

DAVID KENNEDY – ABDEL GADER AL-HUSAN

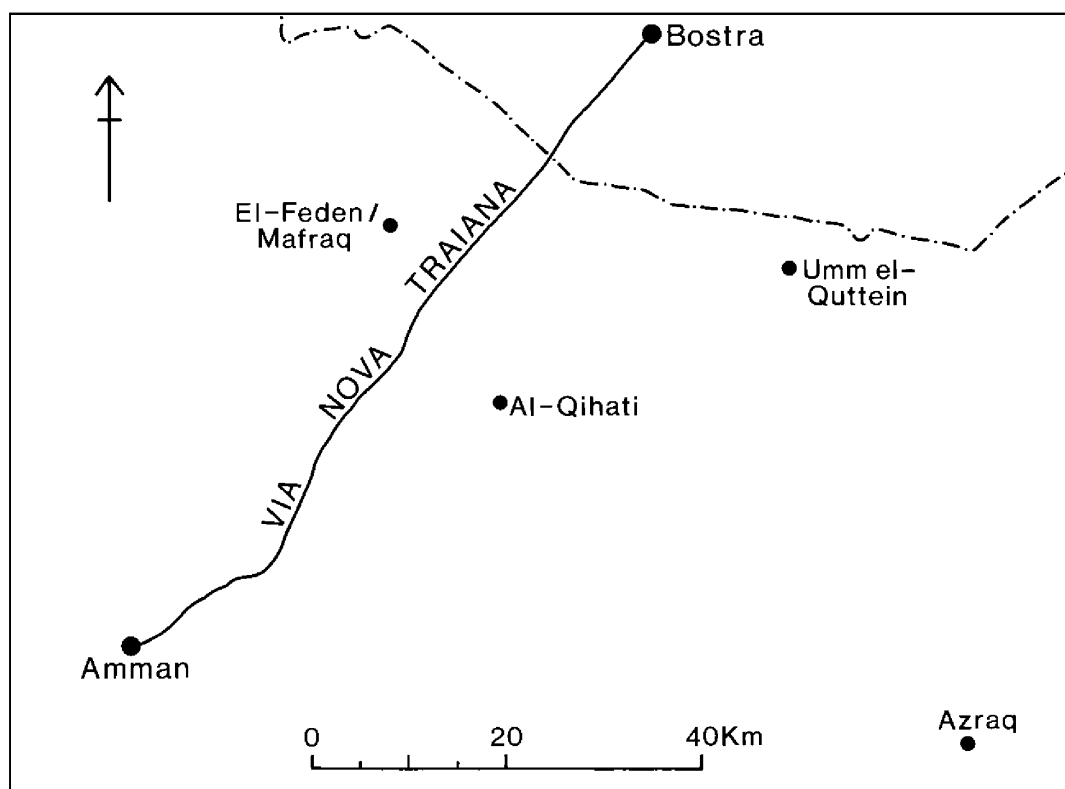
NEW MILESTONES FROM NORTHERN JORDAN: 1992–1995

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 113 (1996) 257–262

© Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH, Bonn

NEW MILESTONES FROM NORTHERN JORDAN: 1992-1995

Fieldwork in northern Jordan has brought several new milestones to light in recent years. The present publication offers text and brief notes on (a) a piece of a milestone found at Umm el-Quttein in the course of the 1992 season of the Southern Hauran Survey (Kennedy and Freeman 1995);¹ (b) parts of four milestones recovered in the course of excavation by Mr. Abdel Gader al-Husan at El-Feden in the western suburbs of Mafraq; (c) parts of two milestones found by Mr. Abdel Gader al-Husan in the vicinity of Al-Qihati and five further parts found when Kennedy and al-Husan, together with Dr. Philip Freeman, visited the findspots of his previous discoveries; and (d) notice of six pieces of milestone subsequently viewed by the same scholars while searching for the Roman road north-east of Al-Qihati.²



Map: Location of area discussed

¹ The following bibliographical abbreviations will be used:

Barnes, T.D. (1982)

Kennedy, D.L. (1982)

Kennedy, D.L. (1997)

Kennedy, D.L. and MacAdam, H. I. (1986)

Kennedy, D.L. and Freeman, P. W. M. (1995)

PES

The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine, Cambridge, Mass.

Archaeological Explorations on the Roman Frontier in North-East Jordan, Oxford (BAR, Int Series 134).

"Roman Roads and Routes in North-East Jordan", *Levant* 29; in press.

"Latin Inscriptions from Jordan, 1985", *ZPE* 65, 231-236; Taf. XI

"Southern Hauran Survey, 1992", *Levant* 27, 39-73.

Butler, H.C., et al. (1907-1949), *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria in 1905-1905 and 1909*, 4 vol.s in many parts, Leyden.

