

INC Travel Report – Fae Amiro

Excavations at the Roman auxiliary fort at Vindolanda, located one mile south of Hadrian's Wall, have been conducted for the past century. Most famous for the excellent conservation of organic objects such as leather shoes and wood writing tablets, a corpus of over 5000 coins has also been found in the excavations which are now housed in the site's museum. This assemblage is valuable for its archaeological cohesion, precisely recorded findspots, and small but significant group of uncorroded *aes* coins from anaerobic deposits. All the coins had previously been identified annually by professional numismatists, primarily John Casey and Richard Brickstock, and housed in a variety of coin binders and boxes without a consistent organizational structure.

In 2024, I began working at Vindolanda identifying and analysing the annual new site finds, as well as databasing and rehousing the earlier material. At the same time, I started converting the legacy data assembled by Richard Brickstock for migration to the museum's database software, which was completed in the summer of 2024. I also collaborated with the museum's curator, Barbara Birley, on a permanent storage solution for the collection in the form of a coin cabinet and individual coin boxes, made possible by a donation from Richard Beleson. Last year, I began the rehousing and audit of the coins in storage.

This past year, thanks in part to the generous support of the INC, I was able to make significant progress on all aspects of the project. In collaboration with volunteer Peter Stocker, the audit and rehousing of all 4700 coins in storage was completed in July 2026. There are approximately 300 additional coins on display in the Vindolanda Trust's two museums, as well as 75 coins from the early years of the excavations which have not yet been linked with a proper inventory number, bringing the new estimate of the total extant coins from the site, including those found so far in the 2026 excavations, to 5100. I also completed the identification and analysis of the 84 new coins from the 2025 Vindolanda excavations and the 15 coins from the Trust's other excavation at the fort of Magna, both published as part of interim site reports this spring. I have also completed the identifications of the 57 coins found so far in the 2026 excavations at both sites.

The rehousing project has now advanced to a stage where it is possible to conduct research using the database and coin cabinet in tandem for the first time. This July, I was able to bring a student to the site, where she conducted research for a senior undergraduate project on the coins of Postumus and Gallienus found at Vindolanda and what they reveal about the circulation of coinage to the site during and after the Gallic Empire. Thanks to the work accomplished during the tenure of the travel grant, she was able to work fluidly with the collection by looking up an item in the database and easily locating it in the coin cabinet, work that would have been impossible one year ago.

We have been able to progress far enough with the project that we are able to move on to the next phase much more quickly than originally estimated. The final audit of on display coins will be completed in January, which will also mark the finalization of the coins' tray locations within the cabinet. In this next phase, which will be by far the longest in the project, photos of each coin will be taken and uploaded to the database. Each individual coin entry will also be updated to correct any missing, incomplete, or inconsistent information. I am very grateful for the INC's support, which allowed for a greater frequency of visits to the site over the course of the year and has made such significant progress possible.