

carrying a second row of columns, adding form and dignity to the building. Further excavation alone can determine the facts.¹

¹ [The plate is 57 in David Roberts' *The Holy Land from Drawings made on the spot* (London, 1855). He states: The ruins of the City are about two miles in circuit. It is a new singularity in the history of Eastern conquest, that arms should assist the researches of taste, or the studies of the antiquarian; and it is to Ibrahim Pasha that we owe the chief indulgence which Askalon now offers to European-curiosity. For the purpose of building a military station or city on this important site, he ordered the ground to be extensively cleared, and the result was the discovery of several magnificent ruins, and among the rest the ground-plan of a Temple, of which some columns remain, each of a single piece of granite, with an entablature, and capitals of marble finely executed in the Corinthian order. Another discovery was the site of a Christian Church, of which the pavement and the bases of the columns have been preserved. The capitals of the remaining columns are well executed, and upon them is represented a cross, encircled with a laurel-wreath.]

A NEW GREEK INSCRIPTION FROM A GREEK CEMETERY NEAR SAFI'.

By J. GARROW DUNCAN, B.D., F.S.A. (SCOT.).

THE tombstone containing the accompanying inscription was handed to me last October by Mr. Allan, of the Persian Oil Company, who had it lying face down as "a worthless antique" at the back of his house. It had been bought by a friend of his for six Mejidis from a Sheikh at Safi' in the S.E. end of the Dead Sea, and had been rather made a joke of as "a bad investment."

The Sheikh¹ told him it had been taken from a ruined house near by; and the shape and size of the stone itself certainly suggest it had been built into a wall. There may be a ruined church there from which it might have been taken; but Mr. Allan

Sheikh Farras of the Safi'an Tribe.

thinks he simply meant a cemetery, and may not have wished to say so. There are cemeteries and ruins all round there, he informs me. Being nicely rounded in shape it was carried away to form the upper stone of a hand-mill; and the Arabs produced it to prove that there are town-ruins near Safi'. The district is so unhealthy that the prospectors came back, one on a stretcher and the other delirious with malaria. Major A. T. Smallwood, who bought the stone, died a month later in England; and the fourth member of the deputation got malaria very badly.

The stone was brought to Jerusalem in 1922.

The inscription runs (see Plate):

Μνημιον Αιγι
ου Γοδεου (? Ποδεου), (? Θαδεου)
Παυσαμενος
ετων π' (or π̄) εν ετι
ΣΠΓ (or ΣΙΓ) Μηνος
Αυδονεου Δ'
Θαρσι ουδισ
αθανατος

The Monument of Aeneas, son of Godeos (?)
He "voluntarily ceased from labour"
at the age of 80 (or 50) years in the year
283 (or 213)
on the 10th day of the month Audoneos
Be of good courage! No one
lives for ever

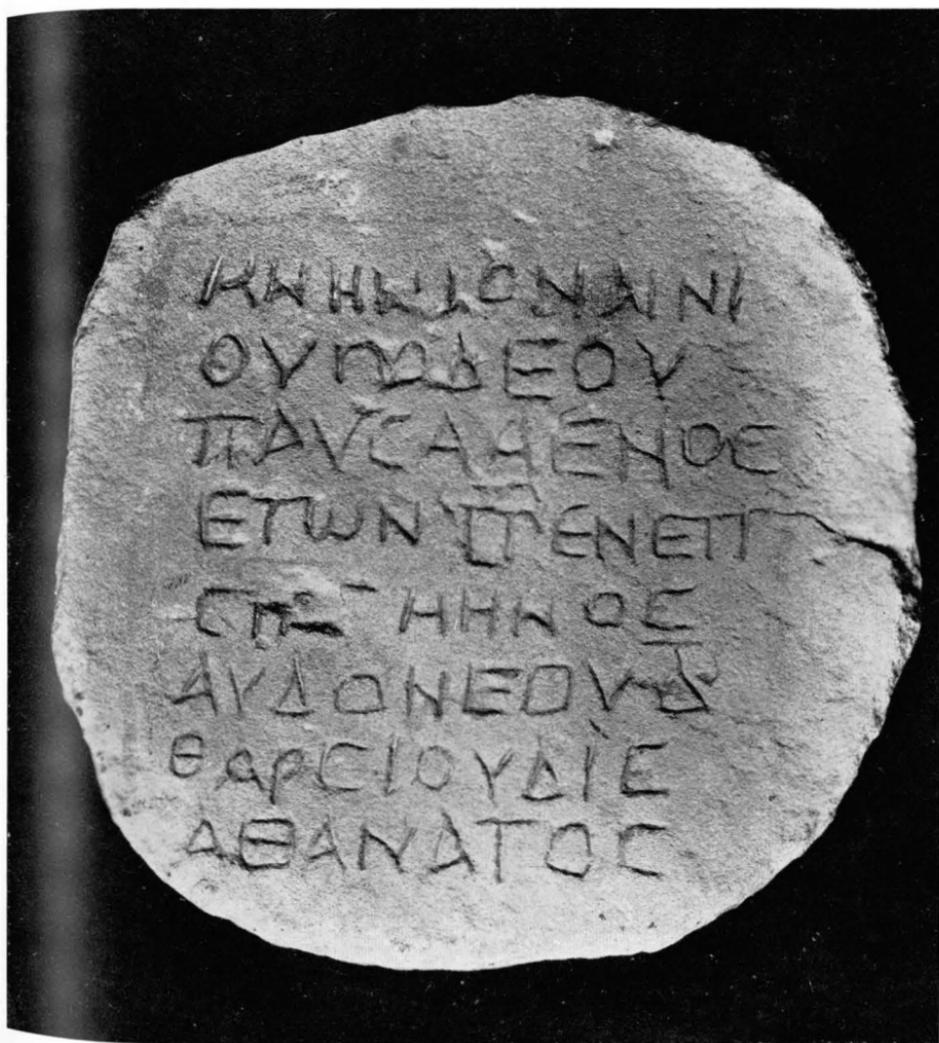
Μνημιον is the contracted form for *μνημειόν*.

