

THE ROMAN ROAD FROM GERASA TO ADRAA⁽¹⁾

Judging from a first glance at the close net presented on Thomsen's² and Aviyonah's³ maps, our knowledge of the Roman road system in Palestine seems to be surprisingly comprehensive, if not almost complete. On closer scrutiny one discovers with no less surprise how many of the lines, drawn for the most part on good grounds, still await verification and how seldom the exact routes of the roads indicated by milestones have been determined. The incompleteness of our knowledge is only partly due to the various destructive influences the roads and their appurtenances were exposed to through the centuries. The lack is to be ascribed no less to the fact that these lines of communication have seldom been subjected to systematic research and that the discovery of new milestones was mostly left to chance. How rewarding a methodical approach can be is proved by the unique example of the road from Petra to Bostra where the careful examinations of different explorers⁴ brought to light nearly as many milestone sites as are known in all the rest of Palestine.

The most recent finds in northern Transjordan show again that in this field a considerable harvest still waits to be gathered. During the archaeological surface research I have been carrying out in northern Transjordan on behalf of the German Evangelical Institute for Archaeology of the Holy Land since August 1963⁵, I was able to trace the course of the almost unknown road from Gerasa (Jerash) via Adraa (Der'a) to Bostra (Bosra eski Sham), but only as far as it runs through Jordanian territory. The few references to this road go as far back as the turn of the century. In 1897/98 and 1900 G. Schumacher found two milestones of the second station of Gerasa⁶. A little later J. Germer-Durand came across a further group, probably marking the tenth mile

¹ This treatise was first published in German in *ZDPV*, 80 (1964), pp. 113-136. The translation was made by Mr. F. Theis, to whom I express my heartfelt thanks for this laborious work. Prof. P. Lapp was kind enough to read the English manuscript. I am also obliged to Mr. Moawiyah M. Ibrahim who accompanied me as representative of the Department of Antiquities of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

² *ZDPV*, 40 (1917), Pl. 1.

³ *QDAP*, 5 (1936), Appendix.

⁴ Literature in G. Beyer, *Die Meilenzaehlung an der Roemerstrasse von Petra nach Bostra und ihre territorialgeschichtliche Bedeutung*, *ZDPV*, 58 (1935), p. 129, n. 1.

⁵ These explorations were made possible by the generous support of the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung.

⁶ *MNDPV*, 6 (1900), pp. 13,55.

from Gerasa⁷. Unfortunately this discovery was only of partial value, as Germer-Durand did not mention its place. Finally there is an incidental and inaccurate hint by N. Glueck⁸ at the road marks of the third mile from Gerasa.

I

The Course of the Road and Its Milestones

The road that left Gerasa by the northern gate and then extended north along the valley that is now called Wadi ed-Der was certainly the stateliest of the large roads leading out of this city. It was fringed for about a mile with tombs and sepulchral monuments. Here it passed two temples and the theatre of the Maiumas Festival (el-Birketein), thus assuming the air of a Via Sacra⁹.

This opening section of the road runs along the western side of the valley¹⁰. But when the valley turns north-west a short distance further north, the road crosses it and 1.5 km. north of el-Birketein it reaches the extensive burial ground of el-Jedeida¹¹ or Khirbet Ebsas er - Rum, at the southern end of which Schumacher made his milestone finds. At the opposite end of this cemetery the Wadi 'Asfur, coming from the north, opens into the Wadi ed - Deir. There is still a good path now along the foot of the slope.

The road now follows the Wadi 'Asfur, and after some hundred metres begins to climb up the eastern slope of the now steep and deeply carved valley. This slope, descending in terraces, permits a comparatively easy ascent. About 200 m below 'Asfur, a spur projecting from the southern slope of el-Kom¹², there are milestone fragments scattered on either side of the path over a distance of about 20 m. (Site A). Some of them are inserted in a low terrace wall.

⁷ *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques*, (1904), pp. 33-34.

⁸ *Explorations in Eastern Palestine IV* (AASOR, 25-28 [1951]), p. 66.

⁹ Cf. C.H. Kraeling (ed.), *Gerasa* (1938), pp. 25, 159-167.

¹⁰ Horsfield (cf. *op.cit.*, p. 159, n. 2) supposes that the actual highway used the eastern slope of the valley, because he could not find any traces of the road beyond the tomb of Germanus (110 m. north of el-Birketein). This is of little account; for it is almost futile to search for the remains of an old road in a continuously cultivated soil.

¹¹ In Schumacher's "Karte des Ostjordanlandes" Sheet B 5 the name was placed by mistake under the name of the site of Munya. It should be substituted for esh-Shewahed which is also in the wrong place. Cf. also C. Steuernagel, *ZDPV*, 48 (1925), pp. 271-72.

¹² It can easily be seen from the new Jerash-Remtha road which runs east of it on a higher level. It is marked by the houses built on it.

