

## REPORTS BY R. A. STEWART MACALISTER, M.A., F.S.A.

## (1) MUGHÂRET EL-'ANAB.

THE fine tomb known as Mughâret el-'Anab, "the cave of the grapes," is one of the most remarkable in the northern necropolis of Jerusalem. It is situated on the north side of the Wady es-Samar, not far from Sha'fât. A brief notice, without illustration, will be found in the "Jerusalem" volume of the *Survey Memoirs*, p. 409.

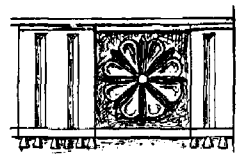
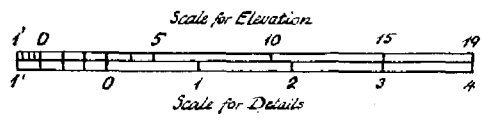
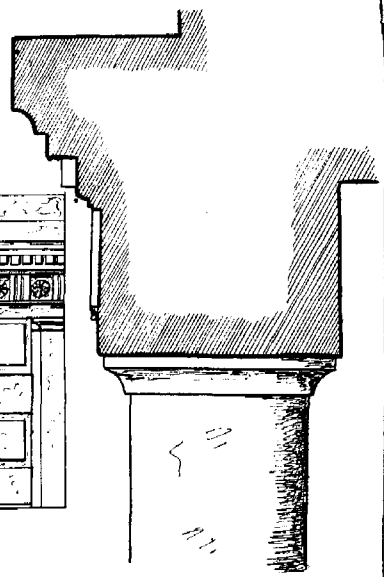
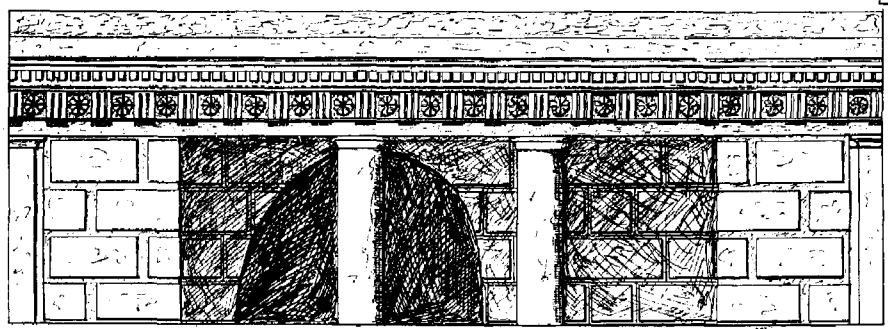
It is unnecessary to repeat the details there given, which are accurate so far as they go. As a supplement to this account I have given the accompanying sketch, which shews the sadly dilapidated present state of the excavation, and have endeavoured to draw a restoration of the porch as it must have appeared when originally prepared. The two chambers of which the tomb itself consists are disappointingly plain and uninteresting. They are in a disagreeably unclean condition, the tomb being unfortunately used as a fold for sheep by the fellahîn; and I thought it hardly worth while to prepare a ground plan. The whole interest of the tomb is concentrated in the costly and elaborate porch.

This is unique among the tombs in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem in the cutting of the stone surface to imitate drafted masonry. There are the remains of five imitation courses in the vestibule, the upper course is hidden, in the elevation, by the cornice which drops (as shown in the section) to mask the upper part of the vestibule. The rude irregular arched doorway to the tomb-chamber is represented as it now exists; originally it was no doubt smaller and more worthy of the tomb, but has been hacked out to make the chambers more convenient for the base uses to which they have been turned. A smaller entrance more than half buried in the earth, to the right of this entrance, and a curious ornament shaped like an ogee arch scratched on one of the bosses of the "masonry," have been omitted from the elevation as they are perhaps not original. The vestibule measures 23 feet 9 inches by 13 feet 10 inches.

