

**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: September 26, 2017

*David R. Sear*

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Nero (AD 54-68)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: circa AD 65

Weight: 22.85 grams

Maximum Diameter: 32.32 millimeters

Die Axis: ↓

Obverse: NERO CLAVD CAESAR AVG GER P M TR P IMP P P, laureate head of Nero right.

Reverse: PACE P R TERRA MARIQ PARTA IANVM CLVSIT, view of the 'Twin Janus' (*ianus geminus*) in the Roman Forum, showing closed double doors and one side wall (to the left) with latticed window running along its entire length about halfway up, S — C across field.

References: RIC — (cf. 171 in original edition); BMCRE 158; CBN 371 and pl. LI; Cohen 146; Mac Dowall ("The Western Coinages of Nero", *ANS NNM 161*) 148; Cayón (*Los Sestercios del Imperio Romano*) 165; cf. Sear (*Roman Coins & Their Values I*) 1958 — for a similar issue from the Lugdunum mint.

Grade: an attractive VF/nearly VF with excellent portrait

Historical & Numismatic Note: originally named L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, Nero was born in AD 37, the son of Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus (consul AD 32) and Agrippina Junior, sister of Caligula. Later, when Agrippina married her uncle, the Emperor Claudius, her son was adopted for the imperial succession and his name changed to Nero Claudius Caesar Drusus Germanicus. Four years later (AD 54) Claudius died, possibly poisoned by Agrippina, and Nero became the fifth emperor of Rome. In the early years of his reign political power was in the hands of wise counselors such as Seneca and Burrus, but from AD 62 the young emperor asserted his independence. With the encouragement of his dissolute companions, his behavior became increasingly eccentric and he fancied himself as a great artist, poet, and theatrical performer. The Roman world eventually tired of his follies and revolt broke out in several provinces, leading eventually to Nero's suicide in AD 68. Remarkably, for almost the first decade of the reign no *aes* coinage was produced at all. However, in circa AD 63 base metal denominations were reintroduced and thereafter coinage was on a large scale from both the Rome and Lugdunum mints. A small globe appearing at the point of the truncation on the imperial portrait generally differentiates products of the latter. Many of the types of Nero's *aes* coinage, especially the sestertii, are of considerable beauty and interest and are rendered with great artistic skill by the engravers. The reverse of this sestertius from the Rome mint depicts the 'Twin Janus' (*ianus geminus*) and relates to the achievements of the celebrated Roman general Gnaeus Domitius Corbulo. His victories in the East led to a settlement with Parthia over the vexed Armenian question, occasioning the ceremonial closing of the doors of the 'Twin Janus' signifying peace throughout the Empire (AD 65). The nature of this curious structure, situated in the Roman Forum, is best explained by John Melville Jones in *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins* — "It consisted of two arched gateways joined by walls, without a roof. When the Romans went to war, the gates were opened and when they were at peace, the gates were shut. The structure was not a temple in the strict sense of the word and was referred to as "the Janus". It is represented on coins of Nero, some of which show it from one side and others from the opposite side, so that it is clear that it had gates at each end". The accompanying inscription translates to "Peace being provided on land and sea for the Roman People, he closed the Janus".

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