

Documenting the Shroud's missing years

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Abstract

History proceeds from documents, not arguments from silence. Besançon alone, of all the major theories of the Turin Shroud's whereabouts during the missing 150 years, has documents to support its possession of the Shroud after the Fourth Crusade until about 1350, after which the Shroud's history from Lirey to Turin is well established. No other hypothesis for the Shroud during this time—whether that of the Templars, the Smyrna Crusade, or the Sainte-Chapelle—even mentions Jesus' shroud. Nor can any other theory document a path of the Shroud from Constantinople to the ever-silent Geoffroy I de Charny.

Keyword: Othon de la Roche, Jeanne de Vergy, Geoffroy I de Charny, Chateau de Ray

1. INTRODUCTION

I continue to regard Ian Wilson's 1978 book as my Shroud bible [1]. Without his insights about Edessa and its imaged cloth, Shroud history might well begin with Robert de Clari in 1203, for all documents before 1203 emanate only from Edessa. Ian is the first to applaud the scholar who makes a good case for a hypothesis, even though it may depart from his own position. Therefore, I will begin with a strong statement and try to back it up in the rest of my paper. *If the Shroud was not at Besançon where it is named—and claimed to have been—during the famous gap in its record (expanded to about 1200-1400), it was somewhere else, unnamed, unclaimed, unattested, and undocumented.*

At least three popular hypotheses may be briefly discussed.

2. THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR HYPOTHESIS

The above statement means that the words "shroud of Jesus" are not found in all the documents of the trials of the Templars. The hypothesis that they possessed the Shroud during the missing years hinges on their worship of an idol in the form of a head.

In 1911, before the Shroud was ever a Templar issue, Salomon Reinach noted, from the records of the trial, that no two members gave the same description of their supposed idol, and some said it was a skull or had three heads [2].

More recently, other scholars have echoed this. They also noted that some interrogated Templars were not fighting knights but menials who were never present at the secret meetings when the idol was supposedly exposed. Yet these, too, proffered a description.

Based on this, one could say that the real issue is not a Templar possession of the Shroud but the very existence of an idol.

It may be useful to notice that the inquisitors must have used the same questions in the trial of the Cathars. How else to explain the fact that at least one Templar testimony said the idol had the power to make trees flourish and the land to be fertile, which resonates exactly with one of the responses of the Cathars with regard to their mysterious "treasure" in the inquisition of Toulouse in 1235?

Such a Templar response could only have been a reply to a question which had already been posed by the inquisitors to the Cathars seventy years previously. Frale has included this point in her list of 127 charges against the Order.

On the basis of this, it seems possible that the inquisitors themselves intruded the idol into the interrogations, and the members of the Order described one in hopes of receiving leniency.

It should also be noted that the most respected histories do not place the Templars in Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade [3]. In short, no clearly acceptable specifics have ever been proposed regarding their receipt of the Shroud or their transfer of the Shroud to Geoffroy I de Charny.

3. THE SMYRNA HYPOTHESIS

Regarding the Smyrna theory, one can be sure that Geoffroy de Charny did not join the Smyrna Crusade in 1346 in order to get the Shroud. Again, the Shroud was not mentioned by any of its supposed owners in the Greek East during this period. Most conclusively, in 1902 the evidence was manipulated, and modern advocates of the Smyrna hypothesis have not noticed it [4].

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4. THE SAINTE-CHAPELLE HYPOTHESIS

Finally, no shroud was ever inventoried among the relics placed by King St. Louis IX in his new Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, where the *Grande Chasse* (“Great Reliquary Chest”) housed the Crown of Thorns and other relics that arrived from Constantinople in 1247.

King St. Louis IX obtained the relics of the Byzantine emperors in perpetuity when they were ceded to him by Baldwin II, the last and war-weary Latin Byzantine emperor, in the famous Golden Bull of 1247, in which the relics were listed [5].

The shroud of Jesus was not mentioned. (As we will see, it had been removed to Athens already by 1205.) Rather, the Bull merely listed among the relics ceded to Louis “part of the shroud in which Christ’s body was wrapped in the tomb” (*partem Sudarii*) and the “holy towel inserted in a frame” (*Sancta Toella in tabule inserta*). Neither of these is the Shroud.

Again, one finds in the inventories of the *Grande Chasse* the same list and these same two items, but listed here as *du St-Suaire* (a piece of the shroud) and *une ste-face* (a holy face). The more common Latin wording *Sancta Toella in tabula inserta* appeared in the inventories only after 1363 [6].

This had been a term for the Mandylion from Edessa. However, that “towel” had already been unfolded in Constantinople in 958 to reveal its full size as the Shroud. From then on we must consider that the venerable 900-year-old Abgar legend and Mandylion, with its image of the face of Jesus, had to be preserved (especially after its celebrated arrival in Constantinople in 944). Thus *something*, presumably a copy of Jesus’ face made from the Shroud to perpetuate the legend of Edessa’s imaged “towel”, was kept separately in the Pharos Chapel relic treasury of the Great Palace.

