

THE ROMAN ROAD BETWEEN KERAK AND MADEBA.¹

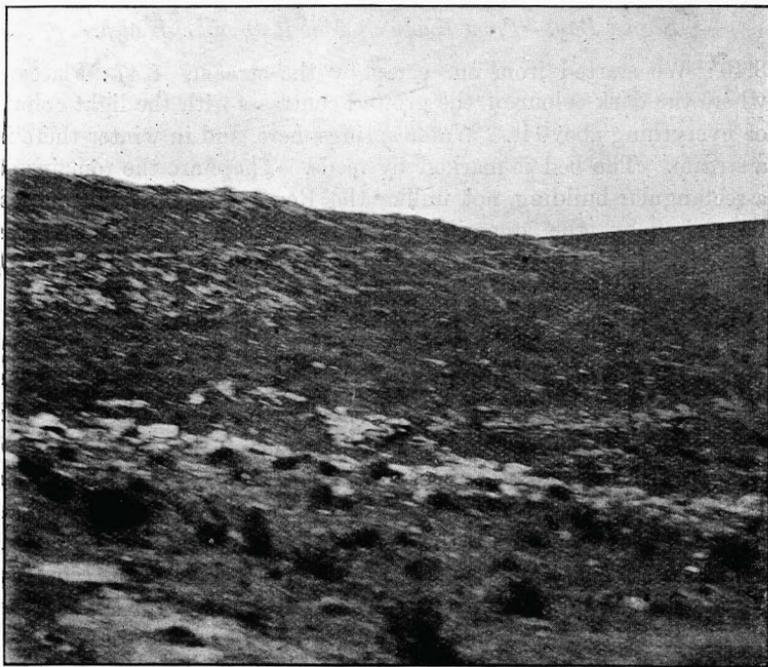
By Professor GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D., LL.D.

*(Continued from "Quarterly Statement," 1904, p. 377.)**Second Day.—From Wady el-Mōjib to Wady el-Wāleh.*

8.40: We started from our camp by the stream. 8.47: Plateau, where the dark colour of the ground contrasts with the light colour of everything above it. Water springs here, and in winter there is a stream. The bed is marked by reeds. There are the remains of a rectangular building, not unlike the Roman station we examined yesterday on the opposite plateau. Khalil called the place el-Baṣṣeh (البصه), *i.e.*, "marshy" or "damp ground." 8.55: Another plateau, with more ruins, according to Khalil, el-Msetterā (المسترا). We met with the first of several swarms of young locusts (Arab Jirād, جراد) hopping vigorously on the ground. Here a road or track branches from the main road and goes up the valley on this line of plateau. 9.15: Another small plateau with a group of four or five Roman milestones: *cf.* Germer Durand and Brünnow, the latter of whom took the same time between the group and the bed of the river as we did, *viz.*, 35 minutes. One column bears the numeral CVIII (109). According to this the group is the next in order to the lower group on the south side of the Mōjib, on which several travellers have read the numeral CVIII (108). Yet they lie rather more than 40 minutes apart, that is more than double a Roman mile (it will be remembered we took only 15 minutes between the two groups on the south side). One expects a milestone between them, on the north bank, some 10 minutes or more above the stream. No trace of this, however, has been reported by any traveller. Therefore, either

¹ *Correction:* In my review of Professor Brünnow's great work *Die Provincia Arabia*, vol. i, in last *Quarterly Statement* (pp. 397 *sqq.*), I corrected the numbering which he made on pp. 36 and 40 for certain Roman milestones on the south bank of Wady el-Mōjib. Professor Brünnow has himself corrected these figures in a list on p. 531 of "Addenda et Corrīgenda," which I regret escaped my notice while reviewing the volume.—G.A.S.

the stone bearing the numeral CVIII (109) has been removed from its proper position if the reading of it is correct; or it has been read wrongly; or we ought to read CVII (107) and CVI (106) on the two groups south of the Mōjib instead of CVIII (108) and CVII (107). The badly-weathered state of the columns makes the alternative of a false reading probable. But, finally, we must remember that in mountainous countries the Romans appear



WALL AT DHĪBĀN.

to have sometimes calculated the distances not by the actual lengths of the climbing, winding road, but by "horizontal miles" (cf. *Our Roman Highways*, by Forbes and Burmester, p. 96). This may be a case in point.

10.2.—Reached the northern brink of the cañon, having taken 1 hour 22 minutes from the stream. The descent on a much hotter day had occupied us 1 hour 15 minutes, and our mules 1 hour 45 minutes. Baedeker gives 1 hour 30 minutes for the descent; Brünnow 1 hour 7 minutes.

