9ET



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Thought for the Day

By Anne Atkins

Extract taken from the *Thought for the Day* broadcast on BBC Radio Four, April 20th 2022.



Good morning. “I don’t have a horse in this race,” said Barrie M Schwartz, Jewish photographer of the Turin Shroud in 1978. “I’ve looked at the science. I’ve come to believe it’s the authentic burial cloth.”

Well, I don’t have a horse running either. When I read Ian Wilson’s book of that year, *The Turin Shroud*, I found the evidence compelling. But when, a decade later, carbon dating suggested it was a mediaeval forgery, my Christian faith was unaffected: it wasn’t founded on the Shroud.

A film is live-streamed this week: *Who Can He Be?* by David Rolfe, who won a BAFTA for *The Silent Witness*, also about the Shroud. Rolfe is now challenging the British Museum, if such a fourteenth-century counterfeit was indeed possible, to replicate the fake in order to show how it was done... for a reward of a staggering million dollars.

Provoking curious comments. One newspaper described “pitting the world of faith against the world of rational thought”: a false apposition that would astonish most throughout Judeo-Christian history, and many of faith today. Another commentator said, “Some people believe that, yes, Jesus was a real person.” Really? I’ve never heard of a serious historian who didn’t. “Pontius Pilate,” he continued, “is a well-documented historical figure.” True. But not nearly as well-documented as Jesus Himself.

What is Truth? The one asked the other. Look at the evidence. My companion on a recent trip to Israel asked repeatedly about my faith: for me it comes down to evidence I replied, repeatedly. Perhaps Jesus wasn’t properly killed... by His professional executioners. Perhaps His body wasn’t properly guarded... by professional guards. Though both could have faced the death penalty for neglect of duty.

I find the alternative more credible.

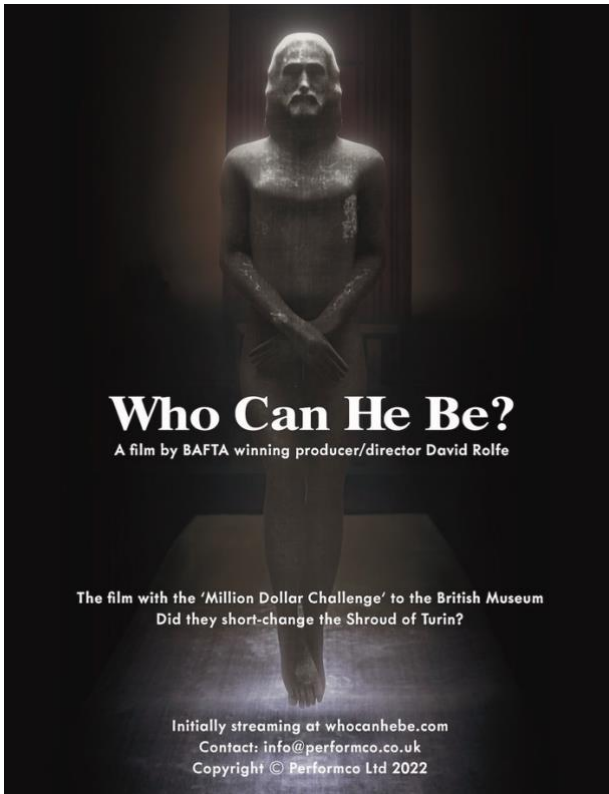
Faith is the decision made when all evidence is called in. “I believe” can mean very different things. I may

Faith is the decision made when all evidence is called in. “I believe” can mean very different things. I may believe in black holes, because the evidence seems convincing. I might believe in education, calling for my taxes to be raised for schools. Or I could believe in you, personally putting my trust in what you offer.

Director David Rolfe has done all three. He's been persuaded by facts. He's pledged a million dollars because of his belief. And he's handed his life over to the risen Christ, on the basis of what he discovered.

Finding the Shroud is a first century burial cloth wouldn't necessarily prove Jesus rose from the dead. Any more than finding Jesus rose from the dead proves the Shroud's authenticity. But they are mutually consistent: they verify each other. As CS Lewis said: "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it but because by it, I see everything else."

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"I purchased 'Who Can He Be?' and watched it last night. Remarkable. A brilliant piece of film making. The final scene, in which the front and dorsal images were merged using 3D digital technology left me with hairs standing all over my body. I can't remember the last time a film had that reaction on me. It's Him, from 2000 years ago. Not a scrap of doubt. Shame on the British Museum...I'm a believer now."

Mark Bradley