

EDITORIAL

The first reactions to the great fire of St John's Cathedral, Turin, were of disbelief, of shock, of distress, of anger, and over the few days of the unfolding of the story these tended to change to relief that the Shroud is apparently unharmed and almost to a reaction of satisfaction that good can often come out of tragedy. The exposition of the Shroud will go ahead in 1998; the Shroud will not be rolled up on a pole and put back in its silver reliquary but displayed permanently flat in a crystal casket to cost a billion lire; the Cathedral will yet again be restored over a period of five years funded by commercial enterprises. All these facts serve to suggest that some aspects of the fire have been propitious.

Many have taken the survival of the Shroud, due mainly to the efforts of hero fireman Mario Trematore, a name now on the lips of every Shroudie in the world, to be a sign of its invincibility and its apparent authenticity. Yet again, some are saying, the Lord has seen to it that the cloth survives an almost insuperable attack.

All this news has totally eclipsed the *Shroud News* issue no 101 which was in preparation this month. Indeed it has eclipsed the Centenary Edition No 100 which we had only just sent out. But it seemed to me a useful exercise to put together a rushed edition compiled from some of the E-mail bulletins, scant press items and faxes I have been receiving.

It is ironic that I was in Turin cathedral more than once during the recent restoration work of the Guarini Chapel and when the Shroud was placed in the cathedral itself out of harm's way. It is more ironic that part of the forthcoming Shroud Symposium at Nice, France, at which I shall be presenting a paper, included in its programme a day trip to Turin. I almost didn't book for it, having been there so many times; but something made me do so in January. I shall therefore, as it turns out, be in a position to report to you firsthand in the next issue about the cathedral, the Shroud and the opinions and news from the battlefield itself.

REX MORGAN

A prophetic headline On 30 March 1997

The Universe, Sunday March 30 1997

Shroud to be put to the test again



Tests - Shroud

THE Turin Shroud is to be subjected to fresh scientific tests, its official custodian has announced.

After two brief periods of public display in 1998 and the year 2000, the shroud of will face new tests, Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini of Turin has announced.

In 1988, three separate laboratories using carbon 14 testing concluded that there was a 95 per cent probability that the cloth, believed by many to have been Christ's burial

shroud, was actually made between the years 1260 and 1390.

Cardinal Saldarini told reporters that, whether or not the shroud was Christ's burial cloth, it still has religious value as a tangible reminder of Christ's suffering and death.

"We still must make the proper verifications of the results proposed by those laboratories, following new paths which were marked out afterwards," he said.

"Besides the determination of the

date' of the cloth, the cardinal said, it is still a mystery how the negative image of an apparently crucified man was imprinted on it.

Cardinal Saldarini, the official custodian of the 14-foot-long linen cloth, spoke at a press conference announcing plans for the 1998 public display of the shroud.

Usually kept rolled and sealed in a silver reliquary in a chapel adjacent to the Turin cathedral, the shroud will be on exhibit from April 18 to June 14, next year.

From: Maurizio Paolicci 12 April 97

Father Francesco Barbero, parish priest of the Cathedral telephoned to the firemen at 11:35 p.m. Friday night-when flames swept through the Guarini Chapel and made the alarm sound. Suddenly the flames wrapped up the wooden Chapel's Dome and the firemen, promptly intervened, tried hard to extinguish the flames which happened only the morning after at around 4:30 a.m., thanks to the work of 130 men.

The fire destroyed the Guarini's Dome and spread also to the Royal Palace, when last night up until 11:00 pm, a dinner had been underway in honor of visiting United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The Shroud was carried out of the Cathedral by the XXI team of firemen that suddenly reached the backside of the main altar where the Shroud was kept since February 24, 1993 while restoration work was underway on the Chapel. The fireman Mario Trematore broke with a large hammer the bulletproof glass (39 mm thick) and after few minutes, hurting his hands with the glass splinters, took out the silver casket and rushed it to safety together with his team, outside the Cathedral.

The fireman then stated to the journalists that "The fire? The problem was not the fire but all the Dome that was going to fall down us! The strength (to break the glass)? The bulletproof glass can stop the bullets but they cannot stop the Strength of the Values that is in the Symbol that was inside it. [...] We all with a hammer and our hands (still bleeding) broke glasses. This is extraordinary!!!"