² Mr. al-Husan kindly invited the first author to prepare his discoveries for publication. Dr. Freeman jointly recorded the text from Umm el-Quttein and I am grateful to him for his assistance then and with the Qihati texts. I am also grateful to Dr.

(a) 1. Milestone from Umm el-Quttein

Milestone piece found in the course of fieldwork for the 1992 season of the Southern Hauran Survey (Kennedy and Freeman 1995), left in situ. Located in a cistern on the western side of Umm el-Quttein (Site SHS 001.6; the cistern is C2) where it had been built into a wall supporting an arch for the roof of the cistern. Recent demolition of the wall had released the stone and revealed lettering on what had been a hidden face.

Black basalt, original flat base but broken across the top and with chips broken from the bottom left and bottom edge. There is hard mortar on the face and obscuring the terminations of some lines. Red sandy coating adhering to the stone and further obscuring the text; resistant to washing and cleaning. Height 60 cm., circumference 40 cm. See pl. I.1.

Five lines of letters: line 1 is broken through and lines 4 and 5 are damaged at the ends. There may be traces of letters for a sixth line but the stone is too badly damaged for certainty. Letter height: 3cm.

1.]C[
ETCALQVALERIO[
MAXIMI [

4. NOBILLIS[
CAESARI[
?

3 N or A

The readable letters point to a text of the Tetrarchic period for which we have the final lines naming the second of the two Caesars. Whether we are dealing with the First or Second Tetrarchy depends on the reading of line 3 where the seventh letter could be either N or A: Maximi[anus], i.e. C. Galerius Valerius Maximianus, or Maximin[us], i.e. C. Galerius Valerius Maximinus. However, parallel texts for the same period already found at Umm el-Quttein suggest the inscriptions of the Second Tetrarchy were abbreviated simply as Severo et Maximino nob. Caes. (PES III.A.2, nos. 205-206). Consequently this stone should probably be restored with the name of Maximianus in Line 3 and dated 1 March 293-1 May 305 (for dating see the convenient tables in Barnes 1982, 3-9). As with other texts on basalt of this Tetrarchic period the lettering was plainly difficult to cut and is often malformed. The surface of the stone was seldom smoothed adequately and the uneven, pitted surface, makes modern reading problematic. Presumably in antiquity colours picked out the letters. The restoration should probably be:

[D(omino) n(ostro) per(petuo) nob(ilissimo) Caes(ari) G(aio) Aur(elio) Valer(io) Diocletiano p(io) f(elici) invic(to) Aug(usto) et imper(atori) Caes(ari) M(arco) Aur(elio) Valer(io) Maximiano p(io) f(elici) invic(to) Aug(usto) et Fl(avio) Valer(io)] C[onstantio] et Gal(erio) Q(ualer)io Maximia[no] nobbillis[imis] Caesari[bus].

A similar text was recorded at Umm el-Quttein by the Princeton Expedition (PES III.A.2: no. 207). Both are dateable between 1 March 293-1 May 305.

At this point it is necessary to correct the reading offered for a milestone recorded near Umm el-Quttein previously (Kennedy and MacAdam 1986: 233-234). That text is clearly one of Diocletian and Maximianus and the name in Line 4 must, therefore, be restored as not Constantino but Constantio. The date will fall between the same limits as no. 5 above (1 March 293-1 May 305).

(b) Nos 2-5 Re-used material from El-Feden, Mafraq

These inscriptions were recovered in the course of excavation on the Abbasid (AD 750-968) building just west of the railway line. The building and the milestones are now within the grounds of the office of the Department of Antiquities in Mafraq.

Thomas Bauzou who subsequently examined some of the Qihati texts and generously shared his own reading and far greater expertise in tackling this material. Finally, Ms. Natalie Dames was of great assistance in recording most of these texts in the field. None of these is responsible for the presentation offered here which is the work of the first named author. Funding for the participation of Drs. Kennedy and Freeman and Ms. Dames was kindly provided on different occasions from funds granted by The British Academy, The British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History, the Australian Research Council, and a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

2. Milestone Drum

Limestone, broken on a flat plane both at top and bottom. Height 1.25 m.; circumference at top 1.53 m.; circumference at bottom 1.67 m. Several vertical cracks and a large fragment missing from the inscribed face. Remainder repaired with mortar by Department of Antiquities. Initial letters of three lines survive but cannot be read with certainty. See pl. I.2.

— — — —	OS[letters 7 cm high
	MA[letters 6 cm
	.. [. . . .	letters 7 cm
— — — —		

3 PP or PR or RE		

3. Top Part of a Milestone Drum

Limestone, broken across bottom and damaged at top. Height: 56 cm.; circumference at top 1.23 m.; circumference at bottom 1.4 m. Four lines of text and slight traces of the top of a fifth. See pl. I.3.