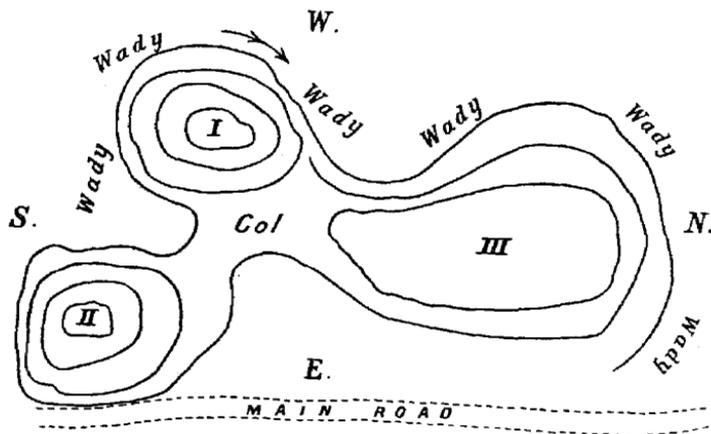
On the edge of the cañon, a little over 10 minutes east from the road, are the ruins usually called 'Ara'er, the ancient 'Aro'er. But Khalil called this ruin 'Akrabā (عقربا), and placed Khurbet 'Ara'r, as he called it, further east "about an hour," also on the brink of the cañon (*cf.* Burekhardt's Akeb el-Debs by the top of the descent). Since coming home I find that Brünnow also received the name 'Akraba for the ruins nearer the road, and el-'Ara'ir for others half-an-hour to the east. It will be remembered that the name 'Akraba, "scorpion," has been found in other parts of the Arabian East near steep, zig-zag ascents.

10.18.—Left the edge of the Wady el-Mōjib and rode across the level, fertile plateau known as el-Kūra (الكورة), by the paved road towards Dhībān. I did not see the milestone, mentioned by Bliss, nor see nor hear of the K̄eṣūr el-Besheir reported by Burekhardt (p. 372) as one hour to the west of 'Ara'ir (to be distinguished from the K̄uṣr Bsheir south of the Arnon and north of Lejjun).

10.50.—Dhībān, pronounced Zibān by Arabs on the spot. On the way south we had made a hasty examination of the ruins, which are very extensive; but except for some older-looking walls, traces of which appear in the photograph, they are apparently all Byzantine. The masonry is mainly what one sees in other ruins in Moab: the thicker walls are faced with dressed stones, but the interior is rubble. Dhībān is usually described as lying on two hills; but there are really *three*, all to the west of the present road, and even to the east of this and across the wady which lies there the ruins spread up to the neighbouring knolls. At one period or another the town must have been as large as any in Moab: *cf.* the epithet Παμπεριέθης applied by Eusebius in the *Onomasticon*. As impressive as the extent of the ruins is the number of roads—four or five in addition to the trunk road—which converge upon them across the rich land. The three hills on which the main city and its defences stood are related as in the accompanying sketch (p. 42). The principal is that to the west, marked I, above a deep wady, which encompasses three sides of it: probably the citadel stood here. On the northern slope are the two lines of ancient wall given in the photograph, one above the other, the upper 5 feet thick. One of these appears to be the same wall as runs along the western slope of the north hill, marked III, and round its

northern end. On the east of the south hill, marked II, are also traces of a wall. Probably therefore, the ancient city comprised all three hills along with the *col* connecting them; but as I have said, it also spread eastward over the road and the shallow wady beside it to the slopes beyond, on which are many scattered ruins.

11.10: Left Dhībān, crossed the wady to the north of it, and cantered over the plateau by the side of the Roman road, here very distinct. 11.30: Immediately to the west of the road the ruins of a rectangular building, 50 paces by 54 (Brünnow, 50 paces square; he calls it Abu Šijān, and took 50 minutes from here to Dhībān), with traces of smaller buildings attached to it, very similar to the

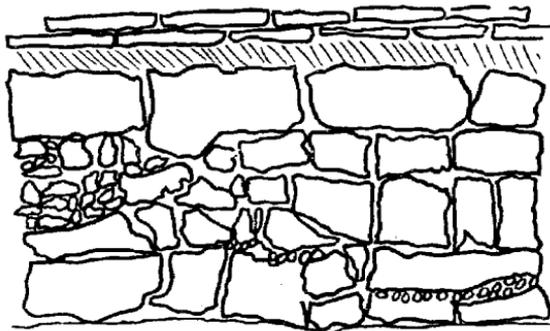


PLAN OF HILLS AT DHĪBĀN.