It is here that crusader knight Robert of Clari says he saw its gold container (*vaissiau d’or*) hanging from the high ceiling.

The Shroud (the unfolded “towel” or Mandylion) had by then been moved to the Blachernes Imperial Palace. It was there that Clari saw it “raised up” every Friday and identified it as Jesus’ imaged *sydoines* (singular), i.e., the Shroud. Let there be no doubt about this, since Clari adds “in which He was wrapped” [7].

In the meantime, in Europe Ordericus Vitalis (1130) and Gervase of Tilbury (1211) already described a shroud with the full-body image of Jesus long before 1247 [8]. Yet the “towel in a frame” continued to be named in Sainte-Chapelle inventories until at least 1575, when we know the actual Shroud was already on its way from the Savoy in Chambéry to Torino [9].

These three scenarios—Knights Templar, Smyrna, and Sainte-Chapelle—each plausible in its own way, are built on foundations of silence regarding the shroud of Jesus. Historiography, however, proceeds by documents.

5. THE BESANÇON HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis which identifies the Turin Shroud with the cloth said to have been previously used in the Easter liturgy at the cathedral of St-Étienne (St. Stephen) at Besançon in 1253 has been scrutinized by scholars, but it has never been refuted [10]. In fact, the Besançon hypothesis has been revived often in the past 20 years, by the present writer in 1989 and by others named herein [11] and *passim*, who have given Besançon even more supporting evidence.

Here let us all be reminded that the Shroud remains, overall, relatively free of historical documentation prior to 1353. Even Geoffroy de Charny, owner of the Lirey-Chambéry-Turin Shroud about 1349-1354, never gave any sign that he had ever heard of it. Long after his death his descendants said, vaguely, that he acquired the Shroud as a “reward freely given”. This is true enough, though one gets the feeling that something is being held back.

Moreover, the official papers of the foundation of Geoffroy’s church at Lirey from 1343 to 1353 mention other relics but no shroud. Still, the cloth at Lirey has been vindicated by Bishop d’Arcis’s *Memorandum* in 1389, the Shroud’s first firm document 34 years after its arrival in Lirey [12]. The Besançon hypothesis is defined by a series of documents and runs as follows.

6. OTHON DE LA ROCHE

Othon de la Roche, a Burgundian nobleman who emerged as a leading figure of the Fourth Crusade, was awarded the important fief of Athens and somehow acquired the shroud of Jesus along with other relics in Constantinople in 1204.

First we must ask: who was Othon de la Roche, that he, of all the illustrious French knights of the Fourth Crusade, should be the recipient of Jesus’ shroud, the most striking relic in Christendom? In 1983 Pasquale Rinaldi published a thirteenth-century copy of a letter asserting that the shroud of Jesus from the relic collections in Constantinople was in Athens. Othon had been the lord of Athens since late in 1204 [13].

The letter is dated August 1, 1205. Theodore Angelos, brother of Michael, who was the despot of Epirus, wrote to Pope Innocent III, complaining that the shroud of Jesus had been taken to Athens. Michael was one of only a few remaining Greek rulers after the capture of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade. Is the letter to the pope authentic [14]? Importantly, in 1205 Pope Innocent III was still threatening to excommunicate the leaders of the western crusading forces for the looting of *Christian* Constantinople. It was a time when a leading spokesman of the Greeks might yet hope that a pope’s intervention might result in the return of Jesus’ shroud and other relics into Greek hands.

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In 1989 I uncovered a second support of the Shroud's presence in Athens. In the years immediately after the Latin takeover of Constantinople in 1204, Nicholas of Otranto (1155-1235) [15], abbot of Casole Monastery in southern Italy, was the personal translator for the newly seated Latin patriarch, Benedict of Santa Susanna. Together they held discussions with Greek clergy, hoping to reconcile disagreements over dogma and papal primacy. These differences included the Greek use of leavened bread as opposed to the Latin Church's use of unleavened (*ázymos*) host in the Eucharist.

Nicholas' reports were written by him both in Greek and Latin. His reference to the Shroud comes in the midst of a discussion in 1207 of the Communion bread. The Byzantines had asserted that a portion of the original (leavened) bread used by Jesus had been present in the imperial relic collection, but had been stolen. Notice below that among the lost relics of the Passion, which Nicholas now enumerated, were that lost leavened bread and Jesus' burial linens. Here is the crucial passage written by Nicholas:

"When the city was captured by the French knights, they entered as thieves, even in the treasury of the Great Palace where the holy objects had been kept, and they found among other things the precious wood, the crown of thorns, the sandals of the Savior, the nail [sic], and the burial linens, *which we later saw with our own eyes . . .* and that bread which Christ divided among his disciples with his own pure hands at the Last Supper". (Italics are mine.)