1	IMPCAESAR	letters 5.5 cm high
	MAVRELIVS	letters 6 cm
	SEVERVSANT, ONINVS	letters 5.5/ 6 cm
4	PIVSFELIX	letters 5 cm
	(traces)	

The emperor in question is Caracalla (ruling alone from AD 212-218). Milestones of this emperor are well-known on the *Via Nova Traiana*—which passes several kilometres to the east of Mafraq—and seem to be fairly standard in their text. On the basis of conflating the two partly damaged examples at milestations 15 and 16 from Bostra along the *Via Nova* (about 11 km ENE of El-Feden), we may reconstruct the text:

Imp. Caesar M. Aurelius Severus Antoninus Pius Felix [Aug., Parthicus Max., Britannicus Max., Pontifex Max., trib. potest. XVII, imp. III, cos. IIII, p. p., procos., per Furnium Iulianum, leg. pr. pr., cos. des.]

This is then followed by the distance in Roman and Greek numbers—in these instances from the *Via Nova*, the numerals XV and IE and XVI and IZ. The date is precisely AD 214.

Neither of the following pieces could, with certainty, be attributed to the two pieces with lettering just discussed.

4. Fragment of Limestone Milestone Drum

This drum is tapering towards the top where it is broken very unevenly. Broken at the bottom before the lettering. Height: 74 cm., lower circumference 1.53 m., upper circumference 1.32 m. No lettering preserved. See pl. II.1.

5. Fragment of Limestone Milestone Drum

This drum is broken diagonally at the top. Broken at bottom before the lettering. Height: 57 cm., lower circumference 1.65 m., upper circumference 1.59 m. No lettering preserved. See pl. II.2.

(c) Nos 6-12 Milestones from Al-Qihati

The following fragments were found about 3 km. east of the village of Al-Qihati. According to a local farmer, some were in situ and others had been brought by him from further north. One (no. 11) had been found by Mr al-Husan further south. Initial readings in 1994 were improved on in 1995.

6. Black Basalt Milestone Fragment.

Height 84 cm., circumference 83 cm. (top) and 89 cm. (bottom). Flat top, probably broken off in antiquity. Slightly oval section with front and rear faces more flattened. Large chip broken from front top of inscribed face. The face was very uneven prior to inscribing.

The stone is covered in lichen and reading is made more difficult by ancient and more recent damage to the inscribed surface. Seemingly thirteen lines of text but only a few were decipherable. The let-

ter V is inscribed as a round-bottomed U. This and some of the other texts published here were subsequently seen by Dr. Thomas Bauzou who arrived at much the same readings. The word division is by the editor. See pl. II.2.

1 DDNN
IMP CAES
C AUR[V]AL
4 DIOCLETIANO P F
[INVI]CTO AUG ET
M AUR VAL
[MAXIM]IANO P F
8. INVICTO AUG ET
FL VAL(E)RIO
CONSTANTIO ET
[GAL] VA[LERIO]
12 MAXIMIANO
[N]OBB CAESS

5 [invi]cto suppl. Bauzou
recognized by Bauzou

7 [Maxim]iano suppl. Bauzou

9 VALRIO read by Bauzou

13 [N]OBB

"To Our Lords the Emperor Caesar Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus, Pius Felix Invincible Augustus, and (the Emperor Caesar) Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus, Pius Felix Invincible Augustus, and to Flavius Valerius Constantius, and Galerius Valerius Maximianus, Most Noble Caesars."

This stone also dates to the First Tetrarchy (1 March 293-1 May 305). Cf. the restoration proposed for no. 1 above.

7. Black Basalt Milestone Fragment

This fragment consists of a crudely squared base and the lower part of the drum above. Height 65/66 cm.; circumference 94 cm. (top); 1.02 m. just above base. Squared base sides of about 32/34 cm. Top surface is broken in a clean, flat line running slightly obliquely to sides of stone. There are a few chips from base and drum, possibly ancient. See pl. III.1.

Here I present mostly Dr. Bauzou's readings. The word division is by the editor.

1 ---
PIO [FEL INVICT AUG ET F
L VAL SEVERO N[OB CAES]
4 E(T) FLA VAL [C]ON[STANTINO]
NOB [C]AES

4 ET C VAL MAXIMINO is expected, Bauzou

8. Black Basalt Milestone Fragment

This is of a very crudely "squared" base (more like 6 sides than 4) and the lower part of the drum above. Height 61/62 cm.; circumference 88.5 cm. (top); 98 cm. just above base. Two or three large chips missing, possibly ancient. Clean flat break on upper surface, covered in lichen now, therefore, ancient. Some recent damage. See pl. III.2.

Two lines of lettering just below top break.

(traces)
]C VAL MAXI
MINO NOB CAESS

3 MI by Bauzou

Tetrarchic in date, probably the same as no. 6 above. Word division by the editor.

