

A CARAUSIAN HOARD FROM CROYDON, SURREY, AND A NOTE ON CARAUSIUS'S CONTINENTAL POSSESSIONS

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'In June 1893 about 120 coins of Carausius and a large brass of Domitian were dug up at South Croydon'.¹ In 1895 thirty-two coins were presented to the British Museum by Thomas Rigby from a hoard found in Croydon.² In 1970 two groups of coins with a Croydon provenance, in all fifty-six coins, were recorded in the trays of two London coin dealers.³ The distinctive patina of the latter coins was exactly similar to the Rigby coins in the British Museum, and clearly shows that they were part of the same find; given the proximity in date of the Rigby donation to the Museum (1895) and the discovery in Croydon (1893), the origin of all the coins is beyond reasonable doubt. It can now be seen that the BM coins were selected for their numismatic interest, but, with the addition of the new (1970) element to the hoard, we can presume that the eighty-eight coins now gathered together represent a fair cross-section of the original one hundred and twenty.

The contents of the Croydon hoard have several important features which offer fundamental information on the chronology of Carausius's coinage.

Firstly, the bulk of the hoard consists of Unmarked issues, yet the hoard terminates with the London issue marked F(0)/ML which can be placed early in the reign: Carson, for instance, assigned it to 289.⁴ This supports the contention that Unmarked coins should be placed at the beginning of the reign. One of the Unmarked coins in the hoard (No. 55: Plate 3) has a consular bust on the obverse,⁵ suggesting that Carausius proclaimed himself consul in the first calendar year of his reign (from 1 January 287), as was the normal constitutional practice of legitimate emperors.

Next, the hoard contained an antoninianus with the RSR mint-mark (No. 9: Plate 1). This mark has been interpreted as indicative of the participation in the issue of the *officium* of the *rationalis summae rei*, the officer of state concerned with finance (perhaps, in this case, Allectus). The early date of the Croydon hoard implies an early date for the RSR issues; not merely for the fairly rare antoniniani, but also the RSR medallion⁶ which, with its consular bust, refers to the consulship of 287, the same consulship as that recorded on Unmarked antoniniani, and, more importantly, also for Carausian silver with RSR (and probably that without any mint-mark as well). Significantly, many of these silver issues also display a consular bust.⁷ The unique aureus with RSR⁸ should, in addition, be of the same early date, especially as it shares its obverse die with an Unmarked antoninianus.⁹ These observations lend support to the view that all Carausian gold without the ML mint-mark is early,¹⁰ forming a component of the Unmarked mint's output. Moreover, the recently

¹ J. Cobet Anderson, 'Collections relating to Beddington, Croydon and neighbourhood' (manuscript notebooks, Croydon Library), I, 50. We owe this information to Mrs M. E. Shaw.

² The British Museum register records the accession as a presentation by 'Thos. Rigby, Esq. (Find of Carausius from Croydon)'.

³ Spink and Son Ltd and Meridien Coin Co., to whom our thanks are due. We also thank Mr C. J. Bailey for showing us his five coins, included in the trade lot, particularly the Unmarked consular antoninianus.

⁴ R. A. G. Carson, 'The mints and coinage of Carausius and Allectus' *JBAA* 22 (1959), 33ff, and 'The sequence-

marks on the coinage of Carausius and Allectus' in *Mints, Dies and Currency: Essays Presented in Memory of Albert Baldwin* (1971), pp. 57-65.

⁵ For other Unmarked antoniniani with consular busts, see BM with rev. PAX AVG (same dies as Croydon coin) and rev. FORTVNA REDVX, or Bonhams I (1980) lot 525.

⁶ N. Shiel, *The Episode of Carausius and Allectus* (1977), p. 162.

⁷ Shiel, pp. 94-114.

⁸ Shiel, p. 146 no. 5.

⁹ H. A. Seaby, 'A Find of Coins of Carausius from the Little Orme's Head', *NC* 6th series 16 (1956), 215 no. 97a.

¹⁰ Shiel, pp. 153-4.

discovered helmeted bust aureus¹¹ has strong stylistic affinities with Unmarked antoniniani.

