

Is it possible that the Shroud we have now was switched and palmed off as the original?

SUBSTITUTED BEFORE 1500?

There is no proof that the Turin Shroud existed in the time of Jesus Christ. The carbon dating says the cloth was medieval. If there was a claimed burial shroud before that we don't know and cannot prove that the current Turin Shroud and that cloth are one and the same. If a precious relic rotted the Church often secretly swapped it with a duplicate.

The cloth could have been venerated for ages until somebody decided to put an image on it.

Whoever was going to forge the image knew he had to have a very old cloth to pull it off. People would expect discoloration, fraying and dirt on a cloth from the first century. Since Palestinian Jews buried different to everybody else he knew he had to get a cloth from Palestine. If he had to do without a real cloth from the first century it would have not have mattered. It just needed to pass for Palestinian. Nobody was going to research how burial cloths were designed at the time of Jesus.

The Shroud might have been replaced a few times with a better production. This could have been done any time though it is a bit more likely to have happened when the Shroud was hidden away following its being moved out of the shrine at Lirey. It is possible that the Shroud that the bishops opposed at the time was a painting of blood with no image and the blood was painted on as if there had been a body in it. Then later somebody decided to put an image on it.

The Shroud was usually exposed in the past to celebrate the weddings of the Savoy family and before that it was exposed once a year on the feast of the Shroud (The Blood and the Shroud, page 132).

The Shroud went missing, apparently stolen, after very slight damage in a fire of 1349. When it was recovered it was laid upon a dead man who came back to life. This was a test to see if it was the right Shroud (page 8, The Holy Shroud and Fictions). Now the Shroud had been displayed before thousands so there was no need for doubt if it was the same Shroud for there were plenty of witnesses to verify it. This silly test shows that this was not the real Shroud for the witnesses doubted that it was it. Even a priest, Richard La Pie, who had seen the old Shroud had to see the miracle before he would believe that it was the old one! A miracle was staged to get him to mistrust his memory. It shows the people knew the Shroud had been a fake and knew fakes as good.

Two bishops testified that the Shroud was a painting in the fourteenth century and one of them set out to track down the artist and was successful. He got professors to declare their certitude that it was forged (page 307, The Turin Shroud).

The Turin Shroud does not look like a painting for it is a light print with the naked eye and is only clear or more impressive when you see it in the negative which nobody saw until Pia photographed the image in 1898 so was this Shroud not our present Shroud? We can't be sure but maybe the image faded since then. Plus a painting you can hardly see is still a painting and the bishops could have known other ways that it was a painting apart from testing it for evidence of paintwork.

If the cloth from Lirey was an obvious painting and the current Shroud is not then they are not the same shroud.

Bishop D'Arcis in 1389 AD declared that when his predecessor began to sue the Shroud promoters as fraudsters they hid the cloth away for thirty-four years or thereabouts for they were scared they would lose the case (page 308, The Turin Shroud).

However, when they displayed the cloth again in 1389 they said it was a copy of the Shroud. That could mean it was not the shroud condemned previously or it could mean they were admitting the Lirey Shroud was not the Shroud of Jesus but a copy.

The bishop did not believe it was really a copy of the Shroud condemned as a fraud. He thought it was the fake. The bishop could have been wrong.

In any case even the promoters as good as admitted the image was a fake in the end. That was very unusual for those times. Relic mongers usually admitted to nothing. If the image was a good attempt at the imprint of a dead body would the forgers have called it an artist's copy? Whatever it was, it was not as good as the current Turin Shroud.

