Marcham Roman Coins

Paul Booth

Introduction

Some 2,363 Roman coins and coin fragments and a single Iron Age coin from eleven seasons of excavation (2001-2011) at Marcham were examined and listed by Paul Booth in autumn 2023. A further 48 coins listed in the site small finds register were not seen and are not included in these figures (these came from all three zones of the site, namely MF, MFNA and MFP, but the vast majority came from trenches in the MF zone). Most of the coins from the 2003 and 2004 excavation seasons had already been listed at various levels of detail by Ian Leins and together with an initial list of coins from all seasons (done by community volunteers Simon Blackmore and Trevor Greer) was present for the entire assemblage, though with identifications often at a very general level. However, none of these listings defined coins in terms of the issue periods set out by Reece. The absence of a breakdown of the assemblage in these terms, vital for comparative analysis of assemblages at local, regional and national level, was seen as problematic and provision of such a breakdown was a primary objective of the present study, in some cases at the expense of other aspects of detail. Consequently, while identifications and assignment of detailed reference numbers were pressed as far as possible at the time of recording it is admitted that there were some cases where further work in refining identifications would have been ideal. Where possible, identifications were based on the standard references of RIC and LRBC (note that the work was done before the new RIC Volume 4 appeared).

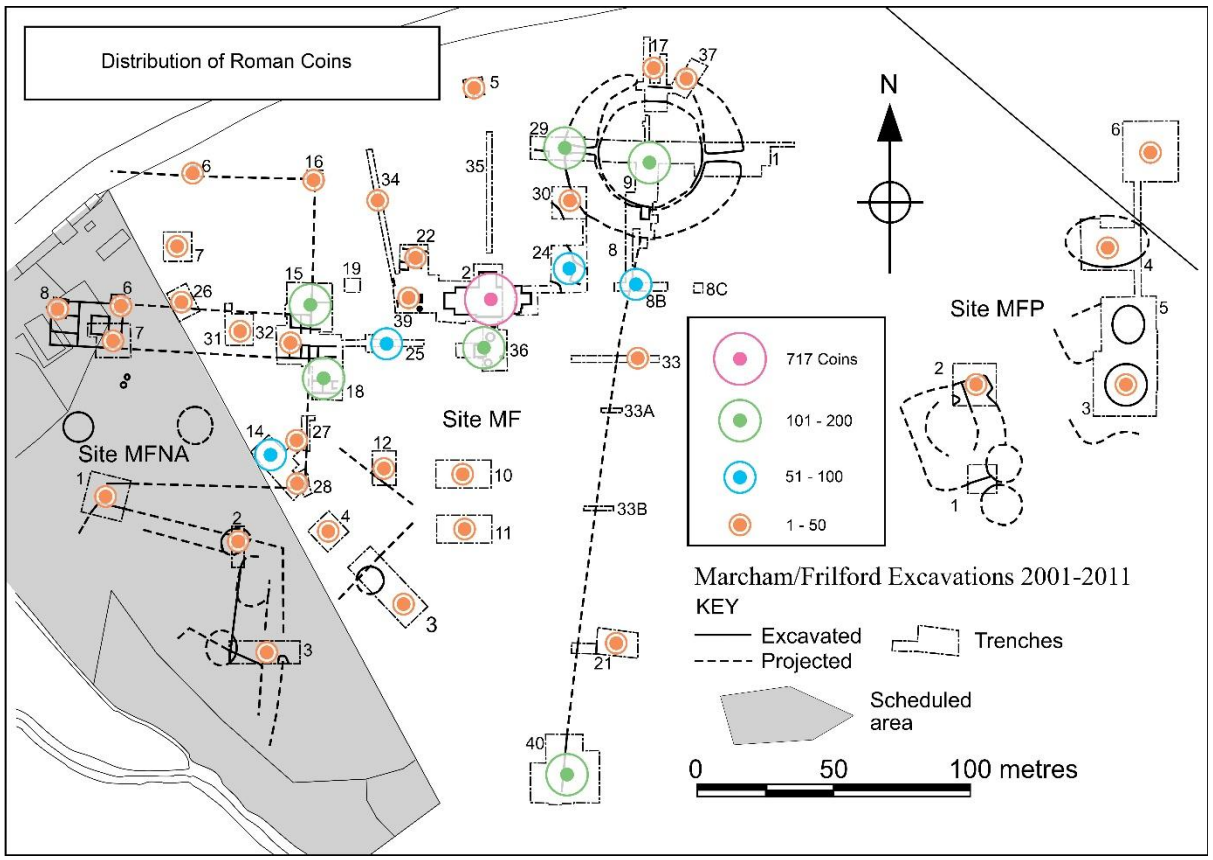


Figure 1. The distribution of Roman coins

The coins were variable in condition. Many were good and a number were excellent, appearing barely if at all worn – a characteristic which applied broadly to some coins of all periods, including early Roman ones. Some manual cleaning in addition to that already undertaken was carried out and a number of identifications were enhanced or facilitated *de novo* as a result.