At 1:36 a.m. the Shroud carried out by the firemen. Crosses the Cathedral square crowded by thousands people, was taken by them to the apartment of Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini, Archbishop of Turin and Custodian of the Shroud. When today it will be subjected to a recognition to check if there is any damage. At a first impression, and through the TV images, it seems that however the Shroud had not suffered any damage.

The Honourable Franco Bassanini, Minister of the Public Function, today afternoon at 1:20 p.m. has reported to the Chamber of Deputies that: "The fire has developed from the wooden structure of the coverage of the corridor that links the Chapel of the Shroud to the Royal Palace, invading subsequently the inside of the Cathedral and developing then to the last floor of the Royal Palace - West wing in the part next to the Chapel. The fire was under control at 4:30 a.m., April 12th. The last floor of Royal Palace, in the area interested by the fire has been destroyed, together with furniture and pictures of notable value kept there. Ulterior damages have been verified to the underlying structures for the absorption of water poured there. 8/10 of the Royal Palace is undamaged. A part of the Palace next to the Chapel of the Shroud is strongly damaged: in this area the superior floor is completely destroyed. It was possible to recover around the 40% of the works of art kept there. Inside the Chapel of the Holy Shroud the greatest damages are in the central and high part of the marmoreal face. In the Chapel was in finishing phase an important joined intervention of restoration between the Superintendence of the Cultural Domain and the Piedmont Region. From a first approximate assessment of damages one can value the damages to the architectural works at tens of billions of liras and to the recorded furniture at same billions of liras."

Attached to this e-mail I send you the ANSA reports about the fire and two images from "La Stampa", newspaper of Turin (I don't know the credits), about the fireman Mario Trematore and about the firemen that carried out the Shroud from the Cathedral.

GEN: THE HOLY SHROUD SAVED FROM BLAZE; (ANSA) - Turin, April 12 - The famous Holy Shroud of Turin, which according to centuries-long tradition wrapped the crucified body of Christ and which, in fact, bears stains in the likeness of a man's body, was safe and sound today after firemen pulled it out of the city's flame-engulfed cathedral to the applause and relief of crowds gathered outside, some of them in tears.

The alarm sounded at 23:45 Friday night as flames swept through the Guarini Chapel built in 1668 to house one of Christianity's most revered relics, the Holy Shroud, and spread to the main part of the cathedral of Turin. It was here that the relic was being kept while restoration work was underway on the chapel.

Shortly after 1:30 Saturday, firemen managed break open the crystal, wood and silver casket which encases the relic and carry it out of the church. It was taken to the apartment of the Turin Archbishop, Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini, custodian of the shroud on behalf of the pope who has been the owner of the relic since 1983 (previously it belonged to the House of Savoy). It appeared that the cloth had suffered no damage from either the heat or the smoke.

The firemen continued the battle to bring the fire under control which was by this time threatening the adjoining Royal Palace. As dawn broke, the flames were finally extinguished but the damage done was enormous, especially to the chapel designed by Guarino Guarini and considered a jewel of 17th-century architecture. It is feared that its dome is seriously compromised. The main altar and apse of the Renaissance cathedral has also suffered serious damage and the wall of wood and glass that separated the church from the adjoining chapel has been completely destroyed. The corridor that links the church with the west wing of the Royal Palace burned throughout the night.

The precious facade of the palace was saved but the roof of the west tower collapsed and the flames devoured the top two floors despite the efforts of 135 firefighters.

Up until 2300 last night, a dinner had been underway in the palace in honor of visiting United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Among the dinner guests were life-senators Gianni Agnelli and Giulio Andreotti. All had left the building before the first alarm was sounded.

The search was on to determine the cause of the blaze and while a short circuit or some other cause linked to the restoration work was one possibility, no line of investigation was being overlooked.