The question must be asked as to just where it was that Nicholas actually saw the linens. To answer this, we must add what he says in another context: that, in 1206, he and Benedict had traveled to Athens and to Thessalonica debating the same questions of Church unification with the Greek theologians. It may therefore have been in Athens that Nicholas saw the burial linens "with our own eyes", which is such a peculiar part of the passage just cited. Most significantly, he says he saw them *after* the rush of pillaging of the precious relics by the crusaders. For the linguists among us, it is crucial to notice that the Latin pluperfect *ubi sancta posita erant* ("where the holy things had been kept") and the Greek imperfect *en tois ta hagia ekeinto* ("in which places the holy objects used to be kept") argue strongly that the linens were no longer in the Great Palace and that Nicholas did not see them *there*. (Emphases are mine.) Theodore of Epirus and Nicholas of Otranto thus provide mutual support for the Shroud in Athens [16].

Yet a third witness has materialized. In 1982 Antoine Legrand announced another document, also found by Pasquale Rinaldi "in the Vatican archives in the library of Santa Caterina a Formiello in Naples" [17]. It is a letter reputedly from Byzantine emperor Alexius V Mourtzouphlus himself to Pope Innocent III after his

flight from Constantinople in April 1204. Mourtzouphlus was one of the Byzantine emperors who had been dethroned in the hectic years before, during, and after the Fourth Crusade. In his letter he complained that, in the sack of the city, he lost his throne, he is in exile, the crusaders have taken the gold and treasure of the empire, and "his" Holy Shroud has been stolen and taken to Athens by Othon de la Roche. Legrand expresses his own certainty that this letter is proof of Othon's and Besançon's possession of Jesus' shroud, no longer in Constantinople after the Fourth Crusade.

We should not omit the testimony of the Besançon "MS 826", favoring the one-time presence there of Jesus' shroud. This little-read eighteenth-century document, which is difficult to obtain, also singled out Othon as the recipient of the Shroud and as the one who conveyed it to Besançon. The anonymous writer cited three medieval sources for his contention. But, to my knowledge, these have not been found.

How did Othon get the Shroud? Besançon historian Dom François Chamard (1902) [18] said that during the second siege of Constantinople, which effectively placed the crusaders in control of the Byzantine government on April 14, 1204, Othon was among the Burgundians following Henry of Flanders and garrisoned in the Blachernes Palace. If so, and since the Shroud was in this palace—and accessible, as Robert of Clari attested—then Othon could have gained possession of it that very day. Official ownership would be earned later. Unfortunately, I could not confirm Chamard's or any other assertion of Othon in Blachernes by any document, but Theodore's letter (above) about the shroud of Jesus in Athens in 1205 does indicate Othon's possession prior to 1205.

By summer 1204 Othon had emerged as a personal representative of the Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, who nearly became the first Latin Byzantine emperor. Baldwin of Flanders was elected, and Boniface was compensated by possession of Thessalonica. This, in effect, made him the overlord of a kingdom comprising most of mainland Greece, for which he paid feudal homage to Baldwin [19]. In November 1204 he appointed Othon lord of Athens.

In 1205 Baldwin was killed, and his younger brother Henry was crowned emperor in August 1206. Soon afterwards, Othon was personally entrusted with a special mission to the new emperor bearing the offer of Boniface's daughter Agnes in marriage [20]. It is an attractive possibility that, in the joyous generosity of this event (ceremony in Hagia Sophia, reception in the Imperial Palace), Henry officially awarded (or confirmed) the Shroud to Othon's protection. The question is not so much whether Othon received the Shroud, but only about when and how he received it.

In April 1209, after helping to reduce Greek resistance led by the same Theodore of Epirus in the Peloponnese, Othon arrived as a conqueror at Henry's big council at Ravenika. The following month Henry visited Othon for

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two days in Athens. He was accompanied by Pons de Chaponay de Lyon, his fiscal agent and “shuttle diplomat”, who had already accomplished missions in the West to profitably dispose of relics, precious fabrics, and imperial jewels in France. The bonding of the men continued when Othon escorted Henry on the continuation of his journey from Athens to Euboea.

Logic demands that Othon would have shipped or carried the Shroud home to the safety of his Chateau de Ray-sur-Saône in Burgundy, near Besançon. Michel Bergeret and Alessandro Piana have provided evidence that this was the permanent home of the Shroud. There can be seen an old wooden chest with a label naming it as that in which the Shroud, brought by Othon from Constantinople in 1206, was preserved. Othon’s presumed journey to France at this time would not have been impossible, but it is likely that the planning for Henry’s wedding to Agnes would have precluded Othon from delivering the Shroud personally.

