

Roman Coins in Derbyshire.

CONTRIBUTED BY GEORGINA S. HURT, FROM A MS. OF
JOHN REYNOLDS.



MISS HURT, to whom our Society is so much indebted for permission to print the Presbyterian Classis Book of Wirksworth, in the second volume of our Journals, recently forwarded to me another small MS. book that belonged to her uncle, the late Mr. Charles Hurt. It is a 12mo. book of 60 pages in a marbled-paper cover. On the inside of the last cover is written :—

“This book was written or rather transcribed by the Rev. — Mason, of Winster, Derbyshire, and given to Charles Hurt, jun., by Mr. Wolley, of Matlock, April, 1822. The Mr. Reynolds mentioned in it was of Crich.”

The contents of this brief manuscript relate exclusively to “finds” of Roman coins in Derbyshire, between the years 1748 and 1778, as chronicled by that careful observer and local antiquary, Mr. John Reynolds, of Plaistow, Crich. Adam Wolley’s collections, now in the British Museum, show how largely he was indebted to Reynolds’ labours. Add. MSS. 6701 is a volume exclusively compiled by Reynolds, containing original church notes of the county, taken about 1750.

The special “finds” here detailed have been briefly referred to by Lysons, in his Derbyshire volume, and subsequently copied by Glover and other later writers. The particular description of the coins, and the details of their discovery are, however,

altogether new matter, and, on referring the question to the modern Romano-British authority—Mr. Thompson Watkin, he agreed with me in thinking that this little book well-merited a *verbatim* reproduction.—EDITOR.

20th Sep^r. 1748. A large quantity of Roman coin was found in a boggy piece of ground, near a watering place in y^e lower close of a Farm, called New Grounds, near Green-hill Lane, in y^e Parish of Alfreton, of County of Derby (which s^d close also adjoins Codnor Park), where one Daniel Elliot, one of y^e workmen who found it, gave me y^e following account thereof, on y^e 11th of Dec^r. 1748, being y^e day I first heard of it.

The s^d Dan. Elliot, and an other laborer, being employed by Sam^l Roe who then rented y^t Farm, to bring up a Drain from y^e bottom of y^e close to Codnor Park pales, to take away y^e water from y^e afores^d watering pool, when it should run over, etc., and thereby spread over too much of y^e land, found, as they first thought, lumps of small pieces of slate (a thing very common thereabouts) sticking together. And when they came almost to y^e s^d Pool, one of them struck his Hack against a Pot (Roman Urn) full of money, which stood not above 3 inches under y^e grass roots. Hereat they were both overjoyed, and Elliot's partner advised for them to take y^e money themselves, and divide it between them. Elliot told him it would not be right, unless y^r Master Roe had some share with them. At last they went and told Roe, and of y^r consultations thereupon, and he agreed to have one third share. They then went to examine those Lumps which they before believed to be slate, and found them to be money also, turned black by y^e peculiar quality of y^e soil, or water they lay in, and sticking together. Having emptied y^e Urn (which they regarded not) of its contents, and picking up all they could readily, they took it (in a wheelbarrow) to Roe's house, and cleaned it from y^e dirt, by washing it in a cloths wash tub.

Then it was agreed among them y^t Roe should sell it, and when sold y^e money to be divided into 3 shares among them.

And hereupon Roe took some of it to Nottingham, and some to Mansfield, to see if it was silver or not, some said it was pure silver, and others y^t it was adulterated, all y^e while keeping it a profound secret, lest y^e chief Lord should claim it as Treasure Trouve, and so was willing to sell it, at any price, where secrecy could be had. Whereupon they then, when it was too late, told it about y^e country, and Rowland Morewood, of Alfreton, Esq^r sent to Roe, and y^e different workmen, to demand it, as L^d of y^e Manor. The right Hon^{ble} y^e Countess Dowager of Oxford (as Lady Paramount of y^e Hundred of Scarsdale, within which it was found) sent Mr. John Dakin, of Mansfield, her steward to demand it also; but at y^e same time Mr. Dakin said he would pay 10 shill^s p. ounce for all that y^t should be brought to him. So I believe several, who had bought cheap bargains of y^e coin, and had not sold it again, or melted it down (of which many hundred pieces had actually been) brought them to Mr. Dakeyne, and he allowed them after 10 shillings y^e ounce, for y^e same.