Αιγιουγοδεου.—1. If this is to be taken as one word it can only mean "the man from Engedi," and is a case of a family migrating from one village to another and adding the name of their former village as surname. Engedi is not far from the Safi'a district. This is a common practice in Palestine at the present day. Thus a family coming to Jerusalem from Nablous got to be known as Nabulsi, which ultimately became the family surname; and when a branch returned to Nablous it retained the surname and uses it still. Similarly Lydāwi, a native of Ludd (Lydda), and Selfiti, a native of the village Selfit, are surnames in use acquired under similar circumstances.

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Palestine Exploration Fund.

Plate.



GREEK INSCRIPTION FROM CEMETERY NEAR SAFI'.

The objection to this is that *Αἰνίου* is genitive, and in the compound *Αἰν-* or *Αἰνιο-* would have been sufficient. Also it is unusual perhaps to use the surname alone in such a case with no "son of" or family details—unless it be that being a stranger no one knew his family history.

2. Taken as two words it reads: "The Monument of Aeneas, son of Godeos, or son of Thadeos (for Thaddeus) or son of Podeos" (*cf.* Acts ix, 33; Matt. x, 3).

The lettering here is difficult. It seems to read **ΓΟ-** or **ΓΑ-**; but Sir William Ramsay, to whom I sent a pencil rubbing, considers Godeos an unsatisfactory reading, and thinks the father's name may be **ΘΑΔΕΟΥ**, *i.e.*, *Θαδέου* for *Θαδδαίου*. He thinks that Aeneas is certainly a reflection of Acts ix, 33.

The next point which calls for note is the use of the middle of *παύω* in the sense of "dying"—"voluntarily ceased from labour." That *πασσόμενος* should be in the nominative case is quite in accordance with usage on such inscriptions. The usual expressions for "dying" in Christian inscriptions, *ἀναπαύσας* and *ἀνεπαύθη*, imply that God has given them rest.

The use of the middle here, omitting all reference to a Higher Power, suggests that this is a pagan inscription, and pre-Christian in date. Sir William Ramsay informs me that he has seen no parallel to this use of the middle in Christian Epigraphy.

Ἐτην Π̄ or Π̄ means "at age of 50 years or 80 years." The latter seems to be the correct reading of the inscription. If **ΙΓ** be read, it would mean 93 (183) years; but his age is perhaps of little importance.

I have studied closely the end of l. 4 and beginning of l. 5, where the cutting splintered, and I am convinced it reads **СΠΓ** "In the year 283." The shake on the left of **С** is accidental, and shows no trace of colouring. The upper line of this letter was prolonged to include both the **Π** and the original **Γ**. In cutting the engraver's chisel had slipped, so that he cut out one side of the first **Γ** and the upper part of **Π** as well. Afterwards he cut in the upper stroke of the **Π** a little beneath the original on the broken face, as is plainly visible on the stone itself. Then he proceeded to make a fresh **Γ** a little further to the right, but his chisel again slipped, and the left side of the second **Γ** was carried away. This is confirmed by the fact that the paint, with

which every letter was originally coloured, is still traceable on the right side of the Γ, as well as on the C and Π.

The date on the inscription therefore is 283. Another possibility is that it should be read CΓ or 213, which does not account for the two parallel strokes between C and Γ.

If the stroke on the left of C is intended, C may stand for the unit 6, the date being written backwards. CΠΓ would then read 386.

