

DAVID R. SEAR

Certificate of Authenticity

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This coin has been personally inspected and authenticated by

Issued to: Jens G. Feierabend

On: January 4, 2019

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Numerian (AD 283-284)

Denomination: bronze medallion

Mint: Rome

Date: July/August AD 283

Weight: 20.86 grams

Maximum Diameter: 32.55 millimeters

Die Axis: ↑

Obverse: IMP C AVR (*sic*, for IMP C M AVR) NVMERIANVS AVG, laureate, draped and cuirassed bust of Numerian right, viewed from behind.

Reverse: MONETA AVGG, the three Monetae standing facing side by side, their heads turned to left, each holding scales and cornucopiae and with pile of metal at her feet (the cornucopiae held by the central figure curved to the right).

Pedigree: Cohen (*Médailles Impériales VI*) 32 (citing Claude Rollin); Gneecchi (*I Medaglioni Romani II*) p. 123, 9 (citing Eduard Weber Collection, Hirsch 'Consul Weber' auction 10/05/1909, lot 2424); ex Bement Collection (Navelle VIII, 25/06/1924, lot 1428); ex Schulman auction 243, 8/10/1966, lot 2507.

Grade & Comments: VF/good F, but broken and repaired. A significant portion of the flan, between 8 o'clock and 11 o'clock, was broken off (in the 19th century?) and subsequently reattached, though the obverse legend now mistakenly omits the emperor's *praenomen* 'M' before the 'AVR'. Comparison with other specimens from this die proves that the *praenomen* was an original feature of the inscription, as one would expect. What appears to have happened is that the 19th century (?) restorer of the piece decided to 'improve' on the original by re-engraving some of the details of the fragment. Note the clumsiness and larger size of the recut lettering behind the emperor's head resulting from the mistaken omission of the 'C'. Also noticeable is the appearance of the ties of the emperor's wreath, the details of which vary considerably from the original die. On the reverse, the 'AVGG' has been rather clumsily recut and the details of Moneta's clothing has been significantly improved in comparison with the degree of wear on the other two figures.

Historical & Numismatic Note: Marcus Aurelius Numerianus was born about AD 254 and was the younger son of Carus, who came to the imperial throne in AD 282 following the assassination of Probus. The new emperor immediately bestowed the rank of Caesar on his two sons, Carinus and Numerian, and left the former in Rome to administer the western provinces while he marched east, accompanied by his younger son, to conduct a campaign against the Sassanid Persians. During the course of this campaign, he further elevated Carinus to the rank of Augustus to ensure his smooth succession should any harm befall him. Although the Persian War was initially a great success, one evening Carus' tent was struck by lightning during a violent thunderstorm near the Persian capital of Ctesiphon and the emperor was found dead inside (late, AD 283). Numerian was proclaimed Augustus and proceeded to lead his legions slowly back to Roman territory. However, he fell ill on the journey and as the army approached Heraclea in Thrace, he was found dead inside his litter (late, AD 284). The praetorian prefect Arrius Aper, father-in-law of the deceased emperor, was accused of his murder and immediately executed by Diocletian, commander of the imperial bodyguard. The plot against Numerian may well have been formulated by Diocletian himself who found in Aper a convenient scapegoat. In any case, Diocletian was proclaimed emperor in Numerian's place and continued his westward advance to challenge Carinus for the supreme imperial authority. This interesting medallion is one of nine examples of this type that have been recorded, all of which were struck from the same obverse die. The reverse die appears to be one of four known. The occasion for the issue was probably the elevation of Numerian to the senior imperial rank following his father's death.

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