

NOTES ON ROMAN COINS
FOUND IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF
SOUTHAMPTON.

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The coins of the Roman Empire are found at the sites of its Cities and stations in long series of the coinages of the successive Imperators and usurpers—sometimes in hoards of certain epochs, often stored away in earthen vessels, and buried probably near the residences of their former owners—or, singly, scattered everywhere, more or less abundantly, throughout the length and breadth of the land, having been lost, or thrown away in later times as useless.

Instances of all these occur in the neighbourhood of Southampton.

Writers, about a hundred years since, to whom we are indebted for accounts of the ruins then existing of the Roman Naval Station *Clausentum* (Bitterne Manor) agree in stating that coins ranging over the whole period of the Roman dominion in Britain, had at various times been dug up there. Warner, writing in 1792, gives a list of such coins either in his possession or seen by him; and in the *Hampshire Repository* of a few years later there is a careful description of the Roman coins found (in the year 1800) whilst the Northam Bridge and roads were in course of construction. Many were silver denarii, and were in the possession of residents in the neighbourhood. Those collections have doubtless long since been dispersed—certainly the denarii, so carefully described, are not at Bitterne Manor. The collection there, in the possession of Mr. Steuart-Macnaghten (which he has kindly allowed the writer to inspect) probably commenced with the subsequent finds recorded by Sir H. Englefield as having been made in the years 1804 and 1805, whilst the Manor House was being built, and which have been added to from time to time, and were catalogued some years ago by Mr. Roach Smith. It now consists of several hundreds of Roman coins, in large, middle, and small brass, with a few silver, probably the rarest of the latter being one of *Allectus*. There are none of gold. Noticeable among the brass coins is one of Nero, of Romano-British workmanship, and

two of Antoninus Pius, having the interesting reverses of "Britannia." The coins of Carausius and Allectus (remarkable from their being struck by independent Emperors of Britain) are not so numerous in this collection as might be expected, considering that it is believed that a mint existed at Clausentum—the letter C on the coins of Carausius and Allectus being conjectured to refer to that place—and the letters MC, SC, MSC, SPC, to admit of the interpretations, *Moneta Clausenti*, *Signata Clausenti*, *Moneta Signata Clausenti*, and *Signata Pecunia Clausenti*.

There can be no doubt that large numbers of coins are yet to be disinterred at Clausentum, as wherever excavations are made, coins are found there. A recent instance occurred in October, 1885, when the workmen employed in laying a gas main in the public road found second and small brass of Nero, Antoninus Pius, Crispus, and some others, with a silver denarius of Severus Alexander.

Immediately outside the entrenchments of Clausentum but few coins have been found. In making a new road at Midanbury in the year 1878, a second brass of Domitian was discovered, but as far as could be learnt no coins were found in making the extensive roads on the adjoining building land estate. Further works in this neighbourhood may, however, result in some discoveries being made.

The writer has thirteen small brass coins, which were lately in the possession of a resident at Weston. They are of the following Emperors and usurpers, viz :—Herennius Etruscus, Trebonianus Gallus, Valerianus, Victorinus, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Postumus, Marius, and Tetricus. They therefore range in date from A.D. 251 to 273, being the disturbed epoch which is known in Roman history as that of "The Thirty Tyrants." From the appearance of these coins, and from their being struck within a period of little over twenty years, it is believed that they formed a part of one of the hoards which were found some years since in that neighbourhood. That found in the year 1867, during some excavations at Netley Hospital, consisted of upwards of 1,800 small brass, ranging from Valerianus to Aurelianus. They were catalogued by Dr. De Chaumont, and specimens are now in the Hartley Museum.

At Portswood and St. Denys, on the western bank of the River Itchen, a few scattered coins have been found. Of these, the writer has first and second brass of Hadrian, Commodus, and Lucilla. Of coins found on the eastern side of Southampton he has small brass of Gallienus and Valens, and has seen a silver denarius of Valens, which was found at St. Mary's. Other scattered Roman coins are recorded to have been found in that locality, but none within the walls of the mediæval town.

At Nursling Manor, about four miles from Southampton, and near the River Test, remains of Romano-British habitations were

discovered some few years since, in excavating for railway ballast. The late Mr. F. F. Hare, who then resided at Nursling Manor House, daily watched the work and formed a very interesting collection, including a somewhat extensive series of Roman coins. It was his intention to transfer the same to the museum of the Hartley Institution—to which he had already been a donor. Unfortunately the London and South Western Railway Company made a formal demand upon Mr. Hare for the collection as legally belonging to them, and that gentleman unwilling or unable to dispute their claim, surrendered it accordingly. It is much to be regretted that the Company did not allow Mr. Hare to carry out his intention, as the Hartley Institution would have been the most desirable place to deposit objects of such great local interest.

At No-Man's-Land, on the borders of the New Forest, a number of coins were found in the year 1881, consisting of first and second brass of Nero, Vespasian, Domitian, Trajan, Antoninus Pius, M. Aurelius, and the younger Faustina, together with a small British coin of the uninscribed type which is peculiar to this district—all these are in the writer's collection, together with a bronze fibula, of which there were several found at the same time.

In the New Forest generally, there have been recorded many finds of coins, both scattered specimens and hoards, and the writer has two denarii of Valerianus and Salonina, which were found near Beaulieu.

In the event of any future finds of coins in the county, members of the Club residing in the respective localities are requested to put themselves in communication with the Local Secretaries, with a view of recording particulars of the coins and the mode of their discovery—or may correspond direct with the writer of this paper.
