

After hearing about the above inscriptions a friend called my attention to several fragments of a soft yellow limestone, bearing deeply-incised Greek characters, in a deserted house at the north side of the village. Four were found in one room and a fifth formed part of the floor in a dark corner near the entrance to the house. When put together these presented the appearance shown in Fig. 7. A search was made for the missing fragments both in the house and in the courtyard but without success. This inscription is stored at Jerusalem with the others. The slab has four fine horizontal lines scratched on it to act as guiding lines to the letterer. The drawing is reduced to one-sixth actual size; the original measures 61 cm. \times 32 cm.

NOTES ON THE GREEK INSCRIPTIONS FROM BEERSHEBA.

By Prof. F. C. BURKITT, D.D., F.B.A.

THE stones from Beersheba acquired and described by Capt. Douglas Blair are of considerable interest. No. 3 is a further fragment of the official document discussed by M. Clermont-Ganneau in the *Quarterly Statement* for July, 1902, pp. 269-282, and for Oct., 1902, pp. 385-388. Unfortunately the new fragment is even smaller and more mutilated than that discussed by him. Of the others, No. 1 is a Christian gravestone dated 57(0) in the era of Gaza, *i.e.* between 510 and 519 A.D. (The unit figure is mutilated.)

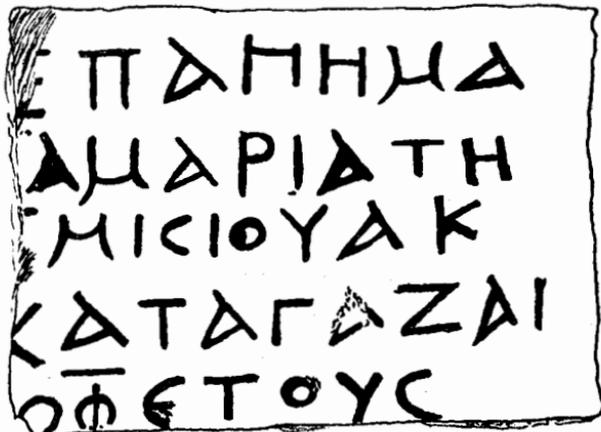
Nos. 2 and 4 are also Christian gravestones, dated by Indictions and also by years, *viz.*, 370 and 356. The era is not specified, but it cannot be that of Gaza, for the Indictions do not begin till 313 A.D., which would be 373 A.G., besides giving a date too early on general grounds. I therefore suggest that they are dated by the era of Eleutheropolis, as in the very similar stone published by Prof. R. A. S. Macalister in the *Quarterly Statement* for April, 1903, p. 172. I do not know whether this era has ever been exactly determined, but as Beth-Gubrin (*Beit Jibrin*) was refounded by Septimius Severus with the new name of Eleutheropolis about the year 200 A.D., it is

probable that that is the date required. The date of the gravestone is Hyperberetaeus 6, Ind. 4, Year 356. Now for the twelve months from 1 Sept. to 31 Aug., 555/6, the Indiction was 4: Hyperberetaeus 6 corresponds to Oct. 3,¹ so that the date of No. 4 is 3 Oct., 555 A.D.

We can now fix the era of Eleutheropolis with some precision. The gravestone in the *Quarterly Statement* for April, 1903, p. 172, is dated Daesius 16, Ind. 6, Year of Eleutheropolis 344. If we assume this calendar to be the same as that of Gaza, viz., months of 30 days with intercalation in August, Daesius 16 is June 10. Further, if Oct. 3, 555 A.D., be 356 A.E., Ind. 4, then Oct. 3, 543 A.D., will be 344 A.E., Ind. 7. But as June 344 A.E. is Ind. 6, it is clear that the year of Eleutheropolis did not begin on Sept. 1 with the new Indiction. Probably it began on Dius 1, i.e. Oct. 28. To reduce years A.E. to years A.D. it is therefore necessary to add 199 from Jan. 1 to Oct. 27, and 198 from Oct. 28 to Dec. 31.

The three dates we get from these stones are therefore 510-519, 555, and 569 A.D., so that we may reasonably infer that the Edict (No. 3) belongs to the legislation either of Anastasius (491-518) or of Justinian (527-565), probably the latter.

No. 1.

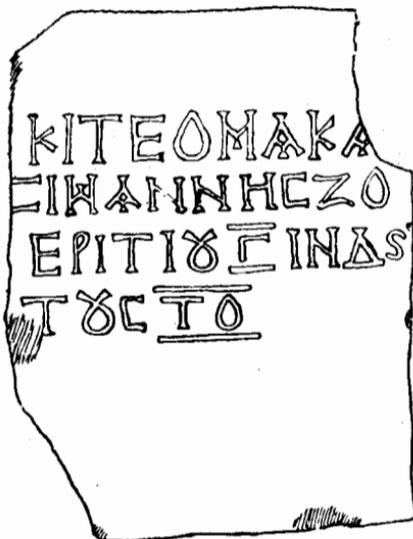
Scale $\frac{1}{8}$.