Measurements (in cm.) :

Number from S to N	Base		Column Length	Diameter ¹³		Remarks		
	Height	Width		top	bottom			
I	about	60	about 60	about	30	?	much weather-worn	
II					50	55	head of pillar	
III				40-	70	55	head of pillar	
IV				70-	100	58		
V	57-	60	about	115	about	53	56	much weather-worn
VI				107		45	50	much damaged
VII	53	63						
VIII				about	75	70		much damaged
IX				about	55	45		much weather-worn
X	about	50	about	50	about	2		

The different height of the base of No. V is not caused by damage but by poor workmanship. The base No. VII has in its upper surface a circular cavity, not lying exactly in the middle (its depth is 20 cm., its diameter nearly 50 cm., its minimum distance from the two undamaged edges which form an angle, 5 and 10 cm.). In fragment No. X the shortest distance between the edge of the base and the foot of the pillar on the only undamaged side is 2 cm. The remarkable thing on this site is an unfinished milestone, a rectangular block measuring 150 by 75 cm., on one side of which the cylindrical shape of the pillar begins to appear. This worked piece is 30 cm. long, and the minimum thickness between the pillar and the unhewn block surface is 2 cm. As is proved by the four bases and the fragment No. X which fits none of the bases, at least five milestones must have stood here. Two of the fragments (V and VII) bear illegible traces of inscriptions.

After a further ascent of 400 m. the path runs round the north-western foot of el-Kom and then swings into the head of Wadi Warran which it follows for a considerable distance into the plain of Irbid ¹⁴. The path, now even practicable for cars, after following the valley east for almost a kilometre and a half, joins the above-mentioned motor-road. The latter, coming down from the south, also descends into the Wadi Warran. Three hundred m. before reaching the fork we come across another milestone

¹³ The intermediate position of the number indicates that the diameter could only be measured at one end, and it was not quite certain which end.

¹⁴ By this expression I mean the large plain extending from the village of Ne'eimeh in the south to the frontier village of Remtha in the north, the chief place of which is the quickly growing town of Irbid.

site (Site B). Two milestone fragments are embedded in the shallow slope on the northern side of the path (I and II), the others in the low wall supporting the terrace field along its southern edge (III and IV). They are scattered over a distance of about 25 m.

Measurements (in cm.) :

Number from E to W	Height Width		Column Length	Diameter	
	Base			top	bottom
I			about 80		
II			about 70	about 50	50
III	about 55	about 55	about 40	?	?
IV	70	80	about 60	?	78

Between No. III and No. IV there lies another pillar fragment, quite decayed. It seems that only fragment No. I bears an inscription, for the two characters arranged vertically on No. IV, resembling a V and a C, can hardly be regarded as remains of inscriptions. In this place there must have stood at least three milestones. Two are evidenced by the two bases. The existence of a third one is proved by the fact that on one hand fragments I and II cannot have been connected with fragment IV, as the circumferences of either pillar do not fit the base, and on the other hand they cannot have both belonged to No. III, as that would have made too tall a pillar.

Of the following four sites, in the section where the wadi winds through the hills first in a north-eastern, then in a northern direction, no trace can be discovered. That is not surprising, for on the narrow bottom of the valley, in some places no wider than the modern road surface, they could easily fall victim to road-making. According to the computation the last station in this gap must have been just before the entrance of the small Wadi Zerqa which comes from the west. In the southern angle formed by its mouth and the west side of Wadi Warran, the ground-plan of a tower can be traced on the slope, 10 m. above the bottom of the valley. It measures 4.5 m. square on the outside, and its walls, 80 cm. thick, are formed of a double row of narrow, longish stones. Beside and below it on the slope more stones are scattered. A small round depression in the north-western corner could be the opening of a cistern, now filled up¹⁵. The scarce finds of pottery refer this building to the Byzantine age (6th-7th cent. A. D.).

¹⁵ A second cistern which has been cleared again is about 100 m. to the south on the other side of the valley, just below the road.

Now the wadi makes a sharp bend east. Not quite 1.5 km. further down, near the ruins of the Khan Warran¹⁶ turns again to its former and final direction. At this turn the valley widens, and the eastern hills recede to form a wide angle at the point of which two wadis end. Here the milestones appear again (Site C). About 75 m. north-west of the ruins there was a pillar fragment (I) embedded in the pebbles of the wadi bed, and about 100 m. further north a second one with its base beside it (the surfaces of fracture fit exactly); a third one lay immediately behind them, but on an edge just above the bottom of the valley (III).

Measurements (in cm.) :

Number from S to N	Base		Column	Diameter		Remarks
	Height	Width	Length	bottom	top	
I			120	about 68	about 68	
II	?	?	140-180	?	?	
III			about 185	about 70	about 80	much weather-worn

Milestone II bears faint traces of an inscription. As the inscribed side lay bare, it was not necessary to dig the pillar out of the hard ground.

The next site provides a typical example of the displacement of milestones. A ploughing peasant, when asked of there were any stone pillars lying about, readily showed a place in the field where they had been and then a place on the edge of the field where they lay now: a heap of small pieces of broken stones which doubtless had been milestones and partly even bore traces of inscriptions. In this way the peasant had cleaned his small plot of the encumbering blocks, apparently not long before.

This regrettable loss was offset at the following station, the richest place of the whole line (Site E). In the middle of a narrow field, which rises gently out of the wadi to the low eastern slope, there lay tumbled irregularly and half sunk in the ground 5 milestones. Three of them bore inscriptions, and thanks to the fortunate circumstance that their inscribed sides were turned downward they were so well preserved that a great deal could be deciphered and almost everything reconstructed. There was a damaged base (90×90×65 cm.), obviously still in situ, embedded in the ground to its top.

¹⁶ The ruin, the remains of a building which possibly was a road station, could not be explored at the time when the road was surveyed as it was overgrown by high weeds and enclosed by wheat.

