

QUESTION CORNER

Q. I read somewhere that the name "Veronica" derives from an inversion of the letters of *vera icon*. Is that true?

A. Dispense me from repeating those two words together, for together they are a barbarism which no ancient could have perpetrated. *Vera* indeed is a Latin word; *icon* is Greek. The correct etymology will be found in Webster:

veronica [LL., fr. Gr. Beroniki, Bereniki, dial. form (Macedonian) for Gr. phereniki, lit., carrying off victory, victorious.]

Byzantine icons of the Holy Face were called *acheiropoietos*, "not made with hands." The Church of S. Silvestro in Capite, Rome, possessed a representation (see cut below) called *Vera Effigies*; some copies were known as *Vera Immagine*. The famous Veronica Veil was conserved in the Vatican from 1292 until it perished in 1527. The legend of a woman named Veronica (Phereniki, or Berenice), who wiped Christ's bloody face as He walked to Calvary, did not appear until the late Middle Ages, and was not inserted in the Way of the Cross until the 18th century.

A discussion of the Veronica Veil-mandyllion-sudarium will appear in a proximate issue of SHROUD SPECTRUM INTERNATIONAL.



"True Effigy of the Holy Face of Our Lord Jesus Christ, reverently honored in the Basilica of St. Peter's in Vatican, Rome."