¹ See Clermont-Ganneau, *Arch. Researches in Palestine*, II, 398-429; also G. F. Hill, *Life of Porphyry of Gaza* (Oxford, 1913), p. 143.

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| [+ ΔΝ]ΕΠΑΗ Η ΜΑ | The blessed Mary entered |
| [ΚΑΡΙ]Δ ΜΑΡΙΑ ΤΗ | into rest the 21st of Artemisius, |
| [Μ ^Η ΔΡΤ]ΕΜΙCΙΟΥ ΔΚ | it being according to (the era of) |
| [...]ΚΑΤΑ ΓΑΖΑΙ | the Gazaeans the |
| [ΟΥC ·] <u>ΟΦ</u> ΕΤΟΥC | 57(0)th year, |

I assume that there should be a line over ΔΚ in line 3, and that it means 21. The date is 16 May, 510/9 A.D.

No. 2.

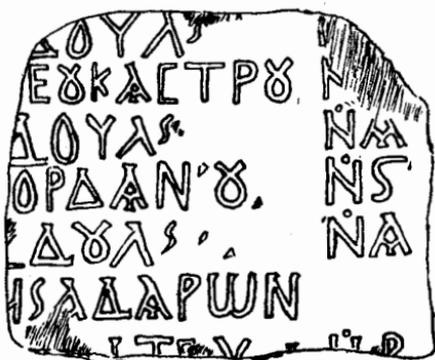


Scale $\frac{1}{6}$.

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| [+ ΕΝΘΑΔΕ]ΚΙΤΕ Ο ΜΑΚΑ | Here lies the blessed |
| [ΡΙΟ]C ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΖΟ | John Z. [who died] the 3rd |
| Π]ΕΡΙΤΙΟΥ <u>Γ</u> ΙΝΔΣ | of Peritius, Indiction [2] |
| Ε]ΤΟΥC <u>ΤΟ</u> | Year 370. |

Possibly this is the gravestone of that John, a fragment of whose ornamented tomb is published in the *Quarterly Statement* for July, 1902, p. 234, fig. 8. The style of lettering, however, though of the same period, is not quite the same. The date is 28 Jan., 569 A.D.

No. 3.

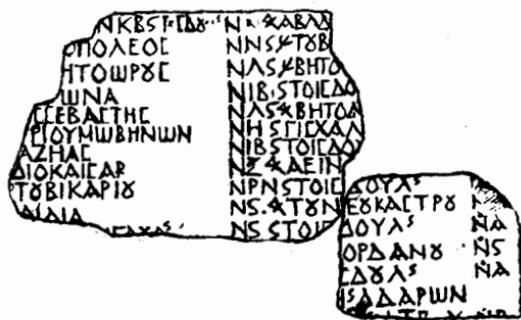


Scale $\frac{1}{6}$.

| | |
|------------|----|
| ΔΟΥΛΣ | Ν |
| ΕΟΥ ΚΑΤΡΟΥ | Ν |
| ΔΟΥΛΣ | ΝΑ |
| ΟΡΔΑΝΟΥ | ΝΣ |
| ΚΔΟΥΛΣ | ΝΑ |
| ΜΣΑΔΑΡΩΝ | |
| ΙΤΘΥ | ΝΒ |

This fragment joins on to the lower corner of that figured in the *Quarterly Statement* for July 1902, p. 270. To show the connexion,

and also the general arrangement of the lettering, I have made the appended sketch of both fragments together. It is to be noted that the ends of the last four lines in our fragment appear to be complete, confirming M. Clermont-Ganneau's way of reading the



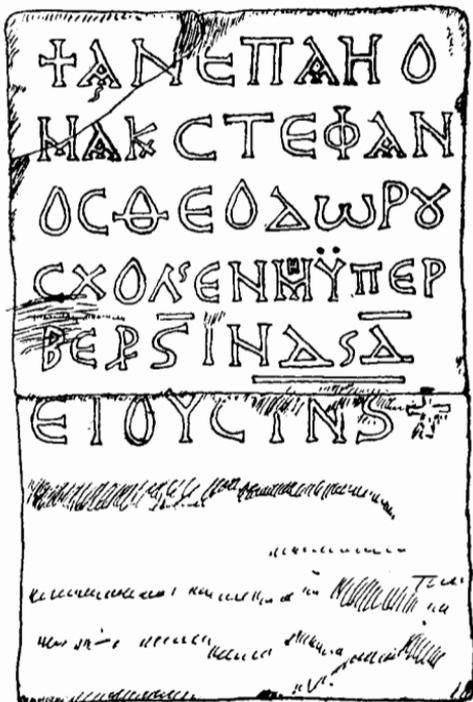
document in continuous horizontal lines, notwithstanding the long breaks before $\dot{\Sigma}$ (i.e. νομισματα). The strange signs χ (? = $\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$), and ψ (? = $\psi\acute{\pi}\epsilon\rho$) do not occur here.