Measurements (in cm.) :

Number from S to N	Base		Column	Diameter	
	Height	Width	Length	top	bottom
I			226	67	about 70
II			140	?	about 58
III			170	about 50	55
IV			220	53	about 60
V	60	53	160	53	53

Judging from their lengths and smooth bottom surfaces, columns No. II and V never had bases. No. III however, though it has an equally smooth lower surface, is not of the normal height of a milestone. So it stood probably on the base No. V. The crumbled debris scattered among the stones seems to be of the pillar fragment No. IV, and there is a piece of a base among them.

That aforementioned tower at the exit of Wadi Zerqa must have belonged to the road system, for only 50 m. east of the present station foundations of a similar building are visible on the slope. Again they are 4.50 m. square. The walls consist of double rows of flat stones, but this time they are 70 cm. thick. In the middle of the square the ground has a funnel-shaped depression, which suggests a cistern. There are numerous weather-worn building-stones lying all around the place. The potsherds found here are of the Byzantine age (6th-7th cent. A.D.). These towers, probably built in a greater number, obviously served to protect the road in the narrow, deep and meandering upper part of Wadi Warran.

Of the following milestone site (Site F) only poor remains are left. Here the rocky river bed approaches the eastern slope while the valley widens towards the west. In the bed, near its western bank there are two bases, about 2.50 m. apart. One of them is 90 cm. square and 60 cm. high, the other measures about 80 by 70 cm. in the width and nearly 50 cm. in height. Ten m. to the north lies a bisected fragment of a pillar, 30 cm. in length and 68 cm. in diameter. The remains on the opposite side of the channel are a little more rewarding. There we find a whole milestone if we may put together the two badly damaged fragments. The base in its present condition is a cube with sides of about 65 cm. The truncated column on it measures about 80 cm. on its longest side, the fragment lying beside it about 70 cm. Owing to severe weathering the diameters could not be ascertained.

Seven hundred m. further on, near Khirbet Kaber, on the latitude of the village of Ne'eimeh, the road enters the plain where it continues north in a straight line for several kilometres. It still follows the Wadi Warran which meanders through the arable land in the west, the distance from the road gradually growing.

There is hardly anything left of the following point (Site G), 450 m. before the junction where the road to el-Husn and Irbid branches off from the main road to Remtha. A few conspicuous pieces of limestone are lying about, and there is a large block measuring 90 by 80 cm¹⁷, possibly a base, embedded in the ground. It was probably in building the Jerash - Remtha road that the base was cut crosswise into four parts and one quarter destroyed.

Part of the next group (Site H) also fell victim to this road. About 50 m. west of it there lay a milestone which had already been dug out and rolled over. Peasants of Ne'eimeh told me that there had been another one which disappeared during the road building about two years before. The one left, a pillar without a base, is preserved in its full length (230 cm.). As the ends are damaged the diameters cannot be measured accurately (about 80 and 65 cm.). There is a much effaced inscription on this pillar.

The following place (Site I), marked by a pillar, lies 200 m. off the road. Looking west beyond Wadi Warran one sees the southern end of the mound of ed-Dahama, rising broadly out of the plain, with the khirbeh of the same name on top. The pillar whose top is a little damaged and at the foot of which an oblique piece was broken off, is 220 cm. in length and about 70 cm. (top) and 75 cm. (bottom) in diameter. It has a well preserved inscription.

The following milestone site (Site K) lies 500 m. off the road. One km. north of it there begins the cistern field of Umm el--Abar esh - Sherquijeh, which extends several hundred metres along the eastern slope of Wadi Warran. In this place there were two milestones, (I) a well-preserved pillar (length 225 cm. upper diameter 66 cm., lower 77 cm.) and (II) a badly damaged pillar with a base of which not only the top but also one side is broken off almost at the middle (length of the pillar 110-127 cm., lower diameter about 58 cm., height of the base 60 cm.). Both stones bear inscriptions.

¹⁷ The block seems to have been square originally, for on one side a piece is missing.

Here the chain of milestone sites breaks off again. It was not easy to find out where it continued. What made matters more difficult was the fact that the road unexpectedly changed its direction, so that the next group (Site L), a pair of milestones, appeared 4.5 km. to the north-east. The place is reached best by driving on the Remtha-Jerash road from where it crosses the Iribid-Mafraq road 1.7 km. south and then following over a distance of 1.4 km. the path that branches off to the south-east and soon turns south¹⁸. The stones, again a very well preserved column and a badly destroyed pillar with a base, lie about 200 m. east of the path, on the other side of a small wadi. The column (I) is 220 cm. long with an upper diameter of 69 cm. and a lower one of about 80 cm. Of the pillar-and-base-stone (II) the side lying open to the air is much weather-worn, especially at the base. The pillar has lost its top and is broken in one place. The pillar is 145 cm. long and about 50 cm. (top) and 53 cm. (bottom) in diameter. The base is 60 cm. high. The difference between the thicknesses of the base and pillar measures 2 cm. in the narrowest place.

Although there are no traces left between this site and the preceding one, the number of milestone places or the number of miles between them can be ascertained. For in these and some former sites distances are fortunately mentioned in the inscriptions, and we can conclude that the distance in question was 3 miles. This means that the road between Sites K and L ran in a straight line.

The change in direction seems to suggest that the road aims next at Tell er-Ramith. The following milestone (Site M) in fact lies at the foot of the extensive hill, the north-eastern summit of which is occupied by that tell. The direct distance to it is just 1 km. Three stones lie in a depression surrounded by mounds in which the Wadi er-Ramith, coming from Khirbet 'Awash, describes a narrow bend.

