

COIN HOARD

Unique ID: SOM-3858A0

Object type certainty: Certain

Workflow status: Published

Treasure case 2013 T179: Acquired by the Museum of Somerset.

For full catalogue and details of the excavation please contact the Somerset FLO.

The find consists of 3335 base silver coins of the second and third centuries AD. 165 of which are *denarii* (which had been the principle Roman denomination during the first two centuries of Roman Britain) and the rest are radiates, the *denarius*-multiple (probably a double denarius) first introduced in AD 215 and which began to take over as the main denomination in the course of the third century. In addition, there are four large brass coins of a denomination known as a sestertius: four such sestertii being the equivalent value of one silver denarius.

The final coins in the group date to about AD 270, a time when Roman Britain was part of a group of rebellious provinces under the rule of a rival 'emperor' (to the one in Italy) sometimes called the 'Gallic Empire.'

Summary *denarii radiates sestertii*

Antoninus Pius (AD 138-61) 1 - -

Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-80) - - -

Faustina II - - 1

Lucilla - - 2

Commodus (AD 180-92) - - 1

Septimius Severus (AD 193-211) 15 -

Caracalla (AD 198-217) 14 -

Julia Domna 4 2

Geta Caesar 1 -

Macrinus (AD 217-8) 1 -

Elagabalus (AD 218-222) 39 8

Julia Soemias 6 -

Julia Maesa 10 -

Aquilia Severa 2 -

Severus Alexander (AD 222-35) 49 -

Julia Mamaea 11 -

Orbiana 1 -

Maximinus I (AD 235-8) 7 -

Maximus 2 -

Pupienus (AD 238) - 1

Gordian III (AD 238-44) 2 467

Philip I (AD 244-9) - 282

Otacilia Severa - 66

Philip II (Caesar) - 40

Philip II (Augustus) - 27

Decius (AD 249-51) - 93

Herennia Etruscilla - 52

Herennius Etruscus - 25

Hostilian (Caesar) - 7

Divus Vespasian - 1

Divus Titus - 2

Divus Trajan - 1

Divus Pius - 1

Divus Severus - 2

Divus Alexander - 1

Trebonianus Gallus (AD 251-3) - 129

Volusian (Augustus) - 76

Aemilian (AD 253) - 5

Valerian & Gallienus (AD 253-60)

Valerian - 256

Gallienus - 416 (incl 1 fused)

Salonina - 177

Valerian II - 88

Divus Valerian II - 54

Saloninus Caesar - 94

Saloninus Augustus - 1

Diva Mariniana - 3

Sole Reign of Gallienus (AD 260-8)

Gallienus - 1

Salonina - 2

Gallic Empire

Postumus (AD 260-8) - 763 (incl 1 fused)

Victorinus (AD 269-71) - 5[1]

Irregular - 4

Emperor illegible - 18 (mostly encrusted in organic material)

Total 165 3170 4

[1] 4 x mint I, PAX AVG (2 x series II, 1 x series III & 1 x series I-III); 1 x mint II, series I, with bust of Marius

From the Same Find?

The coins were lifted en masse and when treated in the conservation lab at the BM some were found to be fused together in rolls with remains of cloth and string preserved in the corrosion products; good physical evidence that they were buried together in antiquity. A large amount of potsherds from what had once been a sizable greyware vessel (locally made utilitarian pottery) was also discovered with the coin. With some traces of corrosion product - leaving some coin-shaped shadows - it was likely to have been the method of storage for the hoard.

Metal content?

Numismatically, this group of coins could all have circulated together in the third century AD. Coins issued prior to the reign of the emperor Septimius Severus (AD 193-211), whose major debasement of the silver coinage made earlier coin attractive to those wishing to remove them to take advantage of their higher silver content, are almost absent and this fits a known pattern for British hoards deposited as this time. The single coin present of Antoninus Pius (AD 138-61) would, on past scientific tests of similar specimens, be somewhere in the region of 80-90% silver. Those of Severus are less than half silver, necessitating the 'enrichment' of the surface by chemically leaching out the baser material from the blank prior to striking with the coin dies. Fineness subsequently drops throughout the century until issues of AD 270 contain only a few per cent - disguised by applied silver 'wash' to the surface.

[1] 4 x mint I, PAX AVG (2 x series II, 1 x series III & 1 x series I-III); 1 x mint II, series I, with bust of Marius

Notes:

On the balance of probabilities, therefore, I conclude that these coins belong together as a hoard (a group of coins left behind from one deposit) and constitute a *prima facie* case of treasure by being of an antiquity greater than 300 years and are of one find of more than ten pieces of base composition. The pot fragments should be considered likewise by virtue of their association with the coins.

Treasure report by

Richard Abdy
British Museum

Subsequent actions

Subsequent action after recording: Acquired by museum after being declared Treasure

Treasure details

Treasure case tracking number: 2013T179

Chronology

Broad period: ROMAN
Period from: ROMAN
Period to: ROMAN
Date from: Circa AD 270
Date to: Circa AD 270

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 3339

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Wednesday 20th March 2013

Personal details

Recorded by: Mr Robert Webley
Identified by: Mr Richard Abdy

Other reference numbers

Treasure case number: 2013T179

Materials and construction

Primary material: Silver

Manufacture method: Struck or hammered

Completeness: Complete

Spatial metadata

Region: [South West](#) (European Region)

County or Unitary authority: [Somerset](#) (County)

District: [South Somerset](#) (District)

To be known as: Yeovil

Spatial coordinates

Grid reference source: GPS (From FLO)

Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 10 metre square.

Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Building work

General landuse: Other

Specific landuse: Recreational usage

finds.org.uk