

A ROMAN TOMB IN HAM

by
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Ham, a small village located six kilometres south of Irbid and near Kufr Yuba, is, like most of Jordan, undergoing extensive development. In the spring of 1984, a late Roman (mid-third century A.D.) tomb was uncovered by a road-working crew. The tomb was excavated by Mr. Sultan Shraideh and Mr. Wagieh Karasneh of the Department of Antiquities. A full report on this tomb will appear in a forthcoming *ADAJ*; below is a summary of the results of the excavation.

The tomb was originally a limestone cave. The cave was prepared for burials, probably representing two phases of use, by the chiselling of loculi and the building of dividing walls. Supportive evidence for the reuse of the tomb during antiquity was found during excavation. This was partially evident as the door had been left ajar and

then re-sealed with mud. The total inside size of the tomb was 24.40 m. x 10.00 m. The numerous sarcophagi in the tomb were all made from the same soft limestone; they were unadorned, except for the "horns" on the lids; and, they had all been opened in antiquity. Lamps and glass were found in the tomb, but were not *in situ*.

The most impressive part of the tomb was its facade (Pl. LVII). To the left of the doorway, a tombstone (not pictured) was found. The tombstone and doorway were all carved from limestone. The doorposts were decorated with a snake (left) and a torch (right) whereas the lintel was decorated with a head flanked by two flowers.

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