fort and *mansio* on the south bank of the Mōjib. The paved road is here 6 paces broad. As one looks back, its course lies very clear through the wheat fields; clear because, although overgrown, it bears only grass, the fellahin being unable to plough it. Although the ground is practically level, the road does not show, as Roman roads are fabled to do, a straight line, but oscillates. A few hundred yards—7 minutes—to the north of the ruin just mentioned is a fragment of a Roman milestone of the usual shape: a round column with rectangular base. There is nothing legible upon it. It may be one of the two fragments which Father Durand noticed "on approaching Wady Walch" from the south (*Rev. Bib.*, vi, 589), and which Father Michon had previously reported (*ibid.*, p. 289). One of these gave the name of *Furius Severianus*, legate under

Caracalla: the other bore the letters ΔIO , *i.e.* Diocletian. From this point Tell 'Oreineh was visible to us due east.

From here we descended from the plateau by the wady running north into the Wady Waleh. Khalil called it Wādy el 'Asideh (الأسدة), but Brünnow gives it as Wady Abu Sidr. On this descent the Roman road presents some interesting features. It keeps on the east of the wady, carefully following the contours, and is on better gradients than the modern road, which holds to the west of it, and occasionally coincides with the dry torrent bed. Where the Roman road approaches the latter it is built up for a height of about 4 feet from the road, with irregular, partly dressed stones, surmounted by a double layer of flat limestones, which can



LINE OF ROCK

STRUCTURE OF ROMAN ROAD NEAR DHĪBĀN.

have been readily procured, almost without need of dressing, from the neighbouring easily-split strata. The pavement lies back 2 or 3 inches from the edge of the supporting wall and slightly tilted towards the edge. The interstices were filled with earth; I found no mortar here. We slowly followed the Roman road, observing that where the rock which it passes over is flat no pavement was laid down, and that where a little earth was packed in the paving stones riding was easy; and there was even a beautiful surface for wheels. But where this packing was absent, the road must have been difficult for horses, and horrible for wheels. Probably the Romans packed earth everywhere that it would lie.

Brünnow reports (p. 29) at 32 minutes from the Wady el-Waleh a milestone of Trajan, "probably the fifteenth from Madebā."

Near the top of the final steep descent to the Wady Waleh we came on remains of a building, then we lost the road; the

present path descends on bad gradients to the right, the road probably followed easier ones to the left above the mouth of the Wady el-'Asideh. We reached the Wāleh stream at 12.45, after many delays on the road. The journey from here to Dhibān in the opposite direction had taken us 1 hour 33 minutes; Brūnnow, 1 hour 40 minutes.

The Wāleh stream is not so large as the Mōjib. Just below the ford the water escapes over the hard, flat limestone strata by channels it has worn, and falls in cascades of 3 or 4 feet. The lower courses of four piers on the south side and two on the north, just above the cascades, are all that remain of the Roman bridge: necessary in winter when the waters are up. Above the piers, on the south side, is a curious block of masonry, with aqueduct along the top, leading to a vertical shaft, the sides of which, like those of the aqueduct, are cemented, the whole apparently designed to turn a waterwheel. There is another similar construction in the mouth of the Wady el-'Asideh, an aqueduct ending in a small square tower, with a central circular shaft 6 feet 6 inches in diameter, from which there is no sign of an issue. We walked up the Wady el-'Asideh (or Abu Sidr), and found remains of buildings very old and rough. The Roman road appears, on leaving the south end of the bridge, to follow the Wady el-'Asideh for some distance; then we lost it.

The name el-Wāleh or Wāleh (الوَالِه) appears in chapter xxviii of Boha-ed-Din's *Life of Saladin* as the camping-place of the Franks after they had raised the siege of Kerak and the Sultan had retired to Hesbon and Ma'in (though Röhricht appears to give another explanation, as if Bela, *i.e.*, Zoar, *Geschichte des Königreichs Jerusalem*, p. 411, n. 3). The meaning of the root is "to be sad," but one derivative means "desert," and another is applied (according to Freytag) to water running out into the desert. As is well known, the Wady el-Wāleh is a tributary of the Mōjib, which it reaches under the name of the Seil el-Heidān (الهيْدَان).

Temperatures in Wady Wāleh on April 20th, 9.30 p.m., 68°; 10.30, 66°. April 21st, 6 a.m., 59°; 7.30, 67°. April 25th, 4.30 p.m., 72°; 8, 59°; 10.30, 55°. April 26th, 7 a.m., 58°. The wady, lying higher than the Wady Mōjib, was thus considerably cooler.

Third Day.—From Wady el-Wāleh to Mādebā.