There was some spatial variation in coin condition, reflecting differences in soil conditions across the site. This was particularly notable in Trench MF40, where of a total of 199 coins 38.7% were completely unidentifiable - eroded or encrusted or both. This was exceptional, since the general figures quoted below show that overall just over 90% of all the coins were at least broadly datable. Generally it seems that heavily worn coins were rare, but identification of this condition prior to the onset of post-depositional processes of erosion and encrustation is problematic. The coin total includes a number of fragments, some very small and of uncertain character, but some others, despite their small size, apparently cut or broken from complete coins. In some cases it was possible to identify these; their possible interpretation is considered further below.

The following summary account presents the key points of the assemblage, with a brief focus on selected aspects which seem to be particularly significant. Much of the analytical potential of the assemblage remains unexplored here.

Chronological breakdown

Of the 2,363 Roman coins some 2,134 were assigned to a Reece period with varying degrees of certainly. 1,895 period identifications were considered secure, with a further 216 probable and 23 possible (Table 1). The great majority of the 'probable' identifications were of coins assigned to period 18 – almost entirely irregular coins considered to be imitations of the FEL TEMP REPARATIO fallen horseman type (many of the 'secure' period 18 identifications were of this type), and 21 of the 23 'possible' period 18 identifications were of the same category. Smaller numbers of 'probable' identifications were of periods 19 and 21 with occasional examples in other periods.

Table 1: Marcham coin numbers by Reece period

Reece period	Date range	Number of identifications			
		Certain	Probable	Possible	Total
(IA)		(1)			(1)
1	-41	1			1
2	41-54	1			1
2/3	41-60?	3			3
3	54-68	2			2
4	69-96	12			12
5	96-117	11			11
6	117-138	4			4
7	138-161	6			6
8	161-180	3	1		4
9	180-192				
10	193-222	2			2
11	222-238	5			5

12	238-260	2			2
13	260-275	96	5		101
14	275-296	60	9		69
15	296-317	15			15
16	317-330	37	1		38
17	330-348	348	7		355
18	348-364	624	156	21	801
19	364-378	473	20	1	494
20	378-388	14			14
21	388-402	176	17	1	194
TOTAL		1,895	216	23	2,134
unidentified					229
GRAND TOTAL					2,364

The single Iron Age coin (SF1950) is a copper alloy unit of Cunobelinus (ABC 2966) The Roman coins span the entire period (and include a single Republican denarius, SF397) but quantities are very small before the middle of the 3rd century (see further below). Early regular issues comprise a possible one of Claudius (SF5874) and two of Nero (SF4369 and SF10). In Table 1 three coins are assigned to a composite period 2/3 group – these are imitation Claudian *asses* of the common Minerva type (SF4224, SF5 and SF56). They were most probably struck under Nero and for the purposes of the comparative bar charts etc are included in the period 3 totals. Flavian and Trajanic coins occur in slightly higher and roughly equal (but modest) quantities – the combined total of 23 coins included five *denarii*. Subsequent 2nd century and early/mid-3rd century issues are particularly poorly represented, though the perhaps unusually high representation of *denarii* in the 1st and 2nd centuries is seen again in period 7, when three of the six coins were *denarii* of Faustina I (SF4405, SF4472 and SF5074). The silver of Severus Alexander (period 11) included a piece (SF4633) with an unusual combination of the reverse PERPETVITATI AVG with the obverse legend IMP ALEXANDER PIVS AVG rather than IMP SEV ALEXAND AVG of RIC 208. To underline the point about the overall scarcity of early Roman coinage it is notable that of the 229 coins in various ways unidentifiable (ie not assigned to an issue period) only 12 fairly certainly fell within a 1st to mid-3rd century date range.

The marked rise in coin loss from the middle of the 3rd century is entirely consistent with the national trend, as is the subsequent dip in coin loss levels in periods 15 and 16. A fairly limited range of rulers is represented in period 13: 'central' emperors Gallienus (19 coins) and Salonina (4) – all probably from the joint reign, and Claudius II (23, including some CONSECRATIO issues), and 'Gallic' emperors Postumus (4), Victorinus (5) and the Tetrici (34). The smaller period 14 assemblage consists mostly of irregular coins and regular official issues of Valerian, Probus and Maximian (1 each) as well as the British usurpers Carausius (7) and Allectus (4).

The 15 coins of period 15 comprised single issues of Licinius and Maximian and 12 of Constantine, the reverses of the latter consisting, with a single exception, of SOLI INVICTO and SOLI INVICTO COMITI types. This last type was also on an issue on Crispus Caesar.

The period 16 coins were of the Augusti Licinius (2 coins) and Constantine (20) and the Caesars Constantine II (5), Crispus (6) and Licinius II (1) and four unidentifiable pieces. A variety of reverse types was evident, with BEATA TRANQVILLITAS (13) the most common.

The great majority of coins at Marcham are of periods 17-19 (AD 330-378), which together account for 76.3% of the coins assigned to an issue period with confidence, and 77.3% of all the coins with a proposed issue period. The levels of coin loss/deposition in periods 18 and 19 are particularly notable.