Over the entrance to the vestibule runs a Doric entablature, which must have been supported by two pillars; the base of one of

# MUGHÂRET EL-CANAB, JERUSALEM

Restoration and Details of the Entrance



*R. A. Stewart Macalister*  
April 1907.

these is still to be seen, and this gives the diameter required for a restoration. The fragment of the cornice seen in the photograph, and a still smaller fragment at the other end, are all that is left of this fine piece of rock-carving. The pillars have been quarried away long since, and all the central portion of the entablature has gone with it. As the only surviving metopes show rosettes, I have in the restoration drawn rosettes in each of the 20 metopes that must originally have existed in the frieze; but it is possible that some of the central metopes had bunches of grapes (as in a now destroyed frieze that till a year or two ago existed in Wady er-Rabâbi), and that to these the name of the cave is due. Pilasters remain at the ends of the façade, and from their capitals I have adapted the capitals of the columns in the restoration. Similar capitals are to be seen in a tomb south of the "Tombs of the Judges," which was measured and described last year by Professor G. A. Barton. This is the only other tomb in the northern necropolis having a façade with pillars (*Journal Bib. Lit.*, 1904, p. 172).

The imitation of masonry (but not the entablature) returns along the east and west scarps of the forecourt of the tomb, which in this example is unusually broad and long. Many vats and other cuttings have been made in the scarps, interfering with the original design, no doubt subsequent to the plundering of the tomb and its adaptation as a dwelling or stable. The inscription mentioned in the *Memoirs* is in the western scarp; a niche, and some flaking of the rock-surface, has carried away all the letters but three. It can never have been very long, and probably contained little more than the name of the owner of this elaborate sepulchre. There was no building in the forecourt as in the case of the "Tombs of the Judges."

## (2) KURIET ES-SA'IDAH AND ITS GREEK INSCRIPTION.

Kuriet es-Sa'idah (*see Memoirs*, vol. iii, pp. 134-5) is situated on the summit of the ridge running westwards from between 'Ain Karim and Malḥah, dividing the Wady el-Werd from the upper end of the Wady es-Surâr. The site is conspicuous for many miles round from all places (like Neby Samwîl) from which a commanding view can be obtained. A small group of terebinth and kharûb trees marks it out on the otherwise bare hills.

Among the trees stand the remains of old walls attributed (in the article in the *Memoirs*) to the twelfth century in their present

form, principally on the ground of the existence among them of the haunch stones of a groined roof. These stones seem to have disappeared; at least I did not find them. There are, however, vaults with cement which cannot be very ancient as they stand. The masonry, however, looks much older, and no stone in or about the ruin shows the masonry dressing characteristic of the twelfth century. The stones are of fair size, dressed with drafts and bosses (some have two bosses), and in all probability represent a Byzantine building or buildings partly demolished and rebuilt. At the western end of the structures is a double row of vaulted cells; such rows of vaults are to be seen elsewhere, and it is not very easy to explain them or to assign a date to them. They are rectangular, open at one end and closed at the other, so that from a distance the whole building presents the appearance of a colonnade or of a blank wall according to the aspect viewed. An excellent example is Khurbet es-Subr, on the hills overlooking 'Ain Karim on the north (*Memoirs*, vol. iii, p. 126). Another stands on the west side of the road to Râm Allah, and is explained as an ancient Khân. This explanation would suit the Râm Allah example, but not the others, for they are in places where we should not expect to find such an establishment.

The eastern end of the complex consists of a number of square enclosures, now utilised as field-walls, with crops growing among them. They all display large-stone, bossed masonry, and do not look like twelfth century structures.

North of the complex is an open, grassy space in which stands a square shrine or wely of the ordinary type. This has been described in the *Memoirs*. The capital of a column built upside down over the door, and here sketched (not to scale), no doubt

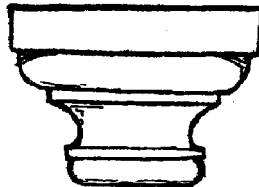


FIG. 2.—Sketch of Capital built into Wely, Kuriet es-Sa'idah.

belongs to some part of the earlier structures, but no columns, drums, or bases are to be seen anywhere in the ruins. There is

nothing among the earlier remains that can be called a church, and as the rock is close to the surface it is not likely that the foundations of such a building are concealed in the earth. Neither can I find any traces of interments, except it be a half-effaced Muslim tomb or two within the precincts of the wely itself.