The Benedictine monk, Cornelius Zantiflet, said that he saw the Shroud and that he admired it as an excellent picture of

Jesus and agreed with his bishop that what he saw was a painting. This happened in Belgium in 1449. He wrote that it showed the outline of the whole body and showed that it showed the outline of the whole body and showed the wounded hands and side with red blood (page 336, *The Blood and the Shroud*). Wilson accepts that this is his beloved Turin Shroud despite the fact that the monk says the picture is a painting. But nobody would think that of something that had no sketch or brush marks and was faint. Also, the Turin Shroud looks like its man was nailed through the wrists and only one wrist is visible. Turin Shroud is right to say that the vague image on the cloth would not be called remarkable or admirable (page 109) suggesting that this was not the Turin Shroud though it was supposed to be. It was obviously a painting which was why it did not take the world by storm like a blood print of a body would have. That superstitious age was mad for Christ's blood and would have just adored the Shroud if it existed then in the form we know today.

Picknett and Prince think that the painted Shroud was replaced by Leonardo da Vinci's copy in 1492. The Shroud was hidden at that time so the opportunity was there. It would be wrong to think that a new cloth would have been used for the carbon dating shows that the 95% probability that the Shroud fibres were cut between 1260 and 1390 must be considered. 1492 is not likely to be the year in which the cloth was made – possible but not likely. So it could be that an old cloth was used. Leonardo would certainly have used an older cloth for a new length of linen would not make a very convincing forgery. Maybe he used the original Shroud after removing the paint, to put the image on it by photography then. Some say that there is no evidence that their idea that Leonardo created the image and put an image of his face on the cloth is right. The fact that the Shroud face looks exactly like a picture of Leonardo as a young man to many is evidence enough. We know that the head of the Shroud man does not belong to the body – the fact that it is more clearly printed than the body proves that as does the indication of decapitation – there is even a cut mark there where the throat would be and if the neck was there the head would not be in such an unnatural position that no model can duplicate (page 135, *Turin Shroud*) shows that somebody wanted to use some important man's face to fake the cloth. Chances are it is a self-portrait when all that trouble was gone to.

Leonardo could have created the Shroud image. If he didn't then somebody did.

A SWITCH AFTER 1500?

The first copies of the Shroud were made in the 1500s (*Turin Shroud*, page 107). So, there is no evidence that the present image existed before then even if the cloth did.

The Shroud was allegedly boiled in oil and then in water a lot of times in 1503 to test its authenticity (*The Holy Shroud and Four Visions*, page 9). It was reasoned that if the imprints on it were the miraculous image of Jesus Christ they could not be removed. In 1532, water was poured on the cloth to stop it burning and these left stains which makes one wonder why there is no discolouration from the boiling in oil and water. The Shroud that went through all this could not have been the Turin one because the latter contains ancient pollen which would have been washed out.

The tests are probably a pack of lies. If they really happened then the Shroud would have been ruined and another one would have needed to be created.

The tests were unlikely for it was clear from the cloth with its burn marks that it was not immune to damage. The Shroud had holes in it because of the fires it nearly perished in. That is why only half of the arms are visible. A large part of the image has therefore been lost together with the blood. When the Shroud is not fireproof how can it be resistant to hot water and boiling oil? Scientists today can remove "blood" from the image and cut pieces off it. It cannot protect itself.

Also, the body not the blood image of the man rests on top of the fibres (page 37, 41, *The Turin Shroud is Genuine*) and so would have been easy to wash out for they were not deep stains – unless they are simply burn marks.

It's tempting to think that whoever forged the Shroud forged more than one. When a Shroud was destroyed it was replaced.

THE 1532 FIRE

In 1532, the Shroud was housed in a chapel in Chambery which was gutted by fire. There was no exposition of the Shroud the following year and it was accepted by all that the Shroud had perished in the fire.

The Shroud perished in the fire of 1532. This would mean that the Turin Shroud is not the Shroud that was at Lirey or Chambery but a substitute. Though the carbon dating dates the Turin Shroud back to the time when the Lirey Shroud was known to have existed, it does not prove that the two cloths were one and the same. If the Shroud was made from old linen and was burned, old linen would have had to be used for its replacement. Or perhaps a number of Shrouds were made the same way and the one we have is the last remaining one. There could have been spares made when the Lirey Shroud was made. There could have been spares made any time. Perhaps there were some differences between these shrouds though they were basically the same. If so then the Turin Shroud is certainly a forgery.