N.B.—Roe sold as much at one time, at Nottingham, for 3 shillings and 6 pence y^e ounce, as came to £10, or more as Joseph Gregory, of Riddins, in y^e Parish of Alfreton, told Mr. Reynolds. He also sold a pound weight there of Avoirdupois to one John Dean, of Alfreton, at 4s. 6d. y^e ounce, and another pound Avoirdupois to Joseph Boot, of Higham, and 20 oz. to Mr. Mellor, of Derby, at y^e same rate.

When Dan^l Elliot and his partner had disclosed y^e matter, which was on y^e 30th of Nov^r. 1748, on y^e day following (being y^e 1st of Dec^r. 1748), all y^e neighbourhood flocked to y^e place where y^e coins had been found, till at last there were 3 or 4 score persons for a week or 10 days time, seeking for these coins, in which time it was reckoned not less than 500 pieces must be picked up, exclusive of those which Roe had and sold, which he some years after told Mr. Reynolds, he supposed might be 15 or 16 hundred pieces or more.

All y^e Scotchmen (pedlars), who travelled y^e country gleaned them up so entirely, as they went about to y^e people's houses, who had picked them up, as afores^d y^t I (Mr. Reynolds) never had it

in my power to get more than 12 of them myself, tho' I offered 12^d. a piece for all y^t any person would bring me, which were legible. But I was too late, all or most of them being drained out of y^e country.

Yet I remember on y^e 28th of Dec^r. 1748, having been at Swanwick and Alfreton, endeavouring to get some of these coins, one Mr. Johnson, a travelling Scotch Pedlar, showed me about 200, most of them legible, but not all. He would abate nothing of 12^d. a piece for them; I (J. R.) bad him 12^d. a piece for as many as I should pick out, but he refused, saying, they should all go together, at y^e same price; so I did not buy them (tho' I (J. R.) have several times repented since), as some were quite spoiled by y^e finders in endeavouring to cleanse them.

N.B.—This was y^e largest and most valuable collection of Roman coins I ever yet heard of being found in Britain. They were all Denarii and several of y^e same Emperor's coins (or medals), yet I do not remember to have seen any two alike, with respect to y^r inscriptions and reverses. And this I (J. R.) have frequently been told has been noticed by others.

Those I've seen are chiefly of y^e Vespasiani, Trajan, Hadrianus, Antoninus Pius, Faustina Augusta, Commodus, Sep^t Severus, etc., but I do not remember seeing any of later date than y^e Emperor Septimius Severus, who died A.U.C. 965, which was Anno D^o. 219^o. Some of these Coins were black and rather corroded; others only black, but not otherwise hurt. Some again were quite bright as when they came from y^e mint. I (J. R.) asked Daniel Elliot (before mentioned) if he observed that when they found them. He replied y^e Pot (meaning y^e Urn; for he said it was shaped like a jug) was about half full of water, and all those y^t were in y^e bottom, within y^e water were bright, and y^e others (whether in y^e Urn, or not) were black.

The Ten which I (J. R.) have are as follows.

I. is a coin of Trajanus, having on one side y^e Emperor's head, wreathed with Laurel, and this inscription,

IMPTRAIANOAVGGERDACPMTRP.

id est.

Imperatorī Trajano, Augusto, Germanico, Darico, Pontifici Maximo, Tribunitia Potestati.

on y^e Reverse

A winged Genius, habited in a loose Garment, writing upon a Table before it, with a Stylum, & Exploits of Trajan, & this Inscription,

COSVPPSPQROPTIMOPRINC.

Id est.

Consuli quintum, Patri Patriae, Senatus Populusque Romanus Optimo Principi.

Trajan y^e Emperor was y^e 5th time Consul in Anno U.C. 855^o, which was in y^e year of our Lord 103.

II. is of y^e same Trajan, having his head laureat, upon y^e one side, and inscribed round it with y^e very same letters as y^e last. On y^e Reverse is a Figure standing in Profile looking towards y^e right hand, and habited in a loose vestment (ad talos demissum) holding in its left arm a staff, from which is pendant something like a ring. The right hand is extended & elevated holding something like a Ball in it, but it is so much wore y^t I cannot be certain w^h it is, & this imperfect inscription round it,

..... ..QROPTIMOPRINC.