Measurement (in(cm.) :

Number	Base		Column Length	Diameter	
	Height or Diam.	Width		top	bottom
I	50	70	about 65	52	55
II	35	Diam. ?	about 90	?	?
III			210	?	77

¹⁸ Five hundred m. further on a path branches off to Khirbet 'Awash, 600 m. to the east. The direct distance between the stones and the khirbeh is 800 m.

Of milestone No. I especially the truncated column is much eroded. Of No. II almost the half is broken off lengthwise; so the diameters of the column and of the cylindrical base cannot be ascertained. On the undamaged side the base protrudes by 2 cm. The third stone is a pillar without a base, from the upper end of which a long oblique piece is broken away. No. I and III show fragments and traces of inscriptions.

From here the road ran towards Tell er-Ramith and then past it into the plain of Remtha. North-east of Tell er-Ramith, about 150 m. beyond the Irbid - Mafraq road, which passes by the northern foot of the steeply ascending hill, we come across an accumulation of seven milestone fragments, the remains of five stones (Site N).

Measurements (in cm.) :

Number	Base		Column Length	Diameter	
	Height	Width		top	bottom
I			150	58	55
II			80-130	65	?
III			185	about 50	about 55
IV	60		40- 54	47	49
V			130	73	about 76
VI			80	70	71
VII	about 65	about 55	about 20	?	?

In addition to these seven fragments there is a much eroded base which must have belonged to one of the columns listed under I-III. Fragments V and VI (a head-piece) belong together, as appears from their exceptionally circumferences, which agree with each other. Judging from their type and whole length they must have been a milestone column without base. Traces of inscriptions can be made out on both pieces, and on the pillar fragment No. I there are remains of an inscription, too. All fragments are in a poor state of preservation.

This was the last milestone site discovered in Jordanian territory. But it seems that the stones of the next station at least are preserved too, as two inhabitants independently testified to their existence and were in accordance with each other. But until now they have been searched for in vain. There is no doubt however as to the further direction of the road. For the course of the last section and the situation of the last group show clearly that it aims at Der'a in a straight line.

II

The Inscriptions

A. Hadrianus

Milestones with the inscription of Hadrian — baseless columns distinguished by their enormous circumferences — were found in no less than four of the sites, and probably we have to add another stone from a fifth place.

a) Site I

1.	CAES	[IMPerator] CAESar
2.	DIVI TRAI A	DIVI TRAIAni
3.	PARTHIFIL DIVI	PARTHICI FILIus DIVI
4.	NERNEP TRAI A	NERvae NEPos TRAIAnus
5.	HADRIANVS PONT	HADRIANVS PONTifex
6.	MAX TRIB POT IIII	MAXimus TRIBunitiae POTestatis IIII
7.	COS III P P	COOnsul III Pater Patriae
8.	XXXX	XXXX
9.	Λ	M

Height of characters: 13 cm. in 1. 1; 7 cm. in 1. 2-7; 10 cm. in 1. 8. Distance between lines: 3-4 cm.

The only part of the inscription that is seriously damaged is the top line where the piece bearing the word IMP was broken away, and at the unearthing the second half of the title, the CAES also crumbled away. The damaged letters, marked by dots, can be clearly identified, except the Greek number, which is hardly recognizable.

b) Site E No. I

1.	IMPCAES
2.	DIVI TRAI A
3.	PARTHIFIL DIVI
4.	NERNEP TRAI A
5.	HADRIANVS
6.	MAX T
7.	COS IIII

Height of characters : 12-13 cm. in l. 1 ; 8-9 cm. in l. 2 ; 7 cm. in l. 3 ; 6 cm. in l. 4-7. Distance between lines : 4 cm.

The inscription is complete down to the fourth line. Further down the larger part of the right half is missing, and the number of miles has disappeared altogether. But the surface of the lower part is neither decayed nor crumbling but entirely smooth. It must have been polished artificially, obviously to make room for the strange signs engraved subsequently beside and below the lines concerned. The T in the sixth line is followed by a deeply engraved broad E, which has displaced the original R and perhaps the I too, for behind it some scratched lines can be made out, which may be the remains of the letters BP. 40 cm. to the right of the T, but a little above the level of the line there are the signs $\sqcup \sqsubset$ (7 cm. high). Four cm. below, only a little indented, there are two semicircles with their backs facing each other ($\cup \cup$), 7 cm. high. In the seventh line a horizontal stroke is drawn above the number, from the protruding right end of which a vertical one goes 8 cm. downward. Beside these there is an L-shaped mark (height 7 cm.). Below the last line there are the letters MW (height 7 cm.; the M is 4 cm. below the number) and 17 cm. below the S of this line there is another M (6 cm. high). These marks are obviously some Greek abbreviations.

c) Site K No. I

1. I M P C A E S
2. D I V I T R A I A
3. P A R T H I F
4. N E R N E P T
5. H A D
6. M

Height of letters : 13 cm. in l. 1 ; 8 cm. in l. 2-3 ; 7 cm. in l. 4-5.

Distance between lines : l. 1/2 : 7 cm. ; l. 2/3 : 4 cm. ; l. 3/4 and 4/5 : 6 cm. ; l. 5/6 : 5 cm.

