

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 3, 2020

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Trebonianus Gallus (AD 251-253)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: circa AD 253

Weight: 18.83 grams

Maximum Diameter: 30.09 millimeters

Die Axis: ↙

Obverse: IMP CAES C VIBIVS TREBONIANVS GALLVS AVG, laureate, draped and cuirassed bust of Trebonianus Gallus right.

Reverse: SALVS AVGG (around), S — C (in field), Salus standing left, feeding snake arising from altar with patera held in right hand and resting on sceptre held in left.

References: RIC 122a; Cohen 119; Hunter 44-6 and pl. 84; Sear (*RCTV III*) 9679.

Grade: nearly VF with 'Tiber' patina, portrait of excellent style

Historical & Numismatic Note: C. Vibius Trebonianus Gallus was a native of the ancient Etruscan hill town of Perugia (modern *Perugia*) and was born about AD 206. After entering the Senate he held the consulship early in the reign of Philip I and in AD 250 was appointed by Trajan Decius to the key governorship of Moesia. Following the deaths of Decius and his elder son Herennius Etruscus in battle against the Goths at Abrittus (July, AD 251) Gallus was proclaimed emperor by his soldiers. The new emperor raised his predecessor's younger son Hostilian to the rank of Augustus and co-emperor but also gave the title of Caesar to his own son Volusian. When Hostilian died of plague before the end of the year Volusian was promoted to be joint ruler with Gallus. Their brief reign was a period of unmitigated disaster for the Empire, with the Persians attacking Syria, the Goths raiding Thrace, and the population being decimated by plague. The general Aemilian, governor of Moesia, succeeded in inflicting a defeat on the Goths whereupon he was immediately proclaimed emperor by his soldiers. Gallus and Volusian had few troops at their disposal in Italy and were unable to oppose their rival's advance on Rome. Civil conflict was averted when they were murdered by their own men after a reign of only two years (summer, 253). This sestertius of Gallus was struck at Rome late in the reign and depicts Salus, the goddess of health, in her usual pose of feeding a snake coiled around an altar. Another type depicts her standing with the snake held in her arms. The appearance of these types on Gallus' coinage may have been prompted by the measures taken by the emperors to try to mitigate the effects of the plague that was afflicting the Empire at this time and had even claimed the life of the young co-emperor Hostilian.

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