Thirdly, the hoard contains a specimen of the 'Rouen' mint (No. 8; Plate 1).¹² It is now clear that this mint was indeed situated in Rouen, and not in Boulogne or even Britain, as has been considered previously.¹³ The Croydon hoard, however, helps refute the suggestion that its activity should be dated to 290/1,¹⁴ a suggestion which is based on the inclusion of C(aesar) in the obverse titulature. This addition to Carausius's titles took place at the same time at the London and the C mint, and Carson associated the change with Carausius's successful repulse of an invasion attempt and a consequent establishment of a Carausian enclave in north-west Gaul.¹⁵

In our view, however, the inclusion of C(aesar) in the titles at Rouen is irrelevant since Rouen coins have appeared in two British hoards, Croydon and Little Orme's Head,¹⁶ both of which closed with F/O//ML, a mint-mark which is earlier than the change in legend at the British mints. It seems clear, then, that C was used at Rouen well before it was added in Britain.

When, then, did the Rouen mint operate? We would like to adopt Kent's suggestion¹⁷ that the Rouen coinage was struck as the accession issue of the new regime, and that this accession took place on the Continent and that the Continental territory was quickly lost to the forces of Diocletian and Maximian, only subsequently being recovered after Maximian's unsuccessful attempt to invade Britain in 289.

The accession of Carausius can probably be placed in the middle of 286, a date suggested by the closure by Maximian of Lugdunum as a mint producing gold¹⁸ and by the consideration that coins of the same mid-286 date comprised the last issues of Maximian and Diocletian to reach Britain in the Linchmere hoard.¹⁹ There seems little to explain the removal of gold stocks from Lyon (presumably to Rome) unless there was indeed a threat. This threat, given all the circumstances, can only be the presence of Carausius on the Continent at this time. Some confirmation for this may be derived from a passage in the Panegyric delivered to Maximian in 289 on the eve of his abortive attack on Britain:

vestrae, inquam, fortunae. vestrae felicitatis est, imperator, quod iam milites vestri ad oceanum pervenere victoria, iam caesorum in illo litore hostium sanguinem reciproci fluctus sorbuerunt.²⁰

'It is part of your good fortune and success that already your soldiers have reached the ocean, victorious, and already the ebb and flow of the tide have sucked the blood of your enemies slain upon that shore'

Although distanced from the events of 286 by three years, the claim that Carausian forces had been defeated on the Continent may be related to the expulsion of the new regime at an earlier date. There is certainly no context for such a claim if Carausius held no Continental territory before the events of 289 and had initiated his regime only after fleeing to Britain in 286.

How long might such an early holding of Continental territory have lasted? Rouen coins include gold issues (in fact a single die) which appear to display consular busts.²¹ This might suggest that the Continental holding lasted from mid-286 till after the beginning of 287. But the Rouen coinage is quite small and does not suggest a long period of issue.²² One might

¹¹ Numismatic Fine Arts VI (22 Feb. 1979), lot 911. Some doubts have been expressed about this coin's authenticity.

¹² B. Beaujard and H. Huvelin in *Histoire et Numismatique en Haute-Normandie. Cahier des Annales de Normandie*, edited by N. Gauthier (1980), p. 82 no. 31.

¹³ H. Huvelin and X. Loriot. *CENB* 1983, 65-74.

¹⁴ Huvelin and Loriot.

¹⁵ Carson.

¹⁶ Seaby, pp. 205-46, especially p. 215, nos. 98-9.

¹⁷ Put forward at the BM/BNS colloquium on Carausius in November 1984. Although Dr Kent has allowed us to adopt his remarks, it does not follow that our arguments represent

his own detailed view.

¹⁸ P. Bastien, *Le monnayage de l'atelier de Lyon 285-294* (1972), nos. 29-34.

¹⁹ *NC* 5th series 5 (1925), 173ff.: the 41 Lyon coins are dated according to Bastien's arrangement (note 18); the Rome coin belongs to Diocletian's sole reign.

²⁰ R. A. B. Mynors, *XII Panegyrici Latini* (1964), X(II) 11,7.

²¹ Shiel, plate B no. 7.