The three lines, where the old and new fragments meet, read:—

... Ρ ΤΟΥ ΒΙΚΑΠΙΟΥ $\dot{\Sigma}$ ΝΠΝ Σ ΤΟΙΕΔΟΥΑ^s $\dot{\Sigma}$
 ΑΙΑΙΑ $\dot{\Sigma}$ ΝΣ. χ ΤΟΥ ΝΕΟΥ ΚΑΚΤΡΟΥ $\dot{\Sigma}$
 s $\dot{\Sigma}$ ΝΣ Σ ΤΟΙΕ ΔΟΥΑ^s $\dot{\Sigma}$

The parts to the right of the vertical line are from the new fragment. The beginning of line 3 in the old fragment is quite uncertain; possibly it is . . . $\chi\alpha\chi\alpha$ ^s, i.e. (Βηθ) Σαχα(ριον). It is to be hoped that this interesting relic of the fiscal arrangements of the Byzantine Empire in the century before the coming of Islam may receive further elucidation, but there can be little doubt that M. Clermont-Ganneau has seized the essential point in regarding it as a list of the sums of money (*adaerationes*) due to the various imperial garrisons of Palestine as a substitute for the old dues paid in kind (*annonae*).

No. 4.



Scale $\frac{1}{8}$.

+ ΔΝΕΠΑΝ Ο
 ΜΑΚ ΣΤΕΦΑΝ
 ΟC ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ
 CΧΟΛ'ΕΝ Μ' ΥΠΕΡ
 ΒΕΡ Ξ ΙΝΔ' Σ Δ
 ΕΤΟΥC ΤΝC +

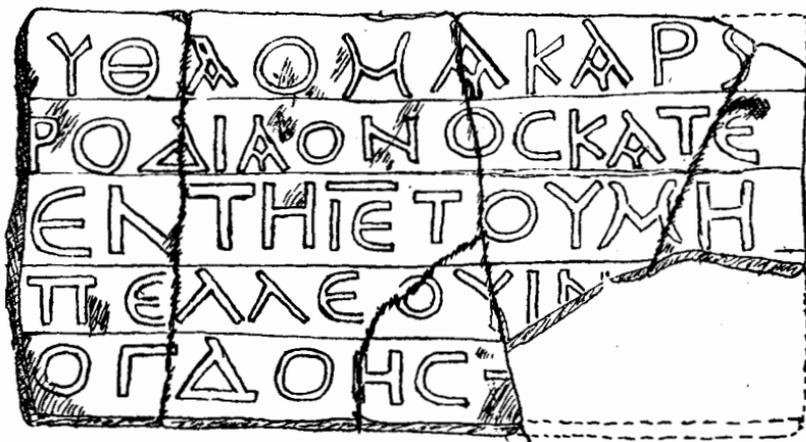
The blessed
 Stephen son of
 Theodore, the Advocate,
 was laid to rest on the
 6th of Hyperberetaeus,
 Year 356.

The **T** in the year-number is not quite clear, but it looks more like **T** than **Υ**. On the assumption, as explained above, that the era is that of Eleutheropolis, the date is 3 Oct., 555 A.D.

Numbers 5 and 6 consist of a single letter only, but of interest as being possibly the beginnings of lines in the official inscription. Capt. Blair, however, rather thinks the letters are slightly too big.¹

¹ [Numbers 5 and 6 are not reproduced here.—ED.]

No. 7.

Scale $\frac{1}{8}$.

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| [+ ΜΑΡΟ]ΥΘΑ Ο ΜΑΚΑΡΣ | [Mar]utha the blessed |
| [... ΙΕ]ΡΟ ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΣ ΚΑΤΕ | .. Deacon was laid to rest |
| [ΠΑΝ] ΕΝ ΤΗ ΤΕ ΤΟΥ ΜΗ | on the 15th of Apellaus, |
| [ΝΟΣ Α]ΠΕΛΛΕΟΥ ΙΝ[Δ | Indiction . . . eighth. |
| [...]ΟΓΔΟΗΣ- | |

The name is, of course, doubtful, and the year appears not to have been given. If "8th" be the Indiction year, it should have been neuter to agree with *ἔτος* understood, not feminine and agreeing with *ἡμέρα*. The 15th of Apellaus is Dec. 11.

I take this opportunity of pointing out that the inscription at Kuriet es-Sa'idah, figured in the *Quarterly Statement* for July, 1904, p. 251, only implies *one* lintel, and that it reads:—

Κ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΚΤΗΣΜΑ ⊕ ΜΑΡΙΝΟΥ ΔΙΑΚ^ο

And this is a Foundation ⊕ of Marinus the Deacon.

ΚΤΗΣΜΑ is merely a misspelling of *κτίσμα*.