Of this stone, too, the missing part of the inscription seems to have been effaced on purpose, for the part of the surface which was covered by soil is smooth. It is in

marked contrast with the side exposed to weathering, which begins at the height of the original ends of the lines. Artificial obliteration is also suggested by the fact that, as in the previous example, a later hand has incised some letters, namely HME. They hang directly under the fourth line and begin with its second E (height 7 cm.; the E is raised by 2 cm.).

d) Site L No. I

1. IMPCAES
2. DIVI TRAI A
3. RTHIFIL
4. NER NEPT
5. HADRIANVSP
6. X TRIB P
7. SII
8. XXXVI
9. S

Height of characters : 11 cm. in l. 1 ; 7 cm. in l. 2-7 ; 10 cm. in l. 8 ; 9 cm. in l. 9.

Distance between lines : 4-6 cm.

e) Site N No. V/VI.

On this milestone one single legible D and some blurred traces are all that is left of the inscription. The size and shape of the stone however and the large size of the mentioned character suggest to cont it among the road marks of Hadrian.

On January 1st A.D. 119 Hedrian entered upon the office of Consul for the third and last time. The fourth period of the annually renewed **tribunitia potestas** lasted from December 10th 119 to December 9th 120¹⁹. As no older inscriptions were found it may be taken for granted that the road was built during that time.

¹⁹ Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopaedie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Vol. I 1 (1893), article "Aelius" 64 (v. Rohden).

B. Pertinax

Site E. No. III

1.	I M P C A S	IMPerator CAeSar
2.	HELVI V S P E R	[Publius] HELVIVS PERTINAX AVGustus
3.	INCEP S SENAT	PR]INCEPS SENAT[VS PONTIF
4.	MAXIMVS CON S	EX] MAXIMVS CONSV[L II
5.	ESAR HELV V	CA]ESAR HELV[I]V[S PERTINAX]
6.	PRINCEPS I	PRINCEPS I[VVENTVTIS]
7.	PRAELIVM S	P[E]R AELIVM S[EVERIANVM
8.	IMV PROPRAE	MA]XIMV _m PRO PRAE[TORE]
9.	X L I I I I	XLIIII
10.	u Δ	MV

Height of characters : 11 cm. in 1. 1 ; 6-7 cm. in 1. 2-8 ; 13.5 cm. in 1. 9 ; 12 cm. in 1. 10. Distance between lines : 1. 1/2 : 4 cm. ; 1. 2/3-7/8 : 2.5-3 cm. ; 1. 8/9 : 18-21 cm. ; 1. 9/10 : 6-7 cm.

The formula of the inscription can be completely reconstructed with the aid of better preserved parallel inscriptions of this emperor. In line 2 the letters TI of the name Pertinax are badly maimed, but there can be no doubt as to their identification. Behind these there is a gap 3 or 4 letters wide with incoherent particles of strokes, and then follow unexpectedly the letters PCAE, but not on the level of the line but 2 cm. above. This shifted fragment, which must be complemented to IMPCAES is obviously part of a second inscription, which is also proved by the fact that the initial letters to be supplemented would trespass on the missing end of the emperor's name. Nor does this title fit into the context of the formula ; it probably supplanted the appellation AUG. The PONTIFEX which should be complemented was certainly written in full like MAXIMUS. This appears also from the space available at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth line. It is not quite clear where the word was divided ; judging from the space left in the fourth line there could hardly have been more than two characters, all the more since the X is a broad letter. The letters marked with dots in line 4 are as blurred as the TI of the second line. The now deeply indented

sixth line possibly began with the final letters of the now missing name Pertinax. At the ends of lines 5 to 7, on the level of their intervals there are two somewhat doubtful marks which might be an O and an N. They seem to belong to the second inscription ²⁰. Three cm. above the Latin number of the mile there is a line 16 cm. long.

Pertinax reigned for scarcely 3 months, from January 1st to March 28th A.D. 193. Before that he had twice held the office of Consul (175 and 192) ²¹.

C. Caracalla

a) Site E No. V

1.	IMP CAESAR M RELIVS	IMPerator CAESAR Marcus [AV]RELIVS
2.	SEVERVS TONINVS PIVS	SEVERVS [AN]TONINVS PIVS
3.	FELIX AVG PARTHICVS MA	FELIX AVGustus PARTHICVS MAXIMUS
		[BRI]TANICVS
4.	XIMVS TANICVS MA	MA[XI]MUS PONTIFEX
5.	MVS PONTIFEX MAXIM	MAXIMVS
6.	TRIB POTEST XVII IMP III	TRIBuntae POTESTats XVII IMPerator III
7.	COS IIII PROCOS	COnSul IIII PROCOOnSul [Pater Patriae]
8.	PER FVRNIVM IVLIANVM	PER FVRNIVM IVLIANVM
9.	LEGRPRCOS Δ	LEGatum PRO PRaetore COOnSulen DeSignatum
10.	XLIIII	XLIIII
11.	ΜΔ	MV
12.	K	K

Height of characters : 6-7 cm. in 1. 1-11 ; 8 cm. in 1. 12. Distance between lines : 1. 1/2 to 8/9 : 3-4 cm. ; 1. 9/10 : 13 cm. ; 1. 10/11 : 11 cm. ; 1. 11/12 : 2 cm.

²⁰ Thomsen seems to criticise as an error that D. Magie in his rendering of a parallel inscription from the Bostra-Philadelphia road omits the title LEGatum AVGusti (*op.cit.*, footnote to No. 77a). But the corresponding part of our inscription (line 8) seems to prove that Magie is right.

²¹ Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *op. cit.*, Suppl. III (1918), article "Helvius" 15 a (Fluss.).