We believe that the Shroud of Lirey was a painting. If it didn't get replaced by Leonardo's Shroud in 1492 then it perished in a fire in 1532. Perhaps it was Leonardo's Shroud that perished in 1532 and a spare was put in its place. At some point after the fire, another one - perhaps a photographic one forged by someone - appeared and was passed off as the original Shroud.

Two years later, Rabelais wrote that nothing had survived of the Shroud in the 1532 fire (page 347, *The Blood and the Shroud*).

A story appeared that a blacksmith threw water on the burning Shroud and rescued it from the flames. It is strange that this survival story was not told at the start when everybody believed that the Shroud had perished. It seems to many it did become a pile of ashes and was replaced with a clever forgery using an old linen cloth - the best forgery to date. This forgery even had burn marks in it. It needed repairs to make the scheme look good. The rescue story reads like hearsay. There is nothing to authenticate any of it.

It looks like another Shroud was produced to back up this story as the Chambery Shroud had perished.

Wilson claims that the fact that the Shroud was not seen for a while ignited the rumours that it had been destroyed in the flames (page 345, *The Blood and the Shroud*). That is hardly an explanation for why the tale of the destruction was on everybody's lips. If it was rumour and not fact why was nobody saying anything about the rescue of the Shroud? Wilson tries to make out that the Shroud not being displayed in 1533 started the rumour which is unlikely.

In his *The Turin Shroud* he said that as soon as the fire happened the rumour was out and when the Shroud was put on display again it was suspected and believed to be a copy of the burned one (page 247). The rumour was not dismissed as gossip for Duke Charles III pestered the pope to arrange an investigation into the cloth. This hints that there was evidence for a switch that had to be refuted. It was believed by many reliable folk at the time of the fire that the Shroud had been destroyed and the rumour was still strong in 1533 (page 345, *The Blood and the Shroud*).

The Turin Shroud has water and burn marks to make it fit the story of the blacksmith saviour but these marks under close analysis tell a different story. The marks were contrived. More about that later. The Shroud perished in the fire and was replaced by a new fake.

The 1532 fire might have been a cynical plot to force somebody to allow a substitute Shroud to become the new relic. Maybe the new copy was more convincing than the rest and "deserved" to be passed off as the burial cloth of Jesus!

There is no reason to hold that the Turin Shroud image (not necessarily the cloth) existed before the 1500s.

SHROUD MENDED IN 1534 IS NOT OUR TURIN SHROUD

The Shroud perished in the fire of 1532.

However, later a story began to appear about how the Shroud was delivered from the conflagration. The legend goes that in this fire, a blacksmith was sent into the chapel to rescue the Shroud and it was saved.

The Shroud is believed by many to have got burn marks from the 1532 fire. A cloth bearing an image and burn and water marks was brought to the nuns to repair it in 1534.

The cloth was folded into forty-eight and one corner of the folded cloth caught fire from the molten silver casket resulting in the burn holes that the nuns had to fix. He threw water on it right away (page 75, *The Blood and the Shroud*). But if a cloth is folded into forty-eight it has four corners and if it is burned down one corner then you get fourteen holes. But the Turin Shroud has sixteen holes though the four ones on the back along the arms are met but still a pair. And the water stains that came from the dousing do not cover the holes and only touch some of them. That water couldn't have put anything out. See for yourself in the diagram of the Shroud damage. Diagram 6&7 of *The Blood and the Shroud*. It seems very odd that only small and unimportant parts of the image were burned.

Five copies of the shroud were made after until 1578 but none of them show the marks (*The Blood and the Shroud*, page 135-6). Was this because the Savoys were ashamed because they could have done more to make the Shroud safe as Ian Wilson suggests? Or was it because the Church was embarrassed at the cloth not being able to protect itself? None of these reasons are believable for the marks were known about and written about and the poker holes were well-known. The copies were of another shroud and not what is now the Turin one. They are copies of one which had been replaced by the Turin one. It seems that after, it was decided to destroy the copy and use the Turin one only.