8.5 : We crossed the stream to the north bank. Here is a mill, to which some Bedawin women were bringing grain. The miller gets one-twelfth of what he grinds. A wady close by bears the name, according to Khalil, of Sheikh Iskander. Brünnow found the same name further up the stream to the east.

Directly opposite the wady which we descended yesterday, there runs into the Wady el-Wāleh from the north the Wady Umm Sa'īdāt, or Imsa'īdāt (المسعيدات). The Roman road follows the east side of this wady, ascending on an easy gradient, while the present road keeps to the stream bed. 8.12 : Roman milestone not recorded by Germer Durand (Brünnow (pp. 21–22)). The Emperor's name is Marcus Aurelius : the numeral is uncertain, either XII, or, as Brünnow thinks, XIII, marked as from Mādebā (AMEΔAMPXI:). Near it the roughly-dressed stones of the road have been used to prop a Turkish telegraph post. 8.20 : Top of ridge at north end of Wady Imsa'īdāt, and descent into another narrow wady. Thence still due north up the succeeding ridge to the ruin of a small tower, 8.28, on the right, and to another, 8.30, on the left. 8.31 : Group of Roman milestones a couple of minutes to the east, and above the present road. They have been described fully by Mr. Bliss. One bears the names of Septimius Severus and Marcus Aurelius, and is marked in Greek and Latin numerals as the XIth mile, *i.e.*, from Mādebā (as Germer-Durand, hardly from Ma'in as Bliss supposes). We took 19 minutes from the previous milestone with the uncertain numeral XII (or XIII, according to Brünnow, who supposes that the road between accomplished a long detour in order to avoid the wadies). So long a detour is hardly probable, and therefore the reading XII on the milestone in question is the more likely. Other stones of the group XI bear the names of Galerius and Constantine.

From this the road passes along the edge of the deep Wady es-Šarabūt (الصرابيط). Colonel Conder gives the singular Sarbut (the Arabic is misprinted Marbūt), as "applied to pillar shafts and milestones" (*Survey of Eastern Palestine, Memoirs*, p. 134). Obviously the wady takes its name from the milestones above it. 8.45 : We passed another group of these, evidently the same as Father Durand describes (*Rev. Bibl.*, vi, 590) as consisting at least of four, one of

which is marked with the figure X. We had taken 14 minutes from the previous group, marked XI.

8.47: We reached the top of the ridge, and the edge of the plateau. From this the view is very extensive, and Khalil pointed out to me a number of wadies which are not marked on any map, and named them. Later we went carefully over their names. West of the Roman road we were following, five wadies run from north to south. Taken from the east, there is—(1) The Ṭala'at el-Manṣaf (طلعة المنصف).¹ This rather shallow wady takes its rise at Libb, and, running at first due south and then south-west, debouches into the Wady Wāleh; the Roman road runs along or near its east brink; (2) El Baḳei'a esh-Sharḳi (البقيع الشرقي); (3) El Baḳei'a el-Gharbi (البقيع الغربي); (4) 'Abu Khsheibeh (أبو خشيبه); (5) Tala'at el-'Arāis (طلعة العرايس). At the head of this wady stands the ruin of the town 'Attārus, and lower down it that of Kūriat. These last four join together in one, called Ez-Zirdab (الزردب)—a name which was explained to me as meaning "Junction." The lexicons define the root as "to choke" or "stifle," and there is another form of it, Zardamat, which means gullet. Through the Zirdab these wadies immediately join the Wady Wāleh, now known as the Seil el-Heidān (سيل الهيدان), the main tributary from the north of the Wady el-Mōjib.

Other place names indicated to me from this viewpoint: to the south of Wady el-Wāleh two ruins, Umm 'Eshjireh (أم اشجيرة) and (west of Dhībān) Khurbet es-Saḥileh (السحيلة); and to the south of Wady el-Mōjib a rocky promontory, with (Khalil said) an old "beled" on it, called Esh-Shḳeiḳ (الشقدق). Professor Musil, in the prospectus of his forthcoming map, gives a Seil esh-Shḳēḳ draining the country to the west of Shīḥān. It is the Wady ech-Cheqiq of De Sauley (*Voyage*, I, 323), running north-east. And Seetzen, on his second journey, came upon the 'Ain Sḡēk, south of the Mōjib (*Reisen*, II, 349).