The severed top of the stone lay some distance apart in a field. The line of fracture runs first straightly through the third line and towards the end bends into the interval below. Here part of the edges of the two fragments had crumbled away so that the last letters of the fourth line are lost. At the end of the seventh line where some indistinct traces can be made out we probably have to complement PP (**paper patriae**). 'Designatus' (1. 9), otherwise abbreviated to DES is represented here by the sign LS, probably a ligature of D and S.

b) Site K No. II

1. RELIVS
2. INVSPIVS
3. VSM
4. MAXIMVS
5. MVS TRIB
6. PII
7. O
8. VM

Height of characters : 6.5 cm. Distance between lines : 2-2.5 cm.

The fragments of names [AV]RELIVS... [ANTO]NINVS PIVSX together with the threefold MAXIMVS in lines 3 (M[AXIMVS]), 4 and 5 ([MAXI]MVS) fit no other formula but Caracalla's. But the arrangement of the inscription is somewhat different from that of the parallel specimen in Site E.

On January 1st A.D. 213 Caracalla entered upon the Consulate for the fourth and last time. In October the same year he accepted the third imperial acclamation. The **tribunitia postestas** XVII lasted from December 10th 213 to December 9th 214²². The inscription seems to belong to the beginning of this period, for the name Germanicus Maximus, assumed by the emperor after a victory he won in the late summer of 213, does not yet occur. The name of the Legate Furnius Iulianus appears on numerous milestones from 213 and 214. There were obviously extensive repairs of the road net

²² Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *op. cit.*, Vol. II 2 (1896), article "Aurelius" 46 (v. Rohden); Vol. VI 2 (1910), article "Furnius Iulianus" 5 (Groag).

of the Provincia Arabia carried out under his governorship. The repairs were occasioned by the certainly premeditated oriental campaign, which the emperor launched in 214, apparently in spring, and from which he did not return.

D. Diocletianus

Site N No. I

1. IMPĒ
2. CAESARI
3. DIV
- ...
5. MÁXIMĪANO
- ...
10. ÁVĠĒ

Height of characters : 6-7 cm. Distance between lines : 2 cm.

Besides the fragments copied above there are in each line of the inscription, which comprises 13 lines, some single more or less distinct letters or pieces of letters. They cannot be combined into a whole. The existing fragments however are sufficient to state the origin of the formula with some certainty. The name of Maximianus in the fifth line argues the inscription to be of the age of Diocletian, and in fact the beginning of this name is found in the third line, although in an unusual form, which however is clearly supported by the spelling DIUCLETIANU in a hitherto unpublished milestone inscription from the village of Kreimeh in the middle Jordan Valley. In the empty space below the fifth line, which covers more than half of the whole, there must have been further names of rulers, though they were hardly the two Caesars of the time of the tetrarchy (A. D. 293-305), who used to be mentioned on milestones in laconic brevity²³. One should rather think of the subsequent short period (A. D. 305-306), when Constantine and Galerius, the previous Caesars took the places of the retired Augusti Diocletianus and Maximianus and Severus and Maximus bore the title of

²³ Cf. Thomsen, *op. cit.*, No. 23 and 64 a.

Caesar²⁴. The application AVG in the tenth line, which cannot be explained otherwise²⁵, proves this dating to be correct.

E. Iulianus (?)

Site M No. III

1. IM
2. GV
3. C OΘE
4. TEO
5. MO
6. HI

Height of characters : 7 cm. in 1. 1 and 3-5 ; 5 and 6 cm. in 1. 2. Distance between lines : 2-3 cm., except in 1. 2, where there are intervals of 1 cm. only both above and below the line.

The last letter of the third line, which is damaged on its right side, is sure to be a Consequently this must be a Greek inscription. Almost the only inscriptions in Greek so far found in Palestine are those by Julianus (A.D. 361-363)²⁶. They are short, varying and often secondary. The letters of the first line, it is true, which should be read IM[P]erator do not suit the usual formula of those inscriptions. This line must belong to an older inscription, which would also explain the letters G(?)V of the second line, which do not occur in the Greek alphabet (and perhaps also some traces of script 8 cm. below the last line, which cannot be identified with certainty). Unfortunately, this fragment cannot be reconstructed, not even by the aid of preserved inscriptions of Julianus. Of course, another origin of this inscription is not quite impossible.

²⁴ Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII A 2 (1948), article "Valerius (Diocletianus)" (Ensslin); Vol. XIV 2 (1930), article "Maximianus (Galerius)" (Ensslin).

²⁵ Cf. Thomsen, *op. cit.*, No. 74 a, 107 d, 134 b.

²⁶ Cf. Thomsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 and 93.

F. Unidentifiable Inscriptions.

On some stones all that is left of their inscriptions are illegible scratches (Site A No. V, VI; N No. VI) or incoherent letters (Site M No. I) and fragments of words.

a) Site B No. I

S EVIR
MAXI

Height of characters : 5-6 cm. Distance between lines : 4-5 cm.

To the right of the inscription some signs are engraved which seem to imitate the shapes of the M and V, and below them there are sparse and indistinct traces of letters from two further lines.

b) Site C No. II

MVŠ
...
OS... RIBPOT
...
US

Between the two first lines there is an interval of one line. Below the two parts of the second line, which lie 23 cm. apart, letter fragments of six further lines can be made out. The number of the mile in Greek (56 cm. below the second line) is quite distinct. The height of the number is 10 cm., that of the letters 5 cm. The distance between the lines is 1.5 - 2 cm.

c) Site H

IMPC
...
AVG
XLI

Between the first and second lines there are, blurred beyond legibility, the remains of another five lines, the last of which is about 60 cm. long. The characters of lines 1 and 3 are 7 cm. high, those of line 2 5.5 cm. The number of the mile is 9 cm. below the last line.