A 1516 copy in Belgium of the Shroud shows pre-1516 poker-holes (page 76, *The Blood and the Shroud*). A 1550 copy in Lisbon shows the poker-holes but not the 1532 burns. This tells us that though the Turin Shroud was copied it was not thought to be identical with the one that had been burned in 1532 but a good copy of that one.

The burns on the Turin Shroud do not prove it is the same one that allegedly survived the 1532 fire with a few holes for the new Shroud would have had these marks for it was a replacement of the old. It had to be passed off as the old one that was destroyed. The 1516 Shroud shows Jesus with his feet crossed and with an egg-shaped face and the crucifixion wounds on the both hands are visible. This suggests that what the artist copied was like but was not our present Turin Shroud for this copy differs too much from our Turin Shroud. It shows toes and hand wounds not wrist wounds.

It has been suggested that he saw the Turin Shroud and copied by memory. The copies had to touch the original to deserve and win veneration. The practice was to lay them on top of the original (*The Blood and the Shroud*, page 115). This means the artist did not need to struggle with memory for he could see the original. There are too many features in common with the Turin Shroud for it to be merely memory. The poker-hole burn marks are exactly where they are on the Turin Shroud. The side-wound blood flows are the same length. Whatever he sketched had a lot in common with the Turin Shroud of today. The differences are very telling. Whatever he sketched had toes and other things that the Shroud in Turin does not have. It is not the same image but close. He did not sketch our Turin Shroud.

We have seen that the Shroud perished in 1532 and soon after in 1534 nuns repaired a cloth presented as being the Shroud pulled from the flames. This cloth does not match our Turin Shroud. Another switch must have taken place after 1534.

Witnesses had to be brought in about 1534 to make sure the damaged cloth that was due to be repaired was the Shroud. The nuns, who were to sew it, described it. They said the blood of the side-wound went to about half a foot long. It does not. They said they saw the back of the head pierced by a cap of thorns. They did not say they meant the blood so the cap of thorns must have been on the image. It is not on our Shroud. There are many spots of blood on the back of the head but they need not have come from a cap of thorns. The blood dripping and the stains soaking into the hair would have done that. Roman soldiers would not have made a cap of thorns when a ring shaped coronet would do. Making a cap would have been harder and they didn't want their hands all picked.



The nuns said they noticed traces of a chain bound tight to the back. Wilson says they incorrectly thought trickles of blood going out more or less horizontally from the middle of the back were indications of this chain (page 347, *The Blood and the Shroud*). But the nuns knew if there had been a chain there would have been similar marks on the stomach. Our Turin Shroud does not have stomach marks. The nuns must have been implying that there were such marks on the stomach. The nuns would not have believed that there had been a chain around Jesus' waist when he was laid in the tomb and would not have said therefore that there was a chain unless they were totally sure what they saw was a chain mark. The marks on our Turin Shroud had only a slight resemblance to a chain so one wonders what made them say it was a chain? The answer is that there was a chain and so the Shroud was not the Turin one.

IMAGE ALLEGEDLY MISTAKEN FOR CHAIN

Those women did not repair the Turin Shroud we have now but another Shroud. This would mean that the Turin Shroud has been replaced and/or perhaps retouched a few times through the centuries.

The 1534 Shroud is not the Turin Shroud.

In the middle of the 1500's, the cloth was snatched from the cathedral in Vercelli by a priest who hid it for years in his house to prevent it being stolen (*The Jesus Conspiracy*, page 224). Another golden opportunity to get rid of the painting if that is what it was and replace it with something more "unexplainable".

Finally

Whatever you think of the Shroud, there is no evidence at all that its image really existed in the time of Christ. There is evidence that until it appeared a few hundred years ago, previous images were obvious paintings and rubbish. A genuine relic of such importance does not appear centuries after the man it depicts is dead.