NEWS LESSON

The Man Who Found 934 Roman Coins



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. What would you do first if you found a pot of old coins?
2. Would you rather find one rare object or hundreds of ordinary ones?
3. What makes buried treasure exciting beyond the money?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**archaeologists**	☐	A	people who study the past by digging up old things
2	**remarkable**	☐	B	a period of one hundred years
3	**century**	☐	C	the male ruler of a very large country
4	**emperor**	☐	D	money that you keep and do not spend
5	**savings**	☐	E	very unusual and worth noticing
6	**mystery**	☐	F	to write down information so you can use it later
7	**electronic**	☐	G	something that nobody can explain
8	**record**	☐	H	working with electricity, like a phone or a computer

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

A man with a metal detector found 934 Roman silver coins in a field in Germany. Who hid them, and why?

1 Oliver Riedl was searching a field near Wesseling, in western Germany, when his metal detector went off. He found a Roman silver coin, then another. The machine kept signalling, and he realised there was probably something important under the ground. He contacted local archaeology experts instead of trying to remove everything himself. What they found was one of the most remarkable Roman discoveries in Germany in recent years.

2 The search began in October 2025, but the full discovery was announced publicly in September 2026. Archaeologists eventually recovered 934 Roman silver coins. Each one is called a denarius, and the plural is denarii. Together they weighed about 3.1 kilograms. Some were more than 2,000 years old, while the newest dated from around AD 124 or 125, during the time of the Roman emperor Hadrian.

3 The coins had probably been buried in the second century AD, possibly inside a pot. Nobody knows who put them there. The owner might have wanted to keep their money safe during a dangerous period, or perhaps they were saving for something important. What is certain is that the money was never collected, and it stayed underground for nearly nineteen centuries.

4 The number of coins was extraordinary. Experts estimated that an ordinary Roman soldier could have needed years to put aside a similar amount. People in Roman times had different ways of keeping money, but they did not have modern bank accounts or electronic payments. Hiding valuable coins could be a sensible decision, even though it came with the risk of forgetting the location or never returning.

5 Riedl's behaviour was also important. He was carrying out a permitted search and informed the authorities when he realised what he might have discovered. Archaeologists could then study the place properly and record how the coins were buried. That information may help researchers understand who owned them and what was happening in the area at the time. A coin removed without recording its location can lose part of its historical value.

6 The collection went on display at the LVR State Museum in Bonn in September 2026. Visitors can now see money that somebody held, saved and eventually hid almost 1,900 years ago. The mystery of its owner may never be solved. But the story reminds us that history is not only about emperors, battles and famous buildings. Sometimes it is about an ordinary person who buried their savings and never came back.

Sources: LVR Office for Archaeological Monument Preservation. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Riedl contacted local archaeology experts. T F NG
2. Experts know who buried the coins. T F NG
3. Riedl received a reward for the discovery. T F NG
4. All 934 coins were made in the time of the emperor Hadrian. T F NG
5. A Roman soldier would probably have needed many years to save this much money. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

certain	estimated	extraordinary	informed	permitted	recovered	weighed

1. Divers _____ a lost ring from the bottom of the lake.
2. Metal detecting is only allowed in places where it is _____ .
3. The shop _____ the police as soon as it saw the broken window.
4. Finding a whole pot of coins would be an _____ piece of luck.
5. I am _____ that I locked the door, because I checked it twice.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Oliver Riedl _____ a Roman silver coin in the field. (FIND)
2. The full discovery _____ publicly in September 2026. (ANNOUNCE)
3. The coins _____ about 3.1 kilograms together. (WEIGH)
4. Somebody _____ the coins almost 1,900 years ago. (HIDE)
5. The machine _____ signalling, so Riedl knew there was more. (KEEP)

7 Language focus: collocations

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. A collocation is a pair of words that sound natural together, like make a decision or heavy rain. Learn the pair, not just the word.

display	keep	make	pay	risk	solve	take

1. Experts hope to _____ the mystery of who owned the coins.
2. If you hide money in a field, you take a big _____ .
3. The museum will put the coins on _____ for visitors.
4. A bank helps people _____ their money safe.
5. It is sensible to _____ care when you handle old coins.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Should a finder get to keep something that matters to a place's history?
2. What can ordinary objects tell us that grand buildings cannot?
3. Which object from your life would help a future historian understand today?

9 Role-play: what should we do with the old coins?

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the neighbour who found the pot

While digging a flower bed by the shared wall, you found an old pot of coins. You'd like to sell them and share the money. Explain why, and answer your neighbour's worries.

Student B · the other neighbour

You think the coins may be important to the history of your town. You want to tell the local museum. Ask questions, then try to agree on a plan.

Useful phrases

I'd like to find out what they're worth.
We shouldn't sell them before an expert has looked.
They might tell us something about the past.
That's a fair point, but it's our garden.
What if we told the museum first?
Let's agree on a plan we're both happy with.

Afterwards, tell the class what you agreed and whether you both felt it was fair.

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 A · 2 E · 3 B · 4 C · 5 D · 6 G · 7 H · 8 F

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 F · 5 T

5 Vocabulary

1 recovered · 2 permitted · 3 informed · 4 extraordinary · 5 certain

6 Verb forms

1 found · 2 was announced · 3 weighed · 4 hid · 5 kept

7 Language focus

1 solve · 2 risk · 3 display · 4 keep · 5 take

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