III

The Counting of Miles and Its Meaning for Territorial History

The essentially new and important findings obtained from these inscriptions are the statements on miles, which (except the additional number on milestone E V) form a coherent row. These high numbers²⁷ which decrease towards the north, point to Bostra as *caput viae*²⁸. An illuminating hint is given by the aforementioned additional number, which besides the forty-fourth mile from Bostra indicates a twentieth mile (K). That is exactly the distance of Adraa (Der'a) from this point. This number proves that the road runs by Adraa²⁹ as we inferred from the direction taken by its northern section.

The import of these numbers however is not exhausted by the conclusions drawn so far. By the example of the Roman road from Petra to Bostra G. Beyer³⁰ has disclosed the background of the numbering of miles in territorial history. He pointed out that the counting from the centres of the municipal territories which began at the time of Hadrian offers a means to determine the extent of these territories³¹, at least in the direction of the roads. If we apply this principle to Bostra, we find that the city must have possessed a territory of amazing extent, especially towards the south where

²⁷ XLVI (MS) at Site C, XLIIII (MV) at Site E, XLI at Site H, XXXX (M) at Site I, XXXVI ([Δ]S) at Site L.

²⁸ Already Bruennow and Domaszewski (*Die Provincia Arabia*, II [1905], p. 337), from the mile number found on a fragment from the group discovered by Germer-Durand, concluded that Bostra was the starting-point of the road (cf. below p. 19). Germer-Durand himself thought of Neve (Nawa), but this already from reasons of territorial history is improbable, as we shall see.

²⁹ This statement of the distance together with the information of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* and of Eusebius (*Onomastikon* [Klostermann] 84, 8-9) that Adraa is 24 miles from Bostra (according to *Onom.* 12, 13-14 it is 25), corroborates the above presumption of the *caput viae*.

³⁰ Cf. above p. 1 n. 4.

³¹ The reckoning continued from the municipal centre of the territory in the opposite direction.

the numbering from Bostra can be followed down to the 44th mile, and that is only nine miles from Philadelphia ('Amman). Beyer himself indeed raised the objection against this conclusion that the largest part of the territory crossed by the road section in question supposedly belonged to the purely military **limes** district, and so could not have been under the control of civil authorities like those of Bostra. Beyer supposes that here it was only for the sake of convenience that the counting of miles referred to Bostra³². Against his view, which indeed would agree with Roman practice, A. Alt pointed out some circumstances, which justify the presumption, or at least make it appear credible, that Bostra enjoyed an exceptional status³³. Alt emphasizes with reason that the numbering of miles could have had no other legal bases than Bostra's duty to maintain that section of the road³⁴. Another convincing though indirect piece of evidence Alt brings forward is the division into ecclesiastical territories in this area of the late Byzantine age. Inscriptions brought to light at Rihab, which is only about 20 km. east-north-east of Gerasa, document that this place belonged to the bishopric of Bostra from which it lies twice as far west-south-west. For ecclesiastical administration the incorporation into the bishopric of Gerasa would have been far more advantageous. These strange conditions can only be understood as having been shaped after the pattern of older political demarcations³⁵. The Bostra territory in fact must have extended very far to the south so that it touched the boundaries of Gerasa and Philadelphia.

These circumstances now — and that is another proof for Alt's thesis — explain the numbering of miles on our road, which looks so strange at first sight. Strange because the far-off city of Bostra was only one of the secondary ends of the road, its main purpose being the connection of the two road junctions Gerasa and Adraa³⁶. This is also expressed by that additional number referring to Adraa, and by the fact that there was another road, connecting Gerasa and Bostra in a direct line³⁷. The mile numbers indeed are the sovereign emblems, so to speak, which manifest the authority of Bostra in this area.

³² *Op. cit.*, p. 158.

³³ A. Alt, *Das Territorium von Bostra* (BBLAK = ZDPV, 68 [1951], pp. 235-45).

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 242. Cf. the arguments mentioned here.

³⁵ We need not dwell here on Alt's further argumentation and his differentiation between a narrower and a wider territory of Bostra.

³⁶ The *Tabula Peutingeriana* shows that there was a road leading from Adraa via Capitolias (Beit Ras) and Gadara (Umm Qes) down to the Jordan Valley. Perhaps there was also a branch to the north, connecting it with the road Hippos (Qal'at el-Husn near Fig) — Damascus.

³⁷ It existed already in A.D. 162 or was built then. For literature see Alt, *op. cit.*, p. 238, n. 8.

So for the first time we gain an impression about how far the southern part of this territory stretched to the west. It certainly comprised the full breadth of the plain of Irbid, which is cut diagonally by the Bostrian road section, and it possibly ended where the plain too has its natural boundary, at the foot of the 'Ajlun hill country, roughly marked by the line Irbid — el-Husn — Ne'eimeh³⁸. In the adjoining hill country, which the road then enters, it must have reached as far west³⁹. So the Bostra district was inserted like a lengthy block between that of Gerasa in the south and the 'Adraa and Capitolias (Beit Ras) territories in the north.

