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The Bishop's Wood Hoard of Roman Coins



Sold as part of Baldwin's auction 64-65 on the 4th-5th May, the Bishop's Wood Hoard of Roman coins was amongst the lots in the Ancient section which opened the second day of the sale. The 1,661 coins and the restored jar that contained them were sold in 11 lots, including the purpose built cabinet in which they were housed. The lots drew worldwide interest amongst the ancient numismatic community prior to the auction as the expertly cleaned and preserved coins had remained out of circulation and in the family of the landowner since their discovery in 1895. Serious pre-sale interest came mainly (and encouragingly) from UK based dealers and collectors but also from some important UK institutions. Bidding was frenzied and busy, both in the room and on the book, but in the end the lots were all won by the same bidder. Baldwin's are very happy to report that this part of the hoard remains intact. In total the 11 lots (lots 1152-1162) achieved £46,964, well over pre-sale estimate.

Baldwin's Ancient expert Paul Hill commented after the auction 'the sale of this hoard was an unprecedented success, it sold well beyond any of our expectations and the vendor is absolutely delighted with the result.'

The hoard was discovered at Bishop's Wood, near Ross-on-Wye, just across the Herefordshire border and within the surroundings of the Forest of Dean. It was uncovered in a rough walling built against the hillside by workmen who were in the process of repairing a road and who struck an earthenware vessel containing the coins. The accidental strike from a pick broke the jar and scattered its contents in various directions.

Included with the hoard is a reprint of the article from the Numismatic Chronicle of 1896 where 17,550 coins were listed in total and a reprint of 'Notes on a Great Hoard of Roman Coins found at Bishop's Wood in 1895' from the "Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society", vol. XIX, both written by Mary Bagnall-Oakeley. The latter also includes the author's handwritten annotations and a list, dated March 1898, of the museums and institutions that she was aware had received portions of the hoard. They are listed as follows:

Hereford City Museum
Gloucester City Museum

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Bristol City Museum
Rolls Hall Monmouth
Ludlow Museum
Newcastle on Tyne Museum
Norwich Museum
Newport (Monmouthshire)
Clifton College Museum
Monmouth School Museum
Sydney Museum (New South Wales) (by special request)
Caerleon Museum
Whitchurch School Museum (W. Ross)

Although 17,550 coins were listed originally a number had already been lifted and dispersed around the region by the time the coins were rescued.

The original intention of the hoard and why it was deposited at the findspot is uncertain. It is possible that the area in question was occupied by Roman soldiers at the time and, given its size, it has been suggested that the hoard formed part of a military treasure, intended as payment for the legions. Whatever the original purpose of the coins, the hoard is a fascinating primary source of information for the mints employed in supplying Britain with coinage.

For more information about the hoard please contact Baldwin's Ancient specialist Paul Hill at paul@baldwin.co.uk.

For press enquiries please contact Caroline Newton on +44 (0)20 7930 9808 or at carolinenewton@baldwin.co.uk

