

FIG. 2

2. On a limestone block, allegedly found at Khirbet Khan el Zebib, map reference approximately 254.103:

لضب بن عصم ذالتم ووجم على خلد اخته متت ترحت و
عبس و رغمت من . . من . مت

By *Dabb* son of 'Ašim of the tribe of Taim. And he laid a stone on the cairn of *Khuld*, his sister. She died, she was grieved, and he frowned (was upset), and she was reluctant (to die).

The end of the text is unfortunately not clear, though the intention seems to be as suggested. *rġm* (*rġmt*) is usually followed by *mny*, the first two letters of which word are clear enough. It is also clear that the verb refers to *Khuld* and not to the writer; see also *L.S.I.*,¹ Nos. 254 and 567.

Dabb seems to be a variant of *Diab*.

'*Ašim* is new, and the *š* is of a very peculiar form; the first letter could also be *j* in view of its size, though I cannot find *jšm* as a name.

Khuld is a new feminine name.

The rest of the text is an interesting example of pre-Islamic Arabic, and Dr. Littmann vocalises it:

مَتَتْ تَرْحَتْ وَ عَبَسَ وَ رَغِمَتْ

The verb '*bs*, though well known in Arabic, has not been found in these texts before.

3. On a basalt block found at Qa' el 'Abid, map reference 360.218 approximately (Pl. VIII). This and the next three texts on another block are from a cairn almost on the Syrian frontier, and there are another twenty or more inscriptions by the same cairn according to my completely reliable informants.² Register No. J1816.

¹ Publications of the Princetown Archaeological Expedition: *Safaitic Inscriptions*, by Enno Littmann.

² Since writing this the place has been visited, and about fifty texts photographed and recorded. It is hoped to publish these later.

لشع بن كهيل و وجم على شيجا اخه رغم مني واتي نظر
هتيرن من اصبح سنت حر بهم ال عوذ بوعل و غنمت لذ
دعى وعور دشر ذ خبل

By *Shai'* son of *Kāhil*. And he placed a stone on the cairn of *Shuja'a*, his brother, disliking death. And he came, seeing the destruction from (upon?) the tribe of *Ṣabāḥ*, in the year in which the tribe of *'Awidh* made war upon them in *W'l* (or *Wjl*?). And spoil to him who leaves [this writing alone], and *Dushara* blind him who destroys [it].

The names are all well known. For the expression *rġm mny* see No. 2. The next words, — واتي نظر هتيرن من —, could be differently interpreted, and Dr. Littmann would translate, 'And he came looking for the man (or the two men, *ثييرين* or *ثييرين*) expelled from the *'Al Ṣabāḥ*,' making *تيرن* the passive participle of *تير*. The tribe of *'Awidh* is a well-known one, and is mentioned many times in *L.S.I.*, but unfortunately we have no other record of the war between them and the *Ṣabāḥ* tribe, so cannot date the text. Nor can the place *W'l* or *Wjl* be identified.

4. See No. 3 for place of finding: this, Nos. 5 and 6 are on the same stone. Register No. J1817: Pl. VIII.

لزبد بن سخر بن داف بن سخر وردف هضان ف هجد عوذ سلم و محبت

By *Zabad* son of *Sakhr* son of *Daf* son of *Sakhr*. And he followed the sheep. So, O *Ḥad 'Awidh*, [give] peace and glory.

A straightforward text with well-known names; the only new feature is the use of the word *mjdt*, which, however, occurs again in No. 7.

5.

لسخر بن عبد بن سخر و اشرق بضان ف هجد عوذ سلم

By *Sakhr* son of *'Abid* son of *Sakhr*. And he went east with the sheep. So, O *Ḥad 'Awidh*, [give] peace.

Another straightforward text with no peculiarities.

6.

لسودن بن تم بن سودن و تامر هشحص ف لت و
جد ضف غنمت

By *Sauden* son of *Taim* son of *Sauden*. And he held a consultation (or meeting) [about] the want (i.e., shortage of supplies?). So, *Allat* and *Ḥad Daif*, [give] booty.