²² Further, Casey has shown (*Britannia* 8 (1977), 288), that, from its distribution, the unmarked coinage was neither produced in nor circulated in Gaul.

speculate that the Rouen coins do not actually refer to a consulship,²³ or that they do not refer to the consulship of 287, but a suffect consulship already held by Carausius.²⁴ While this is speculative, it opens up the possibility that the Unmarked coinage was produced in Britain before Carausius's arrival, and that only then were mints established at two centres, a move which required the differentiation of products by mint-marking. That the Unmarked coinage is of markedly different composition to the products of the marked issues may be significant in this context.²⁵

²³ Carausius does not hold the *scipio*; possibly the coins only depict him in triumphal dress. The coin, with *trabea* and *scipio*, published as a Rouen antoninianus (C. J. Bailey *NCirc* 1981, 321, cf. X. Lorient (*ENB* 1983, 71) is not, in our view a product of Rouen, as it has the wrong reverse type and epigraphy.

²⁴ The continuation of suffect consulships even after the reforms of Gallienus is attested by epigraphic evidence, specifically in 289, a date close to that under discussion:

Dessau *ILS* 4175 (an important reference we owe to J. C. Mann). There is nothing to contradict the view that suffect consuls could assume consular dress; while it might be uncouth for Carausius to appear thus on the Rouen coinage, it would not involve any violation of iconographic principle.

²⁵ L. H. Cope, 'The Metallurgical Development of the Roman Imperial Coinage during the First Five Centuries AD' (Ph.D. thesis, *CNA*, 1974), p. 186: unmarked coins contain no silver.

CATALOGUE

As much detail as possible is given of the eighty-eight recorded specimens; the amount of information obviously varies according to the circumstances of recording (for instance, no weights are known for the Spink and Meridien lots, except where the current location of some coins from them is known). A number in brackets after the catalogue number refers to the final part of the BM registration number. Thus 19(28) means that coin 19 is in the BM, registration number 1895-12-4-28.

No.	Reverse	Mint mark	Weight g	Die-axis	Reference RIC
GALLIENUS <i>Mint of Rome</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP GALLIENVS AVG				
1.	APOLLINI CONS AVG	△			165
DEIFIED CLAUDIUS II <i>Mint of Rome</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> DIVO CLAVDIO				
2.	PAX AVG (hybrid)				283
VICTORINUS <i>Mint I</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP C VICTORINVS P F AVG				
3.	INVICTVS	* /			114
4.	"	"			"
TETRICUS I <i>Mint I</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP C TETRICVS P F AVG				
5.	SPES PVBLICA				136c
6.	" "				"
TETRICUS II <i>Mint I</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> C PIV ESV TETRICVS CAES				
7.	PAX AVG				248

No.	Reverse	Mint mark	Weight g	Die-axis	Reference RIC
CARAUSIUS					
All coins have draped and cuirassed busts, except for 20 and 55.					
<i>Mint of Rouen</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP C CARAVSIVS AVG				
8(1).	FIDE[S MI] LITVM		3.25	12	637
<i>RSR mint</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG				
9(5).	CONCORDIA MILITVM	RSR	2.66	6	604
<i>London mint</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG				
10(6).	[C] OHRT PR[AET]	ML	3.78	?	12
11.	[LEG I MI] N	"	"	6	cf. 56
12(14).	LEG [I M] IN	"	4.22	6	"
13(13).	LEG II [AV] G	"	3.82	7	58
14(12).	LEG [VII] CL	"	4.86	5	75
15.	PAX AVG	"	"	6	101
16.	" "	"	"	6	"
17.	SALVS AVG	"	"	6	155
18(15).	" "	"	4.23	6	"
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P AVG				
19(28).	PAX AVG	L (<i>sic</i>)	4.08	12	122
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG				
20(25).	PAX AVG	F[0]ML	2.89	1	121
21(27).	" "	" "	2.81	11	101
<i>'C' mint</i>					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG				
22(4).	FORT I	C	2.87	6	236
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P AVG				
23(10).	MONE[TA] AVG	"	3.25	6	288
<i>Unmarked issues</i> (some probably irregular)					
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARVSIVS P F AVG				
24(2).	FIDES MILITVM		5.17	6	783
25.	FO[RTVNA] AVG			12	-
26.	FORTVNA AVG			6	-
	<i>Obv.</i> [IMP] CARAVSIVS I				
27.	FO[RTVNA] AVG			6	-
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP C M CARAVSIVS AVG				
28.	MONE] TA AV[G			6	859var.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Reverse</i>	<i>Mint mark</i>	<i>Weight</i> g	<i>Die-axis</i>	<i>Reference</i> <i>RIC</i>
<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG					
29.	MONETA AVG		2.82	6	855
30.	ORIENS AVG			1	869
31.	ORIENS AVG			1	"
32.	PAX AVG (vertical sceptre)			6	880
33.	"			7	"
34.	"			6	"
35.	"			6	"
36.	"		3.65	11	"
37.	"			6	"
38.	"			6	"
39.	"			6	"
40.	"			6	"
41.	"			9	"
42.	"			6	"
43.	"			12	"
44.	"			6	"
45.	"		3.38	6	"
46.	"			7	"
47.	"		3.89	6	"
48(23).	"		4.02	8	"
<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AV					
49(22).	"		5.12	6	"
<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG					
50(20).	"		4.56	6	"
51(24).	"		2.42	5	"
52(9).	"		2.03	9	"
<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P AVG					
53(29).	PAX AVG		3.60	6	881
54(7).	"		3.78	6	"
55.	"		3.93	6	" (consular)
<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F A					
56(21).	PAX AVG		3.52	11	888
<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG					
57(16).	PAX AVG (transverse sceptre)		5.23	12	895
58.	"			6	"
59.	"			6	"
60.	"		3.09	9	"
61.	"			1	"
62.	"			9	"
63.	PAX AVG (short baton)			6	-
64.	PAX AVG (wreath? and cornucopia)			7	917
65(31).	PAX AVS (corn ear and cornucopia)		4.99	1	"
66(18).	PAX AVG (running l.)		4.07	6	903
67(32).	PAX AVG (anchor and wreath)		3.07	1	-
68(11).	PAX AVG (sceptre with snake)		2.49	1	-
<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AV					
69(19).	PAX AVG	*-#	3.19	12	-