The question now arises, what era is here referred to? If¹ it is the Seleucid era, 312 B.C., the year 283 is 29 B.C., the year 213 is 99 B.C., and the year 386 is 74 A.D. If, however, we take the era of the Province of Arabia, 107 A.D., the date of Aeneas' death will be 390 A.D., or 320 A.D., or 493 A.D.¹

There is also the era of Eleutheropolis (Beit Jibrin) about 200 A.D., but it was not wide-spread, Diospolis being the only other place whose coins show its use, as I am informed.² This would place the inscription far too late for its style of lettering and matter. The Christian influence should in that case be much more in evidence. The same may be said of the era of the Province of Arabia. Besides, it is doubtful if Saf'a was included in the Province of Arabia. The era of Pompey, 64 B.C., when he gave freedom to so many Greek cities east of Jordan, is subject to the same criticisms. Saf'a, or the Greek town which existed near it, probably did not share in his gift.

Personally I think the Seleucid era is referred to, and the date of Aeneas' death is 29 B.C. This is the most likely era for the district, on which point Sir William Ramsay agrees; and perhaps best suits the character and style of the inscription itself. Allowing that the stone was erected years after, the inscription is thus in all probability of the 1st century.

Δ' in l. 6 is contracted for Δεκα.

Αυδουρος ought really to be Adnaïos, but in such inscriptions a letter commonly creeps in between δ and υ, usually ι or ν. Prof. Ramsay says this is the only instance of omikron which he has seen.

The last two lines of the inscription contain a common formula for ending such inscriptions, like Memento Mori. It is undoubtedly

¹ [Writing later, Mr. Duncan thinks it more likely that 213 is right.—Ed.]

² By Mr. G. F. Hill, through Prof. W. M. Calder.

pagan in origin, but Ramsay says in his experience it always indicates a Christian inscription. He has "never seen an instance of its pre-Christian use."

Sir G. A. Smith seems to have regarded it as indisputably pagan, and in the first edition of his *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* he contrasted the hopelessness of the pagan's outlook with the hopefulness of the Christian, as evidenced on their tomb inscriptions. In his latest edition he acknowledges that Christians used the formula too. Of course the meaning of the expression on the lips of the pagan would be vastly different from the Christian's meaning. In the one case it means that death ends all. In the other, simply that all must die—no one is deathless; and our translation of it must vary according to whether we regard the inscription as Christian or pre-Christian.

If "Aeneas, son of Thaddaeus" is the correct reading, these two names are of course suggestive. Sir W. Ramsay thinks that Aeneas is most likely in some way connected with Acts (see ix, 33). Thaddaeus is the surname of the Apostle Lebbaeus (Matt. x, 3). Lebbaeus is regarded really as a "pet-name" for Thaddaeus (Souter, *Dict. N.T.*), and may have been given him from the name of his native city.¹ In Joshua xv, 32, Lebaath is given as one of the southern cities of Judah, and it occurs in the company of Ain (probably Ain-gedi) and Rimmon (unless the two are one place, En-rimmon). It is just possible that in Lebbaeus we find a reflection of this city, the site of which is unidentified, but must have been quite near to the Safi' district, from which this stone comes.

If we accept the suggestion that the ΣΠΓ of the date be read backwards, thus giving the date of Aeneas' death as 74 A.D., there is a subtle temptation to connect him with the Aeneas of Acts ix, 33, who was cured of the palsy by Peter some ten or fifteen years earlier. This of course happened at Lydda, and would imply that he had migrated from the Safi'a district and been taken back there for burial. If Aeneas' father was named Thaddaeus, by a common rule in family life Aeneas' son may have been Thaddaeus also—may, in fact, have been the Apostle of Matt. x, 3, which would explain Peter's finding "saints" already in Lydda, as well as his visit there, perhaps. One may

¹ For other views, see *Ency. Biblica*, s.v.

venture to ask whether it will be found some day that the cemetery from which this stone was taken was the cemetery of a Greek town at the S.E. end of the Dead Sea, from whose name *Λεββαίος*, Lebbaeus, would be the correctly formed adjective; and that Thaddaeus Lebbaeus the Apostle was the son of this Aeneas, who died either in 29 B.C. or in 74 A.D.

Leaving these speculations aside, we must recognize that everything depends on whether we decide that this is a Christian or a pre-Christian inscription. Some, not having read the date, have given it as their opinion that it may be as late as the 4th century A.D.

If we accept the 74 A.D. date of the inscription and regard it as Christian, there is the other possibility, that here we have evidence of the presence of St. Paul during the two years which he spent in Arabia. According to Sir G. A. Smith the "Arabia" of St. Paul included Petra and further south, perhaps to Sinai (*Hist. Geog.*, 20th ed., p. 620). This would of course include the district of Safi'a.¹

JERUSALEM, *November*, 1923.

¹ [Prof. Burkitt, to whom a photograph was shown, sees no reason to doubt that it may be 29 B.C. He inclines to read the name as Godeos.—*Ed.*]