



# Holy Shroud Guild

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Affiliated to the *Centro Internazionale  
di Sindonologia*, Turin, Italy

Sponsored by the Redemptorist Fathers  
Canonically erected in the Archdiocese of New York

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Doctor Walter McCrone  
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Dear Doctor McCrone:

I sincerely hope it was not anything I wrote or did that motivated the break in our correspondence. If I am correct, my last letter to you was dated early in June this year. It was a reply to the one you had written to me enclosing slides from your artist-friend's replicas of the face from the image of the Shroud. You did not reply to my letter.

I trust both you and Mrs. McCrone are well. Also, that our friendship has in no way suffered because of the polemic which your position on the Shroud has generated between us. My prayer is that, as you wrote in your March 8/80 letter, "we can continue our efforts to understand, if not to agree with, each other."

The small circle of Shroud friends here in Turin with whom I have discussed your findings and conclusions, are mostly art experts. For nearly all of them the Shroud is just an interesting, rather unique artifact which they view without "supernatural" preoccupations. Here are some points they would like me to present for your consideration.

1. They tell me that the paucity of the sampling in your tests does not warrant your conclusion that the entire image is solely due to the presence of oxide and whatever is the proteinaceous substance you found on the Shroud. That it could be does not mean that it is. You would need many more samples, threads actually and not just fibrils. As one of the experts put it, "the ice is much too thin under your feet."

(Letter to Dr. McCrone - Sept. 18/80)

2. They ask if you have made a microchemical identification of the oxide and of the proteinaceous substance you found on the Shroud. This is important.

3. You claim that 10mm. of oxide could have sufficed to produce the entire image on the Shroud. To the experts here this sounds "preposterously" too little. One of them commented: "Has Dr. McCrone ever tried to paint a twelve-foot portrait on a relatively soft absorbing cloth with 12mm. of oxide?"

4. They find it "impossible" to believe that oxide in watery tempera could have stained only the thinnest surface of each thread on the Shroud without any penetration whatever, and, too, without migrating and showing up between the threads.

5. They likewise challenge your contention that brush strokes are not present (they are certainly not detectable) on the Shroud simply because your would-be forger used a watery medium while applying the oxide. Brush marks are present and detectable even in water color paintings.

6. All of them dismiss as "unthinkable" the technique you attribute to your would-be artist who supposedly painted on the Shroud only the "contact points" of an imaginary cadaver. In no way - they state emphatically - could such a technique produce the negative image on the Shroud, a negative so perfect that, when photographed and seen on the negative, turns into the unbelievably realistic "photographic" portrait of the Man of the Shroud.

7. They have examined the Shroud "face" produced by your artist-friend. They are not convinced he used the "contact-points-only" technique you suggest. Some of the experts suggest that he "copied" the face, possibly tracing it by transparency over the face of the Shroud image, or more likely, by projecting a slide of the Shroud face on a cloth and then filling in with paint. They would be grateful to know the technique he used. In fact, they would like to see one of the portraits since they are anxious to examine, among other things, the degree of penetration of the coloring substance into the cloth.