

Under the shrouds of secrecy

IF I HAVE got the right message from Walter Schwarz's review of John Bowden's book *Jesus: The Unanswered Questions*, I have to say that the author seems to be addressing the wrong questions.

People intent on pursuing a spiritual path within the context of Christianity are mostly not too concerned with virgin births, physical resurrections and the like. They find Jesus to be the pattern to follow because of his consistent doctrine of the power of unconditional love. No amount of scholarship can apparently shake this interpretation of his teaching, which never fails those who pursue it. "My kingdom is not of this world" is the fundamental inspiration.

Margery Still.

Bridport. *Guardian 20 June 88*

YOU REPRODUCED (June 17) from the Turin Shroud a face thought to be that of Christ printed in the fabric as an illustration with Walter Schwarz's challenging review of the Rev Bowden's book *Jesus: The Unanswered Questions*.

Some 70 years ago my father was Governor of Paramatta Gaol, Australia's oldest large prison. Convict-built soon after Australia was founded it interested historians. Several times I went with father as he explained points of interest to them. In the prison morgue the outline of a human face could be seen clearly on a glass window pane. It first appeared during a violent electrical storm in the last century. The body of a dead prisoner was lying on the slab. The extremely small morgue is said to have been clouded with fumes from powerful preservative drenching the corpse. A flash of lightning blazed through the window and fumes coated the window like photographic emulsion. Thus the impression of the face near the window-pane was fixed to the glass.

Could the same process of chemicals and lightning have printed the impression on The Shroud as happened when a forgotten convict's face became an etching because of lightning from the heavens?

George Ivan Smith.
Stroud.