

NOTICES

Paid up members of the AAH are entitled to a \$12.80 (20% discount) subscription to the *American Journal of Ancient History*. Subscriptions should be sent to: Editor, AJAH, Harvard University, Robinson Hall, Cambridge, MA 02138.

1985 dues were due January 1, 1985. Members in arrears will find the last year they paid noted on their mailing label.

A MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

At the Pittsburgh meetings I was deeply touched by the presentation of *The Craft of the Ancient Historian*, a volume of very thoughtful and varied essays. It was also heartwarming to find so many colleagues affixing their names to the Tabula Gratuloria and helping to make possible the appearance of the Festschrift. Since it would be difficult to write each one individually, let me present this note through our *Newsletter*; though it may appear in cold print, please take it as addressed to each of you personally with my deep thanks. Chester G. Starr

THE SHROUD OF TURIN

The public and the media occasionally turn to antiquity in order to indulge a taste for the bizarre or occult: thus the craze for pyramid power and ancient astronauts. This tendency has made professional historians reluctant even to look at the Shroud of Turin — unfortunately, since this not only clears the field for sensationalist interpretations of the Shroud, but also perpetuates academic indifference to what might conceivably turn out to be a document of extraordinary importance. My own indifference ended when I gingerly picked up a November, 1981, *Harper's* article on the Shroud. During the next six months I read most of what was available on the subject (with frequent apologies for idling in a "non-professional" preserve). Finding only two explanations, neither of them persuasive, of what the Shroud was, I began to explore other possibilities and reached an unforeseen conclusion.

It is generally agreed that the Shroud, a 14'3" by 3'7" linen cloth that has been in Turin since 1578, bears a frontal and dorsal image of Jesus of Nazareth's crucified body. The serious questions are when, how, and by whom the image was made. Most devotees of the Shroud have believed that the cloth was Jesus' burial shroud and that the image was created supernaturally. In addition to other objections which will occur to readers of this newsletter, there is the massive fact that during the first thousand years after Jesus' crucifixion, no Christian writer mentioned a miraculously imaged burial shroud of Jesus. The image is man-made.

Although the devout explanation of the Shroud cannot

stand, it is receiving considerable publicity, mostly because in the last few years the skeptical explanation has been undermined by an evangelical group of American scientists. The skeptics' case was based squarely on a 14th century bishop's claim that the image was painted (by an artist who confessed his mischief to the bishop) not long before 1355, when the Shroud was displayed in the bishop's diocese of Troyes and excited much of Christendom. The recent tests, however, have undeniably shown that the image was not painted, but was produced — probably from a human body — by a still undetermined ("mysterious," as some of the scientists would have it) process or agent that degraded the cellulose of which the linen consists. That process was evidently as unknown in the 14th century as it is now, since at that time strenuous attempts to duplicate the image were less successful than attempts in our own day. Secondly, an ingenious argument put forward by Ian Wilson in 1978 holds that from the 6th century to 1204 the Shroud — folded so that only the face was visible — was the renowned Mandylion of the Byzantine world, and so was the source of the Eastern Church's principal tradition of Christ-portraits. Finally, the Shroud image correctly displays wounds at the wrists rather than at the palms of the hands, suggesting that it was produced before the Middle Ages, when Christians uniformly pictured Jesus crucified with nails through the palms.

While the image hints at ancient times, the textile does not. One analyst claimed to have found bits of cotton caught between the linen threads. The Shroud's 3-1 herringbone weave is in antiquity paralleled in a few silks but apparently not in linens (however, since perhaps a thousandth of one per cent of ancient linens have survived, assertions that a given weave "didn't exist" in antiquity are unusually risky). And the Shroud's yarn is Z-twisted, while most ancient yarns are S-twisted. A carbon test is obviously indispensable, but has not yet been permitted by the Turin Cathedral. There are rumors that several years ago an unauthorized test was run (on filched threads), yielding a date ca. 700, but it is unlikely that a reputable laboratory could have involved itself in such an affair.

There is, I think, a better than even chance that a carbon test would date the Shroud to the period of the Roman Empire: a small bit of evidence indicates that a technique for imprinting a human image on cloth, however mysterious for modern science, was known in the Roman East, and was forgotten by the sixth century. If a carbon test should date the Shroud to the early Empire, several arguments would converge to the conclusion that the image was — incredible though this will seem — directly imprinted from Jesus' body immediately after the crucifixion, and that the Shroud is not a shroud but an ancient imprinter's canvas. One of the

arguments is that for the first four centuries believers in the Risen Christ never depicted him in death or even on the cross. Another argument is that in the second century, before orthodox Christians permitted any representational art at all, the Carpocratian Gnostics were making portraits of Jesus based on a *forma Christi* which they preserved and venerated, and which they claimed had been imprinted on Pilate's authorization.

