

DAVID R. SEAR

Certificate of Authenticity

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Issued to: Jens Georg Feierabend

On: August 29, 2017

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Didius Julianus (AD 193, March 28—June 1)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: AD 193, March 28—June 1

Weight: 17.93 grams

Maximum Diameter: 26.73 millimeters

Die Axis: ↓

Obverse: IMP CAES M DID SEVER IVLIAN AVG, laureate head of Didius Julianus right.

Reverse: [RECTOR OR]BIS, emperor, bareheaded and togate, standing facing, looking left, holding globe on extended right hand and scroll at his side in left, S — C in lower field.

References: Woodward ("The Coinage of Didius Julianus and his Family," in *Num. Chron.* 1961, obv. die 16/rev. die F); RIC 16; BMCRE 28 and pl. 4, 3; Hunter 10; Cayon 5; Cohen 17; Sear (*Roman Coins and Their Values II*) 6077.

Grade: fair, rare

Historical & Numismatic Note: Marcus Didius Severus Julianus was born about AD 133 of a prominent family in Mediolanum (Milan). He had a long and distinguished public career and, ironically, held the consulship in AD 174 or 175 with the future emperor Pertinax as his colleague. On the assassination of Pertinax on March 28, 193, the mutinous Praetorian Guard put the imperial throne up for auction, the bidders being Didius Julianus and Pertinax's father-in-law, T. Flavius Sulpicianus. Julianus won by offering 25,000 sestertii per soldier, a colossal sum that in fact was never paid in full. However, these disgraceful proceedings aroused so much resentment in the provinces that three governors in widely separated areas of the Empire were, almost simultaneously, proclaimed emperor by their troops (Clodius Albinus in Britain, Septimius Severus in Pannonia, and Pescennius Niger in Syria). Of these, Severus was the closest to Italy and determined on a rapid march on the capital. His tactics were successful and quickly undermined Julianus' authority as the city awaited with trepidation the arrival of the avowed avenger of Pertinax. Julianus tried unsuccessfully to negotiate with Severus and, having been deposed by the Senate, took refuge in his deserted palace. There, on June 1st, he was murdered by a soldier after a reign of just 66 days. Because of the brevity of his regime, the coinage of Didius Julianus is on a very limited scale, though it did include issues in all metals and there were even coins in the names of the emperor's wife, Manlia Scantilla, and their daughter, Didia Clara. This specimen represents one of only three sestertius reverse types recorded for Julianus. The inscription RECTOR ORBIS ("Ruler of the World") sounds a hollow note in its application to an emperor whose authority was based on such flimsy foundations. Mattingly regarded the coins of Julianus without SEVER in the obverse legend as belonging to his first issue, and those with SEVER as representing the second and final issue. A.M. Woodward (*Numismatic Chronicle*, 1961, pp. 71 ff.), however, reversed this order on the evidence of obverse busts and die-analysis. To the present writer it seems likely that the longer form of the legend was used throughout the reign on the sestertius denomination because of the additional space available on the flans.

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