Another possibility was suggested by the Byzantine scholar Riant, who noted that Pons de Lyon was sent to Burgundy in 1219 on an undefined but important mission. Given Pons’s other special assignments and the relationship that existed between him, Emperor Henry, and Othon, it is not too brash to suppose that in 1219 Pons might have delivered Othon’s precious relic to his Chateau de Ray. Longnon refers to this mission and adds “*avec un sauf-conduit et une créance* [“with a safe-conduct and a letter of credit”] *de 500 livres*” [21]. The significant outcome is that the Shroud did reside in the Chateau de Ray-sur-Saône in Burgundy during the famous missing years, as Bergeret and Piana have explained [22].

A short historical digression may serve to indicate what major events could have become factors in the itinerary of the Shroud in France. From 1309 to 1377 the papacy resided at Avignon; French popes pursued a French foreign policy. By 1377 there must have been few alive who had ever known a papacy that was truly the spiritual leader of all Europe’s Christians. After 1377 rival popes in Rome and in Avignon claimed the allegiances of Catholics in what is called the “Great Western Schism”.

The location of Besançon rendered it a hotbed of all the political and religious dichotomies of those times. Sometime capital of Burgundy, the city straddled France and the German Holy Roman Empire in its geography and politics. A French party constantly worked for the city’s annexation by France and for the legitimacy of the French anti-popes. A German party strove for Besançon’s continued attachment to the Empire and, not surprisingly, supported the return of the popes to Rome.

The family of Vergy, descendants of Othon, were among the pro-French faction in Burgundy. They carefully, if quietly, guarded their relic in their Chateau de Ray until about 1354, when Geoffroy I de Charny certainly possessed it in Lirey.

7. COULD GEOFFROY HAVE ACQUIRED THE SHROUD IN THE 1340s?

In the interest of intellectual discussion, let us consider if Geoffroy could have obtained the Shroud in the 1340s. During most of that decade Geoffroy was pursuing his career as a fighting knight in western France. He suffered his first British imprisonment in the battle of Morlaix in 1342. During this time, as a man of modest means—not yet advantaged by Vergy wealth through his marriage to Jeanne and not yet appointed as King Philip VI’s *porte-d’oriflamme* (banner-bearer)—he considered praying for a miracle. The tradition is well known that he vowed to build a church to the Virgin if he should ever be freed. He was, in fact, released from that imprisonment—whether by ransom or escape—in 1343, when, with financial aid from the same King Philip, work began on his Lirey church [23].

In 1345-1346 he was present on the Smyrna (Turkey) Crusade. Back in France he again saw battle, this time as the banner-bearer for King Philip from 1347 to 1349. In April 1349, with work on his new church at Lirey now completed, he requested permission from Pope Innocent VI to add a cemetery for the canons and townspeople. Curiously, his own remains were to be divided and buried in several places. The end of the decade found him again imprisoned from December 31, 1349, until mid-1351. This time his ransom was paid by Philip’s son, King John the Good, and Geoffroy needed no miracle. All this leaves little time for a wedding [24].

In August 1354, during a period of relative quiet, Geoffroy again requested his cemetery, but “changed his mind”, as Dorothy Crispino has put it, about where he wished to be buried—and his new choice was in his new graveyard. I have found this letter in the writings of Ulysse Chevalier [25]. This request may signal two significant facts: by now Geoffroy and Jeanne de Vergy had wed, and the Shroud had come into his possession and been deposited in the church. Crispino’s valuable evidence places any acquisition of the Shroud by Geoffroy in the 1340s in serious doubt.

8. THE YEARS 1351 TO 1354 MARK THE WINDOW WHEN GEOFFROY OBTAINED THE SHROUD FROM JEANNE DE VERGY

When, in 1624, Besançon’s first historian, J. J. Chifflet [26], began writing the story of the shroud once residing in his proud city, the shroud of Jesus from Constantinople had long since departed from Besançon. Assuming that it had been housed in St-Étienne Cathedral, he related that on March 6, 1349, a fire in the cathedral resulted in the loss of all church documents and the apparent destruction—certainly, the disappearance—of their

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shroud. Since all documents attesting to the circumstances of its arrival in that city had been consumed in the fire, Chifflet could only guess.

In reality, safe in Chateau de Ray, the Shroud survived the fire and was accessible to Jeanne de Vergy (ca. 1320-1388), descended from Othon and with her family's proper claim to ownership. In 1349 the powerful Vergy family could deal with the Shroud in the same way that the Savoys exercised their family's ownership of the Shroud well into the twentieth century. Bro. Hilary de Crémiers, especially, has supported my findings (largely from my research done in the Wuenschel Shroud archives, always with thanks to Fr. Adam Otterbein) that, in the confusion of the times, Jeanne carried the Shroud out of Burgundy to her marriage to Geoffroy I de Charny between 1351 and 1354 [27]. All the evidence for the ever-silent Geoffroy's acquisition of the Shroud leads neatly to his second wife, Jeanne de Vergy. This is likely what was not said in the Charnys' vague "reward freely given". It would have been unwise to announce that Lirey now possessed Besançon's lost precious relic.