The period 17 assemblage included issues of Constantine (17) and the contemporary Caesars Constantine II (26), Constans (1) and Constantius II (9). Post-337 issues were a single one of the emperor in quadriga, and of the Augusti Constantine II (1), Constans (64) and Constantius II (25) together with the posthumous ones of Helena (PAX PVBLICA, 8) and Theodora (PIETAS ROMANA, 12). The reverse type repertoire is mainly dominated as would be expected by the well-known types: in the first part of the period VRBS ROMA and CONSTANTINOPOLIS (41 and 51 examples respectively) alongside the GLORIA EXERCITVS (two standards) type (54 examples). The slightly later one-standard GLORIA EXERCITVS (77 examples) was then followed by VICTORIAE DD AVGG Q NN issues (95 examples).

It is in periods 18 and 19, and particularly the former, that contrasts with wider trends are most remarkable. In period 18 the Marcham total figure (32.9% of all coins) is five times that of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) mean which gives a good national picture. Although less numerous than period 18 coins, those of period 19 are the second commonest group in the assemblage, accounting for 25% of the Marcham total, more than double the PAS mean. These imbalances make up for the consistent Marcham shortfalls in periods 1-16. They arise from specific characteristics of coin use on the site in these periods. The importance of the period 18 FEL TEMP REPARATIO coinage has been mentioned above; of the 624 coins assigned to period 18 with some confidence (a figure which includes the only two siliquae from the site, one each of Julian and Jovian), approximately 85% were considered to be probably irregular. These were almost entirely of the FEL TEMP REPARATIO fallen horseman type, and inevitably almost all of the period 18 coins in the probable and possible identification categories were also of this type. In many cases these coins were small or very small: of all the period 18 coins 37 were recorded as fragments (mostly small) and 532 were defined as ‘minims’ with a diameter up to about 10mm, the smallest examples being only *c.* 3mm across, while a further 121 coins were in a diameter range typically from 11 to 13mm: the high representation of these coins may be owing at least in part to a combination of fairly careful hand excavation and the use of metal-detectors on site. The consistent character of most of these pieces encouraged the view that they should be seen as a group, even when conclusive individual distinguishing features were not clearly present, but the condition of many of the smaller coins inevitably increased the degree of uncertainty (and subjectivity) in assigning them to an issue period.

FEL TEMP REPARATIO issues of all types completely dominated the period 18 assemblage. As already indicated distinction between regular and irregular issues was difficult. Only 12 examples of the fallen horseman reverse type were thought likely to be regular. These were supplemented by small numbers of galley (2), hut (2) and phoenix (8) types. All other reverse types were rare, VICTORIAE DD NN AVG ET CAE(S), with five examples, being the most numerous.

The period 18 assemblage included a few notable oddities. SF1478, a large nummus in Trench MF2 was one of the VICTORIAE DD NN AVG ET CAE types. Both faces were overstruck, the reverse over the same type, but at an oblique angle. Only IMP CONSTA is legible of the obverse legend; the remaining legend consists of densely superimposed small letters and the lower part of the obverse bust is overlaid by a larger helmeted head facing right. SF3209 in Trench MF15 combined a FEL TEMP REPARATIO fallen horseman reverse of Aquileia with a D N CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C obverse.

As noted above the Marcham assemblage included a number of coin fragments. Almost exactly half (67) of the pieces defined as ‘fragment’ in the record were assigned with varying degrees of confidence to an issue period; of these, 14 are certainly of period 18 while a further 23 were in the probable and possible categories. Most of the certain examples were of the FEL TEMP REPARATIO fallen horseman type, as would be expected, and one of these was noted as cut down. More striking is the treatment of the three VICTORIAE issues in this group, one is simply ‘broken’, but SF869 is cut down, while SF2144 is a cut quarter. Most notable are two small coins, SF2633 and SF2991 (recorded as minims rather than fragments), the latter certainly and the former probably an issue of Magnentius, both cut down to focus on the chi-rho motif. SF2633 came from Trench MF2, but SF2991 was from Trench MF1. The use of cut pieces in addition to a wide range of more subjectively described ‘broken’ ones can be suggested as part of a wider picture of use of material to supplement the irregular FEL TEMP REPARATIO pieces. It is important to note that fragmentary coins occurred much more widely than just in period 18 (including in later periods where such items cannot possibly have formed part of a repertoire associated with deposition in period 18). The situation with regard to cut coins might have been different, however. These were noted only for periods 17 and 18, and it is striking that the three period 17 examples (SF430, SF914 and SF1346) are all of the VICTORIAE DD AVGG Q NN type which, chronologically immediately preceding the period of large scale production of large numbers of small copies, and themselves available in quantity, could have lent themselves to use in this context.

The period 19 coin total. Like that for period 18, also included probable and possible identification categories, but these accounted for a much smaller percentage of the period total (4.3% compared to 22.1% for period 18) and the narrow range of types in this period enhanced confidence in their identification even when they were not in good condition. The overall total of period 19 coins was boosted by contents of the most notable single collection of coins from the site, a group of 111 from contexts from a probable ‘ritual shaft’, context 36123 in Trench MF36, of which 92 were of period 19 (see further below). The assemblage was made up entirely of the three main types for this period, GLORIA NOVI SAECVLI (unique to Gratian and the mint at Arles, 50 examples), GLORIA ROMANORVM (165) and SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE (255).

Nine of the 14 coins in the small period 20 assemblage were VOT/XV/MVLT/XX issues certainly or probably of Gratian, with a further three of Maximus (one not certain). A single

VOT/X/MVLT/XX issue of Theodosius was perhaps from the mint of Antioch, but the mark was incomplete.