If the Shroud was the Carpocratians' *forma Christi*, it has enormous implications for an understanding not only of the *Christusbilder* of Late Antiquity, but more importantly of the Passion and Resurrection narratives in the New Testament, of the relation of Gnostic to orthodox Christianity, and of the history of 1st-century Judaea. For those who have thought about the role of *tyche* in history, the profoundest lesson would be the paradox and sheer coincidence of the cloth's career. The possibility that the Shroud of Turin does carry the direct image of Jesus' body makes a carbon test for the Shroud a matter of the highest importance. One must hope that the Turin Cathedral will soon come to recognize that its private interests and fears can no longer overshadow its responsibility to let the world *know* how old is the legendary cloth now in the cathedral's keeping.

References:

- Ian Wilson, *The Shroud of Turin* (New York, 1978);
Robert Drews, *In Search of the Shroud of Turin: New Light on its History and Origin* (Tottawa, N.J., 1984)

Robert Drews
Vanderbilt University

OBITUARY

Hermann Strasburger died in April of this year. Born in 1909, son of a leading physician, he studied with some of Germany's eminent ancient historians at Frankfurt, Munich, and Innsbruck and received his degree in 1931 with an essay on "concordia ordinum." From 1933 to 1945 he led a precarious life without regular employment, a period relieved only by his zest for music and mountain climbing; in his ancestry was Jewish blood and his name had a dangerous taint. During World War II he served on the Russian front where he was so severely wounded as to spend the last two years of the war in a hospital.

Only after 1945 could he take up regular academic life at Freiburg im Breisgau, where many of this generation's leading ancient historians absorbed his learning; he could also now demonstrate in a series of masterful articles his incisive, sensitive understanding especially of early Greek history and society as well as ancient historiography. Strasburger never published anything longer than a short monograph, but his articles, collected in the two volumes of *Studien zur Alten Geschichte* (Ohms; Hildesheim, 1982) are an impressive monument to one of the greatest German historians of recent decades.

Chester G. Starr

PERSONALIA

Professor T.D. Barnes (University of Toronto) was awarded the Goodwin Award of Merit for 1984 by the APA for *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine and Constantine*

and *Eusebius*.

Professor E. Borza (Penn State University) will be the visiting professor of Classical Studies for 1985/86 at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens.

Professor Donald Engels will be teaching at Boston College during the 1985/86 academic year.

Professor M. Jameson (Stanford) will be fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford for the 1985/86 academic year.

Professor P. Krentz (Davidson College) will be an associate member of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens for the 1985/86 academic year.

Professor Thomas Martin has been appointed associate professor in the Dept. of History at Pomona College.

Professor Jennifer Roberts (SMU) will spend the Fall, 1985 term at the Institute for Advanced Study.

Professor Susan M. Teggiari (Stanford) delivered the Mary White Lecture on "Augustus and Dynasty: How to Succeed" at Trinity College, Toronto on March 21, 1985.

AWARDS

Prof. Lawrence J. Bliquez (Univ. of Washington) ACLS, A catalogue of Roman surgical instruments in the Naples Museum.

Prof. Eugene N. Borza (Penn. State Univ.) ACLS, Topographical field work in Macedonia.

Prof. David Cherry (Univ. of Ottawa) Social Sciences and Research Council of Canada award for 1985/86.

Prof. Peter Krenz NEH, A commentary on Xenophon's *Hellenica*.

Prof. S. Thomas Parker (N. Carolina State Univ.) NEH, Nat. Geographic Society, Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, The historical evolution of the Roman frontier in central Jordan.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Ancient History. Tenure-track assistant professorship in ancient history with Greek or Roman specialty, beginning fall, 1986. Send résumé and three letters of recommendation to Prof. Thomas F. Glick, Chair, Dept. of History, Boston Univ., 226 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 00215, by November 1. AA/EOE.

Roman History (Republic or Early Empire). Tenure track assistant professorship. Résumés should be sent to Prof. M.L. Benedict, Chair, Search Committee, Dept. of History, Ohio State University, 106 Dulles Hall, 230 W. 17th Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43210-1367. AA/EOE.

BOOKS

Barry Baldwin, *Studies on Greek and Roman History and Literature*, London Studies in Classical Philology 15 (Amsterdam, 1985).

Stanley M. Burstein, *The Hellenistic Age from the battle of Ipsos to the death of Kleopatra VII*, TDGR 3 (Cambridge, 1985).

Stephen L. Dyson, *The Creation of the Roman Frontier* (Princeton, 1985).