About 9 we left our viewpoint and held by the road along the upper reach of the Ṭala'at el-Manṣaf. 9.20: Newly-excavated cistern under the telegraph line, just below Libb, the ruins of which

¹ This appears to be the same wady which Brünnow (pp. 4 and 20) name Minshef Abu Zeid.

cover the top of a hill to the west of the road, and about 300 feet above it. Just to the south of Libb the road is joined by a track coming in from the north-west, probably from Ma'in. We spent half-an-hour rambling over the ruins of Libb. There are many vaulted buildings, numerous deep cisterns, several caves, a few squared lintels, and a carven trough. A rectangular building on the summit is without distinction, and we saw no other signs of public architecture—churches and the like, such as one sees at Machaerus and in other ruins. With this agrees the fact that the name of the town is not discoverable in ancient maps or records. There is a *Lydia* in Moab on Ptolemy's map, but it can hardly (even if a mistake for Lybia were conceivable) be this place, Libb. At 9.50 we left the summit and descended the northern slope into the deep Wady Libb, about 400 feet below the summit, and, crossing the dry torrent bed, proceeded by a paved road up the opposite ridge to its summit, where this branch road joins the Roman road. Here at 10.2 we found some ruins, to which Khalil gave the name Hareidhein (حريددين). From this he pointed out to me to the west of Libb the Wady el-Meshūdd (المشض). East of Hareidhein the land is called 'Ard 'Itlā esh-Sha'al (اتلح الشعل), and east of this 'Ard Abu el-'Ajūl (ابو العجول).

10.10: We left this viewpoint, and at 10.11 passed Roman mile-stones on the right of the road, at least two. These must contain the one on which Germer Durand deciphered the Greek Ϡ, or VIII miles, *i.e.*, from Mādebā. Our time for riding the distance to this stone from the Xth was 35 minutes. Brünnow, wrongly I think, styles it "probably" the VIIth from Mādebā. Immediately thereafter we came on a ruined Kerakon, as the Arabs call it, "barrack," or military post on the edge of the shallow Wady el-Hābis (الحبيس), an upper and the most easterly branch of the Wady Zerka Ma'in. 10.20: Crossed the bed of the Wady el-Hābis with the Roman road, Ma'in full in sight to the west. 10.26: Roman milestone, the VIIth from Mādebā (not the VIth as Brünnow, p. 19, states), 15 minutes from the previous, the VIIIth. 10.30: Top of ascent on the north of the Wady el-Hābis. 10.35: Khurbet el-Mureijmeh (المريجمة) on right of the road. 10.53: On the crest of a swell of the plateau we came in sight of Mādebā; on the left a hamlet of two or three houses, el-Bṭān (البطان = mule's girth). 11.8:

Roman milestone: *cf.* Germer Durand, p. 590; Brünnow, p. 19, "probably the third from Mādebā," rather the IVth. We had taken only 42 minutes from the VIIth, but this was due to much cantering. From here to Mādebā on either side of the road is broad fertile land, the road following the edge of the shallow Wady el-Ḥabis on the right. On the left is another equally shallow depression, at the head of which Mādebā is conspicuous on its Tell. Across it are the rolling limestone hills north-north-east of Ma'in. 11.35: We passed Et-Teim lying some distance to the west. 12: After some cantering we reached Mādebā, 52 minutes from the IVth milestone, and just three hours riding (not including stoppages) from the XIth.

OCCASIONAL PAPERS ON THE MODERN INHABITANTS OF PALESTINE.

By R. A. STEWART MACALISTER, M.A., F.S.A., and
E. W. G. MASTERMAN, F.R.C.S.

(Concluded from "*Quarterly Statement*," 1904, p. 160.)

PERSONAL NAMES.

LIST II.

CLASSIFIED CATALOGUE OF NAMES COLLECTED IN NABLUS.

THE persons from whom these names were collected were mostly Muslim fellahīn. Some, however, are Christians, and names found exclusively among Christians are denoted by † prefixed. Female names are distinguished by * prefixed. Words in square brackets are supplied to complete the sense implied by certain names.

Class A: Theophorous Names.—Ḥurs Allah, "Object of God's Protection"; Rizk Allah, "Property of God"; 'Abd Allah, "Servant of God"; ['Abd] el-Bāri, "Servant of the Creator"; 'Abd el-Ḥamīd, "Servant of the Praised"; 'Abd el-Ḥaqq, "Servant of the Truth"; 'Abd el-Ḥallāk, "Servant of the Creator"; 'Abd ed-Dahabi, "Servant of the Golden"; ['Abd] er-Rahmān, "Servant of the Merciful"; 'Abd er-Ra'ūf, "Servant of the Merciful"; 'Abd er-Razzāk, "Servant of the Apportioner"; ['Abd] eṣ-Ṣamad, "Servant of the Everlasting"; 'Abd el-Fattāl, "Servant of the Opener"; 'Abd el-Ghāfir, "Servant of the Forgiver"; 'Abd el Ghani, "Servant