In 1929 Noguier de Malijay suggested a variation on this theme, namely that Jeanne de Vergy brought the Shroud out of Burgundy, thereby saving it for France. Malijay argued further that she presented it first to the French king, Philip VI de Valois (d. 1350), who in turn awarded it to Geoffroy de Charny, his trusted *porte-d'oriflamme* [28], possibly as a major relic to be placed in the new church at Lirey, one that was—again—"freely given". In any case, the question of the shroud of Jesus in Besançon and its transfer to Lirey has a decidedly political dimension.

Ian Wilson [29] has noted that in 1355 Geoffroy gave a receipt "as lord of Savoisy and Montfort" for the temporary removal of the Shroud from Lirey on account of the dangerous presence of the British in the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). In 1356, after Geoffroy's death, ownership of the relic was exercised by his wife Jeanne. It remained safe in the castle of Montfort until about 1389.

Jeanne's death must have occurred before 1389, since Bishop d'Arcis's *Memorandum* of 1389 named their son, Geoffroy II, as displaying the cloth in Lirey—falsely—as the true shroud of Jesus.

The absence of any mention of a shroud in the earliest documents (1343-1353) of the Lirey church and also the presence of the Vergy crest on the Seine medallion with its twin image of Jesus point to Vergy ownership and Jeanne's delivery of the Shroud from Besançon. No other theory of the missing 150 years has ever explained so efficiently—or at all—how Geoffroy acquired the Shroud.

9. SHROUD CONFUSIONS

Chifflet, convinced that the original shroud was consumed in the St-Étienne fire, wrote that in 1377 it was miraculously rediscovered in a niche in the restored cathedral. In 1902, based on the illustrations of the Lirey

and Besançon shrouds from Chifflet's book, Vignon wrote that the shroud of Besançon was clearly a replica of that of Lirey, made between the years 1349 (the fire) and 1375. Chamard agreed, though he was not forthcoming about how Lirey had obtained the original [30].

Shroud *aficionados* remember how Bishop d'Arcis complained in 1389 that in Lirey an artist had "painted" an imaged shroud. Now we can demonstrate that there really was a copy of the true Shroud painted by an artist. It was most likely commissioned by Jeanne, now the lady of Lirey, and sent in 1377 as a replacement for the one she had taken out of Besançon between 1349 and 1354.

10. BASIS OF OPPOSITION TO THE BESANÇON HYPOTHESIS

Opposition to Besançon is largely the result of the loss of records. What shall we make of the fact that local scholar Chifflet in 1624 knew nothing of Othon? (It is time to play the "lost documents card", and we will understand the reasons.) Recall the loss of all church records in the fire in 1349. This means that in Chifflet's time there were no documents attesting to the role of Othon in the Shroud's arrival in Burgundy.

This destruction of Besançon's ecclesiastical records before 1349 immediately announces the obstacles in the path of Chifflet as he attempted to reconstruct the history of the Shroud in his city. Not surprising, we have no record of Jeanne's role in the removal of the Shroud.

My next point is supremely important: it needs to be understood that writers who reject the Besançon hypothesis have focused *only* on the replacement copy of 1377 with its frontal-only image, which was the Lirey "painted" copy. In short, their arguments have not disproved the authenticity of the original cloth sent to Burgundy from Athens.

This present fresh approach to the Besançon hypothesis provides answers to some major issues in Shroud history. Besançon's possession of the replacement shroud solves the issue of why the city did not more strenuously claim prior ownership of the Lirey shroud. They had the copy and believed it to be the rediscovered original. In 1624 poor Chifflet, well aware of but never having seen Lirey's shroud, believed that there had been two real shrouds, one for wrapping the body and the second one for carrying it to the tomb.

A frequently used argument against Besançon's one-time possession of the present Shroud of Turin is that the earliest extant record of it in the city dates from 1523. However, to be accurate, this was a reference to the city's Easter ritual when the replacement shroud was displayed. No primary sources have ever claimed that Besançon first received a shroud in 1523. Chifflet thought that the ritual already was used in Besançon "before the union of St. John and St. Stephen in 1253" and that it was "renewed" in 1523 [31].

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In this regard, finally, the question has never been asked as to why, given the Shroud's adverse notoriety in Lirey in the fourteenth century deriving from the accusations of d'Arcis and its possession in 1523 by the powerful Savoy family in Chambéry, Besançon should seriously enter the "shroud business" in that year. Besançon's claim on the shroud of Jesus makes sense only if the city previously had possession of the original.

The loss of Besançon's ecclesiastical records is a given. Chifflet did not mention Othon. But he was clear—and honest—when he wrote, "The fire burned up the [shroud and] the details of the shroud's arrival, i.e., the means, the time, and the carrier" [32].