So consequently this was y^e same as y^t last, excepting y^e number of times he might have been consul, which may either be y^e same or not.

III. is of y^e same Trajan, but has been so much wore in y^e pocket since found, y^t there only appears on one side y^e head of y^e Emperor, which from its form appears to be Trajans, and this very imperfect inscription,

IMPCH.....and no more, tho' y^e inscription was very long.

Reverse.

A figure standing in profile looking towards y^e right hand & habited in a loose garment holding something resembling a cornucopia on its left arm, & something in its right hand extended, but what I cannot distinguish.

IV. The next (which might have been put first in point of age) is a coin of Vespasians, on one side is y^e Emperor's head, wearing a Diadem, & this imperfect inscription,

... ..CAESARVESPASIANVSAVG.

Id est,

Imperator Cæsar Vespasianus Augustus.

Reverse.

A naked figure standing in profile resting his left hand elevated & turned back towards y^e head, on a staff, with its right hand extended over an altar before it, and this inscription,

IOVIS CVSTOS

which needs no explanation.

N.B.—The letters upon y^e obverse have y^r feet towards y^e edge of y^e coin (as all Vespasian's coins which I have seen have), but those on y^e Reverse are in y^e usual way.

Flavius Vespasianus died 25th June Anno U. C. 831, which was in y^e year of our Lord, 79.

V. This is of y^e Emperor Hadrian, having on y^e one side his head thus circumscribed,

HADRIANVSAVGCOSIIPP.

Id est,

Hadrianus Augustus Consul tertium Pater Patriæ.

Reverse.

A figure in a standing posture & habited in a loose garment, girt about his waist, supporting with his right arm a branch of a tree (which it grasps in its left hand) & y^e right hand is extended & holds something like a Sistrum, & is thus inscribed,

FELICI T ASAVG, that is

Felicitas Augusti.

Hadrian was y^e 3^d time Consul in y^e year of Rome 870, which answers to y^e year of our Lord 118.

VI. This is a coin of Antoninus Pius, as fresh as if just out of y^e mint, & is quite bright, being one of those y^t was found in y^e state, as before mentioned. On one side is his head, and this circumscription,

ANTONINVSAVG PIVPTRPXII, Id est,

Antoninus Augustus Pius Pater Patriæ Tributritia(*sic*)potestate dno decimum.

Reverse.

A Priest (or Flamen) resting his left hand upon a..... stretching out his right hand, in which he holds a chaplet, over an altar inflamed, & this circumscribed,

COSIII that is Consul quartum.

N.B.—All y^e figures upon y^e reverse stand in profile, & look towards y^e right hand.

Antoninus Pius was Consul y^e 4th time, in y^e year of Rome 897, which was in y^e year of our Lord 145.

VII. Another of y^e same Antoninus Pius, having his head on one side, & this circumscription,

DIVVSANTONINVS i.e.,

Divus Antoninus.

Reverse.

A funeral pile on fire, thus circumscribed,

CONSE CRATIO i.e. consecratio.

Antoninus Pius died 7 Martii, U.C. 936, vel An^o. Dom. 160.

VIII. A coin of Faustina, having her head bound about with a& this inscription round y^e same,

FAVSTINA AVGVSTA, which needs no explanation.

Reverse.

Some kind of a seat, & this inscription,

SAEVLIFELICIT id est,

Sæculi felicitas.

IX. Another of y^e same Empress, having her head on one side thereof, her hair tied in a knot behind, with this inscription,

DIVAFV STINAPIA id est,

Diva Faustina Pia.

Reverse.

A Peacock (ad lævam prospiciens) drooping its tail, & this inscription,

CONSEC RATIO id est,

Consecratio.

X. A coin of Commodus, having his head (with very short hair & curled) on one side, & thus circumscribed,

AVRELIVSCO.....AVGPIIF, that is

Aurelius Commodus Augustus Pii Filius.

Reverse.

A figure in a loose garment standing in profile, holding a cornucopia in y^e left hand (& supporting it with y^t arm), y^e right hand extended, & holding something (but y^e piece is too much worn to see what) & thus circumscribed.

COSII, that is

Consul secundum.

Aurelius Commodus was consul y^e second time A. U. C. 931, qui fuit vulgaris Epochis 179.