After the characteristic period 20 dip the Marcham coin list recovers well in period 21, these coins amounting to just over 9% of the assemblage, a figure approximately double that of the PAS mean. Amongst the 194 coins of this period (including 18 probable and possible examples) there were 14 issues of Valentinian II, 21 of Theodosius and 31 of Arcadius (only one of Honorius), plus two of usurper Eugenius. Identifiable reverse types were divided almost equally between SALVS REIPVBLICAE (70) and VICTORIA AVGGG (78). Identification of the reverses was frequently possible on the form of the image, whereas that of the obverses was hampered by the basic character of issues of this period, small and often worn, but more importantly, often poorly struck leaving legends incomplete and unclear.

Figure 2 compares in graphical form two versions of the Marcham data with two more wide-ranging data sets. The first of the latter shows mean coin loss for England based on PAS data as collated in 2021 and can be taken as giving a fairly representative view of the overall national trend. A second column shows a mean loss pattern for rural temples in Roman Britain calculated by Richard Henry. The third and fourth columns for each issue period show the breakdown of the Marcham assemblage, first ('top') the 1,894 coins with confident period attributions and then the total figure including probable and possible identifications.

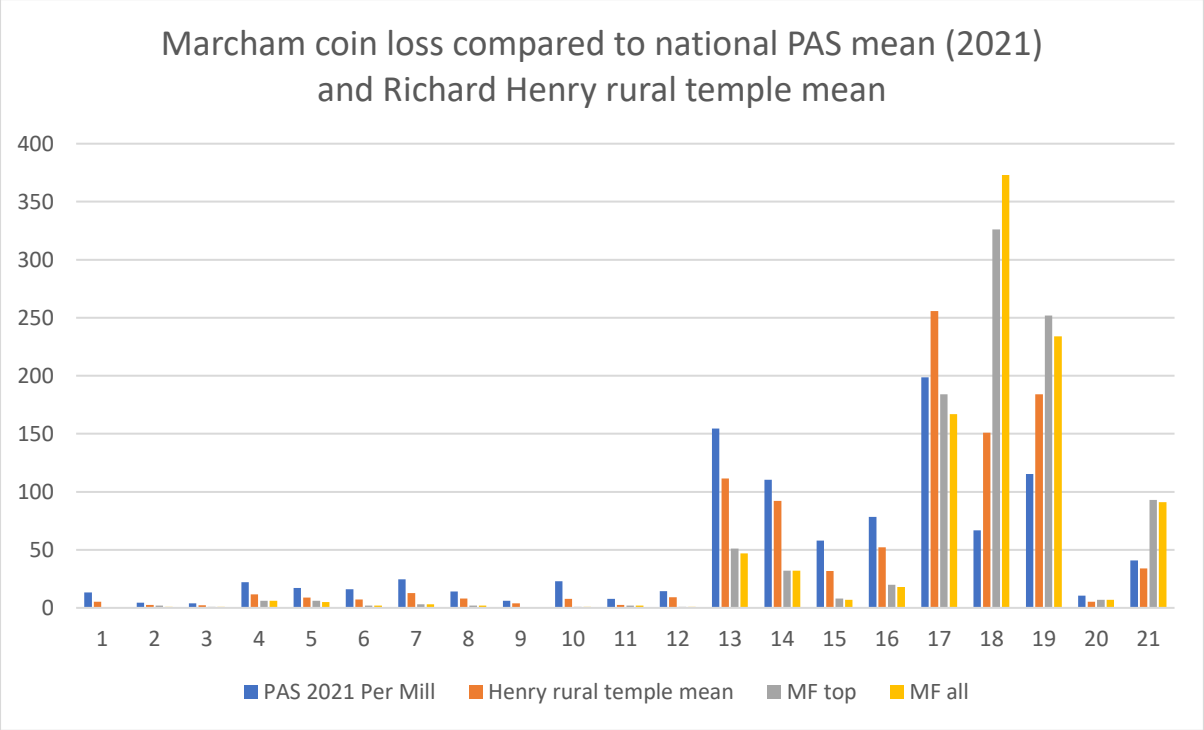


Figure 2: Marcham coin loss compared to national PAS mean (2021) and Richard Henry rural temple mean

While the overall shape of the Marcham graph follows the national (PAS 2021) trend, as indicated above, it is clear that it does so only very loosely. Both versions of the Marcham data show that coin loss is consistently below, and typically well below, the PAS levels right up to and including the early 4th century (period 16, AD 317-330). The same is true, though in a less extreme way, of a comparison with Henry's mean for rural Romano-British temples.

Only in period 17 is approximate parity achieved, though Henry's mean is the most prominent here. As the PAS figure here shows, period 17 is characteristically the best represented in Roman Britain – this is particularly true of rural assemblages (and it is important to note that the nature of the PAS dataset means that urban assemblages, in which period 13 and 14 coins are often dominant, are under-represented, with a skewing effect on the overall PAS profile).

