A hoard of *denarii* from Middlewich, Cheshire

David Shotter

A hoard of thirty *denarii* was found in May 1998 on a development site on the west side of King Street, the main Roman military route from the north Midlands into north-west England (NGR lodged with the County Sites and Monuments Register). The coins range in date from a legionary *denarius* of Marcus Antonius (32-31 BC) to an issue of Hadrian’s reign (AD 125). The present hoard thus joins a recognisable group in north-west England with termination dates in the first quarter of the second century.¹ There was no sign of a container, and the coins may have been kept in a bag or wrapper of fabric. I am grateful to the late Stephen Penny, Curator of the Salt Museum at Northwich, for facilitating my examination of this hoard.

Summary of coins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Number of coins</th>
<th>Reference (see abbreviations)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Crawford 544,29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>RIC I (2) 167a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vespasian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>RIC 8, 21, 67, 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Titus (as Caesar)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>RIC (Vesp), 208, 218</td>
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<tr>
<td>Titus</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>RIC 26a, 63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domitian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>RIC 138, 166, 175, 186</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trajan</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>RIC 52, 99, 104, 115, 128(2), 180, 202, 216, 269, 275, 287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadrian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>RIC 44, 83, 139, 162</td>
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As one would expect of a savings-collection which closed early in Hadrian’s reign, the bulk of the coins are Trajanic and Hadrianic (80%), although the earlier Flavian coins exhibit a considerable degree of wear, indicating much usage in circulation. There are clear signs of the effects of Trajan’s recall of ‘old silver’ in c.AD 107 in the near-absence of pre-Neronian silver from this hoard. The presence, however, of the coin of Augustus indicates that Trajan’s legislation may have taken some time to become fully effective in Britain. The issue of Antonius is less significant because contemporary belief in the poor silver-quality of Antonius’ coins evidently allowed them to escape the recall; it is not unusual to find them, worn virtually smooth, in contexts as late as the early decades of the third century. I have discussed elsewhere Roman coin-hoards from Cheshire and the large sample of Roman coins from the Middlewich area.

The coins

Inscriptions, dates and references to the individual coins are given in the following listing:

Marcus Antonius (1)
1. ANT AVG IIIIVIR R P C I LEG XIV; Crawford 544,29; 32–1 BC

Augustus (1)
2. AVGVSTVS DIVI F I IMP X (Bull butting right); RIC I (2) 167a; 15–13 BC

Vespasian (4)
3. IMP CAESAR VESPASIANVS AVG I COS ITER TR POT (Neptune); RIC 8; AD 69–71
4. IMP CAESAR VESPASIANVS AVG I PONT MAX (Caduceus); RIC 21; AD 69–71
5. IMP CAES VESP AVG CEN I SALVS AVG; RIC 67; AD 73

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6. IMP CAESAR VESP AVG | PON MAX TR P COS VI (Pax); RIC 90; AD 75

Titus (as Caesar) (2)
7. T CAESAR VESPASIANVS | ANNONA AVG; RIC (Vespasian) 218; AD 78–9
8. T CAESAR IMP VESPASIANVS | TR POT VIII COS VII (Trophy and Captive); RIC (Vespasian) 208; AD 79

Titus (2)
9. DIVVS AVGVSTVS VESPASIANVS | Shield, bearing S C, supported by two capricorns; RIC 63; AD 80–1
10. IMP TITVS CAES VESPASIAN AVG P M | TR P IX IMP XV COS VIII P P (Dolphin and Anchor); RIC 26a; AD 80

Domitian (4)
11. IMP CAES DOMIT AVG GERM P M TR P VIII IMP XIX COS XIII CENS P P P | (Minerva); RIC 138; AD 88–9
12. IMP CAES DOMIT AVG GERM P M TR P XI IMP XXI COS XVI CENS P P P | (Minerva); RIC 166; AD 92
13. IMP CAES DOMIT AVG GERM P M TR P XIII IMP XXII COS XVI CENS P P P | (Minerva); RIC 175; AD 93–4
14. IMP CAES DOMIT AVG GERM P M TR P XIII IMP XXII COS XVII CENS P P P | (Minerva); RIC 186; AD 95

Trajan (12)
15. IMP CAES NERVA TRAIAN AVG GERM | P M TR P COS III P P | (Mars); RIC 52; AD 101–2
16. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P | COS V P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCI (Victoria); RIC 128; AD 103–11
17. As 16
18. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P | COS V P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI (Genius); RIC 180; AD 103–11
19. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P | COS V P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCI (Roma); RIC 115; AD 103–11
20. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P | COS V P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCI PIET; RIC 104; AD 103–11
21. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P | COS V P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCI DAC CAP; RIC 99; AD 103–11
22. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P I COS V P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI (Virtus); RIC 202; AD 103–11
23. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P I COS VI P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI (Mars); RIC 269; AD 112–7
24. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P I COS VI P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI (Genius); RIC 275; AD 112–7
25. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P I COS VI P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI DACICA (on shield) (Victoria); RIC 287; AD 112–4
26. IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P I COS VI P P SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI (Dacia); RIC 216; AD 112–7

Hadrian (4)
27. IMP CAESAR TRAIAN HADRIANVS AVG I P M TR P COS II PAX; RIC 44; AD 118
28. IMP CAESAR TRAIAN HADRIANVS AVG I P M TR P COS III SALVS AVG; RIC 139; AD 119–22
29. (Fragmentary) IMP CAESAR TRAIAN HADRIANVS AVG I P M TR P COS III (Felicitas); RIC 83; AD 119–22
30. HADRIANVS AVGSTVS I COS III (Roma); RIC 162; AD 125–8

Abbreviations
Crawford: M. H. Crawford, Roman Republican Coinage (Cambridge, 1974).