The next episode seems to be a patent and deliberate conspiratorial contrivance. However, instead of destroying the Besançon hypothesis, it rather strengthens it. Chifflet wrote that in 1377 the cloth in its chest was rediscovered by means of a strange light coming from a hidden part of the cathedral. (Remember, it was almost certainly that which was made by the artist in Lirey as claimed by d'Arcis.) Judging from the lapse of twenty-eight years (1349-1377) between the fire and "rediscovery", there could not have been many in Besançon who knew precisely what the original had looked like.

In 1377 Archbishop Guillaume III de Vergy (1371-1391) was the fifth in line since the fire. That is to say, four archbishops, who might have been able to compare the replacement cloth with the original, had died. In order to determine if it was the same true burial shroud of Christ previously lost, Chifflet relates that the cloth newly found in 1377 was placed upon a corpse, which miraculously revived. It was thus a Vergy who "verified" by a "miracle" that the new Besançon replacement shroud was indeed the original Besançon shroud. A family cover-up to exonerate Jeanne's departure with the true Shroud is a strong possibility.

Nobody doubts that the new cloth residing in Besançon until its destruction in 1794, when it was singled out in the official account of the events of the French Revolution as having been torn into bandages, was only the painted copy. It is obviated by the history of the shroud at Lirey, the shroud whose continuity extends to the present day, the shroud which is beyond a doubt identifiable as the Shroud of Turin. Besançon's claims to possession of the true burial wrapping of Christ thus gradually evaporated.

11. CONCLUSION

All of the mysteries surrounding the initial appearance of the Turin Shroud in the West are by no means solved by these historical revelations. As the venue for the Shroud during the missing years, Besançon alone offers documents that actually name the Shroud, which other hypotheses do not. It has a reasonable—and documented—provenance from Constantinople via Othon. It affords us the moment and circumstance for

Geoffroy de Charny's acquisition of the cloth, which no other hypothesis has been able to do.

The Besançon hypothesis is the most likely to hold the truth about the "missing 150 years" of the Shroud's history.

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3. Frale, *ibid.*, p. 317; on pp. 118-132 and in ch. 3 she has revealed the accusatory protocol initiated by King Philip the Fair as "fluid", a work always in process, the charges capable of increasing as the poor knights and lowly brothers uttered statements that permitted new avenues of interrogation. So, an initial basic list of 7 charges had grown to 127 in some places.
Frale has recently related (*L'Osservatore Romano*, April 5, 2009) that Arnaut Sabbatier testified in the trial process of the Templars that in 1287 he kissed the feet of a figure of a man imprinted on "a long linen cloth".
Considering that Arnaut's deposition remains merely one among dozens of differing descriptions of the alleged "idol" of the Templars, his words do not seem sufficiently descriptive or definitive to indicate that he was looking at the Shroud of Turin. Still, we must wait for the consensus of Shroud scholars to see if the suggestion that the idol was the Shroud will carry the day.
Also militating against the Templars' possession of the Shroud is the fact that respectable histories do not place the Templars in Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade, when, if ever, they might have acquired the Shroud. This absence speaks loudly in the 895 pages of R. L. Wolfe and H. W. Hazard, eds., *The Later Crusades, 1189-1311*, vol. II, of K. M. Setton, ed., *A History of the Crusades*, Univ. of Wisconsin Pr., Madison, Wisconsin, and London (1969).
4. D. Scavone, "Did Geoffroy I de Charny Obtain the Present Turin Shroud on the Smyrna Campaign of 1346?", available for reading in its entirety at <<http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/scavone2.pdf>>
5. P. E. Riant, *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae*, 2 vols., Ernest Leroux, Paris, vol. II, pp. 133-135 (1878)