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Lot Details

1152 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Brazilian Mahogany Cabinet, purpose-built by Spink & Son, drop-front, bevelled-glazed lifting lid, with two interior compartments, the left with five coin trays, each with the capacity to hold 100 coins, and two deeper drawers, the right with space to house the pot; the cabinet on stand with carved claw-and-ball feet; cabinet dimensions 70cm x 36cm x 38cm; together with the heavily reconstructed pot, not of local (possible east Midlands) manufacture, that contained the hoard; also with offprints of the articles by Mary Bagnall-Oakeley, *Numismatic Chronicle*, vol XVI, 1896, pp.209-237, and *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, vol.XIX, 1895, pp.399-420, the latter including the author's handwritten list of institutions that had received parcels of coins from the hoard, dated March 1898. The trays of the cabinet containing 500 coins as follows: Divus Claudius Gothicus (d. AD 270), REQVIES OPTIMOR MERIT, emperor seated on curule chair, Rome, 317-318 (RIC 106) (1); Diocletian (AD 284-305), CONCORDIA MILITVM, Prince receiving Victory on globe from Jupiter, Antioch, c.296 (RIC VI 60a var) (1); Maximian (AD 286-305), CONCORDIA MILITVM, similar type, Alexandria, c.296-297 (RIC VI 46b) (1); Constantine I (AD 307-337), Treveri, 330-331 (RIC 525) (17), (RIC 526) (18), 332-333 (RIC 537) (46), (RIC 538) (12); BEATA TRANQVILLITAS, globe on altar inscribed VOT/IS/XX, Treveri, 321 (RIC 303) (1); SARMATIA DEVICTA, Victory, with trophy, Treveri, 323-324 (RIC 435) (1); CONSTAN/TINVS/AVG in three lines, Treveri, 326 (RIC 485) (1); SOLI INVICTO, Sol, Treveri (RIC -) (1); SOLI INVICTO COMITI, Sol, Lugdunum, 316 (RIC 53) (1); CONSTANTINI AVG around VO/TIS/XX in three lines, Lugdunum, 320 (RIC 91) (1); VIRTVS EXERCIT, VOT / XX, Lugdunum (uncertain mark) (1); Helena (mother of Constantine I), SECVRITAS REI PVBLICAE, Securitas, Treveri, 326 (RIC 481) (1), 327-328 (RIC 515) (1); Licinius I (AD 308-324), IOVI CONSERVATORI AVGG, Jupiter, holding Victory, Heraclea, 321-324 (RIC 52) (1), (RIC 54) (1); Nicomedia (RIC 44) (2), (RIC 49) (1); Cyzicus (RIC 18) (1); Alexandria (RIC 28) (2), (uncertain mark) (1); Urbs Roma (c.AD 330), wolf and twins, two stars above, Treveri (RIC 522) (4), (RIC 529) (85), (RIC 542) (41); Constantinopolis (c.AD 330), Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Treveri (RIC 523) (6), (RIC 530) (106), (RIC 543) (45); Constantine II (AD 337-340), Treveri, 330-331 (RIC 527) (38), 332-333 (RIC 539) (19); IOVI CONSERVATORI AVGG, Cyzicus, 321-324 (RIC 19) (1); Constantius II (AD 337-361), Treveri, 330-331 (RIC 528) (18), 332-333 (RIC 540) (22); PROVIDENTIAE CAES, camp gate, Treveri, 326 (RIC 480) (1). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (500)

Estimate: £4000-5000

Hammer: £10,200

1153 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Lugdunum, 330-331 (RIC 236) (7); Treveri, 332-333 (RIC 544) (9); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Lugdunum (RIC 241) (14); Treveri (RIC 530) (11); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Lugdunum (RIC 247) (26); Constantine II, Lugdunum, 330-331 (RIC 238) (11); Treveri, 332-333 (RIC 545) (23); Constantius II, Lugdunum, 330-331 (RIC 240) (5); Treveri, 332-333 (RIC 546) (6). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (112)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £2,800

1154 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 549) (9); Arelate, 330-331 (RIC 341, note) (1), (RIC 345) (6), 333 (RIC 370) (14); Helena (mother of Constantine I), PAX PVBLICA, Pax standing left, holding branch and sceptre, Treveri (cf RIC 47, 55, 63, 78) (23); Constantinopolis, Lugdunum, Victory on prow, with spear and shield (RIC 246) (32); Constantine II, Arelate, 330-331 (RIC 346) (8), 333 (RIC 371) (7); Constantius II, Arelate, 330-331 (RIC 347) (8). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (108)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £2,800

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1155 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Lugdunum, 330-331 (RIC 243) (5), 332 (RIC 248) (1); Arelate, 330-331 (RIC 349) (2); Rome, 330 (RIC 327) (2); Aquileia, 334-335 (RIC 118) (1); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Treveri (RIC 554) (44); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Lugdunum (RIC 242) (12); Arelate (RIC 351) (3); Constantine II, Lugdunum (uncertain mark) (5); Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 550) (17); Arelate, 330-331 (RIC 350) (4); Constans (AD 337-350), Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 552) (7); Arelate, 333-334 (RIC 378) (4); Constantius II, Lugdunum, 330-331 (RIC 245) (4), (uncertain mark) (3); Treveri (uncertain mark) (2); Arelate (RIC -) (2); Rome, 330-331 (RIC 337) (3). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (121)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £2,600

