

surviving footings. However, despite this extensive rebuilding, early photographs make it clear that the present appearance of the site does not accurately reproduce the Victorian romantic garden, as there has been much subsequent repair and alteration of the masonry in a number of mutually-inconsistent styles, while only the timber frames of the Victorian shelters are original, the museum interior has been substantially altered, and little of the original garden planting survives. Twentieth-century attempts to mark out buried walls have further detracted from the Victorian ambience, whilst failing to assist the visitor's understanding.

In addition to the above assessment of work at Chedworth since 1977, the Trust is preparing two other documents for early deposition on the web as basic tools for future work on the site. Both will be kept up-to-date. The first is a Gazetteer, a room-by-room and area-by-area description of the site. This is intended to provide a reference framework for all activity, whether it is straightforwardly archaeological or educational, or related to the conservation and management needs of the monument. It has, indeed, often been difficult to distinguish between research and conservation, and many of the discoveries have been made in the course of repairs to the upstanding fabric or evaluations before work on site-services not primarily intended with research in mind. The second document is an annotated Bibliography.<sup>61</sup> This is as far as possible a comprehensive list of published and unpublished articles and notes on Chedworth, including both 'grey literature' and miscellaneous notices. The latter range from 'Roman Britain in xxxx' in this journal to popular articles and press notices, as it has been discovered that much of the past activity on site generally thought to have been lost can be tracked through such varied and surprisingly numerous sources.

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**The Latest Roman Coin from Hadrian's Wall: a Small Fifth-century Purse Group.** Rob Collins writes: In May 2007, Barry Seger recovered eight copper-alloy *nummi* while searching a field in the Great Whittington area of Northumberland with a metal detector. The coins were found individually, separated by a distance of 10–50 cm, in a zig-zag linear arrangement. He reported his finds and an accurate findspot to the local Finds Liaison Officer (Rob Collins) for the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Investigation determined that the distinct linear distribution of the coins is almost certainly due to the

<sup>61</sup> This combines separately-compiled bibliographies by P. Bethell and P. Salway (internal National Trust documents).

insertion of an agricultural drain, which disturbed a small collection of coins. Strictly speaking, the coins could be called a hoard on the basis that they form a small assemblage, but interpretation suggests the coins were the result of casual loss rather than intentional deposition, and so the term 'group' is favoured. The field in which the group was found is north of the fort of Halton Chesters on Hadrian's Wall, on the projected line of a road which runs north-east from the north gate of the fort and probably connects to the Devil's Causeway.

The eight coins range in date from an issue of Constantine I of A.D. 318 to a House of Theodosius issue of A.D. 406–408. The small number of coins, combination of mints, and broad range of dates suggest that the coins were the contents of a purse that was lost accidentally rather than intentionally deposited. Based on a *terminus post quem* provided by the latest coin, the group can be dated to the early fifth century. The group is significant because it has provided the latest dated *nummus* to have been found in the Hadrian's Wall corridor in probable proximity to a road, and its occurrence also begs a number of methodological questions.

No.	Reverse	Mint	Date	Reference
<b>Constantine I</b> (NCL-EF8E21)				
1	<i>Victoriae Laetae Princ Perp</i>	ASIS* (Siscia)	318	RIC VII, p. 431, nos 47–48
Note: There is evidence for silver washing of this coin				
<b>Constantius II</b> (NCL-EEBF58)				
2	<i>Gloria Exercitus</i>	(CO)? (Constantinople?)	330–335	RIC VII, p. 581, no. 75
<b>Constans</b> (NCL-EE7100; NCL-EF0D13)				
3	<i>Gloria Exercitus</i>	SM... (Eastern mint)	337–341	RIC VIII, p. 490, no. 18
4	<i>Fel Temp Reparatio</i>	illeg.	335–361	RIC VIII, as p. 191, no. 189
Note: This issue is a contemporary copy				
<b>Constans or Constantius II</b> (NCL-EEEE36)				
5	<i>Fel Temp Reparatio</i>	illeg.	355–361	RIC VIII, as p. 191, no. 189
Note: This issue is a contemporary copy				
<b>Valentinian</b> (NCL-EF35F5; NCL-EF6DD1)				
6	<i>Securitas Rei Publicae</i>	OF/II//CONS[T] (Arles)	364–367	LRBC, p. 56, nos 481–483
7	<i>Securitas Rei Publicae</i>	•-/[ ]CON (Arles)	364–378	LRBC, p. 56, no. 501
Note: This issue is probably of Valentinian I, though it may belong to Valens				
<b>House of Theodosius</b> (NCL-EE2655)				
8	<i>Gloria Romanorum</i>	illeg. (Eastern mint)	406–408	RIC X, no. 142ff.