J.W. Eadie & J. Ober, edd., *The Craft of the Ancient Historian: Essays in Honor of Chester G. Starr* (University Press of America co-published with AAH, 1985).

Steven W. Hirsch, *The Friendship of the Barbarians: Xenophon and the Persian Empire* (Univ. of New England Press, 1985).

G.M. Paul, *A Historical Commentary on Sallust's Bellum Jugurthinum* (Francis Cairns, 1984).

S. Thomas Parker, *Romans and Saracens: A History of the Arabian Frontier* (American Schools of Oriental Research, 1985)

John Scarborough, ed., *Byzantine Medicine*, Dumbarton Oaks Papers 38 (Washington, 1984).

CALLS FOR PAPERS

The deadline for the submission of abstracts (one to two pages) for papers to be delivered at the 1986 AAH meeting at Texas Tech University has been extended to October 31, 1985. The following topics are being solicited, although others will be considered: Bronze Age, Imperialism in the Eastern Mediterranean, Colonization, Ancient Sports, Ancient Nautical Topics, Roman Family Law, Late Antiquity. Abstracts should be sent to: Prof. B. Twyman, Dept. of History, Texas Tech Univ., Box 4529, Lubbock, TX 79409.

Thirty-minute papers are invited on the following topics for the 1987 AAH meeting at McMaster Univ.: (1) The Hellenophone historians of Rome; (2) Value and Exchange in Antiquity; (3) Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire. Program criteria include a broad chronological (neolithic through Late Roman) and geographical (i.e. to include areas beyond the Hellenic and Italic peninsulas) range. Presentations should include historiographic context. Proposals, abstracts and inquiries may be sent to Prof. Daniel J. Geagan, Dept. of History, McMaster Univ., Hamilton, Ont., Canada L8S 4L9.

Proposals, preferably for complete sessions (two papers, one commentator and one moderator) are being solicited for the Seventh Berkshire conference on the History of Women to be held at Wellesley College on June 19-21, 1987 on the theme "Beyond the Public/Private Dichotomy: Reassessing Women's Place in History", although papers on all aspects of women's history are welcome. Proposals (3 copies) should include: title, names, addresses, affiliation, phone numbers, one page vitae of all participants and one page abstracts of papers. Ancient History proposals may be sent to: Prof. S.B. Pomeroy, Hunter College CUNY, Dept. of Classics, 695 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021. Deadline is February 1, 1986.

The Institut fur Alte Geschichte of the Univ. of Munich will sponsor an International Boiotian Conference in honor of the 75th birthday of Prof. Dr. Sigfried Lauffer from June 13-17, 1986. Abstracts (no more than four pages in length) of proposed papers are invited. Those wishing to submit abstracts or to attend the colloquium should write to: Dr. Hartmut Beister, Institut fur Alte Geschichte, Universitat Munchen, Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1, D 8000 Munchen 22, Federal Republic of Germany. The papers of the conference will be published as a *Teiresias* Supplement.

Antichthon

Antichthon is an annual journal, published by the Australian Society for Classical Studies. The journal is open to contributors from any country, and publishes articles on topics relating to the languages, literature, thought, history and archeology of the ancient world.

Membership of the Society is open to anyone interested in the study of the ancient world. Enquiries can be directed to the Honorary Secretary (Dr. B.A. Marshall, Department of Classics and Ancient History, University of New England, N.S.W. 2351, Australia).

The current subscription rate is \$15.00 (Australian).

Special offer on back-issues

Back-issues are available for all volumes from 1 (1967) to 18 (1984). For complete sets, the cost is \$6.00 per volume (i.e. a total of \$108, a saving of \$162 at the current price), and \$7.50 for individual volumes (a saving of 50% of the current price).

Orders should be sent to the Business Manager (Dr. H.A.S. Tarrant, Department of Greek, University of Sydney, N.S.W. 2006, Australia).

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Send to: Stanley M. Burstein,
Secretary-Treasurer/AAH
Dept. of History
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1984
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University Park, PA 16802

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A Historical Commentary on Asconius

Bruce A. Marshall. Quintus Asconius Pedianus, a Roman scholar who lived during the reigns of Claudius and Nero, is best known for his commentaries on the speeches of Cicero. Only five of Asconius's commentaries on Cicero's speeches have survived. Two of these are considered particularly valuable since they furnish details about speeches by Cicero that no longer exist. In the tradition of classical commentaries, Marshall has now compiled a unique two-part study of Asconius. In the introduction, he discusses general questions about Asconius and his work, including topics such as the range and the purpose of his commentaries, his sources, and his reliability as a commentator. The second part provides detailed commentary on Asconius's analyses of Cicero's speeches in *in Pisonem*, *pro Scauro*, *pro Milone*, *pro Cornelio*, and *in toga candida*.

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