

# Safaitic Inscriptions from Lebanon

by  
Mr. G. Lankester Harding

## *Inscription N° I (pl. I and fig. 1)*

This inscription was found by Mr. Chaker Ghadbân, representative of the Department of Antiquities in Baalbak, and I am indebted to him and to Mr. Fawzi Zayadin for bringing it to my notice; Mr. Ghadbân has described the site from which it originates and its position on the map. The text is brief, and incomplete at the beginning and end, and its chief interest lies in the fact that it is the most westerly Safa-

itic text yet found. The stone on which it is inscribed is a soft, greyish limestone, measuring at present 17×12 - 13 cms. but the lower right hand corner is broken away as is also the right side of the stone. The back has been dressed down to a thickness of 3 - 4 cms., and all edges have been trimmed and smoothed; this suggests that it was at some time used as a floor tile.

This text is a good example of the danger of trying to read these graffiti from photographs

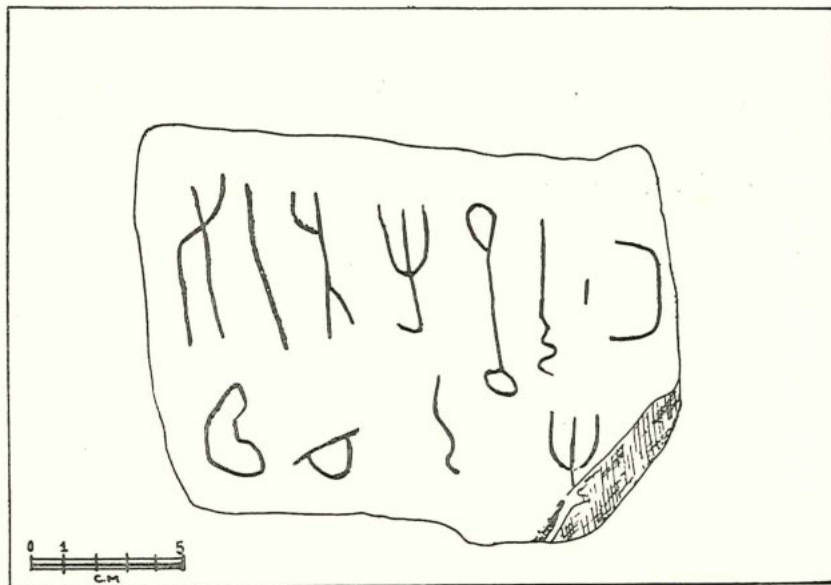


Fig. 1

alone; I was first shown three photographs of the stone taken in full sunlight but with the light from a different angle in each case. One of the

photos suggested that the three strokes at the end of the text were joined, whereas the other two showed clearly (?) that they were not. On

the basis of this I considered three strokes to be part of a group of seven as is often found at the end of Safaitic texts. However, when much later I saw the original it was immediately apparent that the strokes were joined, and that it was in fact the upper part of a  $\text{ذ}$  of the same form as that in the first line. Furthermore, traces of a letter were indicated between the  $\text{ذ}$  and the  $\text{د}$  which had not been apparent on any of the photographs. The present drawing is made from the original and a squeeze, and a new photograph is used.

••• بن غث ذعل خدم (ف؟) ذ•••  
 ----- son of Ghathth of the tribe of Khamid,  
 and he *dh* -----

The first letter of the personal name looks like a  $\text{ش}$  upside down, but there are two good comparisons for this form of  $\text{غ}$  in *HCH* 50 and 154, where the value of the sign is in no doubt. The name  $\text{ش ث}$  is unknown, whereas  $\text{غ ث}$  is ferqunet in *C. HCH, ISB, LP and SIJ*. The name is sometimes voealised Ghauth, but the root  $\text{غ ث ث}$  is found in Qatabanian (*J. 310*), and the root  $\text{غ و ث}$  in Safaitic (*C 5163, 5319*), Thamudic (*WTI 19*), Minaean (*GI 985/1*) and Qatabanian (*R 3870*).

The tribal name is new; Ar. *Khâmid* means

calm, silent. The next letter could be another form of  $\text{غ}$  but  $\text{ف}$  (so, and) would be more in place as the beginning of some further remark or comment. There are not many verbs in Safaitic beginning with  $\text{ذ}$  the most frequent being  $\text{ذ بد}$  he sacrificed, and  $\text{ذ كر}$  he remembered; in the absence of any indication, speculation seems pointless.

The position of the  $\text{ذ}$  of  $\text{خدم}$  lying partly on its side, is peculiar, and there seems no reason for this; there is plenty of room and no flaw in the stone at this point. The attenuated form of the  $\text{ف}$  (if such it is) is unusual, but the stone is rather worn here and the shape not really clear. The remainder of the letters are well formed and cut.

#### *Inscription No II (pl. II)*

On a large irregular stone there are isolated letters one  $\text{ع}$  and three  $\text{ا ي}$  and one group of three letters which could read  $\text{ل ه ي}$  this is not known as a personal name though  $\text{ل ه ي ن}$  occurs once in Saf., *LP 1267*. Ryckmans (*RNP I, p. 2*) considers it a form of  $\text{ل ه ع}$  though the Saf. reference he quotes (*LSI 3 = C 3873*) is now read as  $\text{ن ه ي}$ . The isolated letters and signs could well be tribal marks.

*G. Lankester Harding*

### Table of Abbreviations

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|------------|---|------------|--|
| <i>C</i>   | <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum</i> , Part V, vol. I.   |            | <i>American Archaeological Expedition to Syria</i> , Part IV, 1904.  |
| <i>GI</i>  | Glaser, numbered texts; for 985=1264 see K. Mlaker, <i>Die Hierodulenlisten von Ma'in</i> , Leipzig, 1943.          | <i>R</i>   | <i>Répertoire d'Épigraphie sémitique</i> , tomes I-VII.  |
| <i>HCH</i> | G. L. Harding, "The Cairn of Hani" in <i>Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan</i> , vol. II, 1953.     | <i>RNP</i> | G. Ryckmans, <i>Les Noms Propres Sud-Sémitiques</i> , Louvain, 1934.   |
| <i>ISB</i> | S. G. Oxtoby, <i>Some Inscriptions of the Safaitic Bedouin</i> , American Oriental Series vol. 50, New Haven, 1968. | <i>Saf</i> | Safaitic.  |
| <i>J</i>   | A. Jamme, texts numbered in sequence; for 310 see <i>Pièces épigraphiques de Heid bin Aqil</i> , Louvain 1952.      | <i>SIJ</i> | F. V. Winnett, <i>Safaitic Inscriptions from Jordan</i> , University of Toronto Press, 1957.                               |
| <i>LP</i>  | Enno Littmann, <i>Safaitic Inscriptions</i> , Leyden 1943.  | <i>WH</i>  | Winnet and Harding, <i>4000 Safaitic Texts</i> , in preparation.   |
| <i>LSI</i> | <i>Semitic Inscriptions</i> , Publications of the   | <i>WTI</i> | F. V. Winnett, "The Thamudic Inscriptions," in Winnett and Reed, <i>Ancient Records from North Arabia</i> , Toronto, 1970. |