No.	Reverse	Mint mark	Weight g	Die-axis	Reference RIC
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS AVG				
70(8).	PROVID[ENTIA] AVG		2.69	6	cf. 956
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG				
71.	SALVS AVG			7	983
72.	"			12	"
73.	VICTORIA AVG			6	1020
74.	"			7	"
75.	VICTORIA AV			6	"
76.	VICTORIA AVG		2.66	6	"
77.	VIRTVS AVG			6	1038
78.				6	"
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AV				
79(3).	VIRTVS AVG		3.96	7	1039
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P AV				
80(17).	LITIT A [VG]		3.80	12	835var.

Irregular issues

The distinction between regular and irregular is notoriously hard to draw among unmarked Carausian coins. A number of pieces catalogued among nos. 24–81 may also be irregular (e.g. 41–2, 48, 51–2, 57, 60–1, 65, 67 and 80).

	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CAR[] JA				
81.	AM ; Moneta			11	cf. 855
	<i>Obv.</i> IM CARAVSIVS P F AVG (garbled)				
82.	PAX AVG			11	cf. 880
	<i>Obv.</i> Legend garbled				
83(16).	Garbled: Salus with snake		2.59	6	–
	<i>Obv.</i> IMP CARAVSIVS P F AVG				
84(30).	Garbled: Pax		3.22	12	–

Additional

85–88. A further 4 coins with Pax reverses were disposed of before recording.

Notes to the catalogue

10. Exchanged in 1977. See Lanz 30 (1984) lot 816.

11. R. A. G. Carson, *Principal Coins of the Romans*, II, no. 1130.

19. Despite the odd mint-mark the coin appears to be regular; perhaps 1. is a slip for ML?

20. Cuirassed bust. The cuirass is finely decorated, and is perhaps related to the consular bust which is known for this mark (BM).

21. Imitation. Struck over Claudius II.

25. Standing left holding scales and cornucopia (i.e. confusion with Moneta).

26. Standing left holding short sceptre and cornucopia.

27. Standing left holding branch and vertical sceptre (confusion with Pax).

28. A number of coins (e.g. BM) are known with this form of obverse legend and without any mint-mark. They are exceptions to the 'rule' (occasionally broken even by marked coins) that c does not appear before the second half of the reign.