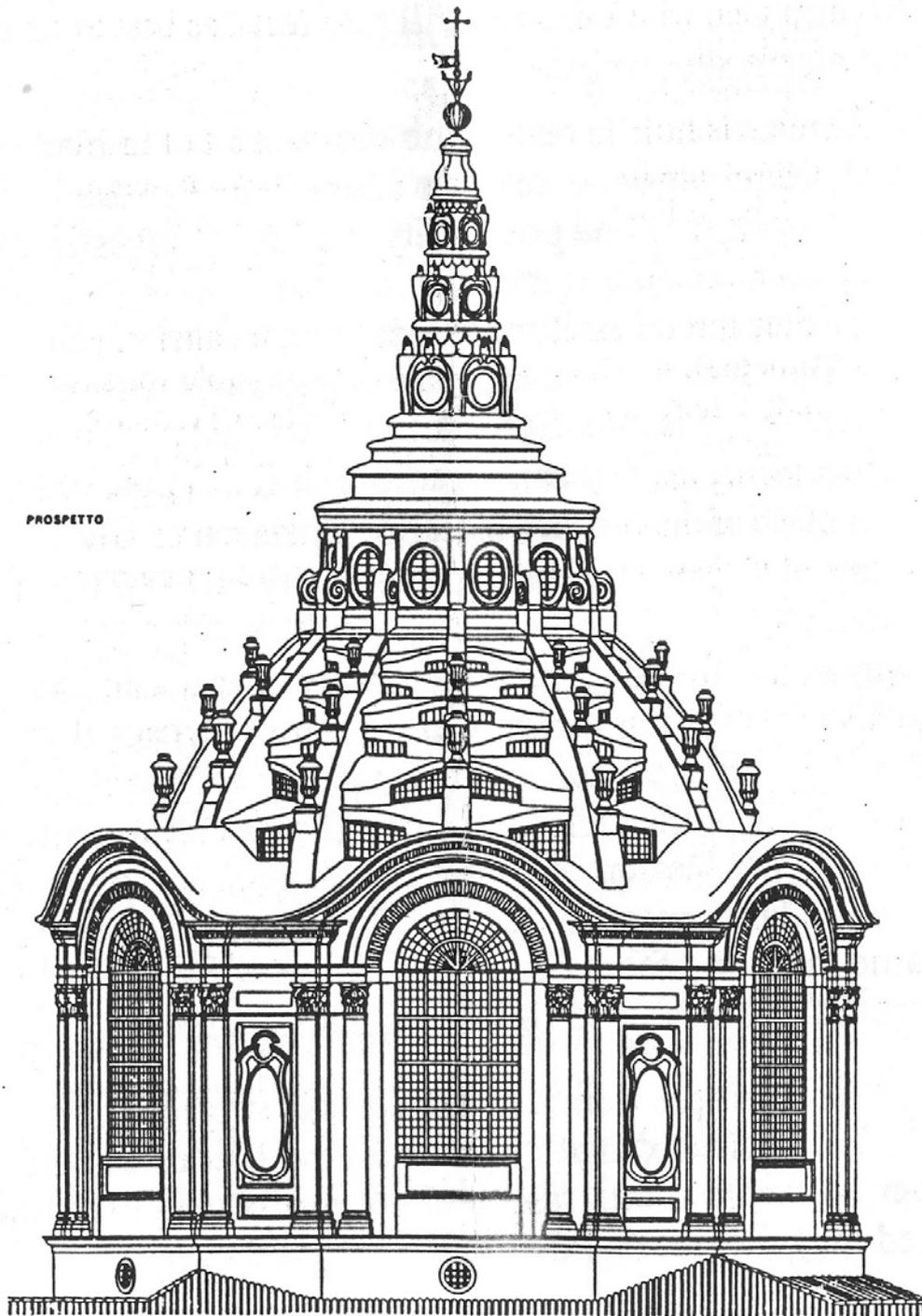
Meanwhile, the faithful were breathing a sigh of relief today that the cloth had escaped the ravages of the fire. But just how is it that the famous relic is housed in Turin? According to very early tradition it first appeared in the city in 1087, donated by Heraclio, Patriarch of Jerusalem, to the King of Cyprus and brought to Savoy in 1430 [sic] by Marguerite di Charny.

However, the first documented reports of the relic date back to 1352 according to which the King of Cyprus [sic] donated the cloth the following year to Geoffrey, viceroy of Picardy who put it in the custody of the canons of Lirey (France) from whence it came into the possession of Count Humbert of Villersexel whose widow was Marguerite de Charny. This version has it that the relic came into the possession of the House of Savoy in 1452. It was brought to Turin in 1578 by Emanuele Filiberto.

In 1987, a sample from the shroud was subjected to carbon dating which indicated that it was from the Medieval period. However, various experts criticized the procedures used and indicated they did not feel the results were reliable.

The Turin curia was very cautious in its reaction at the time, with one prelate expressing the view that "science should be left to do its work while 'for us' the shroud remains the icon of Christ's passion", a position reiterated by the current archbishop of Turin, Saldarini.