XI. This coin (which in order of time should have preceded y^e last) is one of two Antonines (Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Philosophus, & Lucius Antoninus Verus), it has on one side thereof y^e head of y^e Emperor laureat & circumscribed as under,

ANTONINVS AVGVSTVS.

Reverse.

The figure of a man (pileatus) habited in a loose garment down to y^e feet, standing in profile, & looking towards y^e right hand, encompassing a cornucopia with his left arm, & resting his right hand extended upon a staff (upon y^e top whereof seems to be two children, confronting each other, in a sitting posture) with this inscription,

FELICI TASAVGG, i.e.,

Felicitas Augustorum, shewing y^t there were two Augustuses at y^e time it was coined.

The two Antonines began y^r reign An^o. U. conditæ 913, which answers to y^e year of our Lord 161, and one of them (Scil. Lucius) died of an Apoplexy A. U. C. 921, or An^o. Dni. 169.

XII. Another coin of Antoninus Pius, upon which the Head encompassed with a wreath of laurel is very plain, but y^e inscription is mutilated, there appearing only these letters,

ANTONI.....

Reverse.

Justice, supporting her left hand with a staff, holding a balance in her right hand extended, with this inscription,

COSIII. y^t is

Consul quartum.

Hence this was coined in y^e same year as No. VI., which was A.D. 145.

These are all y^t I have in my possession of those found in New Grounds, afores^d, this 11th March 1778 (J.R.)

Some years ago, an old woman caving for lead ore (wast fustula plumbaginis colligens, quæ a fossoribus neglecta fuere) between Winster & Bakewell afores^d found a parcel of Roman coins, all small, and of copper, as report then said about a quart full; 4 of which being all I could get, I have now (this 11th of March 1778) by me. They were bought for me (at y^e time, when found by Ralph Howson of Bonsal, who then taught scool at Wensley.) They are as under:

I. A small coin, having a head with a helmet thereon, on one side, & thus circumscribed,

VRBS ROMA.

Reverse.

Two Infants (Romulus and Remus) sucking a Wolf, y^e Wolf turning its head back, & smelling at or licking one of them. Over y^e Wolf's head are two stars, & under its feet are these letters,

TR. S. Id est,

Treviris signatus nummus,

Showing it was coined at Triers.

N.B.—These sorts of coin are commonly called Romulus coins, but falsely, for he coined none. Others again think them y^e most antient Coins of y^e Roman Common Wealth, but these are as much mistaken; for they were struck by y^e successors of Constantine y^e Great, in honor of y^r antient Capital, after y^e seat of y^e Empire had been translated from thence to Constantinople.

N.B.—They are very common.

II. A coin, having y^e head of Rome upon it, as I suppose (being in every respect like y^e former, & looking as it does to y^e right hand) and thus circumscribed in very plain letters,

DNVALLICINLICINIVSNOBC.

Reverse.

Jupiter (or a figure of a man with a beard) naked, standing in profile, looking towards y^e right hand, supporting his left hand upon a staff or spear erect, on y^e point thereof perched a Bird (probably an eagle) turning its head backward towards Jupiter's head, intending as it were to put a chaplet upon his head, which it holds in its beak, having his right hand extended forwards & grasping a globe, whereupon stands a winged genius holding out another chaplet also, in its hand towards Jupiter's head. Before Jupiter, at his feet, stands an Eagle, close, fluting his head backwards towards Jupiter, & holding a thunder-bolt in its beak. Behind Jupiter is a small figure kneeling at his feet & over its head, which is behind Jupiter also, are these characters, standing as under,

X

III,

and round y^e edge thereof is this inscription,

IOVICONSERVATORI.

Id est

Jovi conservatori. In y^e Exergue SALNT.

III. This has on one side a head laureat, thus circumscribed,

CONSTANTINVSIVNNOBC.

That is Constantinus Junior Nobilis Cæsar.

Reverse.

Two Roman Soldiers standing affront, resting y^r exterior hands upon 2 pikes or lances, with two military ensigns (Labara) betwixt them, & thus circumscribed,

GLORIAEXERCITVS. Id est,

Gloria exercitus.

In y^e Exergue

That is

RES.

This coin was struck whilst y^e Emperor Constantine was living (designati Imperii Successoris hoc nomine nobilis notati sunt) & he died A. U. C. 1088, which answer to y^e year of our Lord 336.

