

## Two New Latin Inscriptions from Jordan – 1976

by

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In the course of a short visit to Jordan in the summer of 1976, I was able to record a number of new Latin inscriptions<sup>1</sup>, two of which I present here.<sup>2</sup>

1. Two fragments of a broken milestone on the south side of the *via nova Traiana* 100 mètres west of the point where the Roman road crosses the Mafraq–Zerka road. Exposed in a pit on the edge of a field, at the site of mile XXII from Bostra. Sandstone drums, 60 cms. in diameter with a rim at the top (64 cms. in diameter). Inscribed shaft height = 8 cm; 1 2–7 = 6 cm. Nine inscribed lines. Figs. 1, 2.

IMPCAESARI  
IMPPFVAL (sic)  
DIOCLETIANO  
PFINVICTOAVG  
IMPCMVVAL  
MAXIMIANOAVG  
PFINVICTOAVG  
XXII  
KB

As far as I am aware, this stone has not previously been published. Butler, in his

1911 discussion of the road, noted that milestones had been traced from Bostra as far south as mile XXI and again from Amman northwards as far as mile XXIV, but that the intervening section had yet to be examined.<sup>3</sup> There can be no doubt that this is one of the stones formerly standing at mile XXII; most miles had more than one stone and it is probable that others still remain buried in the field.<sup>4</sup>

The text here is to be dated to the joint reigns of Diocletian and Maximian, 285-92. Lines 1 and 2 are best explained as an error on the part of the lapicide. It should have read *Imp. Caes. Val./ Diocletiano*/... or some such variant; alternatively, line 2 should have read: <Aurel> Val.<sup>5</sup> The remainder of the text is unambiguous, culminating in the milage, clear in Greek, restorable in Latin, of 22.

Imp (eratori) C[ae]sar[is] (or) C[ae]s (ari) Val (erio)] / < Aurel (io) > Val (erio) / Diocletiano / P (io) F(elici) Invicto Aug (usto) / Imp (eratori) M(arco) Val (erio) Maximiano A[ug(usto)] / P(io) F(elici) Invicto Au [g(usto)] / XX[II] / KB.

1. I am most grateful to the Department of Antiquities of Jordan for their ready co-operation and great help in assisting me to gain access to sites and material. Thanks are also due to Mrs. C.-M. Bennett, Director of the British School of Archaeology at Jerusalem, who suggested the visit, and to Mr. Yousef al-Alami for permission to publish these texts. The visit itself was in part financed by generous grants from the Craven Committee and Mejerstein Funds.
2. For other texts see: Bennett and Kennedy, 'A New Roman Military Inscription from

Petra', *Levant*, X (forthcoming); Kennedy, 'Legio VI Ferrata, the annexation and early garrison of Arabia: a new military inscription from Jordan', (forthcoming).

3. H.C. Butler, *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria in 1904-5 and 1909*, III, A, 2—Appendix, 'Trajan's Road from Bosra to the Red Sea', xi-xii.
4. *Ibid.*, xvii-xxviii.
5. Cf. e.g. *ibid.* xx, IVb; xxi, Vb; xxii, VIb.