This being so, the ecclesiastical connexions indicated by the Greek inscription are not a little curious. There is a sketch of this inscription in the *Memoirs (loc. cit.)* which is correct so far as the copy of the letters goes, but it is accompanied by an impossible rendering. The inscription is cut on two blocks of stone, one lying loose in the open space south of the wely, and the other built upside down in one of the field-walls to the south of the ruin. The first is 5 feet 9 inches long, 2 feet 2 inches broad, and 1 foot 8 inches thick; the second is 3 feet 9 inches long, with the same cross dimensions. They are lintel stones, the reveal and bolt holes being quite clear. The lettering is well cut, but I do not think the opinion expressed in the *Memoirs*, that it is not older than the twelfth century, can possibly be endorsed: it much resembles the square character of the Imperial rescript found at Bir es-Seb'a a couple of years ago, and is, I have little doubt, of approximately the same date. That the inscriptions belong to one another is evident from the similarity of their technique and measurements; and the whole looks like a lintel, bearing an inscription divided into two parts by the cross in a circle which is so common an ornament of lintels of the Byzantine period.

But when we try to fit the fragments of the inscription together on this scheme we find that the sequence makes no intelligible sense. To interpret the writing it is necessary to reverse the order in which we take the fragments, which gives us

**ΜΑΡΙΝΟΥ ΔΙΑΚΟῦ καὶ ΤΟΥ ΤΟΚΤΗΣ ΜΑ . . . .**

“Of Marinus the Deacon and of his father Ma . . . .”

taking **ΤΟΚΤΗΣ** as a barbarism for *τοκέως*. It thus becomes evident that we have the remains not of one lintel but of two, which spanned adjacent doorways of some building, and bore an inscription running continuously across both. The first half of the first lintel, which probably bore a specification of the nature of the property of Marinus, has been lost, as has also the second half of the second, which no doubt completed the name of his father. In the

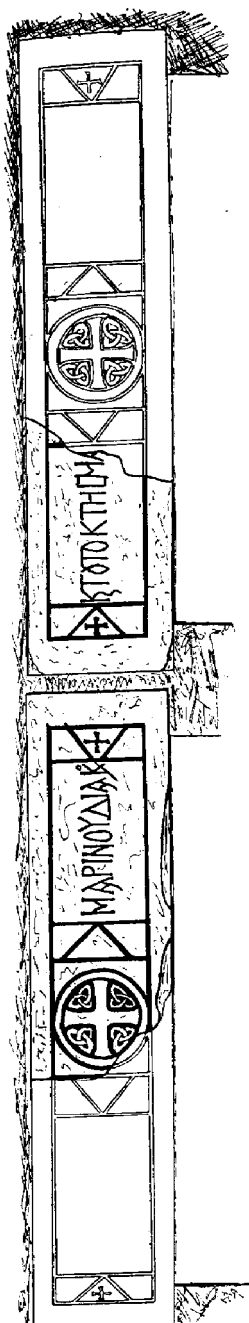


Fig. 3.—Inscription at Kuriet es-Saidah.

accompanying drawing (reduced from rubbings of the inscriptions and afterwards checked by comparison with the original) I have attempted a restoration of the two stones. The surviving central cross and the smaller crosses in the triangular ears at the ends of the inscribed panels, have been battered by iconoclasts. I have drawn triquetras in the angles of the cross, as these seem to be indicated by the obscure traces which this vandalism has left, but absolute certainty cannot attach to any restoration of the ornament. There was no cross in the triangular ear next to the **M** of **MAPINOY**, and therefore there can have been none in the corresponding ears which have disappeared. I made a careful search for other fragments of the lintels, but found none; in one of the square enclosures is a fragment of a sill-stone, which looks as though it belonged to the same doorways.

On the northern slope of the hill on which the ruins stand, a short distance down from the brow of the hill is one of the very few columbaria in the Jerusalem district.<sup>1</sup> It is a cave 22 feet 3 inches long, 10 feet broad, with a small extension on both sides, one rectangular and the other circular, and having the walls fitted with square loculi as shown in the sketch on next page (Fig. 4). The floor is covered with rubbish so that it is impossible to stand upright in the cave :

<sup>1</sup> The other columbaria known in the Jerusalem district, four in number, are all in the immediate neighbourhood of the city. They are situated at Jebel Abu Tôr, at Neby Daâd, on the Bethany Road, and at Karm el-Khalili ("Abraham's Vineyard") respectively.

a hole has been broken in the roof. This cave, which can hardly be later than the Roman period, carries the history of the site a step farther back, behind the Muslim wely, the Crusaders' (?) vaults, and the Byzantine inscription.