Site distribution

The wide distribution of coins across the site is shown in terms of issue period in Table 2 and in Figure 1. Coins were recovered from 36 of the 40 numbered trenches. In addition there as well as from Zone MF there were coins from the two separately identified zones, MFNA and MFP; in these cases the coins from their component trenches have been grouped together (it may be significant that these trenches produced four of the seven pre-Flavian coins from the site). Finally, a small number of unstratified coins were not associated with a specific zone or trench.

Table 2: Quantification of coins by Reece period and trench/zone: trench/period totals include probable and possible identifications

	Reece period																								
MF trench	1	2	2/3	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total		NI
0					1										1			2	4				8		3
1														5	5	1	2	15	20	14	1	4	67		4
2									1					12	11	3	7	104	420	75	2	41	676		35
3																		3		3			6		4
4														2	1					1			4		
5																			4	1		2	7		2
6																	1	2	1				4		
7														1						1			2		
8						2							1	1	1	1		5	18	10		7	46		4
9					1	1	1		1					5	2		4	23	20	31	1	8	98		12
10																		1					1		
11																		1	1			1	3		
12														1	1	1		1	1	1			6		2
14					1			1						6	2	1	1	14	43	17	2	6	94		4
15					1				1					21	8		1	30	56	37	1	19	175		9
16																				2			2		
17															1			2	1	2		1	7		
18					1	4	1	1	1		2	1		5	11	1	4	34	25	28	1	10	130		11
20																				3			3		4
21								1					1	1			1	6	4	5		3	22		9
22			1											3	2				8	3	1	2	20		2
23																		1	2			3	6		2
24					3	1		2				3		5	1	1	3	11	19	7	1	8	65		7
25														6	6		1	11	28	20	1	7	80		1
26					1									9	1	1	1	5	5	1	1	1	26		3
27																		1		1			2		

28																		1	2	2		3	8		4
29						1								4	4		4	22	37	35	1	23	131		15
30				1	1											1	1	3	5			2	14		
31								1				1		1	3			6	11	13		8	44		1
32					1									1				3	2	6		3	16		2
33																	1	1	1				3		2
34																		3	8	4		1	16		
36		1					1							3	3		2	12	10	104		7	143		4
37																		1					1		
39							1											5	7	3		1	17		3
40														7	4	3	3	14	21	49	1	20	122		77
MFNA	1		2		1									1	1		1	5	15	5		3	35		3
MFP				1		2								1		1		7	2	10			24		
Total	1	1	3	2	12	11	4	6	4		2	5	2	101	69	15	38	355	801	494	14	194	2,134		229

These figures do not readily lend themselves to analysis of chronological trends within the site. Most of the individual trench groups are far too small for their loss profiles to have statistical significance. Sixteen trench groups contained fewer than 10 coins, and an attempt to compare the loss profiles of the 13 largest trenches (with assemblages from 44 coins upwards) produced such a diverse set of patterns that it was hard to see any meaning in the variability displayed (the raw data are presented in Table 3). Further detailed analysis should provide a better insight into the extent to which individual trench assemblages were or were not comparable but this has not been attempted here. For present purposes attention was narrowed down to trench assemblages of approximately 100 coins or more (the smallest group was of 94 coins). The loss patterns of the eight resulting groups are plotted against the overall site mean in Figure 3.

Table 3: The thirteen largest trench assemblages, coin loss percentage by period

	Trench													
Period	1	2	8	9	14	15	18	24	25	29	31	36	40	
1														
2												0.7		
2/3														
3														
4				1.0	1.1	0.6	0.8	4.6						
5			4.4	1.0			3.1	1.5		0.8				
6				1.0			0.8					0.7		
7					1.1		0.8	3.1			2.3			
8		0.1		1.0		0.6	0.8							
9														
10							1.5							
11							0.8	4.6			2.3			
12			2.2											
13	7.5	1.8	2.2	5.1	6.4	12.0	3.9	7.7	7.5	3.1	2.3	2.1	5.7	
14	7.5	1.6	2.2	2.0	2.1	4.6	8.5	1.5	7.5	3.1	6.8	2.1	3.3	
15	1.5	0.4	2.2		1.1		0.8	1.5					2.5	
16	3.0	1.0		4.1	1.1	0.6	4.0	4.6	1.3	3.1		1.4	2.5	
17	22.4	15.5	10.9	23.5	14.9	17.1	3.0	16.9	13.8	16.8	13.6	8.4	11.5	
18	29.9	61.7	39.1	20.4	45.7	32.0	19.2	29.2	35.0	28.2	25.0	7.0	15.6	
19	20.9	11.4	21.7	31.6	18.1	21.1	21.5	10.8	25.0	26.7	29.6	72.7	41.8	
20	1.5	0.3		1.0	2.1	0.6	0.8	1.5	1.3	0.8			0.8	
21	6.0	6.1	15.2	8.2	6.4	10.9	7.7	12.3	8.8	17.6	18.2	4.9	16.4	
Total coins	67	676	46	98	94	175	130	65	80	131	44	143	122	

