

DAVID R. SEAR

Certificate of Authenticity

issued by the Ancient Coin Certification Service (A.C.C.S.)



This coin has been personally inspected and authenticated by

Issued to: Jens Georg Feierabend

On: June 13, 2018

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-180)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: AD 161 (May-December 9)

Weight: 23.65 grams

Maximum Diameter: 32.85 millimeters

Die Axis: ↑

Obverse: IMP CAES M AVREL ANTONINVS AVG P M, bareheaded bust of Marcus Aurelius right, light drapery on left shoulder.

Reverse: CONCORD AVGVSTOR TR P XV COS III S C, Marcus Aurelius, on right, and Lucius Verus, on left, both togate, standing facing each other, clasping right hands and each holding roll in left.

References: MIR 16-6/30; BMCRE, p. 519, 848; RIC 795; cf. Cohen 45; Sear (*Roman Coins & Their Values II*) 4962 var. (bareheaded and cuirassed bust).

Grade: VF/good F, with elegant portrait of the newly elevated emperor

Historical & Numismatic Note: originally named Marcus Annius Verus, the future emperor Marcus Aurelius was born in AD 121. After his father's death, he was brought up by his grandfather (also M. Annius Verus) who had an illustrious public career and was three times consul, a rare distinction for someone outside the imperial family. He attracted the attention of the emperor Hadrian who had him betrothed to the daughter of the Caesar Aelius. Later, when Antoninus became heir to the throne following the death of Aelius, Hadrian stipulated that Marcus should be adopted by Antoninus along with Aelius' son, Lucius Verus. On the accession of Antoninus in AD 138, Marcus' career was rapidly advanced and he was even promoted to the rank of Caesar in 139. Meanwhile, his engagement to the daughter of the late Aelius Caesar was annulled and instead he was betrothed to Antoninus' daughter, Faustina Junior. Lucius Verus, on the other hand, was kept very much in the background, it being Antoninus' clear intention that Marcus alone should eventually succeed to the imperial throne. In 145, Marcus and Faustina were married and two years later, the 26-year-old Caesar was granted the tribunician power. Antoninus survived to the age of 74 and Marcus was already 40 by the time he ascended the throne. Loyal to the memory of Hadrian, one of his first acts as emperor was to associate Lucius Verus with him as co-ruler — the first joint reign in the history of the Empire. This attractive orichalcum sestertius (worth one-fourth of the silver denarius) is dated by Marcus' titles to the first year of his reign. It shows him with full beard though still bareheaded as he had been depicted throughout his period as Caesar. The reverse type features the two emperors clasping hands, symbolic of the unity of the new regime, a theme that is emphasized by the accompanying inscription — *Concordiae Augustorum* ("to the harmony of the emperors"). In reality, Marcus found his pleasure-loving junior colleague more of a liability than a support in the onerous task of governing his vast empire and Lucius' early death, in AD 169, must have come as something of a relief. Thus, the first experiment in divided imperial authority had hardly been a resounding success. Nevertheless, in the closing years of his reign, Marcus, shaken by the revolt of the popular general Avidius Cassius in the East, appointed another co-emperor in the person of his own 16-year-old son, Commodus.

DAVID R. SEAR / A.C.C.S. P. O. Box 7314, Porter Ranch, CA. 91327, U.S.A.

Phone (818) 993-7363 Mobile (818) 312-4903 E-mail david@davidrsear.com Web site www.davidrsear.com

The information provided on this certificate has been researched in good faith by the signatory utilizing sixty years of professional experience in ancient numismatics. However, no guarantee is made regarding the accuracy of any of the opinions or data conveyed above and no liability of any kind is assumed. It should be borne in mind that the authentication and grading of ancient coins is subjective and opinions can, and do, vary among experts.

Ref. 758CR/RI/N/CM