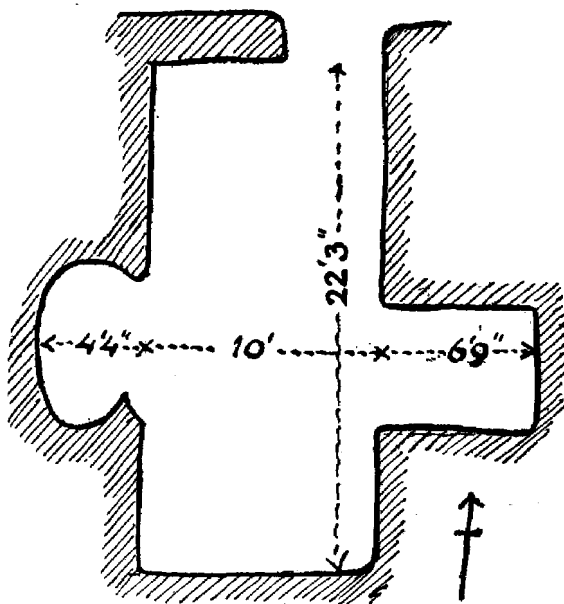


FIG. 4.—Columbarium at Kuriet es-Sa'idah.

Another relic, of perhaps yet higher antiquity, is to be seen in the same hill-slope, above the columbarium. This is a tunnel conveying water from a spring in the heart of the rock. Such tunnels occur in various parts of the Jerusalem district, and they have not received the attention their interest warrants. There are two at Neby Samwil, one at Bireh, one near 'Ain Karîm, and, above all, a magnificent example at 'Urtâs, of which I hope later to submit a plan and description. They resemble in all respects (except, of course, size) the Siloam aqueduct, and I see no reason to doubt that they may be as old as that excavation. The Kuriet es-Sa'idah example has unfortunately been lined with modern masonry, so nothing definite can be learned from it.

The researches of Professor Curtiss lead us to see in modern shrines the representatives, genealogically and topographically, of

holy places of primitive Semitic worship; and though nothing tangible on the spot suggests such analogies it is difficult to avoid regarding Kuriet es-Sa'idah as the survival of a sacred temenos of the kind. I do not know whether any special rites are performed at the wely, such as Professor Curtiss has found in various parts of the country; as is often the case ploughs and other objects are sometimes left there for safety. But though the little patch of greensward between the wely and the ruins—a space about a rood in extent—seems to be good land, the utilitarian and iconoclastic

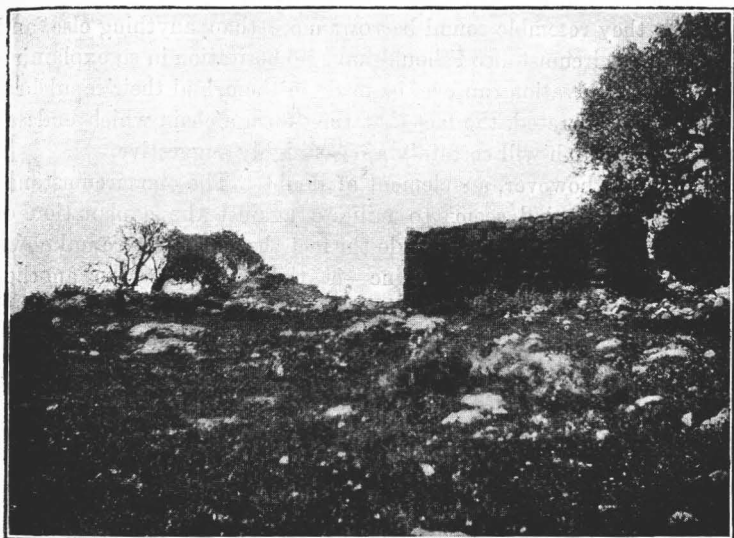


FIG. 5.—The Wely and Sacred Enclosure, "Kuriet es-Sa'idah."

fellaḥīn, who have cultivated the land all round it, have never ventured, apparently, to touch it with the plough. This clearly shows that the whole enclosure is consecrated. If so, the probabilities are enormously in favour of its being a primitive high place, and of its grove of trees, which can be seen over a wide extent of country, being the descendants of the sacred trees at which worshipped the primitive ancestors of the modern Muslim fellaḥīn.

