

SHORT NOTES

RECENT FINDS OF ROMAN COINS IN LANCASHIRE

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It is hoped that these notes will form the first of an occasional series in *Transactions*, providing information on new discoveries of Roman coins as well as occasionally new information concerning older finds. Precise locations for finds will not be given, although when known they will be lodged with the appropriate museum. The base for the notes will be my *Roman Coins from North-West England*, which was published in 1990 as a Resource Paper at the Centre for North-West Regional Studies at Lancaster University. Where new information is given in these notes on coin-finds already recorded in that volume, the fact will be indicated by an asterisk. In the present state of our knowledge it is often not possible to gauge the significance of a find, and sometimes not even whether it represents an ancient or recent loss. However, the purpose of these notes is to put such finds on record, in the hope that in many cases the contexts of the finds will in due course become apparent.

I: CASUAL FINDS

- 1 CARNFORTH: A very worn *sestertius* of Hadrian (LIBERALITAS AVG; Hill 124) of A.D. 119 was found some years ago in Carnforth (location unknown). Information from Lancaster City Museum and Art Gallery.
- *2 LANCASTER: A rare medallion of Commodus was found in 1989 near the railway line in Ryelands Park. It was

- issued to mark the new year, A.D. 192, Commodus's last (see F. Gneecchi, *I Medaglioni Romani* (Milan, 1912), II 117–118). Information from Peter Field of the Harris Museum at Preston.
- *3 CLAUGHTON (near Hornby): In 1989, a *didrachm* of Domitian's reign was found. The coin was minted in Damascus. Information from Mr Hugh Sherdley of Pilling.
- *4 CHORLEY: A very worn *denarius*, probably Republican, was found in 1990 by the use of a metal-detector.
- *5 GREAT MITTON (Toot Hill): A very worn *aes* issue of the house of Constantine was reported in 1991. It is the VICTORIAE DD AVGG Q₂NN issue of A.D. 341–348.
- *6 GREAT CROSBY: A coin of Nero, found on the shore before the Second World War and lost from Liverpool Museum's collection as a result of war damage, was dated to A.D. 64–66. *
- *7 FORMBY: A radiate copy of Tetricus I was found on the shore in 1979.
- 8 FORMBY: A *sestertius* of Julia Mamaea (*R.I.C.* 676) was found on the shore in 1980.
- 9 BARNSTON: *Aes* issue of Gratian from the mint of Lyon (*L.R.B.C.*, II, 297 of A.D. 367–375) has been found by metal-detecting.
- 10 BARNSTON: *Antoninianus* of Probus (*R.I.C.* 31).
- 11 GREAT CROSBY: A report of the finding of Roman coins on the surface of the marshland was made in the nineteenth century (T. M. Reade, in *Quarterly Journal of Geological Society*, XXXVII (1881), p. 439).
- 12 BARNSTON; An unidentified and unverified Roman coin is reported. I am grateful to Dr Robert Philpott of Liverpool Museum (National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside) for information relating to nos. 6–12.
- 13 FRECKLETON: Four *denarii* have been found in separate locations in the area of Naze Mount Lane: the coins are one of each of Vespasian, Trajan, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius. Such details as are known do not suggest that the coins formed part of a hoard. Information from Mr Jim Ridge of Ribchester Museum.
- 14 FLEETWOOD: A *dupondius* of Nero (*R.I.C.* I², 292) of A.D. 64 was dug up in 1991 in a private garden near the shore

between Fleetwood and Rossall (information from the finder). This adds to the not inconsiderable number of pre-Flavian *aes* coins from coastal locations in Lancashire and Cumbria.

II: HOARDS

- 1 LANCASTER (St George's Quay): A small hoard of radiate copies was found in 1990, stacked in a 'column' and wrapped in linen. At the time of writing, the coins had yet to be separated and identified, although they included at least three issues of Tetricus I.
- 2 KNOTT END (Hackensall Hall; Shotter 1990: III. A. ii. 19): A further issue of Victorinus came to light in 1991, bringing the total for that emperor to 89. The reverse is PROVIDENTIA AVG (*R.I.C.* 61).

III: UNCERTAIN

A small private collection of nine coins has been presented for examination by its owner, who lives in Bentham. The coins were apparently recovered during demolition work in Bentham, though, from the circumstances, clearly not from their original location. However, it would appear likely that they had not been moved far from the original place of deposition. That would suggest that the original find spot may have been close to the Roman road running north from the fort at Burrow-in-Lonsdale. The disparate nature of the coins argues against their ever having constituted a hoard, though the issues of third and fourth century dates could conceivably cohere. Alternatively, they may have been individual finds, or a votive deposit. The earliest coin is an *as* of Tiberius (A.D. 14–37; *R.I.C.* I², 80): such finds are relatively rare in the north-west, though one is said to have been found in excavation on the Castle Mound at Burton-in-Lonsdale (*Trans. C.W.A.A.S.*, new ser., V (1905), p. 284). The other coins are as follows: two silvered *antoniniani* of Valerian (*R.I.C.* 87 of A.D. 255–256; *R.I.C.* 126 of A.D. 254); two radiate copies of Postumus (*R.I.C.* 316 and 318 of A.D. 259–268); two radiate copies of Victorinus *R.I.C.* 78 and one with an illegible

reverse, of A.D. 269–271); two Constantine issues (*L.R.B.C.*, I, 49 and I, 354 of A.D. 330–335).

ABBREVIATIONS AND REFERENCES

- Shotter 1990: D. C. A. Shotter, *Roman Coins from North-West England* (Lancaster, 1990).
- R.I.C.*: *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, ed. H. Mattingley, E. A. Sydenham, and C. H. V. Sutherland (London, 1923 and later).
- L.R.B.C.*: P. V. Hill, R. A. G. Carson, and J. P. C. Kent, *Late Roman Bronze Coinage* (London, 1960).
- Hill: P. V. Hill, *The Dating and Arrangement of the Undated Coins of Rome, A.D. 98–148* (London, 1970).
- Trans. C.W.A.A.S.*: *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*.