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MORE ON THE MONSTER META SUDANS!

As I gazed at the amazing photograph from Roma Ieri Oggi in [my last post](#), I suddenly became conscious of just how huge the Meta Sudans was. The old photographs do not really give us an impression of its sheer size.

But the combined photo does. The monument was, clearly, immense, well worthy of an emperor with something to prove.

The Colosseum stands – or did, until Mussolini – in a hollow in the hills. The heat must have been great. The fountain put out a spray of water, rather like the “foggers” used by restaurants in the Piazza Navona today, and this must have cooled the air.

Just for fun, I thought that I would draw a line up the sides of the stub, to see how tall it must have been. And we get ... this:



We get something that must have been as tall as the Colosseum itself! Which is mildly incredible.

The original monument must have been covered in marble, so it would be taller.

The shape of the monument is preserved on coins. [This one, in the British Museum](#), is new to me:



Meta Sudans in coin of Titus, 80-81. British Museum, 1931, 1006.13. Asset number 259280001. Copper alloy coin (fake).

What is remarkable about this coin is that it does not show the Colosseum, as the well-known sestertius (about which I wrote [here](#)) does:



This shows the Meta Sudans as almost as tall as the Colloseum. And plainly it was!

I had always thought the coin exaggerated the height of the Meta Sudans, but clearly not. The 4 niches on each side of the Meta Sudans are still preserved to some extent in the brick stub above.

It does make you wonder where the foundations of the portico shown on the coin are!
