

Promoting the scientific study of the Turin Shroud

THE ASSIST Investigations Group

A DIVISION OF:

The Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin, Ltd.

A tax exempt, non profit organization

Garnersville, New York

Feb. 23, 1987

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To all participants in the Summit, N.J. project,

It would appear from my various discussions with each of you that so far as the scientific team is concerned the earliest date we would be able to do the examination of the Summit, N.J. True Copy of the Shroud of Turin would be March 28. Please mark this date on your calendar to reserve it for the examination.

However, due to ongoing repairs at the Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary in Summit where the examination will take place, we are not able, at this point in time, to confirm the above mentioned date. I have talked with Mother Mary Albert at the Monastery just this past week and she is not able to give a date when the repairs will be completed. Work has progressed much more slowly than was originally anticipated and some snags were encountered which were unexpected.

As soon as I can confirm the above date I will do so either by mail, by phone, or both, depending upon the circumstances.

Meanwhile, in case we are in need of a back-up date I am enclosing a postcard with dates listed for April. We hope we will not have to fall back to an April date since this would cut severely into our lead time for preparation for the work in Turin. However, if you will kindly circle those dates on which you would be able to participate in the examination and cross out the dates on which you would not be able to be involved and return the card to me, this will be much appreciated. Thanks.

Sincerely yours,



Paul C. Maloney
General Projects Director, ASSIST

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Aug. 11, 1987

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Dear Fr. Otterbein,

Thanks so much for your good letter of Aug. 4 and the support you've provided related to the possible purchase of the Frei collection. Your letter provides much to think about and as things progress I will keep you informed of developments.

When I got back from vacation there was a "ton" of mail awaiting me so I have my work cut out--all in addition to the other work I left when I went away.

You might be interested in some small tidbit which grew out of the Summit project. I received a letter from Cathy Dirks this past Spring giving me her assessment of the work on the True Copy. One of the things which disturbed her was our use of sticky tape on the True Copy. She told me in her letter that one of the "no-no's" of conservation was "You never apply sticky tape to cloth". Well, since our use of sticky tape was such an important feature of our testing design I was worried that such application might in fact be considered damaging to the Shroud. We therefore wanted to know if sticky tape left any residue on cloth by mere momentary application. So I turned the project over to Jan Cardamone to see if we could come up with any answers. Not only would this affect our own future plans for sampling on the Shroud but it would also tell us if past applications of sticky tape by STURP and by Frei had left any damaging residue.

So one of the letters I found awaiting me was a large packet from Jan. I was almost afraid to open it for fear of her verdict. She used ESCA which, I think is "electron spectroscopic characterization analysis". Her preliminary verdict, using common dime store sticky tape, the kind Max Frei used, and applying it for 10 seconds using 2 pounds pressure is that it leaves no residue at all. But we want to test other types of tapes and use other pressures so we want Jan to continue her experiments. Since ASSIST is now beginning to receive some very small donations I believe we are going to try to get matching funds from Virginia Tech to pursue this further. But I am very relieved to be informed of this since it allows us to refine our planning as well as to inform Turin and the Vatican that the use of sticky tape will apparently have no untoward effect on the Shroud.

Thanks again for your letter--best wishes as ever,