Despite the pronouncements of science, the shroud is still an object of veneration.



From: Revd Kim Dreisbach 12 April 97

Have just finished a conference call from Mike Minor with Isabel Piczek, Tom D'Muhala, Paul Maloney, Dorothy Crispino and me. He in turn had just gotten off the phone with Luigi Gonella. The facts, as best as can be determined at this time are as follows: 1. The fire began in the Royal Palace, spread to the Chapel and thence to the Cathedral itself. Gonella believes that there is little likelihood of arson. 2. Part of the roof of the Royal Palace and the Dome of the Chapel have fallen in. Only the charred brick walls of the latter remain. However, the fire alarm system in the Chapel worked. Mercifully, the Shroud was not in the Chapel as it has been closed for the last 2 to 3 years for repairs. 3. The Shroud, enclosed in a bulletproof case, was behind the main altar on the ground floor of the Cathedral. 4. The fireman most responsible for saving the Shroud is already a hero on Turin. His name: Mario Trematore, originally reported as "Crematore"(sp.?). He worked for 5 or 6 minutes with a sledge hammer to break the glass with flames around him and debris falling. 5. The CNN footage of the firemen carrying the casket out clearly show the silk ribbons still intact. D'Muhala opines that there probably was no thermal damage. 6. Cardinal Saldarini arrived on the scene and took possession of the Shroud. Word is that the casket will be opened and the cloth inspected for any possible damage. Remember that on the same evening Prof. Avinoam Danin, Dept. of Botany, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, was featured on CBS nightly news with Dan Rather. A pollen expert, he confirmed that many of the flowers and plants on the Shroud are not only indigenous but unique to Israel. Also, they bloom only at Easter time. Ergo, whom the Shroud enveloped he cannot say, but he will state that the cloth is from Israel and not Europe. Theologically, the Shroud has once again been "tested by fire." As such testing is often used by God for "purgation" and or "refinement", maybe we are to view this moment in time as the "purging" of the C-14 and other detractors prior to the re-emergence of the Shroud from the ashes. With Danin, Tyron and Mattingly's insights, a new chapter of sindonology has begun and once again "He will be lifted up so that all men may be drawn unto Him." And if there are guardian angels, I wonder if Fr. Peter Rinaldi wasn't looking down on the Cathedral last night to insure that the "alarm" was sounded in time?



"There was nothing else to do" ... Mr Trematore and another man carry the



Shroud from the cathedral. Photograph by AP/LA STAMPA/UGO LIPRANDI

From: Rev Kim Dreisbach 14 April 97

The Sunday edition of the *Atlanta Journal & Constitution* carried a photo of the reliquary's being carried out of the cathedral by a fireman (wearing gloves) and a civilian in a dark overcoat whose bare hand is touching the corner of the silver casket. Hopefully the bulletproof glass acted as a thermal barrier to retard the heat and thus prevent thermal damage to the Shroud. Paul Maloney expressed concern to me last night in a phone call that the heat might have produced the "Pellicori effect" (i.e. premature "aging" of linen via baking it in an oven).

Finally getting some sleep after a tense and hectic weekend. Dedicated the Mass yesterday to the Shroud's miraculous survival and found myself trembling with tears of thanksgiving in my eyes.

Though it may not be the most apt quote, I was struck by the appropriateness of the following lines from M. Scott Peck, M.D. in his "The Road Less Traveled & Beyond":

But as I continue to mature, I've become more and more impressed by the frequency of highly improbable events. In their very improbability, I begin to see the fingerprints of God.

Surely the "fingerprints of God" were left on the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Turin this past weekend. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

From: Rev Fr Joe Marino 14 April 97

The Sunday *New York Times*, in their April 13 article about the fire in the Cathedral in Turin (pg. 4) quoted Cardinal Saldarini as saying the exposition in April-June 1998 would go on as scheduled, but it didn't say where it would be held.

On Friday, April 11, just several hours before the fire broke out, the CBS evening news ran a short piece about an Israeli botanist who identified some flower images on the Shroud and concluded that the Shroud originated in Jerusalem. The piece ended with a mention of the C-14 dating of 1988, but said there were serious reasons for doubting the results.

