

**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 12, 2018

*David R. Sear*

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Postumus (usurper in the West, AD 260-269)

Denomination: bronze sestertius

Mint: Colonia Agrippinensis (Cologne)

Date: circa AD 261

Weight: 14.42 grams

Maximum Diameter: 29.84 millimeters

Die Axis: ↓

Obverse: IMP C POSTVMVS P F AVG, laureate, draped and cuirassed bust of Postumus right.

Reverse: P M TR P COS II P P (around), S — C (in field), Postumus, helmeted and in military attire, standing facing, head left, holding globe in extended right hand and resting on spear held in left.

References: Bastien (*Le Monnayage de Bronze de Postume*) 59-61 and pl. VIII; RIC 107; Cohen 249; Sear (*Roman Coins & Their Values III*) 11089.

Grade: an attractive good VF with excellent portrait, a clean striking with pristine surfaces

Historical & Numismatic Note: little is known of the origins of Marcus Cassianus Latinius Postumus though it seems he may have been a Gaul and, from his coin portraits, was probably in his late thirties or early forties at the time of his elevation to imperial power in AD 260. Valerian and Gallienus had appointed him governor of Upper or Lower Germany and he was given supreme command on the Rhine when Gallienus left for Pannonia to put down the revolts of Ingenuus and Regalianus. However, Postumus himself rebelled against Gallienus, seized control of Cologne and put to death not only the praetorian prefect Silvanus but also the emperor's young son Saloninus, who had been left in the prefect's care. Postumus, having assumed the imperial purple, now set about organizing a rival state (the Gallic Empire) independent of the control of the central government. Ultimately, this state included Gaul, Spain and Britain and was destined to survive for almost a decade and a half. Gallienus, after several fruitless attempts to recover his lost territories, eventually acquiesced in the *fait accompli*. He had problems enough on his hands in the East where whole provinces had come under the rule of Odenathus of Palmyra following the defeat and capture of the Emperor Valerian by the Sassanid Persians. Postumus seems to have ruled his independent western Empire wisely and well for almost a decade, but was eventually assassinated by his own troops when he forbade them to sack the city of Moguntiacum (modern Mainz), which had harbored the usurper Laelianus. Although debased, the vast antoninianus coinage of Postumus compares favorably in quality with the contemporary issues of the central government. Surprisingly, *aes* denominations were produced in significant quantities by the rebel regime and in a range of denominations, including a large double sestertius. Many of these were overstruck on sestertii of the 1st and 2nd centuries, a testament to the extraordinary longevity of Roman *aes* in circulation in the western provinces. This attractive sestertius was issued at Colonia Agrippinensis (modern Cologne) which seems to have been Postumus' principal mint. The reverse legend lists the imperial titles claimed by the usurper and even though he exercised no authority in Rome, the usual formula S[enatus] C[onsulto] "by decree of the Senate" appears in the field. The military figure is probably that of the emperor himself as he holds a globe symbolizing his imperial dominion.

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