IV. A small coin of y^e Emperor Dioclesian as appears by y^e form of y^e head. There remains no more of y^e Epigraphe than
VSAVG.

Both y^e inscription & figure upon y^e Reverse are wholly illegible.

On y^e 26 of July, 1761, some Laborers getting Limestone for Mr. Reynolds on y^e south side of Crich Cliff, near y^e summit commonly called y^e Parsons Nab, they discovered y^e foundations of a small Building, about 10 feet square, built of grit, or fellstone, but unhewn, & not laid in mortar or any kind of cement whatsoever. Within this compass were several pieces of charcoal intermixed with y^e earth & diverse pieces of broken tiles lying within & without y^e same. These pieces were all small, y^e largest not exceeding y^e size of a man's hand, and made of exceeding red clay. The sides of some of y^e pieces were turne^d up at right angles,—better than half an inch. Some of these pieces are very soft & rotten; others very hard, & of a bluish cast, being almost vitrified. They also found several Roman coins within y^e area (for I was present (J. R.) some lying by odd ones, and some sticking 3 or 4, or more in lumps, as sealing-wafers will do, which upon parting all crumbled to dirt, nay even you could not so much as clean y^e dirt off by washing without breaking y^e coin in pieces y^e pernicious quality of y^e earth having rendered them quite rotten. There happening to be 3 among them of Tin, or some other hard white metal, not so much decayed as y^e others which were of copper, I made shift to discover whose coin 2 of them are, but y^e 3rd I could not—all y^t is possible to be discovered thereon, being only a head wearing a radiated Diadem.

I. On one of these Tin ones (as I call them) is a head, adorned with a radiated Diadem, & having a pretty large beard on y^e chin, & this circumscription

IMPCPOSTVMVSPFAVG. id est
 Imperator Caius Postumus, Pius, Felix Augustus.

Reverse.

The Device & Inscription not legible, though there are faint Vestiges of letters all round.

II. The other being more dim than y^e last, has on one side, a head, with a radiated Diadem also, and this imperfect inscription

IMPC TORINVS AVG.

id est

Imperator Caius Victorinus Augustus.

The reverse is quite obliterated.

N.B.—These were two of y^e Thirty Tyrants, as they are generally called, who assumed the government in Gaul and Britain in y^e time of Gallienus y^e Emperor, as Eutropius tells us. Gallienus began his reign A.U.C. 1012, which was A.D. 260, and died A.U.C. 1018, in which year Postumus made himself Emperor in Gallia et Britannia, which was A.D. 266.

There was only one of copper which I found, y^t was not wholly eaten away with rust. But there does not remain y^e least vestige of a letter upon it. It has only a faint head upon it (radiate, diademate, revinetum).

Anno D. 1772. Joseph Dowmer of Fritchley, in y^e Parish of Crich, ridding or clearing away a large baulk or heap of stones, grown over with some wood amongst them, in a close in his occupation, lying to y^e south of Fritchley, between it & y^e river Amber, & not far from y^e Bull Bridge, found several pieces of Roman coin, chiefly small ones of copper, lying partly together, among some large stones, eight of which pieces I got, & have now by me (J. R.) this 11 Mar. 1778. But they are greatly eaten away with rust, so y^t few of them are legible.

I. This has a faint head upon it, whether bound about with a Diadem, plain or radiated, does not appear (it having received damage by rubbing since found) full as much as from time, & this faint inscription circumscribing y^e same.

GALLIENVSAVG. Id est

Gallienus Augustus.

The figure on y^e Reverse scarce discernable, and a few faint letters of an inscription something like the following.

. . . . V S . . CO

II. Wears a radiated Diadem, & this dim and imperfect circumscription

. 'TETRICVSA

which is just sufficient to tell us y^t it was one of y^e usurper Tetricus's.

Reverse.

Reverse has an upright figure thereupon (but very faint) seeming to hold a cornucopia with y^e left hand and arm, much like y^e Reverse of Commodus's (No. X.), but no Letters (ne vestigia quidem) are distinguishable.

III. Another coin with a head encompassed with, or wearing a radiated Diadem, very plain, but part of y^e inscription is cankered off with rust, what remains is as follows IMP PEAVG.

Reverse.

