

THE
CARLETON ST PETER
HOARD





THE FIND

The exciting hoard was discovered on three occasions in February 2000 by a metal detectorist searching a cultivated field near the village. The first find was of 53 coins together with fragments of a grey ware pot. Two further searches revealed a further 53 and 21 coins making a total of 127 coins found in all. All the coins were of bronze and from a similar period, all being minted after AD 320.

Three sherds from the base and wall of a 3rd Century AD Beaker type vessel were also recovered. These sherds show signs of green encrustation confirming that this was the original container for the hoard, which must have been dispersed by agricultural activity.

The hoard consists of coins minted under Constantine I, his sons Constantine II, Crispus and Constantius II as well as Constantine I's joint emperor Licinius I.

The find was reported to the British Museum who submitted it as Treasure under the Treasure act (1996) and acquired one coin, the remainder were disclaimed and returned to the finder. During this process the coins were catalogued, a copy of which can be provided upon request.

The 127 coins found were all bronze follies and date to a relatively short period of Roman occupation in Britain, 320-332A.D. This was a peaceful and very prosperous time in Roman Britain.

HISTORY OF THE AREA

Norfolk lies on the eastern edge of the country and forms part of East Anglia. The area was occupied by the Iceni tribe during the Iron Age and prior to Roman invasion of Britain in 43AD. Initially the Iceni kings having sworn allegiance to Rome remained in place, however following the Bouddica rebellion in AD 60-61 the Romans imposed direct rule which lasted until they withdrew around AD 410.

Carleton St Peter lies on the edge of the areas now known as the Norfolk Broads. Although fertile and rich farmland much of this area is low lying being close to the River Yare. The Yare is one of the major rivers in the county flowing through Norwich before discharging into Oulton Broad and thence the sea close to Great Yarmouth. The Waveney, another major river, runs a few miles to the south and also flows into Oulton Broad.

The old Iceni capital Venta Icenorum as well as Great Yarmouth were both large settlements during Roman times. Great Yarmouth being on the coast was primarily used as a port. The

nearby rivers were used as a means of communication to the various inland settlements such as Norwich which lies just to the north of Venta Icenorum. To help protect the coastal area the Romans built fortresses nearby at Burgh Castle and Caister. Caister became one of the largest Roman settlements in East Anglia.

Venta Icenorum lies in the Tas valley, roughly 6 miles from Carleton St Peter. The present A140 Trunk road, parts of which follow a Roman road, runs from the north Norfolk coast near Cromer south to Norwich, past Venta Icenorum to Colchester and London.

For most of the Roman occupation this part of Norfolk was peaceful and with trade flourishing became wealthy. Finance most likely came from cloth, general farming, fishing as well as pottery manufacture.

LOOKING AT THE COINS

At the start of Constantine's reign the Roman Empire was divided into an eastern sphere, which was ruled by Licinius, and a western sphere which was ruled by Constantine. In AD 324 Constantine deposed his co-emperor Licinius after two civil wars which culminated in Licinius being beaten by Constantine at the battle of Chrysopolis.

Constantine thus became sole emperor of the entire empire. In AD 330 Constantinople was founded and made capital of his Eastern empire. Rome meanwhile continued as the capital of the Western empire. Constantinopolis and Urbs Roma coins, which are both represented in the hoard, were issued at around this time to commemorate the establishment of the new capitals.

In December AD 333 another Constantine's sons, Constans was elevated to Caesar however none of his coins are present in the hoard. This suggests that the hoard was deposited before AD 334. The hoard though does contain a number of coins from the Lyon mint which are known to have been minted in AD 332. It therefore seems likely that the hoard was deposited in about AD 333.



WHERE WERE THEY MINTED?

The coins from the Carleton St Peter hoard date to between 320AD and 332AD and were minted all over the Roman Empire but predominately in the west, the map below shows the mint distribution.



Mints present – London, Trier, Lyon, Arles, Rome, Ticinum, Siscia, Thessalonica.

In AD 328 the Arles mint was renamed Constantina in honour of Constantine II, the emperor's oldest son. When Constantine II was killed in AD 340 the name of the city reverted to Arelate before Constantius II restored the dynastic connection by renaming the place Constania in AD 353.

There are a large number of types and emperors represented, remarkable given the short window of production.

The coins present can be grouped in to two periods, 320-324AD when Constantine the Great (306-337AD) the first Christian emperor ruled jointly with his pagan rival Licinius (308-324AD) and then 324-337AD when Constantine the Great ruled as senior emperor with his sons as junior emperors.

Below is a table showing the emperors & types present:

Constantine the Great 306-337A.D.	42
Licinius I 308-324A.D.	1
Constantine II (as Caesar, son of Constantine the Great)	27
Constantius II (as Caesar, son of Constantine the Great)	12
Crispus (as Caesar, son of Constantine the Great) 317-326A.D.	10
Constantinopolis issues	18
Urbs Roma	10
Uncertain (the whole hoard was only available to be studied uncleaned so attribution was difficult in some cases)	2

OBVERSE & REVERSE VARIETIES

Laureate Bust

The laureate bust type is the most common of the bust types in this hoard. The emperor is shown crowned with a laurel bust. This type of bust dated back to the first Roman emperor Augustus. The laureate crown was only conferred on those who had acquired pro-consular dignity. Caesars therefore were not therefore shown with a laureate crown unless they had also been invested with the title emperor. The laurel crown was initially used by Julius Caesar to help disguise his lack of hair!