1156 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Thessalonica, 330-333 (RIC 183) (1); Heraclea, 330-333 (RIC 116) (1), (RIC 121) (2); Constantinople, 330-333 (RIC 59) (2); Nicomedia, 330-335 (RIC 188) (1); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Arelate (RIC 352) (3); Siscia (RIC 224) (1); Cyzicus (RIC 93) (1); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Treveri (RIC 553) (68); Heraclea (RIC 124) (1); Constantinople (RIC 62) (1); Constantine II, Lugdunum, 330-331 (RIC 244) (24); Siscia, 330-331 (RIC 220) (1), 334-335 (RIC 236) (2); Constantinople, 333-335 (RIC 74) (1); Cyzicus, 332-333 (RIC 96) (1); Constantius II, Siscia, 334-335 (RIC 237) (1); Thessalonica, 330-333 (RIC 185) (1); Heraclea, 330-333 (RIC 123) (1); Cyzicus, 333-334 (RIC 85) (1); Antioch, 330-333 (RIC 88) (1). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (116)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £4,200

1157 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Arelate, 331 (RIC 353) (1), 332 (RIC 358) (3), 335 (RIC 387) (6); Rome, 330-331 (RIC 335) (2); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Lugdunum (RIC 251) (3); Treveri (uncertain mark) (8), Arelate (RIC 374) (5), Rome (RIC 339) (1); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Treveri (RIC 561) (45); Delmatius (Caesar, AD 335-337), Arelate, 336 (RIC 398) (1); Constantine II, Lugdunum, 332 (RIC 254) (24); Arelate, 331 (RIC 354) (1), 333-334 (RIC 376) (6); Rome, 333-335 (RIC 351) (2); Constantius II, Lugdunum, 332 (RIC 255) (7); Arelate, 332 (RIC 360) (2); Rome, 333-335 (RIC 352) (5). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (122)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £2,600

1158 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Arelate, 332-333 (RIC 364) (6); Helena, PAX PVBLICA, Pax standing left, holding branch and sceptre, Treveri, before 340 (RIC VIII 63) (9); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Treveri (RIC 548) (43); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Lugdunum (RIC 257) (14); Aquileia (RIC 122) (1); Constantine II, Lugdunum, 333-334 (RIC 263) (19); Arelate, 332-333 (RIC 365) (5); Aquileia, 334-335 (RIC 125) (1); Constantius II, Arelate, 332-333 (RIC 367) (3), 333 (RIC 372) (1); Rome, 335-336 (RIC 366) (3); Aquileia, 334-335 (RIC 126) (2); together with issues of uncertain mints of Constantine I (1), Constantine II (7), Constantius II (2). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (117)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £2,800

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1159 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Lugdunum, 332 (RIC 253) (6), (uncertain mark) (2); Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 555) (4); Arelate, 333-334 (RIC 375) (4); Theodora (wife of Constantius I), PIETAS ROMANA, Pietas standing facing, head right, carrying infant, Treveri, before 340 (RIC VIII 65) (6); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Treveri (RIC 563) (39); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Lugdunum (RIC 267) (18); Treveri (uncertain mark) (6); Constantine II Lugdunum, 332 (RIC 249) (4), (RIC -) (1); Treveri (RIC -) (1); Constans, Arelate, 335 (RIC 390) (2); Constantius II, Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 551) (10); Arelate, 333-334 (RIC 377) (1), 335 (RIC 389) (2); together with issues of uncertain mints of Constantine I (1), Constantine II (9), Constans (2). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (118)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £3,000

1160 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Lugdunum, 333-334 (RIC 262) (5); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Lugdunum (RIC 256) (15); uncertain mint (7); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Arelate (RIC 368) (2), (RIC 373) (3), (RIC 379) (2), (RIC 392) (1); uncertain mint (7); Rome (RIC 354) (5); Constantine II, Lugdunum (RIC -) (1); Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 556) (21); Arelate, 336 (RIC 395) (3); Constans, Lugdunum, 333-334 (RIC 265) (2); Arelate, 336 (RIC 397) (4); Constantius II, Treveri, 335-337 (RIC 592) (18); Arelate, 336 (RIC 396) (1); together with contemporary copies (22), including Constantine I, Constantinopolis, Urbs Roma and Constantine II. *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (119)