From: Rev Kim Dreisbach 15 April 97

Finally given a moment or two to breathe after this past weekend, I thought some of the users of your web site might be interested to recall that certain dates have a way of being repeated in the Shroud's long history. For example:

1. October 13

1307 The day on which Philip the Fair ordered the arrest of Templars throughout France. Though a search is made for their "idol" (i.e. the Shroud?), none is found.

1988 The day chosen by Oxford, Arizona and Zurich to announce that the C-14 "date" for the Shroud was between 1260 and 1390 with 95% degree of certainty.

2. April 12

1204 The day members of the Fourth Crusade sacked Constantinople and the Image of Edessa/Mandylion/Shroud of Turin disappeared in the confusion. Noted chronicler Robert de Clari, "neither Greek nor Frenchman knew what became of it."

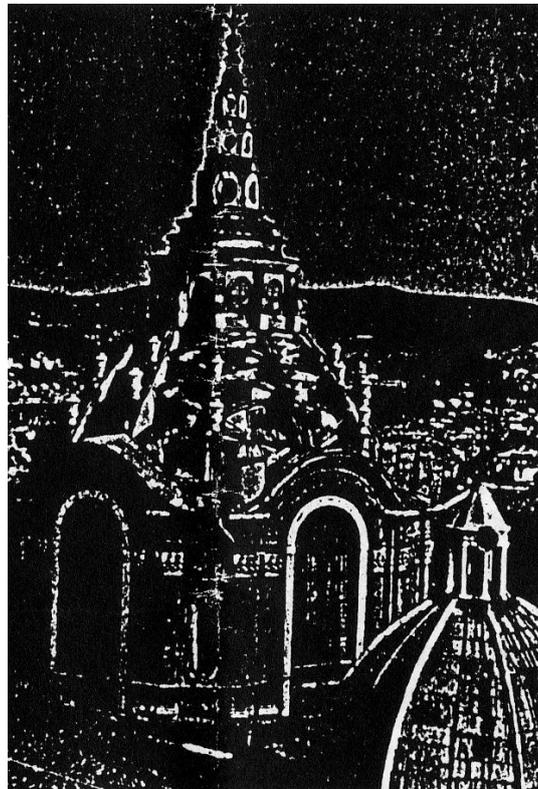
1997 The day (i.e. Italian time) when the Holy Shroud was saved from the fire at its permanent home in Turin's Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

The weekend of April 11-13 was a very special one for me personally and for Christians all around the world who are students of the Shroud. Once again it has been "resurrected from the grave" after seemingly having been dealt its final death blow. As noted above, it was on April 12, 1204 that the Shroud - then known as the Mandylion or Image of Edessa - was somehow rescued and preserved during the sacking of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade. When one allows for the six hour time differential between the USA and Italy, the Holy Shroud was actually carried from the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in Turin on the morning April the 12th. In 1532, it had survived a near disastrous fire at Chambéry. On that long ago night, a blacksmith, two Franciscans

and a canon risked the flames of that blaze to save what was for them more precious than their very lives. Miraculously, though they carried the silver chest to safety, one corner of that chest had begun to melt which accounts for the patched burn holes visible on the Shroud today. Silver melts at 960°C yet the hands of the four men were not burned and neither they nor their clothes were touched by the flames.

This past weekend, the hero was a fireman, Mario Trematore who broke the Lexan - the same type of bulletproof glass which protects stained-glass windows - and other layers of glass protecting the Shroud and its reliquary silver casket. Experts are amazed that Trematore was able to break through the Lexan, even with a sledge hammer. Trematore himself was quoted in an AP release as saying: "God gave me the strength to break those glasses ..." *

My own response to all of the above is that I don't think that such coincidences are merely the result of random chance. Certainly the hard sciences are unlikely to agree with me. But then I believe in miracles ... like the ones that happened in Turin and this past weekend and in Constantinople and Chambéry so long ago thanks to God and the ordinary people whom He once again has used to bring about extraordinary events.



"The Australian" 15 April 1997

Police cite arson in Shroud blaze

By RICHARD OWEN in Rome and agencies

ITALIAN investigators have said the fire which almost destroyed the Shroud of Turin at the weekend and left much of Turin's 15th century cathedral in ruins may have been arson.

Police said a mystery telephone caller had given a warning half an hour before the blaze that there "might be a fire" in the cathedral. A petrol can was found later in the gardens.

Investigators said the fire alarms had been switched off and there was no night watchman.