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6. Pere A.-M. Dubarle and H. Leynen, *Histoire Ancienne du Linceul de Turin*, tome II, 944-1356, François-Xavier de Guibert Pr., Paris (1998); H. Leynen, "À-propos du Mandilion", Soudarion, Bruges (1991). Her paper, which discusses the *Grande Chasse*, is an extract from this Flemish journal, here translated into French.
7. Robert de Clari, "La Conquête de Constantinople", chs. 83 and 92, in C. Hopf, *Chroniques Gréco-Romaines Inédites ou Peu Connues*, Impression Anastaltique Culture et Civilisation, Brussels (1966; rp. of Paris, 1873); H. McNeal, tr., *Robert de Clari, The Conquest of Constantinople*, Columbia Univ. Pr., New York (1936). His description in ch. 83 of a painting of St. Demetrius is evidence that he did not "see" the *sydoines* as a painting. Important on this issue is P. F. Dembowski, "Sindon in the Old French Chronicle of Robert of Clari", *Shroud Spectrum International*, vol. 2, pp. 13-18 (March 1982). Fuller discussion in D. Scavone, "The Shroud in Constantinople: The Documentary Evidence", *Sindon*, N. S., vol. I, no. 1, pp. 113-128 (1989).
8. C. M. Mazzucchi, "La Testimonianza piú Antica dell'Esistenza di una Sindone a Costantinopoli", *Aevum*, vol. 57, pp. 227-231 (1983), notes the first clear reference to the Shroud itself in Constantinople in 958. Yet there exists no record of the arrival of the Shroud. The most plausible conclusion, hypothesized by Ian Wilson already in 1978, is that it was the Mandylion unfolded in 958. In any case, awareness of the full-body image on cloth had reached Britain by the twelfth century: S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns, *Gervase of Tilbury, Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, Clarendon Pr., Oxford (2002); for Ordericus: E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, 3 vols., J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, Leipzig (1899).
9. A. Vidier, "Le Trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle", *Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris et de l'Ile-de-France*, vols. 34, 35, 36, 37, H. Champion, Paris (1907-1910)
10. Among opponents of this Besançon hypothesis, D. Crispino, "Doubts Along the Doubs", *Shroud Spectrum International*, no. 14, pp. 10-24 (March 1985), and more recently, G. M. Zaccone, "Sindone di Torino e Sindone di Besançon, Appunti per una Ricerca Parallela", *Sindon*, N. S., vol. 9-10, pp. 107-116 (1997), and D. Raffard de Brienne, "Review of Dom François Chamard", *Revue Internationale du Linceul de Turin*, Sommaire no. 15-16, p. 53 (2000), all focusing entirely on the post-1377 Besançon shroud, have rightly denied its authenticity. P. Vignon, *The Shroud of Christ*, Constable, Westminster, pp. 64-76 (1902), said the replacement shroud pictured in Chifflet's volume was a copy of Lirey's. The Bibliotheque Municipale de Besançon possesses "MS 826", dating to 1700-1750. It has two parts: one in favor of the authenticity of Besançon's shroud and the other opposed to authenticity. The latter also focused almost entirely on the replacement shroud. None of the above have proven the original shroud (from Othon in Athens) to be a fake.
11. M. Buttigieg, "La Lettera del Vescovo Pierre d'Arcis", *Collegamento Pro Sindone*, pp. 33f. (Sept.-Oct. 1990); H. de Crémiers, "The Holy Shroud Refound—From Constantinople to Lirey (1204-1354)", *Catholic Counter-Reformation*, no. 238, pp. 42-47 (April 1991); M. Bergeret, "Le Trou Historique: 1204-1357", paper presented at the C.I.E.L.T. Symposium in Paris in 1993; A. Piana, *Sindone gli Anni Perduti*, Sugarco Edizioni, Milan (2007)
12. Translation of the *Memorandum* in Wilson, *op. cit.* (Ref. 1 above), pp. 230-235; original in Fr. L. Fossati, *La Santa Sindone: Nuova Luce su Antichi Documenti*, Borla, Turin, pp. 213-219 (1961)
13. Pasquale Rinaldi, "Un Documento Probante sulla Localizzazione in Atene della Santa Sindone dopo il Sacheggio di Costantinopoli", in L. Coppini and F. Cavazzuti, eds., *La Sindone, Scienza e Fede*, Editrice CLUEB, Bologna, pp. 109-113 (1983); D. Scavone, "The Shroud in Constantinople: The Documentary Evidence", *Sindon*, N. S., vol. I, no. 1, pp. 113-128 (1989)
14. D. Polemis, *The Doukai*, Univ. of London Athlone Pr., London, pp. 89f. (1968), has written about the nomenclature of Theodore of Epirus. His thesis is that Theodore would have used the name Doukas and would not have sent the letter from Rome. But other scholars are not so insistent. Theodore himself used Doukas, Angelus, and Comnenus, sometimes together and sometimes interchangeably. J. Longnon has identified Theodore as "Angelus Comnenus" in his chapter, "The Frankish States in Greece, 1204-1311", p. 240, in Wolfe and Hazard, *op. cit.* (Ref. 3 above). The use of the name Angelos and the credibility of Theodore's letter in 1205 are supported by the following: In 1202, when the Western princes launched the Fourth Crusade, Alexius IV, the son of the deposed Isaac II, promised to end the schism of East and West and to pay for their transport if they helped him to retake his father's throne and depose his uncle, Alexius V Doukas Mourtzouphlus. This latter, a Doukas, had initially led the resistance to the crusading forces. It would not have been wise for Theodore of Epirus to use the name Doukas.
15. On this learned man, see A. Acconcia Longo and A. Jacob, "Poesie di Nicola d'Otranto nel Laur. Gr. 58.2", *Byzantion*, vol. 54, pp. 371-379 (1984); J. W. Hoeck and R. J. Loenertz, *Nikolaos-Nektarios von Otranto, Abt von Casole. Beitrage zur Geschichte der Ost-Westlichen Beziehungen Unter Innocenz III und Friedrich II*, Buch-Kunstverlag, Ettal (1965); W. Norden, *Das Papsttum und Byzanz: Die Trennung der Beiden Mächte und das Problem Ihrer Wiedervereinigung bis zum Untergange des Byzantinischen Reichs*, Burt Franklin, New York, pp. 183-187 (1958; rp. of Berlin, 1903)
16. Riant, *Exuviae*, *op. cit.* (Ref. 5 above), pp. 233f., gives both the Greek and Latin versions: *quum capta esset a*