Consular Bust

The consular bust type, which was used by both Constantine I and his eldest son Constantine II, is relatively rare. It was used to signify the fact that the emperor was also made a consul during each year of his reign. The eagle tipped sceptre signified imperial authority whilst Victory on a globe was used to signify that the emperor was all powerful. The consulate was initially established after the abolition of royalty in 510 BC. The consulate was the highest office that could be conferred by the Roman Republic and was initially for a period of one year. Julius Caesar was appointed consul for life in 44BC effectively becoming a dictator and leading to his assassination on the Ides of March.



Helmeted Bust

This type was designed to show that the emperor was the Commander in chief and First Soldier of the empire, a strong image to portray a strong leader.



SOL INVICTO COMITI.

Sol raising right hand and holding a globe

Sol was the pagan god of the sun. He is usually depicted naked wearing a radiate crown and holding a globe or a whip. His titles include COMES (Companion) and INVICTVS (Unconquered). When styled ORIENS it may be taken to allude to the rising fortunes of the emperor.



Continued...

OBVERSE & REVERSE VARIETIES *CONTINUED*

PROVIDENTIAE AVGG. Campgate

This was used to signify the building of fortress and fortifications as the empire came under attack. This type was basically used for propaganda purposes to show that the emperor was taking action to protect the empire from attack.



BEATA TRANQUILLITAS.

Altar inscribed VOT/IS/XX in 3 lines

Surmounted by globe and stars. One of the first non pagan designs to be used it basically means The beautiful peace. Used to promote the benefits of the peace and tranquillity of Roman rule which allowed trade and the economy to flourish.



SAMATIA DEVICTA.

Victory advancing right holding trophy and palm, Captive at feet

This series commemorates Constantine's success in his Danubian campaign against the Sarmatians in AD 322 just prior to the second Civil War with Licinius.



VOT/X, VOT/V/MVLT/X, VOTIS/XXX, MVLTIS/XXXX. Wreath with vows

This type of reverse was used to commemorate significant vows undertaken during the emperor's rule, these would have taken place at important ceremonies and no doubt been followed by celebrations which the Romans became famous for!



Continued...

OBVERSE & REVERSE VARIETIES *CONTINUED*

VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC PERP.

Two figures inscribing altar

2 Victories standing facing, placing a shield on a pedestal inscribed with vows VOT/XX. Captives are sometimes shown seated below. This issue commemorates the success and might of Roman arms.



GLORIA EXERCITVS.

Soldiers and Standards

2 Soldiers standing facing each other each resting on a spear and shield. There are 2 standards between them. This issue bears reference to the bravery and fortitude of the Roman soldier in subduing the barbarous tribes especially those of Francia and Alamannia.



Wolf and Twins

This signifies the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus in 753 BC. Their mother, Rhea Silvia, was a Vestal Virgin and daughter of King Numitor. Rhea conceived the twins when she visited a sacred grove that was dedicated to the god Mars. The twins were considered a threat by his brother Amulus and thrown out. Legend has it that they were adopted and raised by a wolf later to return and kill Amulus, restoring their grandfathers' throne. Romulus went on to kill Remus and later became the first king of Rome. This issue was to commemorate the founding of the western empire under Constantine the Great in AD 330 and the rededication of Rome as the capital of the west.



Winged Victory on Prow

This issue signifies the founding and dedication of Constantinople as the capital of the eastern empire which was created by Constantine the Great in AD 330. These coins were issued by Constantine and his sons. The Victory commemorates the success of Roman arms.



CONSERVATION

4th Century bronze coins often encounter significant encrustation when hoarded underground for 1600 years, this hoard was no exception, fortunately we know specialist conservators who can help remove this deposit without damaging the coin itself. The results shown below speak for themselves.



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



CONCLUSION

Silbury Coins was delighted to be offered this hoard. Often disclaimed hoards are sold without the study & publication given here which is a shame as it can bring joy to many involved with the find, living in the local area or wishing to own part of a real Roman treasure find.

Silbury Coins has had lots of experience dealing with disclaimed hoards and knew the right specialist conservator to be able to remove the encrustation and turn the coins in to something presentable and desirable to the collector. This represents an opportunity for experienced and novice collectors alike to buy a coin from a well-researched Treasure find, only adding to the historical interest and enjoyment of owning coins like these.

We look forward to being contacted by the next lucky finder!



BACKGROUND TO SILBURY COINS

Silbury coins is a well-known and respected name in the numismatic world. Director John Philpotts has been handling coins and antiquities for 30 years. With a great team around him, Silbury Coins provides a professional service, whilst still retaining the personal touch. Driven by a passion for hands-on history ever since being given his first Roman coin by his father at the age of 6 John remains just as passionate today, as does his father who regularly attends numismatic events with the company. When buying from Silbury Coins you will be dealing with expert numismatists and receive all the benefits of their years of knowledge and experience.

As members of the BNTA we adhere to their strict code of conduct as a start but we like to take it further than that. As well as offering nothing but genuine, correctly described stock we ensure that our prices are fair both to the buyer & seller. Dealing with Silbury Coins you will find honesty and integrity is of foremost importance in their day to day business. If you choose to deal with us then you will be treated as we would want to be treated ourselves.

As well as offering a wonderful and vast selection of coins for sale we provide much information for collectors starting out and are happy to assist those who've spent a lifetime collecting coins.

The best place to browse our stock is on our website, or if you'd prefer, you can get in touch to arrange a meeting.

We are always looking to replenish our stock, if you would like to sell single coins or a collection/hoard then get in touch.

To discuss buying or selling you can contact us using one of the following ways:

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