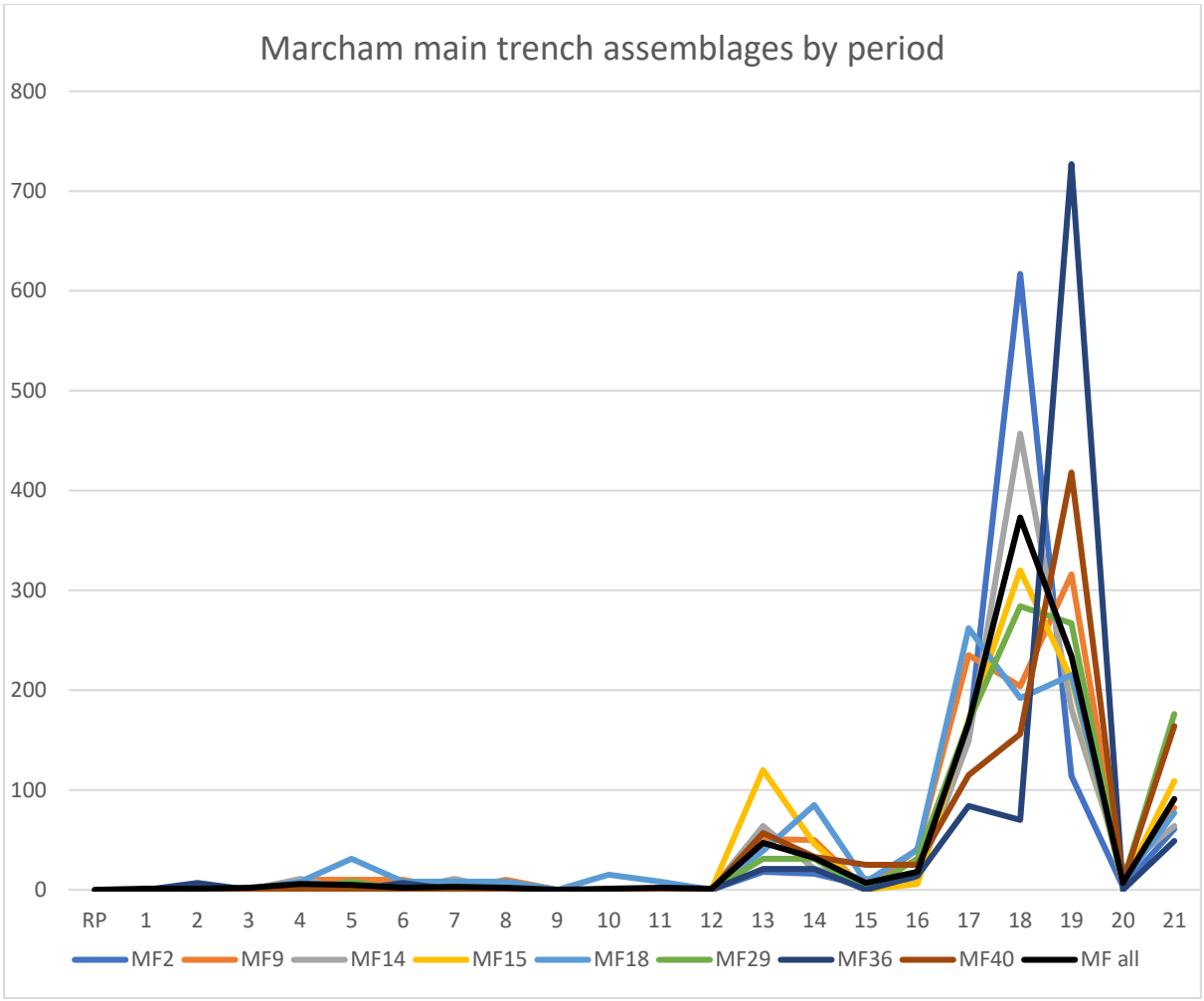


Figure 3: Coin loss patterns for the eight largest Marcham trench coin assemblages, with the overall site mean

Figure 3 shows the considerable variation in loss/deposition pattern between these largest assemblages and perhaps in particular highlights contrasts between assemblages in which coins of period 18 or period 19 are most strongly represented. In terms of broad variation from the overall site mean the little peak of period 5 (Trajanic) coinage in Trench MF18 is notable. This trench also significantly exceeds the site mean in period 14, while a period 13 peak is notable in Trench MF15. Unsurprisingly the most significant variation in relation to the overall site mean is seen in periods 17-19. In period 17 the most notable variants from the mean seem to be those below it, Trenches MF36 and MF40, which are also well below the overall site mean in period 18, along with Trench MF9. Period 18 is of course the peak point in the overall site pattern; only Trench MF14 and (in particular) Trench MF2 have values above the mean here – the substantial assemblage from the latter being primarily responsible for the overall peak (see further below). In period 18 the range of values in these eight groups is from 7% (in Trench MF36) to 62% (in Trench MF2). In Period 19 a similarly wide range is seen, from 11% (Trench MF2) to 73% (Trench MF36), reversing the extreme positions of these trenches in the preceding period. The extreme representation of period 19 coins in Trench MF36 results primarily from the remarkable accumulation in context 36123. Trench

MF40 and to a lesser extent Trench MF9 also have numbers of period 19 coins above the site mean.

The minimal representation of period 20 coinage is seen in all eight trench assemblages. They then show considerable variation in period 21, with a range of values from just under 5% (Trench MF36) to around 16.5% and 17.5% in Trenches MF40 and MF29 respectively.

