

DAVID R. SEAR

Certificate of Authenticity

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This coin has been personally inspected and authenticated by

Issued to: Jens Feierabend

On: May 27, 2017

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Galba (AD 68-69)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: AD 68 (c. October)

Weight: 25.33 grams

Maximum Diameter: 37.06 millimeters

Die Axis: ↙

Obverse: SER GALBA IMP CAESAR AVG TR P, laureate and draped bust of Galba right.

Reverse: LIBERTAS PVBLICA S C, Libertas standing left, holding pileus in extended right hand and vertical sceptre at her side in left.

References: RIC 388; BMCRE 69-70; CBN 194; Cohen 112; Kraay ("The Aes Coinage of Galba", *ANS NNM 133*) p. 88, 200 (obv. die A148, rev. die unlisted).

Grade: nearly VF with brown patina and struck on a large flan, edge flaw on obverse at 11 o'clock

Historical & Numismatic Note: Servius Sulpicius Galba, born of an aristocratic family in 3 BC and a favorite of the Empress Livia in his youth, had a most distinguished public career culminating in the governorship of Hispania Tarraconensis in the latter part of Nero's reign. When Vindex, governor of Gallia Lugdunensis, rebelled against Nero in March, AD 68, he invited Galba to join him and promised to support him as Nero's replacement on the imperial throne. Vindex soon perished but by then Galba had already committed himself to the revolt and Nero's suicide soon afterwards assured his success. However, Galba's reign was of but short duration. He failed to gain popularity, chiefly through his notorious miserliness that made him greatly disliked by the army. His supporter in the revolt against Nero, M. Salvius Otho, had hoped to be adopted as his successor. But when, early in January 69, Galba selected a certain L. Calpurnius Piso as his heir the disgruntled Otho wasted no time in organizing a conspiracy of the Praetorian Guard. On January 15, Galba and Piso were both assassinated in the Roman Forum, their severed heads being taken to Otho in the praetorian camp. Galba's *aes* coinage from the mint of Rome is on a remarkably large scale considering the brevity of his reign. Sutherland dates this variety of the sestertius (RIC vol. I, revised edition) to October of AD 68, at about the time of the new emperor's arrival in Rome. The reverse type proclaims "the Freedom of the State", a popular theme on the coinage of Galba and one that refers directly to the overthrow of the tyrannical regime of Nero and the restoration of constitutional government. In commenting on the prominence of this type on Galba's coinage Mattingly (BMCRE vol. I, p. ccv) notes "It was significant that Galba made his first proclamation against Nero on a day set for the granting of freedom to slaves".

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