

DAVID R. SEAR

Certificate of Authenticity

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This coin has been personally inspected and authenticated by

Issued to: Jens Feierabend

On: December 27, 2021

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Nero (AD 54-68)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: circa AD 64

Weight: 25.61 grams

Maximum Diameter: 35.07 millimeters

Die Axis: ↓

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

Reverse: DECVR SIO (in exergue), S — C either side of Nero, bare-headed and wearing cuirass and short tunic, on horse prancing right, holding spear at rest in right hand, accompanied by a second horseman in background, holding vexillum over right shoulder.

References: RIC 171 = Mac Dowall (*The Western Coinages of Nero*, ANS NNM 161) 114 (citing specimens in Rome (Museo Nazionale delle Terme), the Hague, and Bement Collection); cf. BMCRE 145 (second horseman obliterated by tooling); Cayón (*Los Sestercios del Imperio Romano I*) p. 109, 106.

Grade: good F/F, with excellent portrait, old surface abrasions in reverse field

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. But in circa AD 63 base metal denominations were reintroduced and thereafter coinage was on a large scale from both the Rome and Lugdunum mints. Products of the latter are generally differentiated by a small globe appearing at the point of the truncation on the imperial portrait. 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. Minted in c. AD 64, this type depicts the emperor mounted on horseback leading a formal cavalry parade, probably in the Circus Maximus in Rome. The accompanying legend DECVR SIO was derived from *decurro* ('run downwards, charge'), a word that came to be applied to military or equestrian maneuvers. It was doubtless intended to be complimentary to the Praetorian Guard on whose loyalty the safety of the emperor depended.

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