However, they also said the Guarini chapel, where the shroud was usually kept in a silver casket under bullet-proof glass, was undergoing restoration, including rewiring, and the fire could have been caused by a short circuit.

La Stampa newspaper said it was a "suspicious coincidence" that at the time the fire started a banquet for the UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, had just ended in the former Royal Palace, now a museum, which adjoins the cathedral and was also badly damaged.

Mr Annan is in Italy to give UN backing to the Italian-led intervention in Albania. Last week, 400 Turin anarchists, known as *autonomi*, demonstrated at the cathedral against Italy's Albanian policy.

The only thing investigators are virtually sure of is that the fire began in the chapel built by architect Guarino Guarini in 1668 [sic]

to house the shroud, a relic revered for centuries in the belief that it enveloped the body of Christ after the crucifixion and bears the image of his body.

The shroud was rescued unharmed from behind the cathedral's central altar, where it had been moved because of restoration work in the chapel.

The shroud, which has been taken to a secret monastery location for safe keeping, was saved by a fireman, Mr Mario Trematore, who has become a national hero. "God gave me the strength to smash the glass," he said afterwards.

The Vatican said the Pope would bestow a special papal award on Mr Trematore and fellow firefighters who rescued the shroud. Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini, the Archbishop of Turin, said the rescue was "a miracle", and vowed it would be on display next year as planned.

The shroud, brought from Palestine to Troyes in France by 14th century crusaders [sic], passed to the House of Savoy in 1453 and was placed in the Guarini chapel by the royal family in 1694.

The shroud has always been revered in Italy, and about 100 years ago a photographic negative showed that the cloth held the image of a bearded, long-faced man almost two metres tall [sic]. However, carbon-14 tests in 1988 showed that the shroud was a medieval fake dating from between 1260 and 1390.

The Times

Hero's halo for fireman who rescued the sacred shroud

By **ANDREW HURST**
in Turin

Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini described the rescue of the Shroud of Turin as a miracle but its survival owed at least as much to the courage and presence of mind of an Italian fireman.

As flames engulfed a cathedral chapel in this north-western Italian city in the early hours of Saturday, Mr Mario Trematore smashed his way through a bullet-proof shield to grab the silver casket that contains the winding sheet.

Mr Trematore, who was later treated for cuts and bruises, described how he saved the burial cloth in an interview carried in a special edition of the Turin newspaper *La Stampa*.

"I found the strength in that symbol, the symbol of the shroud. Just think, that glass can withstand bullets but I managed somehow to break it all the same. It's almost a miracle," Mr Trematore, 44, said.

The shroud, which bears the ghostly imprint of a man, is revered by many Catholics as Christ's burial cloth although scientists dispute its authenticity and say it only dates back to the Middle Ages.

"All appeared to be lost. Pieces of the Guarini chapel were crashing down and there was a serious danger that it would bury everything — the casket, the altar and all of us," Mr Trematore said.

"Then I hurled myself through the flames with a hammer and I was able to save the shroud. There was nothing else to do at that point. We were about to lose it forever."

Mr Trematore grabbed the silver box and ran out of the chapel, blood streaming down his face, and was met by a group of weeping priests.

Police who took the casket from Mr Trematore were cheered by a crowd of onlookers as they carried it triumphantly out of the cathedral.

Reuter

From Isabel Piczek 19 April 97

News from Italy just received in this moment!

As you know, the Shroud was examined by a group of experts and was found entirely in the same condition as it was in 1978. No damage!

It was taken to a monastery where it will stay until the exposition in 1998. The place remains undisclosed.

Within four days temporary roofs will be erected over the Guarini Chapel, the Royal palace and the part of the Cathedral which has burnt.