Principal individual trench assemblages

Trench MF2 (676 coins) produced by far the largest single trench assemblage, amounting to 31.7% of all the identified coins from the site. A further 35 coins were unidentified. The fact that this substantial assemblage was dominated by period 18 issues therefore accounts in large part for their prominence in the site total. Trench MF2 was located centrally within the site and was occupied by a large rectangular building, the function of which is uncertain. The coins come from a wide variety of contexts (the context associations are not considered here) including 144 from topsoil (context 2000). A single *sestertius* of Marcus Aurelius was from 2000. There was a continuous run of coin loss/deposition, but initially at a low level, from period 13 onwards. Period 17 is well-represented (15.5%), leading to the massive period 18 peak (61.7% of the trench total) before the drop to the low period 19 level mentioned above (nevertheless still numbering 75 coins). The modest period 21 figure (6.1%) is below the overall site mean value.

Trench MF9 was placed within the arena in the north-east part of the site and encompassed parts of the arena interior and the bank structure on the south side. The Trench MF9 assemblage (98 coins, plus 12 unidentified) presents few striking features. It includes single coins from periods 4, 5, 6 and 8 and a fairly standard sequence from period 13 onwards. The numbers of coins from periods 17-19 are very roughly similar, but the period 17 percentage is in fact the highest in any of the trench assemblages and the period 19 figure one of the highest, while the period 21 value is just above the site mean. Other excavation trenches relating to the arena were MF1, MF17, MF29 and MF37, of which the Trenches MF1 (67 coins) and MF29 (131 coins) assemblages, associated respectively with the east and west entrances of the structure are numerically significant. The Trench MF1, MF9 and MF29 groups are shown together in Figure 4 in an east-west sequence. The significance of the differences between these three profiles is uncertain; all the three main periods (17-19) are well-represented, and it is probably going beyond the evidence to suggest that deposition was slightly more intense in the east and west entrance trenches in period 18 whereas it became more important in the arena in period 19. The western entrance, trench MF29, does have a significantly high number of period 21 coins – the highest percentage of these in the entire site.

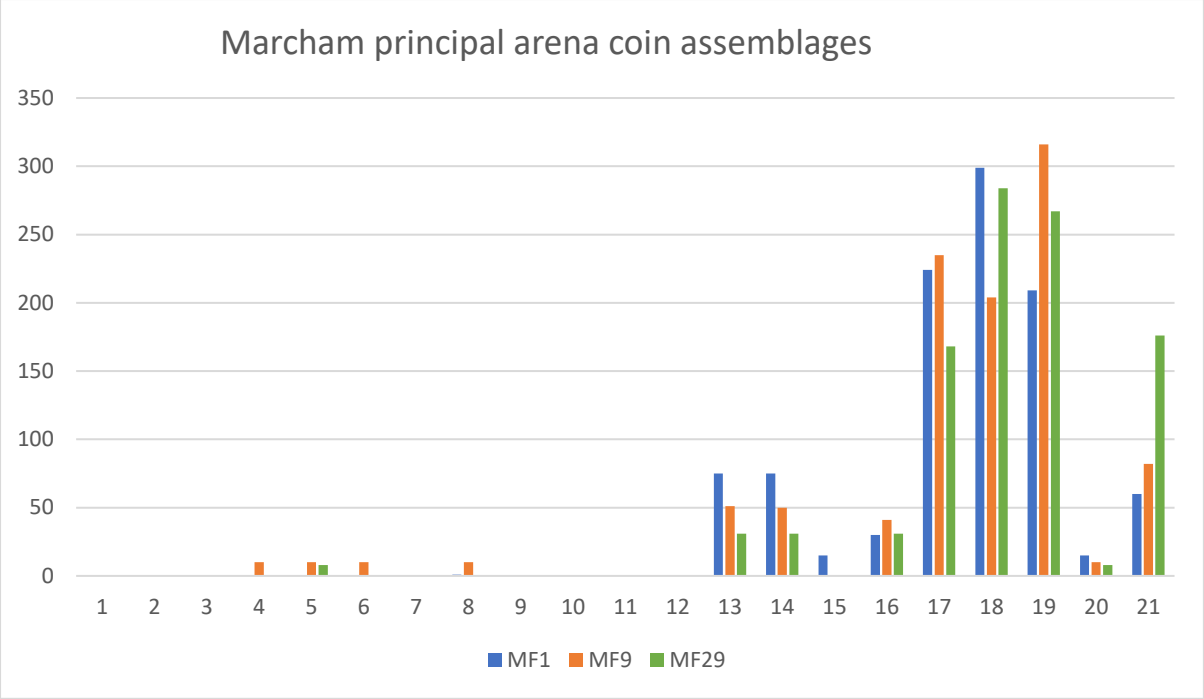


Figure 4. Comparative coin loss in the three main arena trenches

The Trench MF14 and MF15 assemblages were the only ones of reasonable size associated with the temple's temenos. Trench MF14 (94 coins) lay within the south-east corner of the temenos enclosure. The principal feature of this assemblage was the dominance of period 18 coins, at 45.7% the second highest figure on the site. Trench MF15 to the north produced the second largest trench assemblage (175 coins). This trench straddled the eastern temenos wall and encompassed a building alongside the axial approach to the temple through the temenos entrance. The main features of the coin assemblage included a peak of loss/deposition in period 13, at 12% of the assemblage the highest of any trench, except for the much smaller group in Trench MF26 (34.6% of a total of 26 coins) which, perhaps coincidentally, occupied a comparable location at the margin of the axial approach to the temple to the west of Trench MF15. Of the three main period groups in Trench MF15 those of periods 17 and 19 were of roughly equal importance (17.1% and 21.1% respectively) while period 18 coins dominated at 32%. The period 21 contribution was also notable at 10.9%.