Full photographs, descriptions, details of the obverse and reverse, and measurements of each coin can be found on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database available on the internet ([www.findsdatabase.org.uk](http://www.findsdatabase.org.uk)) under the Object Identifications provided after the name of each emperor. It should also be stated that the patina on each coin is consistent with coins found in the north of England, and the coins have been checked against finds from the Eastern Mediterranean. The *Gloria Romanorum* coin is illustrated in FIG. 8.

#### DATE OF THE GROUP

Following the known archaeological principle of dating based on a *terminus post quem*, the group would have been deposited in A.D. 406 at the earliest. However, such a rapid and early deposition seems unlikely. The distance the coin had to travel and the degree of wear on the coin suggest it was in circulation for some time after it was minted. While wear must be considered, it should also be noted that the latest coin was also the most worn coin, the coins that had the least wear being those of Constantine I and one of

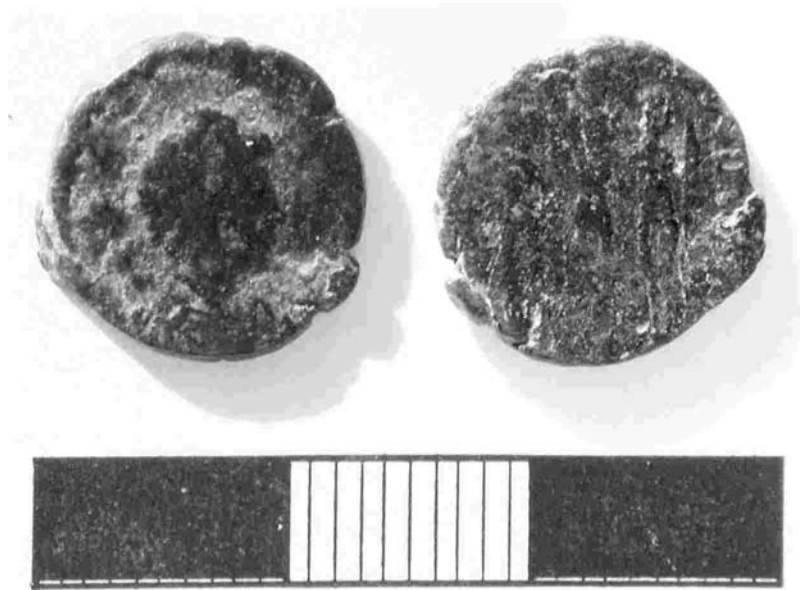


FIG. 8. The obverse and reverse of the *Gloria Romanorum* coin, with three emperors visible on the reverse.

the Valentinian coins. It should also be noted that late fourth- and early fifth-century coins were often struck from worn dies, which means that the coins can give the appearance of being worn when they are not. Thus, the differential qualities of production must be taken into account for the date of the group. Therefore, we are left with a more general date of the early fifth century for the deposition of the group.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COINS

The recovery of this group has a number of implications. Those implications related to interpretation and understanding of the late Roman economy will be addressed in this section. Methodological implications are addressed in the following section.