An interesting and unusual text, but the meaning seems clear. The word *shš* is found

in *L.S.I.*, No. 342, but the use of *t'mr* is new.¹ Perhaps a *h* is omitted before *lt*: the most usual expression is *fhlt*. I suggest *ʔad-Dhaiʔ* on the analogy of *ʔad-'Awidh*: if correct, it adds another deity to the Safaitic pantheon.

7. Found by the side of the main road about 12 km. west of H5. Register No. J1815, Pl. VIII.

لتم بن نارال ذال ضف و خيط مدبر ف هلت مجدت و سلم

By *Taim* son of *Nar'el* of the tribe of *Daif*. And he went straight to [the] desert. So, O *Allat*, [give] glory and peace.

The name *Nar'el* is unusual, but the *a* seems clear: it is usually *Nahr'el*. The tribe of *Daif* is referred to in No. 6.

hyt is a new expression: Dr. Littmann translates it as the second form of *h't* 'to pass along quickly.' One would have expected either *m* or *h* in front of *mabr*, but *m* may be elided. In which case it would read 'And he passed quickly along [from] the desert.' See No. 4 for *mjdt*.

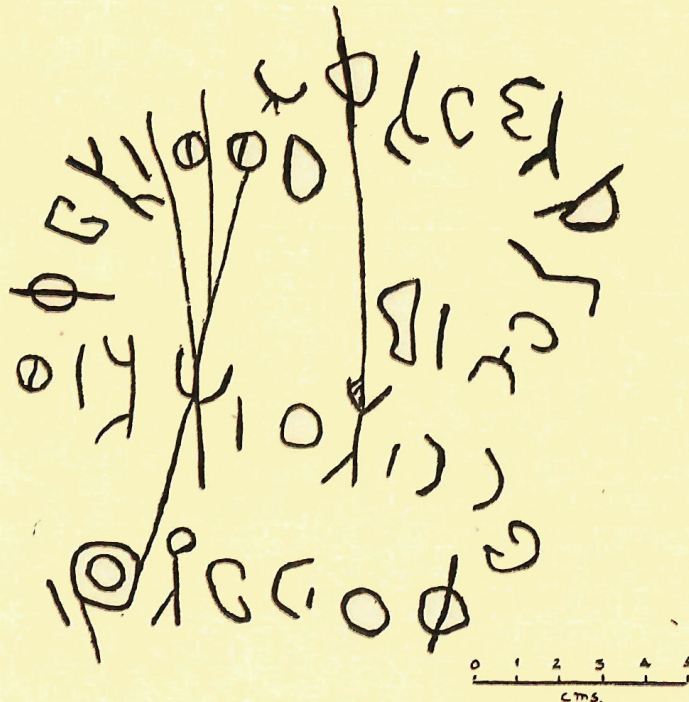


FIG. 3

8. On a small sandstone slab found somewhere east of Katrana, register No. J1820.

لجصر بن عقرب بن اعل ذال وقرالا و—س قبر (قهر)
فهدشر سلم

By *ʔāšir* son of 'Aqrab son of 'A'al of the tribe of *Wqr'el*. And he—a tomb (or, he overcame). So, oh *Dushara* [give] peace.

¹ I have since found it in Dussaud and Macler, *Mission de la Syrie Moyenne*, Pl. IX, No. 42: the end of this text is unreadable from the copy.

Jāsir is a new name: the others are known. The name of the tribe is new. The following verb is difficult to establish, as the stone is rather rubbed at this point and clearly the writer has made some slip. It is uncertain whether the upper or lower letter after the *w* should be read first: it looks like *wjs* or *wsj*, the former meaning 'to be frightened by the sound of something,' the latter 'the fastest pace of a camel' and hence 'to pass quickly along.' It could also be *w's* or *ws'*: if the next word is *qbr*, it could read *w ws' qbr* 'and he enlarged a tomb.' But the word looks more like *qhr*, which would give the rather fanciful reading *w wjs qhr* 'And he was frightened by a sound and overcame it.'

The forms of some letters are peculiar: the *j* is the type more often found in Thamoudic, but *r* and *n*, though the former is rather exaggerated in form, are Safaitic. The *s* is more like *ḡ* in form.

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