

DAVID R. SEAR

Certificate of Authenticity

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This coin has been personally inspected and authenticated by

Issued to: Jens Georg Feierabend

On: April 25, 2017

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Caligula (AD 37-41)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: AD 37-38

Weight: 24.22 grams

Maximum Diameter: 34.65 millimeters

Die Axis: ↓

Obverse: C CAESAR AVG GERMANICVS PON M TR POT, laureate head of Caligula left.

Reverse: S P Q R / P P / OB CIVES / SERVATOS in four lines within oak wreath.

References: RIC 37; BMCRE 38 and pl. 28, 5; CBN 50 and pl. xiii; Cohen 24; Sear (*Roman Coins & Their Values I*) 1801 variant — dated TR P III = AD 39-40.

Grade: F, with porous surfaces

Historical & Numismatic Note: Rome's third emperor was the great-grandson of both of the principal adversaries in the battle of Actium (31 BC) — Mark Antony and Octavian. Although his official name was Gaius, he had acquired the nickname “Caligula” from the tiny military boots or *caligae* that he wore as a young child during the campaigns of his father Germanicus. In the latter part of Tiberius' reign, Caligula's mother and two elder brothers all fell victim to the political ambitions of the praetorian prefect Sejanus. Caligula's youth saved him and in AD 32 he moved to Capri where he was the constant companion of his great-uncle, the elderly and reclusive Tiberius. On the emperor's death five years later, Caligula ascended the throne and occupied it until his assassination less than four years later. The excesses and debaucheries of his reign are well documented and have exercised the talents (and imaginations) of authors and filmmakers alike. In marked contrast to the emperor's bizarre behavior, the coinage of Caligula's reign is notably conservative in character and there are many types honoring the emperor's relatives, both living and deceased. The reverse of this sestertius depicts the “civic crown” (*corona civica*) which had originally been awarded to Augustus by the Senate in recognition of his outstanding services to the State (27 BC). Later emperors appear to have received the *corona civica* as a token of the constitutional inauguration of a new reign. Caligula was the first emperor to place his portrait head on sestertii minted in Rome and this specimen belongs to the initial issue of his *aes* coinage struck between March 18, AD 37, and March 17, AD 38.

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