Estimate: £500-700

Hammer: £2,800

1161 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Lugdunum, 337 (RIC 285) (4); Treveri, 335-337 (RIC 590) (10); Theodora, PIETAS ROMANA, Pietas standing facing, head right, carrying infant, Treveri (uncertain mark) (10); Helena, PAX PVBLICA, Pax standing left, holding branch and sceptre, Treveri, before 340 (RIC VIII 78) (1), (RIC VIII 90) (8); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Lugdunum (RIC 266) (10); Arelate (RIC 393) (1); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Arelate (RIC 400) (1); Delmatius, Treveri, 335-337 (RIC 594) (2); Constantine II, Lugdunum, 337 (RIC 286) (8), (uncertain mark) (4); Treveri, 335-337 (RIC 591) (30); VIRTUS AVGVSTI, Emperor, in military dress, standing facing, head right, holding spear and resting on shield, Rome, before 340 (RIC VIII 4) (1); Constans, Arelate, before 340 (RIC VIII 23) (2); Constantius II, Treveri, 347-348 (RIC VIII 82) (25); SECVRITAS REI P, Securitas standing facing, head right, holding sceptre and leaning on column, Rome, before 340 (RIC VIII 9) (1). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (118)

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1162 Ancient Coins. Roman Coins From The Bishop's Wood Hoard. Constantine I, Lugdunum, 333-334 (RIC 261) (1), 335 (RIC 280) (1); Siscia, 334-335 (RIC 235) (1); Divus Constantine I (d. AD 337), AETERNA PIETAS, Emperor, in military dress, standing right, holding spear and globe, Arelate, before 340 (RIC VIII 17) (1); Helena, PAX PVBLICA, Pax standing left, holding branch and sceptre, Treveri, before 340 (RIC VIII 47) (1); Theodora, PIETAS ROMANA, Pietas standing facing, head right, carrying infant, Treveri, before 340 (RIC VIII 56) (1), (RIC VIII 91) (15); Constantinopolis, Victory on prow, with spear and shield, Lugdunum (uncertain mark) (4); Arelate (RIC 380) (1), (RIC 401) (1); Urbs Roma, wolf and twins, two stars above, Treveri (RIC 547) (32); Delmatius, Lugdunum, 337 (RIC 288) (2); Constantine II, Lugdunum, 336 (RIC 281) (2); before 340 (RIC VIII 6) (3); Treveri, 335-337 (RIC 586) (1); before 340 (RIC VIII 38) (1), (RIC VIII 57) (1), (RIC VIII 81) (1); Arelate, before 340 (RIC VIII 44) (1); Constans, Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 560) (3), 335-337 (RIC 593) (1), before 340 (RIC VIII 41) (1), (cf RIC VIII 46) (1), (RIC VIII 85) (3), (RIC 111) (4), (RIC -) (3); VIRTUS AVGG NN, Soldier standing facing, head right, holding spear and shield, Treveri, before 340 (RIC VIII 76) (1), (RIC VIII 77) (3); Arelate, 336-337 (RIC 405) (1); Constantius II, Lugdunum, before 340 (RIC VIII 8) (2); Treveri, 333-334 (RIC 558) (7), (RIC VIII 58) (1), (RIC VIII 70) (3), (RIC VIII 93) (2), 340 (RIC VIII 102) (1); VIRTUS AVGG NN, Soldier standing facing, head right, holding spear and shield, Treveri, before 340 (RIC VIII 74) (2). *Extremely fine or nearly so.* (110)

Estimate: £500-700

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Notes to the Editor:

- Unless otherwise stated, RIC references are to volume VII and reverse types are: GLORIA EXERCITVS, two soldiers, helmeted, standing front, heads turned towards each other, each holding spear and resting hand on shield, two standards between them.
- Prices quoted in the main body of the release are inclusive of Buyer's Premium at 18%.
- Established in 1872 A. H. Baldwin & Sons Ltd has over 100 years experience in servicing the numismatic industry.
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