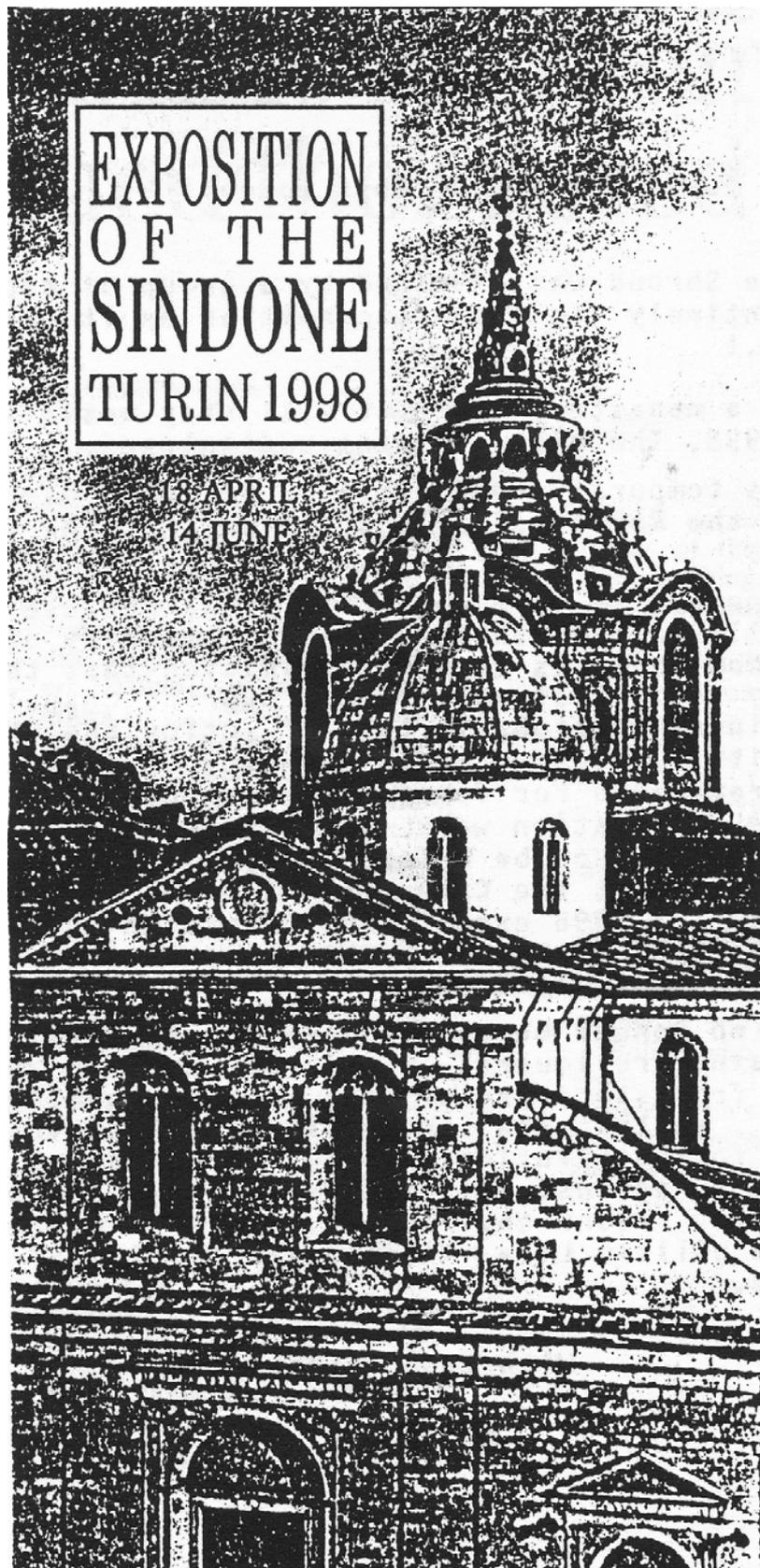
The Guarini Chapel is in very poor condition, because even the marble practically melted, there was such intensity of heat in the Chapel. Now there is serious suspicion that the fire was deliberately set. It started in the Guarini Chapel. Because of the investigations in this direction the Chapel has to stay as it is, without anything moved in it and this probably will remain so for four months or so. Therefore the finishing of the restoration work -- as it is seen now by the authorities-it will not be before 2002; unfortunately passed the two expositions. But the Cathedral might be in good enough shape already for the 1998 exposition. They plan to exhibit the Shroud in the half of the Cathedral closer to the main entrance, which was less damaged.

The Shroud will no longer be kept rolled up. It will be placed into a new container reliquary. It will be 5m long and 2m wide. It will be made from stone and crystal with a lighting system installed in it, so that the Shroud in flat position, can be lit at any time for observation. It will be protected by the most modern systems against all attacks and harm and will have a microbiologically sound environment. The cost of this new container is one billion Lira. The Italian "ITALGAS" will donate the money.