There are five coins of the House of Constantine dating to the years A.D. 318–361, including two barbarous copies, two coins of the House of Valentinian dating to A.D. 364–378, and one exceptional coin from the House of Theodosius, a *Gloria Romanorum* issue with three emperors on the reverse dating to A.D. 406–408. Without this final coin, the group would be a quite normal selection of fourth-century coins in the frontier.<sup>62</sup> However, the Theodosian coin is only the second of its type to be recorded in Britain, despite the fact that this is a common issue in the Mediterranean, from Beirut in Lebanon to Butrint in Albania.<sup>63</sup> Notably absent from the group are the House of Theodosius issues of A.D. 388–402, which are the most common Theodosian coins found in the frontier, particularly those dating between A.D. 388 and 395.<sup>64</sup>

The overall profile of the group should be noted, particularly as it dates to the end of the Roman period in Britain or the early sub-Roman period. Given the interpretation of the group as a lost purse, it is significant that small denomination issues of the House of Constantine still dominate, particularly as there were a number of demonetisations during the fourth century that removed old coins from circulation, at least in principle.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Brickstock 2000; Robertson 2000.

<sup>63</sup> Abdy and Williams 2006, 30, no. 51; Butcher 2001–2, 231–4; Moorhead *et al.* 2007, 89.

<sup>64</sup> Brickstock 2000.

<sup>65</sup> Grierson and Mays 1992, 28.

A comparable group may be the hoard from Heddon on the Wall (Northumberland) which consisted of 31 copper-alloy coins. The coins were reportedly issues of Maximian, Constantine, Constantius II, Constans, Magnentius, Valens, and Arcadius.<sup>66</sup> The latest coin is described in some detail and can be confidently identified as an *Urbs Roma Felix* issue of Arcadius dated to A.D. 404–408. Unfortunately, no further details such as the number of issues of each emperor are provided, making detailed comparison impossible. However, it should be noted that the earliest coin is attributed to Maximian, who ruled from A.D. 286–305 — another coin that seems to have remained in circulation for at least a century. Given this broad range of dates for the Heddon hoard, it may be that this is another group of coins lost by the owner rather than intentionally deposited.

Other fifth-century hoards from Britain, for example Hoxne or Patching, have very few House of Constantine issues and are dominated by bullion issues of the House of Valentinian and House of Theodosius, contrasting with the two groups from the Hadrian's Wall corridor.<sup>67</sup> Of course, these hoards were *selected* for the storage of bullion rather than representing casual loss, so a direct comparison is inappropriate other than noting that all fifth-century hoards should be representative of coins available in circulation.

The accepted view of late Roman bronze coinage is that no coins were shipped in bulk to Britain after A.D. 402, and in fact very few after A.D. 395 when only the mints at Rome and Aquileia continued to strike small denomination bronze in any quantities in the West.<sup>68</sup> Very few bronze coins that post-date A.D. 402 are found in Britain, though this number has increased over the past ten years through the establishment of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which provides a national network for standardised reporting and recording of public finds throughout England and Wales. Of course, the establishment of the PAS has seen an increase in reporting of coins from all periods of Roman history, so the actual increase as a percentage of the total number of Roman coins found may not be significant. Those coins post-dating A.D. 402 that have been reported were found in southern England and the Midlands, thus far indicating that coin exchange with Continental contacts was limited to the southern half of England.<sup>69</sup> This pattern is further reinforced by the distribution of the coinage of Constantine III.<sup>70</sup> One *solidus* was found in a hoard in Stanmore, London, and another *solidus* was found in a hoard from Good Easter, Kent, while an unspecified number of *solidi* have been reported from Eye, Suffolk. Two *siliquae* have been found in the Hoxne hoard, Suffolk, and a single *siliqua* was in the Patching hoard, Sussex. A significant outlier in this distribution are the *siliquae* (between 1 and 5) from the Coleraine area of Londonderry, Ireland (though note Continental finds have not been included here). Site finds of Constantine III are particularly rare, limited to three *siliquae* from the Saxon Shore fort at Richborough.

