

INTRODUCING...LIREY, FRANCE!

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The tiny village of Lirey in France (Canton: Bouilly; Prefecture/District: Troyes; Dept.: Aube; Region: Champagne-Ardenne) played an important part in the history of the preservation and controversy of the Linceul Sacre (Holy Shroud). For it was here in this village, which rarely ever numbered more than 100 residents, that the French knight Geoffrey de Charnay made known that he was in possession of the Holy Shroud which had disappeared during the sac of Constantinople in 1204, and written about sporadically during the previous thousand years. It was here, in this out-of-the-way place, that de Charnay built a collegiate church in 1354 to display this coveted memento of the past. It was here in Lirey that it is believed the Lirey Pilgrim Badge, discovered in the river beneath the Pont au Change Bridge in Paris, was minted (see below) in commemoration of the Sacra Sindone. Lirey is a link between the past “shrouded” history of The Shroud and its present home in Turin, Italy. Here, for the first time available on the web, are a few photographs of this humble chapel!



The Lirey Pilgrim Badge depicting The Shroud held over the coat of arms of the family of de Charnay, and the herring-bone weave pattern on the back-side. It is housed in the Cluny Museum of Medieval Art in Paris, France (Photos courtesy of www.sindonology.org)



The Lirey Pilgrim Badge was discovered in the Seine River under the Pont au Change Bridge in 1855 near the Cathedrale Notre Dame de Paris. Of the 37 bridges in Paris, it is the only one with the distinctive “N” medallions over its support piers, the personal insignia of Napoleon III who rebuilt this 12th century bridge in 1858-1860. The Pont au Change is featured in the novel *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo as the bridge over which Inspector Javert throws himself into the Seine. (Photo: A. Jang)

The village of Lirey is located 93 miles southeast of Paris. The Collegiate Church of St. Mary, seen here from the SE street-side, was the site of the original church built by French knight Geoffroi de Charnay to show-case The Sacred Sindon. (Photo: A. Jang)





This iron-wrought crucifix is parallel to the East side of the church (Photo: A. Jang)



The church as viewed from across the street on the SE side (Photo, A. Jang)



Viewed from the end of the East lawn (Photo: A. Jang)



North-east side view (Photo: A. Jang)



Translator Gabriel opening the entrance door to the chapel with the key which he secured from Monsieur Cheviot, who is the village elder statesman.

(Photo: A. Jang)

View of the apse and altar front as viewed from the back (i.e., entrance). The church is not in regular use except as a village bell clock which is set on an automatic timer. It is dusty, musky, and all the pews are shoved together so there is no leg/sitting room even if the tarps were removed. Note the two framed pictures beneath the wall mounted statues facing the reader, on the left and right. (Photo: A. Jang)





The picture below the wall statue on the left reads,

“SANTO VOLTO DEL DIVIN REDENTURE
(PARTICOLARE DELLA S. SINDONE)
Adoramus Te, Christe, et Benedicimus Tibi
Rifroduzione Interdetta
Snveyi pas la ville de Suaiu le 3 Julillet, 1932.”

which translated means:

"HOLY FACE OF THE DIVINE REDENTURE
(DETAIL ON HOLY SHROUD)
We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless you
Reproduction is Forbidden
July 3, 1932”

The picture below the wall statue on the right reads,

“LE VERITBLE PORTRAIT DE NOTRE
SEIGNEUR
JESUS CHRIST (D’ APRES LE SAINT-SUAIRE
OU ST. LINCEUL DE TURIN)
Edmond Mulliez
RITRATTO AUTENTICO DE NOSTRO
SIGNORE GESU CRISTO
INCAVATO DALLA S.S. SINDONE DE
TORINO”

Which translated from Italian means:

“VERITBLE THE PORTRAIT OF OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST (ACCORDING TO THE HOLY
SHROUD OR ST. SHROUD OF TURIN)
Edmond Mulliez
AUTHENTIC PORTRAIT OF OUR LORD JESUS
CHRIST
HOLLOW BY S.S. SHROUD OF TURIN”





On the wall to the right of the altar, left of Allen Jang (Photo: L. Jang) is...

this familiar Shroud portrait, with no accompanying inscription.



A view of the back as seen from the altar.
(Photo: A. Jang)

L to R. Custodian of the key to The Collegiate Church of Saint Mary, Chevrot Jacques; my wife, Loan Jang; and translators Nguyet and Quyen Van Phu Gabriel. (Photo: A. Jang)



The neatest thing about the trip was to get a sense of the relationship between the tiny village of Lirey and the large city of Troyes and the D'Arcy Memorandum. If Geoffrey de Charnay wanted to promote a fake, why would he want to showcase it in a village in the middle of no-where? Not only is the D'Arcy memorandum unsigned, undated, and does not mention the alleged forger, now I have a sense of the motive for the bishop making the allegation that the Shroud was a forgery.

The Cathedral of Troyes is huge and host to 17 relics which drew many pilgrims and collected a nice sum of donations for the bishop. When the tiny Collegiate Church of Saint Mary was built in the tiny village of Lirey, it made claim to a relic of greater value than any at Troyes, and drew many pilgrims (potential donors) away. Consequently, it served in Bishop D'Arcy's personal interest to defame The Sindon.

And pilgrim badges were often made as mementoes at well-known and well-accepted shrines and sites. The skeptics seem to imply that the D'Arcy memorandum shows that many people did not take the Sindon seriously because they knew that it was a fake/hoax. The fact that a pilgrim badge was made of The Shroud at Lirey, however, shows that the Sindon apparently was accepted and taken seriously.

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