30. One captive.

31. Two captives

42. Struck over Victorinus.

52. Overstruck.
54. Struck over Tetricus I.
55. Consular bust left – see discussion above.
63. Confusion with Laetitia?
64. Altar at foot.
67. Confusion with Laetitia. Altar at foot. Overstruck.
68. Confusion with Salus. Traces of letters in exergue. Overstruck.
70. Globe and transverse sceptre.
- 73–4. Same reverse die.
76. Victory walks left.
82. Struck over Gallienus. DIANA: CONS AVG.

PLATE 1



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PLATE 2



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PLATE 3

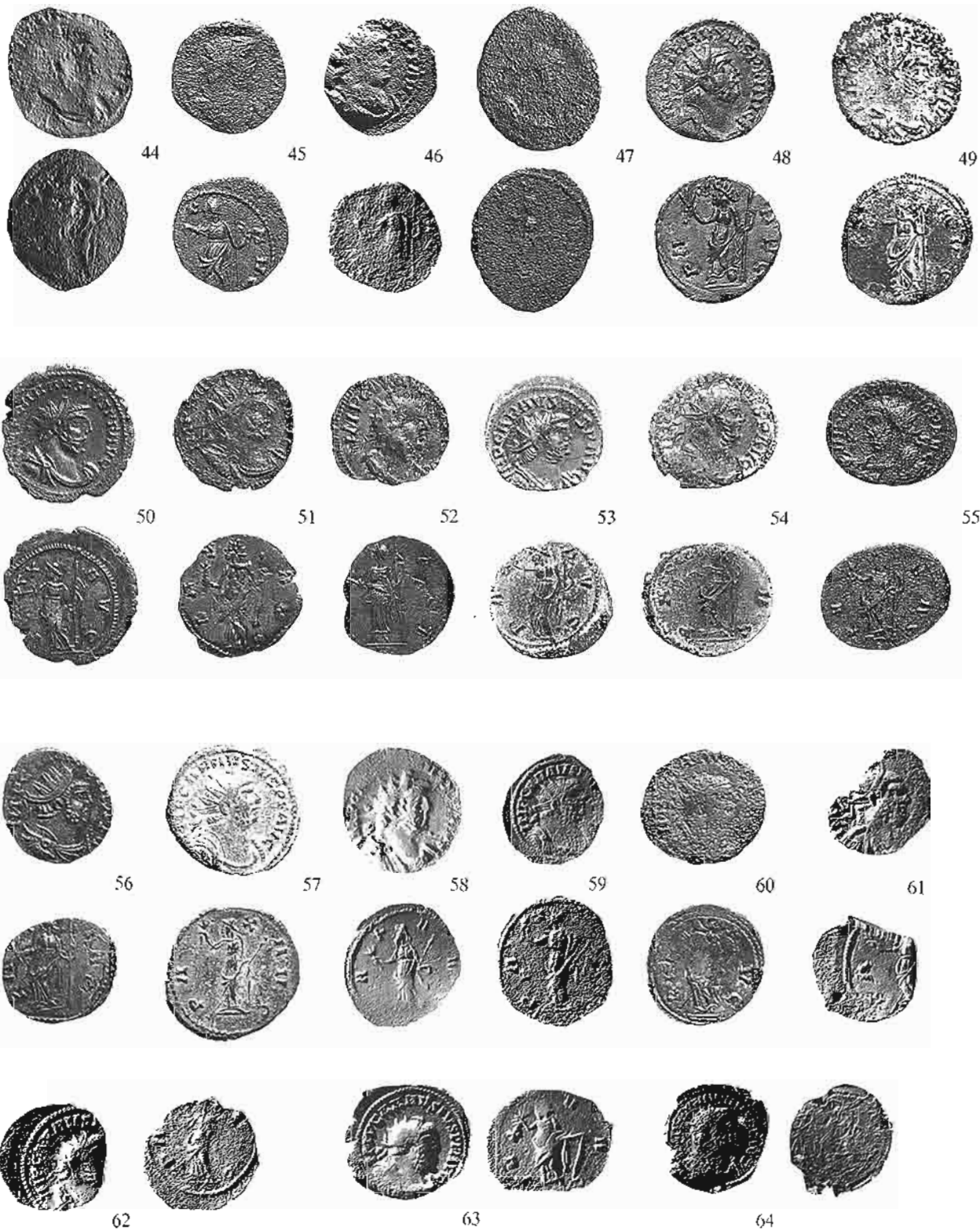


PLATE 4