It is curious that Trench MF32, contiguous with Trench MF15 on its south side produced only 16 coins, with period 19 issues most prominent. Trench MF32 was in turn adjoined to the south by Trench MF18, comprising mainly buildings against the outer (east) side of the temenos wall. These produced 130 coins, including the widest (but still numerically meagre) range of pieces from the Flavian to early 3rd century periods. A minor peak in period 14 was followed by the principal one in period 17 (26.2%) and slightly reduced quantities in periods 18 and 19.

The Trench MF36 assemblage (143 coins) has already been referred to. This trench lay east of the temenos but on the axis of approach to it. On this axis was a small square shrine, most of the interior of which was occupied by a large pit (36132), one element of which was the shaft 36123, which produced 111 coins (including one unspecified 4th century piece) from eight component contexts. These ranged from a very worn *as* of Hadrian (SF5779, interestingly one of two examples of a BRITANNIA type (RIC2 (3) rev 241) from the site,

the other (SF6010) from Trench MF39) to three certain and one possible issues of period 21 (all from the main upper fills). It is possible that these represent contamination of an essentially period 19 feature (92 of the 111 coins being of this period) but that cannot be considered certain. Altogether period 19 coins accounted for 72.7% of the Trench MF36 total. As well as the Hadrianic *as* other elements were the possible *as* of Claudius (SF5874), then the usual spread from periods 13-18 and then a final low-level representation of period 21.

The last of the largest trench assemblages, from Trench MF40 (122 coins), lying at the southern edge of the site, had in common with Trench MF36 dominance by coins of period 19, and while it was not to the same extent (41.8% here) this was still by some margin the second highest trench representation of this period. Percentages of period 17 and 18 coins were notably low (11.5% and 15.6% respectively) while period 21 numbers were unusually high (16.4%). The low-lying location of Trench MF40 meant that periodically poor drainage conditions had considerable adverse effects on the condition of many coins. In addition to the identified pieces were a further 77 unidentifiable coins (38.7% of the overall total of 199 coins). These amounted to one third of the total of unidentified coins from the overall site. In Trench MF40 it is likely that most of the unidentifiable coins were of periods 18 and 19, but this can be no more than speculation.

Fourth-century mints

	Reece period						
MINT	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**
London	5	6					
Amiens				1			
Trier	5	17	134	16	10		4
Lyons	1	5	29	12	67	6	11
Arles		1	11	2	169	2	13
Ticinum		3					
Aquileia				2	17		9
Rome			2	3	8		5
Siscia		2	5		18		
Cyzicus			2				
Antioch?						1	
Coins assigned to mint in period	11	34	183	36	289	9	42
Total coins in period	15	38	356	795	499	14	194

Table 4: Approximate numbers of mint attributions in fourth-century issue periods

Table 4 shows the numbers of mint attributions in fourth-century issue periods. Not all identifications were based on complete mintmarks, so not all the attributions are absolutely certain. The overall picture, however, is considered reliable. The overall size and condition of the assemblage suggested examination of this aspect to assess the degree to which it was or was not ‘typical’ and to consider the possibility of the occurrence of unusual individual pieces.

The domination of the small period 15 assemblage by issues of London and Trier is typical. The very high proportion of coins attributable to mints in period 16 reflects the facts that they were typically large, well struck and went out of circulation very quickly – as site finds they tend to be in good condition (where soil conditions allow). Issues from Trier become more important in Period 16. London issues are still present, but that mint closed in AD 325. The range of mints seen in this period has expanded into northern Italy and Croatia (Siscia). In period 17 the strong dominance of Trier issues is characteristic, as is the supporting role of Lyons and Arles. The occurrence of two coins from Cyzicus is notable. Period 18 is highly problematic, since so many of the coins in this period were irregular issues and fragmentary indications of mintmarks on them have no clear significance. Because of the difficulties of differentiation between regular and irregular issues the numbers presented here may be less reliable than for other periods. The mint of Amiens, specific to the usurpation of Magnentius and Decentius in this period, is only represented by a single identifiable example. As in the previous period Trier and Lyons remain the most common mints.

By period 19 the balance of supply has shifted almost entirely from Trier to the Gaulish mints of Lyons and, in particular, Arles – again a well-recognised pattern. These sources are supplemented by the Italian mints of Aquileia and Rome, and by Siscia. Lyons dominates the small period 20 group, in which a possible issue of Antioch is notable. All of the period 19 sources, with the important exception of Siscia, contribute to the supply of coin in period 21. The relatively small number of coins attributed to a mint in this period is a direct consequence of their basic character, small, often worn but more importantly, often poorly struck leaving mintmarks incomplete, unclear, or sometimes totally missing.