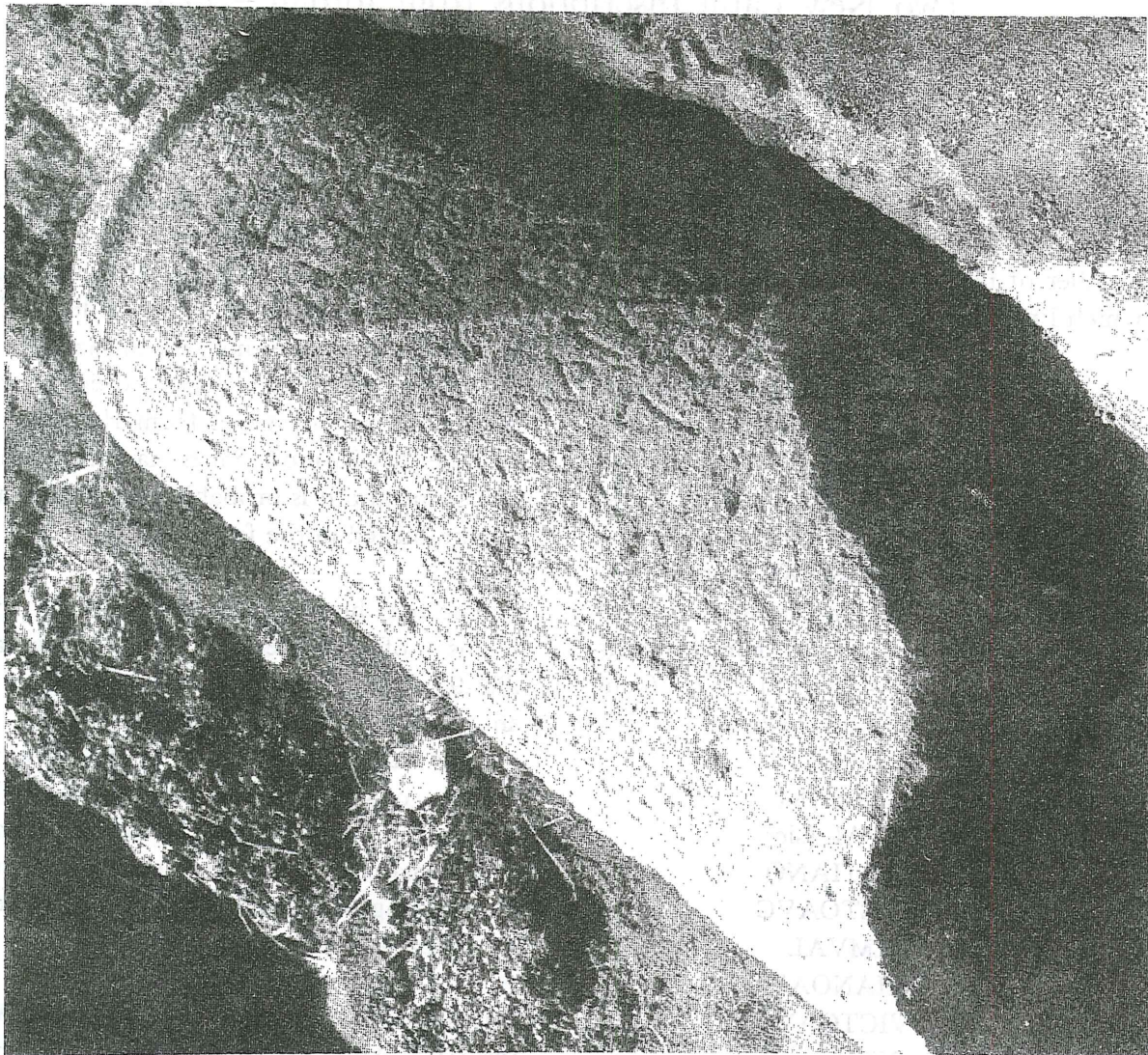


Fig. 1. — Roman milestone.



Fig. 2. — Roman Milestone.

The stone lay in a pit and I was unable to turn it over. Since many of the Diocletianic inscriptions on milestones along this road are simply cut on the rear side of the existing stone, it is probable that the hidden face here is also inscribed.<sup>6</sup> Most frequently, the re-used shaft was of the Severan repair — presumably the earlier stones were already pushed down and it was easier and preferable to re-inscribe the more recent, and still standing, stone; Butler illustrates a Severan milestone at mile XLVIII which is of the same style as here: a well-shaped shaft with a rim round the top.<sup>7</sup>

The next modern village along the *via nova* towards Amman (Philadelphia) has another shaft and some fragments; probably those of mile XXIII. At least one of these, though badly mutilated, bore an inscription, but I had no opportunity at that time to attempt a reading. Vestiges of the road itself, quite clear as far as the edge of the village, are lost among the houses and were not obvious on the slopes on the other side.

It is hoped to carry out a fuller inspection of the road and stones between miles XXI and XXIV in 1977.

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6. *Ibid.*, xx, IVb; xxi, Vb; xxii, VIb etc.

7. *Ibid.*, ix.