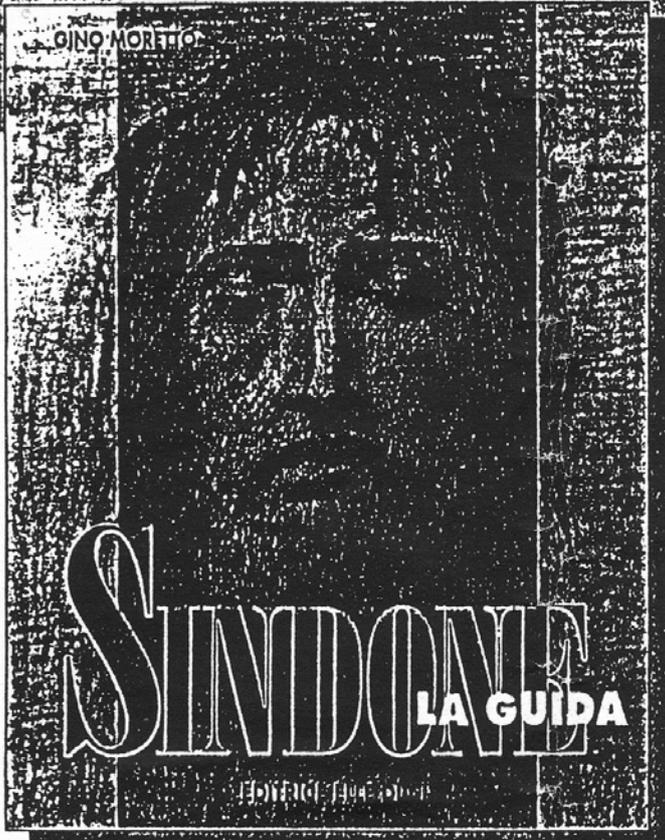
With best wishes,

(signed)

Isabel



una sfida alla scienza,
una provocazione all'intelligenza dell'uomo
anche di quello più scettico



di GINO MORETTO

Un aiuto a "leggere"
l'immagine sindonica
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(dalla presentazione del Card. Giovanni Saldarini)

nella
stessa
collana

L'EQUIVOCO SINDONE

di LUIGI MALATRUCO

Pagine 122. Lire 15.000

Shroud News began in 1980 when Rex Morgan, author of three books on the subject of the Holy Shroud (*Perpetual Miracle*, *Shroud Guide* and *The Holy Shroud and the Earliest Paintings of Christ*) and editor of several others, began sending a few notes about current developments in the study of the Shroud of Turin (Sindonology) for a small circle of interested people in his home country of Australia. He didn't expect it to go beyond a few issues.

Today, the bulletin, now highly acclaimed, reaches subscribers all over the world and is written, produced and disseminated more quickly than any other Shroud publication in the English language. It contains information, news, articles and illustrations gathered from sources of Shroud study worldwide through Rex Morgan's extensive network of personal connections with what has been described as the "Shroud Crowd".

Rex Morgan is a frequent traveller overseas which gives him the opportunity to keep abreast of latest developments in Shroud study and research at first hand. He was present at the world media preview of the Shroud itself in August 1978 in Turin, Italy and has met and knows numerous Shroud researchers in many countries. His quest for Shroud information became, as he described it, "a passionate hobby". He took the world famous Photographic Exhibition created by Brooks Institute, California, to Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Macau, and Canada and during those tours it attracted more than 700,000 visitors. The exhibition was subsequently donated by Brooks to the non-profit making organisation, The South East Asia Research Centre for the Holy Shroud (SEARCH) of which Morgan is President. He is also a Board member of the US based Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin (ASSIST) and was a member of the scientific team which conducted environmental experiments in a Jerusalem tomb in 1986 (ESSJ). He has made a number of original contributions to Shroud research has presented major papers at international Shroud conferences has written numerous articles and has given hundreds of broadcasts and telecasts on the subject in many countries.

The list of *Shroud News* subscribers continues to increase internationally and it has been described many times as one of the best available. *Shroud News* comes out six times a year. Its production is obviously privately subsidised as we request a subscription in Australia of only \$6 for six issues posted. The USA subscription is \$12 (posted airmail - there is no longer any surface mail from Australia). Postage to other countries varies. ALL back issues are available for \$1 (US or Aust) each plus postage. The famous 50th issue is \$3 plus post. Customers should note that as it costs us \$8 to negotiate each foreign cheque we request all payments be made in currency banknotes of your country or charge to Visa, Master or Amex cards.

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