P.S. to the NEWS
by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

RELEASE: DECEMBER 19, 1980

NEW EVIDENCE ON THE HOLY SHROUD

New evidence keeps surfacing all the time to confirm the authenticity of the Shroud in which the body of Jesus was wrapped. It has been kept in the cathedral at Turin, Italy since 1578.

It was the practice in burials at the time of Christ to place a coin on the body's eyes to keep them closed in death. New scientific techniques have just identified on the Shroud of Turin the impression of a coin minted only between 30 A.D. and 32 A.D., when Pontius Pilate was Roman Governor of Palestine.

The Holy Shroud is a folded piece of faded linen, about 14 feet by four feet. It has on it a straw-colored image of the front and back of a bearded man, with scourge marks and blood stains that correspond to the biblical accounts of the crucified Christ.

Marks resembling a small staff and four Greek letters, part of the words "Of Tiberias Caesar," appear over the man's right eye. Coin experts say that the staff (called a "lituus") appears only on coins minted during Pilate's reign. The curved outline of the coin image on the Shroud matches the edge of an identical coin from Pilate's reign which is still in existence.

The new coin evidence was discovered by the Rev. Francis L. Filas, professor of Theology at Loyola University in Chicago. He discovered the marks accidentally while studying an enlargement, and then identified the coin with the help of a Chicago coin dealer.

Filas says the probability that the marks were made by coins is "so great that it exceeds many of the practical certainties by which we conduct our daily lives."

An American team of 32 scientists investigated the image on the Holy Shroud for two years, 1978-80. They unanimously rejected the allegations that the image was painted on the cloth. They said that the image has far too many baffling and subtle properties to be the work of a human hand.

(more)

The American scientific team announced its findings at a meeting in Los Alamos, New Mexico. The scientists all concluded that the image is indeed that of a crucified man and is too inexplicable to be a deliberate fake.

The Shroud's optical properties indicate that a painter would need superhuman skill, according to the scientists. The most important of these properties is the Shroud's three dimensionality: the brightness of the image varies precisely according to the cloth's distances from parts of the body -- closer to the nose than to the eyes, for example.

One scientist inspected the Shroud with sophisticated image-analyzing equipment and concluded that an artist could not produce the image because it is of such low contrast that it can scarcely be discerned up close. Another scientist who is an optical physicist concluded that the image is so extraordinarily delicate that it had to be caused by natural chemical changes from a body's secretions and burial oils.

Another scientist confirmed that the Shroud has absolutely no evidence of any dyes, stains or pigments. Sensitive fluroscopic tests have failed to produce evidence of any medieval pigment. No plausible explanation has been offered for how the image on the Shroud could have been formed except by the body of the crucified Christ.

The Shroud shows eight scalp wounds from the crowning of thorns and 42 scourge marks. The New Testament confirms that Pilate had Jesus scourged, thinking that this severe punishment would save the life of him whom Pilate said, "I find no fault in him."

The Shroud confirms all the unique details described in the four Gospels. The Shroud has marks of tightly compressed long hair gathered at the back of the neck in the unique fashion of the young Jewish men of the first century.

The thumbs appear on the Shroud to have been pulled tightly into the palms of Jesus' hands. According to medical science, the nail wounds in the wrists would cause this reflex action. The Shroud shows the nails in the wrists, since the hands could not have held the body on the cross.

The Holy Shroud is a remarkable picture of the crucified Christ confirmed by the most modern discovery techniques. This new scientific proof can further reinforce the faith of all those preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

(end)