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Francigenis regalis civitas . . . et in scevophylachium Magni Palacii tamquam latrones, ubi sancta posita erant, scilicet: preciosa ligna, spinea corona, Salvatoris sandalia, clavis, et fascia (que et nos postea oculis nostris vidimus) aliaque multa invenerunt . . . (Riant's parentheses.) The Moscow MS published by Bishop Arsenij, Greek only with Russian translation, Novgorod, p. 41 (1896), does not have the word ὕστερον, "later", which is in Riant's original text.

17. A. Legrand, "Du Nouveau pour le Suaire de Turin: Une Lettre de l'Emperor Alexis V", Notre Histoire, Librairie Taillandier, Paris (December 1982); on Othon's career, W. Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, London (1908)

18. Dom F. Chamard, *Le Linceul du Christ*, Oudin, Paris, pp. 40-41 (1902)

19. Villehardouin, in M. R. B. Shaw, tr., *Joinville and Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades*, Penguin, New York, pp. 94-97 (1963)

20. Villehardouin, ch. 19, pp. 146-148, in Shaw, *ibid.*; J. Longnon, ed., *Henri de Valenciennes: Histoire de l'Empereur Henri de Constantinople*, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris, pp. 106-108 (1948)

21. P.E. Riant, *Depouilles Religieuses Enlevées a Constantinople au XIIIe Siècle par les Latins et des Documents Historiques Nés de leur Transport en Occident*, Paris, p. 87 (1875); Riant, *Exuviae*, *op. cit.* (Ref. 5 above), vol. I, pp. cil and clxiii, in which latter place he suggests the delivery in Burgundy of the cloth from Constantinople and Athens in 1219; Chamard, *op. cit.* (Ref. 18 above), pp. 43f., thought this was the natural explanation of the presence of Othon's *Suaire* in Burgundy; Longnon, *ibid.*, p. 106

22. Bergeret, *op. cit.* (Ref. 11 above); Piana, *op. cit.* (Ref. 11 above)

23. D. Scavone, "Geoffroy's Vow and the Church at Lirey", *Australian Shroud News*, vol. 40, pp. 4-7 (1987); the same in *Sindon*, N. S., vol. I, no. 1, pp. 129-132 (1989); Pere A.-M. Dubarle kindly cited my paper in his article "La Première Captivité de Geoffroy de Charny", *Montre Nous ton Visage*, no. 8, pp. 6-18 (Dec. 1992), and in ch. 5 in Dubarle and Leynen, *op. cit.* (Ref. 6 above), pp. 71-83.

24. P. Contamine, "L'Oriflamme de Saint-Denis aux XIVe et XVe Siècles", *Annales de l'Est*, vol. 7, pp. 179-244 (1973)

25. D. Crispino, "Why Did Geoffroy Change His Mind?", *Shroud Spectrum International*, vol. 1, pp. 28-34 (Dec. 1981); U. Chevalier, *Autour des Origines du Suaire de Lirey, Avec Documents Inédites*, Alphonse Picard, Paris (1903)

26. J. J. Chifflet, *De Linteis Sepulchralibus Christi Servatoris Crisis Historica*, Antwerp (1624)

27. Crémiers, *op. cit.* (Ref. 11 above); Chamard, *op. cit.* (Ref. 18 above), p. 49; Legrand, "Linceul de Turin: Quinze Siècles de Voyages", *Notre Histoire*, vol. 17, pp. 6-11 (Nov. 1985); Wilson, *op. cit.* (Ref. 1 above), p. 173, also thought Jeanne may have originated the Shroud's expositions at Lirey in 1357, after Geoffroy's death.

28. N. de Malijay, *Le Saint-Suaire de Turin*, Spes, Paris (1929)

29. I. Wilson, *The Blood and the Shroud*, The Free Press, New York, pp. 278f. (1998)

30. Vignon, *op. cit.* (Ref. 10 above), pp. 64-76; Chamard, *op. cit.* (Ref. 18 above)

31. Chifflet, *op. cit.* (Ref. 26 above), p. 55; Chamard, *op. cit.* (Ref. 18 above), p. 44, n.1

32. Chifflet, *ibid.*, p. 50