It is extremely regrettable that in the south the boundary cannot be traced any longer, for with the forty-sixth mile from Bostra, nine miles before Gerasa, the chain of numbers leaves off. Now it seems that Germer - Durand hit exactly this border-line, for one of his milestones — it bears the inscription of Septimius Severus (A.D. 193-211) — indicates the tenth mile from Gerasa, and that by Latin and Greek numbers. The inscription indeed is badly destroyed, but the numbers, according Germer-Durand, are clearly visible so that it would be hard to doubt their correctness. With the tenth mile we come to our Site D, the place where the clearing-operations of the peasants left nothing but a heap of debris. So the findings cannot be verified. What makes this

³⁸ This assertion should be modified if we were to identify the Decapolis city Dion with Tell el-Husn, for the town, squeezed against the hills as it is, naturally had its fields in the plain. (It now reaches as far as the motor road Jerash-Remtha). But this equation is quite uncertain (cf. H. Bietenhard, *ZDPV*, 79 [1963], p. 27) and is made more doubtful by the fact that the Roman road leaves the place far aside.

³⁹ Eusebius indirectly confirms the supposed western extent of the Bostra district and at the same time makes a remark on its western neighbour in a note on the Transjordanian village of Arbela (*Onomastikon* [Klostermann] 14, 18-20), which for a long time has been equated with Irbid, and probably justly so (cf. F.-M. Abel, *Géographie de la Palestine*, II [1938], pp. 267-68; on the philology v. G. Kampffmeyer, *ZDPV*, 15 [1892], p. 21; 16 [1893], p. 21 and on the history of settlement N. Glueck, *AASOR*, 25-28 [1951], pp. 153-54). On this Arbela

Eusebius remarked that it lay *ἔν ὑπέροις Πέλλης πόλεως Παλαεστίνης* Eusebius uses the term *ἑνωσίολις* other twenty-eight times, and with few exceptions (72, 19; 120, 3-4 [quotation from Mt. 4,13]; 150,5) it designates the territories of the big cities, which were the largest administrative units of the *Provincia Palaestina*: Aelia (26,5; 68,20-21; 112,6; 132,3; 172,16), Ascalon (20,3-4), Diocaesarea (16,13; 30,24-25; 78,7), Diospolis (24,4; 96,25; 144,28), Eleutheropolis (26,8; 78,22; 92,13-14, 16; 130,2; 144,20; 156,15; 160,9-10; 172,7), Neapolis (100,13), Sebaste (76,14; 158,22; 160,13-13). On the other hand, when referring to Old Testament territorial designations he almost invariably uses it in the form *Ἀοισόλις* is obviously meant either to render the Hebrew *gebul* or correspond to it, while

number suspicious is the fact that a second fragment of this group bears a number counted from Bostra⁴⁰. And according to our own findings even the ninth mile was counted from Bostra. How could this incongruity be explained? Should one think of some shifting of the borderline in favour of one or the other side? This possibility cannot be completely excluded, but owing to the scantiness of evidence (the milestone in question cannot even be dated) there is no use speculating about it. It is much more likely that here again we have an additional number. This view is supported by the fact that the number is a round one. But then there should not only be noted the distance from Gerasa, but as in the parallel example E V that from Bostra, too. Considering however the extremely fragmentary condition of the inscription it is not impossible that this number once existed, but has been destroyed⁴¹.

In the north the Bostra district, like the territory of Jordan now, did not extend beyond the hills that confine the plain in the north-eastern corner. From 'Adraa, too, there was no reason to go farther than this barrier, for in the fertile plain in the northern and eastern surroundings of the city there was sufficient living space at hand. But perhaps we are to obtain further information from new milestone finds.

is the expected Greek term. Arbela must have been the north-eastern corner point of the Pella district, for directly opposite to it, only 5 km. to the north there lay Capitolias (Beit Ras), seat of a bishop in the Byzantine age, and so probably the capital of another district in former times. In its southern parts the Pella district undoubtedly stretched as far east as here in the north. Its eastern frontier coincided in almost its full length with the western borders of the Bostra district. The Pella district in the south, as we learn from a milestone inscription on the Pella-Gerasa road (cf. G. Dalman, *ZDPV*, 31 [1908], p. 270; M. Noth, *ZDPV*, 73 [1957], pp. 26-27; the stone lies 2 km. west of Ba'un), stretched beyond Wadi el-Yabis and probably reached as far as the deep-cut Wadi Kufrinjeh. That it did not extend beyond it, is clear from the fact that two places Ammathus (Tell 'Ammata, situated where Wadi Rajib enters the Jordan Valley) and Enganna ('Ain Janneh on the northern head-water of Wadi Kufrinjeh) are counted by Eusebius (*Onom.* 22,24 and 94,26-27) with the territory of Jeraea. From the

appellative *Πολεως Παλαστίνης* i by Eusebius to the name of Pella we may gather that Pella was included in the *Provincia Palaestina jsecunda*, and possibly had been so since the reorganisation of Transjordan carried out by Trajan in connection with the establishment of the *Provincia Arabia* (A.D. 105-106). So the boundary that ran along the eastern edge of the 'Ajlun hill country not only divided the territories of two cities but at the same time the two provinces Arabia and Palaestina.

⁴⁰ According to Germer-Durand this number was found on a cubic base, which is unusual. Perhaps there was a stump of the column left, but the offset was worn down. — Germer-Durand read the Latin number as XLII; of the Greek number only the first part, the M could be recognized. But if this was really the tenth mile the first number should be corrected into XLV and the second supplemented by an E.

⁴¹ It would be pointless anyway to expect from these additional numbers any indications about territorial history.