In connection with this view, a very interesting feature in the surrounding landscape must be taken into account. This is the remarkable series of conical mounds which dot the whole ridge



between Kuriet es-Sa'idah and Malḥah. The following measurements of one of these will serve as giving an idea of all: Circumference at base, 490 feet; diameter at top, 44 feet; length of sloping side, 67 feet; approximate vertical height, 30 feet. These mounds, with their names, are described in the *Memoirs* (vol. iii, p. 156); that of which the measurements are here given is Rujm el-Barish, which is the finest example. The hollow made by the excavation referred to in the *Memoirs* (*loc. cit.*) still remains; it is 12 feet 6 inches across and 5 feet deep.

So far as can be judged from a superficial examination of these mounds they resemble round barrows more than anything else, and but for one circumstance I should have no hesitation in so explaining them. If excavation can ever be made in them, and their sepulchral nature demonstrated, the fact that they form a chain which ends at Kuriet es-Sa'idah will certainly appear highly suggestive.

There is, however, an element of doubt. The one circumstance which to my mind seems to militate against the explanation of these mounds as barrows—beside the fact that barrows are unknown elsewhere in Western Palestine—is their similarity to another mound which has been partially excavated, and which has proved to possess no sepulchral character. This is the conspicuous cone known as Tell el-Fûl, on the east side of the Nâblus road, a short distance beyond Sha'fât—a place popularly identified with Gibeah. Excavations were made there at the time of the Survey, and these, though very superficial, were enough to show that the mound covers the foundations and walls of a large watch-tower of ancient, but not necessarily very ancient, masonry. Around are meagre traces of a small occupation, but that the mound represents Gibeah I do not see any reason for attempting to persuade myself.

The number and relative position of the Malḥah mounds does not necessarily preclude their being regarded as the remains of watch-towers. In the fields round and above 'Ain Karim much space is occupied—one might almost say wasted—by large numbers of extensive and complicated watch-towers, grouped together in the same or adjacent fields.

The above comparison with Tell el-Fûl is put forward, not to advance a definite hypothesis as to the purpose of these mounds, but rather to show that the theory that naturally presents itself when the mounds are first seen is not necessarily the only explanation which can be suggested. Their external similarity to Tell

el-Fûl does not make it less probable that they are really barrows; it merely prevents us from saying that they cannot be anything else. If they were in England or some other country where barrows are recognised as ancient methods of interment, no one would entertain any doubt, even before excavation, of their sepulchral character.

Thus we see that although the ruins at Kuriet es-Sa'idah, as they stand, are not very ancient and not of very diverse periods, and though they do not show any depth of débris covering earlier structures, in the manner of a tell, yet evidences are to be found of Muslim connections, in its wely; of Byzantine ecclesiastical connections, in its inscription; of Roman (?) connections, in its columbarium; of Hebrew (?) connections, in its aqueduct; and that its history as a sacred place may go back not only to the Canaanites, but to primitive barrow-builders. In the present state of our knowledge we are obliged to mark several deductions and suggestions with a note of interrogation, but, notwithstanding, it is impossible to sit among its meagre ruins without feeling that the place is associated with traditions leading back to very remote ages.<sup>1</sup>

### (3) AN UNPUBLISHED INSCRIPTION IN THE NORTHERN NECROPOLIS OF JERUSALEM.

The northern necropolis of Jerusalem well deserves a complete monograph, though the work involved would necessarily be tedious. Some years ago a search for the inscription in Hebrew letters which has been long known to exist there, but to find which I had at the time imperfect data, led me to examine every wall-surface of every chamber in the majority of the tombs—a task that occupied four days. This time was not altogether wasted, as I was enabled to form the negative conclusion that there are probably no more inscriptions to be found above ground in this, otherwise the most interesting, part of the surroundings of Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was printed, I find on referring to Professor Clermont-Ganneau's *Archæological Researches in Palestine*, that he has also treated of the inscription at Kuriet es-Sa'idah—a fact that had slipped my memory while the foregoing paper was being written. He has forestalled me in observing that a missing lintel must be postulated in order to complete the inscription—a conclusion that I reached independently—but in both arrangement and interpretation his rendering of the inscription differs from that above suggested.  
—R. A. S. M.