Thus, the *Gloria Romanorum* coin is exceptional due to its findspot, in proximity to a Roman road running north-east from the Hadrian's Wall fort of Halton Chesters and south of the Roman road known as the Devil's Causeway. Furthermore, the coin is from an Eastern Mediterranean mint, as are three of the other coins. Only the two Valentinianic coins are certainly from Western mints. Without the *Gloria Romanorum* coin, the mix of mints would be unexceptional in Britain. However, this latest coin suggests that at least one person journeyed from the Eastern Mediterranean in the fifth century, or the coin was passed on by several people in stages. Significantly, this provides evidence for direct or indirect contact with people from the Mediterranean in the fifth century that probably post-dates the traditional end date for Roman Britain, c. A.D. 409 or 410. This is reinforced by a second early fifth-century coin, the *Urbs Roma Felix* issue from the Heddon hoard.

#### METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The recognition of the *Gloria Romanorum* coin raises a number of methodological concerns. First, there is the issue of recognition. Most widely available and relatively affordable books that offer assistance in

<sup>66</sup> Bates 1886, 242, n. 6.

<sup>67</sup> Guest 2005; Abdy 2006.

<sup>68</sup> Kent 1979, 21.

<sup>69</sup> Abdy and Williams 2006; Moorhead 2006.

<sup>70</sup> Robertson 2000, 403–6 for the Stanmore, Eye, Hoxne and Coleraine hoards; Abdy 2006, 81 for Patching; Abdy and Cuddeford forthcoming for Good Easter; Stebbing 1949, 275 and Abdy and Williams 2005, 30, no. 52 for Richborough.

the identification of Roman coins in Britain do not depict issues later than A.D. 402, with the exception of coins of Constantine III. This contributes to a self-fulfilling prophecy in which post-402 coins are not recognised because they are not adequately represented in the published literature. Recognition of such coins relies on specialised training and/or personal familiarity with fifth-century issues — this coin was identified by Sam Moorhead, Finds Adviser for Iron Age and Roman Coins in the Portable Antiquities scheme, a scholar who has worked on coins from several Mediterranean excavations. At a time when most Roman coins are found by metal-detectorists rather than under controlled archaeological investigations, recognition is a serious issue. It is also possible that *Gloria Exercitus* issues of A.D. 335–341 with two soldiers and one standard could be confused with the later *Gloria Romanorum* two and three emperor types. On the three emperor type, the central emperor is smaller which could result in the incorrect supposition that it is a standard, particularly if the coin is very worn or produced from worn dies.

A second issue relates to recording and assessing coin assemblages with fifth-century issues. Coin assemblages are often analysed in reference to issue periods, but Reece's latest issue period stops at A.D. 402. Sam Moorhead has added two further issue periods, 22 and 23, that span the years A.D. 402–445 and 445–498, respectively, for recording by the Portable Antiquities Scheme ([www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk); contra Brickstock's recommendations<sup>71</sup>). But the extent to which these emendations have been incorporated beyond the PAS has yet to be established.

#### CONCLUSION

It is expected that the numbers of recorded fifth-century coins will continue to increase, forcing numismatists and academics to reconsider the role of coinage in the fifth century.<sup>72</sup> Very little can be said at present in regards to this fifth-century group from the Hadrian's Wall corridor. Thus far, it is an exception in terms of its date and detail of recording from the frontier zone.

However, it may be worth re-evaluating coin assemblages from old excavations to see if fifth-century issues were perhaps unrecognised, as was the case when John Casey re-identified a piece of Valentinian III (A.D. 425–435) from the nineteenth-century excavations at Wroxeter.<sup>73</sup> In cases of very worn coins, the development of digital imaging technology may refine identification.

Whether existing assemblages are reassessed or not, this small group raises the possibility of additional fifth-century issues that have yet to be found or identified. On the other hand, perhaps the purse was lost by a foreign traveller and can thus be interpreted as exceptional circumstances.

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<sup>71</sup> Brickstock 2004, 16.

<sup>72</sup> Though note discussions by Guest 2005, Abdy 2006, and Moorhead 2006.

<sup>73</sup> Abdy and Williams 2006, 31, no. 58.

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