A female figure sejant right hand extended, & holding something in it, inscription not legible, tho y^e Vestiges of Letters remain.

IIII., V., VI., VII., VIII. Have each a faint Figure of a Head on y^e obverse, but no inscription upon y^t or y^e Reverse.

9th of March, 1778. Abraham Harrison and another labourer as y^{ey} were removing a heap of stones in Culland Park, in the Parish of Crich, found a large flat stone among them, lying upon two others, which stood on an edge, under which was a mug pot, narrower at top than in y^e middle, being in fact an antient urn, in which was a large quantity of copper coin, viz., about 700, some as big again as others & more. The pot or urn was so rotten y^t it broke in pieces, but y^{ey} took y^e money and sold it for what they could get in y^e neighbourhood. The inscriptions on those I have seen are as follows.

I. The Emperor's head bound about with a plain Diadem and this Inscription.

IMPDIOCLETIANVSAVG.

Reverse. A human figure standing in profile, piliatus, & cornucopia in y^e left hand, & a Patina or garland in y^e right (for it may be either)

GENIOPOPVLIROMANI.

II. The Emperor's head with a plain Diadem thus circumscribed.

CONSTANTINVSNOBC.

Reverse. Genio Populi Romani. Exergue, PTR. id est, Pecunia Treveris cusa, y^t is, struck at Triers.

III. Obverse. The Emperor's head laureat, circumscribed

IMPCONSTANTINVSPAVG.

Reverse. Mars brandishing his lance & shield; armed with a Helmet and Crest, inscr^d Marti Patri Propug: Exergue, PLN, y^t is Pecunia Londini cusa.

N.B.—The three last are not in Mr. Reynolds' collection.

I. The Emp^s. head with a Diadem circumscribed

IMPMAXIMIANVSPAVG.

Reverse. The Genius of y^e Romans, & Genio Populi Romani, & in y^e field, on y^e right & left of y^e figure these letters S. F., which are y^e initials of Seculi Felicitas, y^t is The felicity of y^e age. Exergue, PT R.

Diocletian took Maximianus for his colleague in y^e Empire in y^e 3^d year of his reign, A.U.C. 1037, A.D. 285.

II. Head wearing a Diadem, circumscribed

CONSTANTINVSNOBILIC.

Reverse, y^e same as y^e last.

III. Maximianus, inscribed.

IMPMAXIMIANVSPFAVG.

Reverse, same as y^e last in y^e field, on one side the figure an S., on y^e other a C which I (J. Mason) take to be y^e initials of Senatus consulto, or seculi claritas.

IV. Another of y^e same, inscribed,

DNMAXIMIANVSP...AVG.

Reverse, same as y^e last.

V. Obverse, Emp^s. head, laureat, circumscribed,

IMPCONSTANTINVSPFAVG.

Reverse, Apollo, head radiated, inscribed,
Soli invicto comiti. In y^e field, on y^e right hand y^e figure T, on
y^e left F, which are y^e initials of Temporum felicitas, y^t is Happy
times.

VI. Same as y^e last, both Obverse and Reverse.

VII., VIII. Exactly y^e same as V.

IX. Same as y^e preceeding,

X. Emp. head laureat, inscribed,

IMPCONSTANTINVS PFAVG.

Reverse, y^e same as y^e last.

XI. Head laureat, inscribed,

IMPLICINIVS PFAVG.

Reverse, Genius of Romans, circumscribed—Genio Populi
Romani.

XII. The same as y^e V.

XIII. Same as y^e V.

XIIII. Same as y^e 5th.

XIIIIII. Same as y^e V. Except y^e Reverse.

Legend,

SPQROPTMOPRINCIPI.

Senatus populusque Romanus optimo principi. Exergue.....OST.

Next follows in Mr. Reynolds' Register, a Series of 28 Culland
Park Coins, mostly similar to y^e preceeding, & in no respect
more valuable.—J MASON.

V. A head lauriat, circumscribed,

DIVOCONSTANTIOPIO.

Reverse, an altar, at y^e foot of whereof on each side sits an
Eagle, with wings, a little expanded, & thus circumscribed,

MEMORIAFELIX,

id est, Memoria felix. Mr. Reynolds gave

me this coin at Plaistow 21 April, 1778.

X. In y^e field of y^e Reverse, behind y^e capital figure, an N.