As it happens, I found the object of my search before turning my attention to the tomb containing the epitaph now recorded; so that I failed then to notice the inscription, and knew nothing of it till my eye happened to fall upon it in the course of a casual afternoon walk during last Easter vacation. To enable others to find the inscription without difficulty, I give the following directions:— Take the road leading to the “Tombs of the Judges” as far as the first group of tombs in the necropolis. Here a path branches to the right, in the direction of the house of the Spafford colony. Following this path for a few paces, a small field-track will be found to lead to the left, which after a short distance descends a low declivity; the tomb required is in the face of this declivity, on the left-hand side of the track.

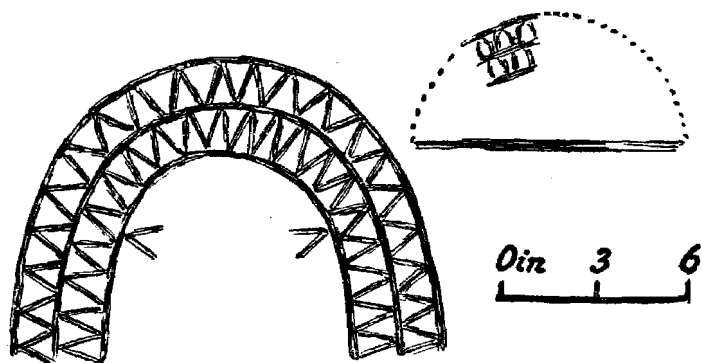


FIG. 6.—Painted ornament in tomb in the Northern Necropolis of Jerusalem.

It consists of a small chamber six paces long, with the outer wall quarried away, having an arcosolium in the left-hand wall, and a blocked-up entrance to an inner chamber in the middle of the back wall.

At the end of the back wall, low down and near the arcosolium above referred to, is the curious ornament (Fig. 6) painted in dark Indian red. It is much defaced, and, to me, unintelligible.

The inscription (Fig. 7) is also painted red, but of a lighter shade. It much resembles the red painted inscriptions in Wady er-Rabâbi. It is on the left-hand side of the entrance to the inner chamber. When I first noticed it I could not feel sure, so indistinct is it, that it was not merely a series of red oxide stains, like those in “Solomon’s quarries,” and, indeed, there are a number of such stains

in the walls of this tomb, especially over the inner entrance. After careful washing, however, the letters come out with tolerable clearness, but unfortunately, owing to its defaced condition, a connected reading of the inscription cannot be given. Enough, however, remains to show that it is unique among the tomb-inscriptions round Jerusalem (excluding ossuaries) in being bilingual; but the two legends seem independent, and do not help to an interpretation of one another.

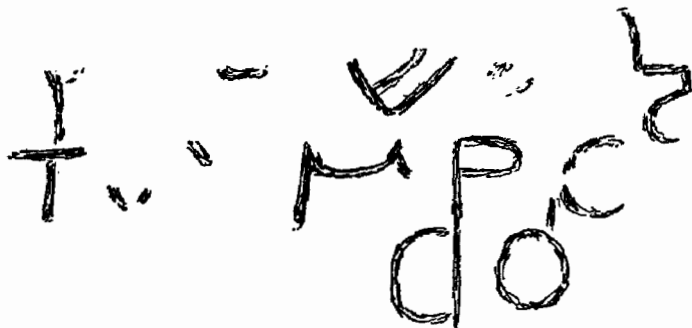


FIG. 7.—Painted inscription in tomb in the Northern Necropolis of Jerusalem.

Of the Hebrew inscription, which occupies the top line, I can make nothing, but  $\text{ש}^{\text{ל}}$ , with three indecipherable letters—one before and two following the  $\text{ש}$ . The Greek is more promising: it fills the two remaining lines, and may possibly be—

T[BA]M<B>PO  
CIO<Y>

letters in square brackets being those defaced, those in angled brackets being omitted. This would mean "Of Ambrosios," but I cannot feel any certainty about this rendering.