9. Black Basalt Milestone Fragment

Height 30 cm.; circumference 79.5 cm. (top) and 86.5 cm. (bottom). Clean horizontal breaks across top and bottom. "Rear" surface almost flat; other sides curving and quite well-formed. There are no traces of lettering. See pl. III.3.

10. Black Basalt Milestone Fragment

This fragment is on a crudely squared base and the lower part of the drum above. Height 52/54 cm.; circumference 90 cm. (top); 94 cm. just above base. Squared base sides of about 19-20 cm. Flat rear surface of base extends up drum above. There are no traces of letters. See pl. IV.1.

11. Black Basalt Milestone Fragment

This is a drum including perhaps, the top of the milestone. Found south of the find spot of nos. 6-10, and 12, beyond the village of Abu Gharah. Height 53 cm.; circumference 74 cm. (top); and 82 cm. (bottom). Almost square in section with a very flat rear face. The drum is broken horizontally at the bottom; large chip out of top right corner. Word division by the editor. See Pl. IV.2.

1	FELICI C AVR VAL DIOCLETIANO PAT RI IMMPP ET M AV
4	R VAL MAXIMIANO PATRI IMMPP ET F L AVR VAL CONSTAN TIO P F INVICT AVGG
8	T GAL VAL MAXIMIAN [O] P F[INVICT AV]G E
	T[
	7 AVGG Bauzou 9 not transcribed by Bauzou

"To the Most Fortunate Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus, Father of the Emperors, and to Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus, Father of the Emperors, and to Flavius Aurelius Valerius Constantius, Pius Felix Invictus, Augustus, and Galerius Valerius Maximianus, Pius Felix Invictus Augustus, and to ..."

The text is paralleled on stones noted by Bauzou on the *Via Nova Traiana*. The date is 305-306 immediately following the abdication of Diocletian and Maximianus. As such it is followed by the names of the two Augusti and would have gone on to give the names of the two new Caesars.

12. Black Basalt Milestone Fragment

This fragment of a drum is, perhaps, the top of the milestone. Height 56 cm., circumference 86 cm. (top); and 93 cm. (bottom). There is a clean flat break across bottom, the piece is possibly complete at the top but for some damage. Small depression at centre of drum, 4.5 cm. in diameter. Large chip off face to right of text. Letters are c. 3 cm. high. The word division is by the editor. See pl. IV.3.

1.	(traces) O FELICI G AVR VAL DI[O]CLETIANO PAT
4.	RI IMMPP ET M AVR VAL MAXIMIANO PA TRI IMMPP ET FL AV R VAL CONSTANTIO
8.	P FINVICTAVGG ET G [A]V[R]VAL MAXIMIANO AV]GG (sic) E (traces)
	7-10 Bauzou

A clearer example is provided with the previous text. The date is again 305-306.

The number of individual milestones involved from the Al-Qihati area is uncertain. The three base sections (nos 7, 8, 10) provide a minimum. Attempts to fit no. 6 to any of these failed because it needed no further letters and because physically the fragments could not be matched. Likewise neither nos 11 nor 12 could be fitted physically to any of the bases. The remaining fragment (no. 9) cannot be fitted to any of the other pieces either. The seven pieces seem, therefore, to belong to seven different milestones. The implication is that further fragments may yet be recovered at the findspots or at the places from which they had been removed by the farmer.

The dates of nos. 11 and 12 are contemporary indicating, presumably, that at least one of the stones was brought to the find-spot near Al-Qihati from its original location beside the road. However, the First Tetrarchy may well be the date at which the road was formally established—most of its milestones commence with the formulaic DDNN IMP CAES as with no. 6 above. At this time, however, we have no way of knowing if any of the findspots of these pieces from near Al-Qihati were milestations or merely the chance place to which they had been brought by the farmer from the road along which they had been set up before collection.

(d) Nos 13-18, Further Milestone Pieces from Near Al-Qihati.

In the course of further fieldwork in Jordan for other purposes in 1995 the opportunity was taken to re-visit briefly the vicinity of Al-Qihati. A further milestone base had been found by Mr al-Husan at the principal previous findspot and taken to Mafraq (no. 13). Subsequently, an examination of the area about 1.5 km. further north of this findspot located five pieces of similar basalt milestone scattered in an area of ploughing (nos 14-18). Three included bases. All of these were left where found and none was read beyond briefly ascertaining that they again appeared to be Tetrarchic. However, the position now is that the three locations for milestones pieces east of Al-Qihati include seven bases.

These last inscriptions and the road to which they belong will require detailed study during future fieldwork. An article discussing the texts published here and updating a survey of roads and milestones in the region east of Mafraq (Kennedy 1982: ch. 5) is in preparation (Kennedy 1997).

The University of Western Australia, Perth
Al al-Bayt University, Mafraq, Jordan

David Kennedy
Abdel Gader al-Husan