

COINS FROM THE 1976 EXCAVATIONS AT HESHBON

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This report is the last of the preliminary reports on the coins found at Tell Heshbân, Jordan, from 1968-1976.¹ With the current publication covering 57 coins found in 1976,² the total of the coins found during the five campaigns has reached 395: 78 in 1968, 187 in 1971 (including a hoard of 66 coins), 35 in 1973, and 38 in 1974. Regardless of their condition, all of these coins have been accounted for in the respective reports, with 363 enumerated and 32 merely cited.³

Certain of the latest coins are worth singling out. Of the Roman provincial coins, no. 327 is of particular interest because of the rarity of its type. The reverse, showing a cart with domed canopy supported by four pillars and drawn right by four horses, appears only among the coins of Philadelphia (Amman) from the time of Aurelius to Commodus (second half of the second cent. A.D.). However, the Heshbon specimen differs somewhat from the two known types,⁴ and its attribution to Philadelphia cannot be determined with certainty because of the illegible inscription.

Two Islamic coins are of special interest: no. 344 is an Umayyad pictorial coin of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwân (A.D. 685-705), the 5th Umayyad caliph, known for his monetary reforms and the

¹For the earlier reports, see *AUSS* 9 (1971): 147-160; 12 (1974): 35-46; and 14 (1976): 133-141.

²Not included in the descriptive catalogue are the following very poorly preserved coins: nos. 355-356 (2468—B.7:19; 2676—C.6:72) are Roman *aes* III-IV type of the 4th-5th cent.; nos. 357-363 (2469—C.6:45; 2664—C.9:14; 2670—A.11:11; 2675—F.34:4B; 2879—K.1:4; 2880—C.9:37; 2881—G.15:20) are, to all obvious indications such as a partial reading of the word *as-Sultân*, all Mamlûk. Of these, no. 360 must have been dropped by a tomb-robber.

³For the latter, see *AUSS* 9 (1971): 156, n. 24.

⁴Cf. George F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia* (London, 1922), pp. 39, 41, nos. 11 and 20.

erection of the Dome of the Rock at the temple mound in Jerusalem. It shows the caliph standing in Byzantine style; a number of other Byzantine derivations are also noticeable.⁵ The other Islamic coin, no. 348, is of special significance to the dig. It is a poorly preserved 'Abbāsid silver coin (*dirham*) from the early tenth century. It is the only 'Abbāsid coin found at Tell Ḥesbān and must be correlated with the few other 'Abbāsid finds from the tell in order to account for this very poorly represented period in the occupational history of the site, a subject to which we shall return after cataloguing.

Except for the *dirham* cited above, all coins are copper.

Ptolemaic

307. (2477—D.3:108, fill in cave 83.) Ptolemy III, 246-211 B.C.
Similar to no. 269 in the 1974 report, but one eagle on rev.; between legs: Δ .
308. (2473—G.11:11, soil layer, continuous with loci 5-8.)
Obv. Head of Alexander the Great, r.
Rev. Eagle on thunderbolt, facing l., wings open; between legs: Δ; obliterated inscr. on l. and r. •

Seleucid

309. (2674—G.15:1, surface soil.) Antiochus VIII, 121-96 B.C.
Obv. Head of Antiochus r., radiate.
Rev. Eagle, facing l., wings closed, scepter over r. shoulder; inscr. r.: [BA]ΣΙΑ [ΕΩΣ]/ ANTIOXOY; l.: [ΕΠ]ΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ; obliterated exergue.

Maccabean

310. (2480—D.4:92, ḥuwwār surface over 85.) Alexander Jannaeus, 103-76 B.C.
Similar to no. 47 in the 1971 report.
311. (2662—D.4:101, soil fill over bedrock between walls 86-103 and 32.)
Obv. Wreath of laurel, obliterated inscr. within.
Rev. Traces of two cornucopias.
312. (2671—G.14:8, multiple burials in undefined graves.) John Hyrcanus II, 67, 63-40 B.C.
Obv. Wreath of laurel, within: ⁶ יהוחנן / הזכר / הזכר / היהודים
Rev. Two cornucopias, pomegranate between.

Nabataean

313. (2317—D.4:69, ḥuwwār and soil surface.) Aretas IV, 9 B.C.-A.D. 40.
Similar to no. 2 in the 1968 report.

⁵For more on this type, see the excellent introduction by John Walker, *Catalogue of the Muhammadan Coins in the British Museum*, Vol. III: *A Catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine and Post-reform Umayyad Coins*, 2 vols. (London, 1956); cf. p. 32, no. 104.

⁶A. Reifenberg, *Ancient Jewish Coins*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem, 1965), p. 40, no. 10 has ⁷ of line 3 at the beginning of line 4. Such differences are commonplace.

314. (2474—C.9:3, tumble above area of walls 8 21 35.)
Similar to the preceding.
315. (2871—C.9:38, wall, ceiling collapse debris in SW room.)
Similar to the preceding.
316. (2669—B.7:35, fill under late Roman stairway.) Malichus II, A.D. 40-70.
Obv. Jugate heads of Malichus II and wife; hair hanging down; obliterated field.
Rev. Two crossed cornucopias; two lines of inscr. between them above, and one line below: $\eta\lambda\gamma\iota\sigma\kappa\iota / \mu\lambda\kappa\epsilon\upsilon$
317. (2663—D.4:107, soil layer S of wall 88.) Rabbel II, A.D. 71-106.
Obv. Traces of two busts r.
Rev. Traces of two crossed cornucopias; two lines of inscr. between them above, and one line below: $\eta\lambda\gamma\iota\sigma\kappa\iota / \dots / \dots$
318. (2872—G.4:33, soil layer.)
Similar to no. 276 in the 1974 report.
319. (2873—C.8:25, early Mamlūk occupation surface in E room.)
Similar to the preceding.
320. (2348—C.1:119, cleanup locus in NE.)
Similar to the preceding.

Provincial Roman

321. (2937—C.9:24, channel on bedrock in NW corner.) Judaea; Pontius Pilate, A.D. 30-32.
Similar to no. 5 in the 1968 report; date obliterated.
322. (2939—G.15:32, soil surface E of wall 2-8.) Alexandria; Trajan, A.D. 113/4.
Obv. Traces of head l.
Rev. Androsphinx r., recumbent; in exergue: LIS.
323. (2470—D.4:99, soil surface in NW corner of walls 100-103 and 88.) Caesarea; Hadrian, A.D. 117-138.
Obv. Bust of Hadrian r., laureate, wearing paludamentum and cuirass; obliterated inscr. around.
Rev. City-goddess standing l., wearing turreted crown, chiton, and mantle; her r. foot rests on small figure, l. hand rests on spear or standard and r. holds another small figure; around: [CIF AVG] CAESAR.
324. (2591—A.10:4, soil accumulated over architecture after collapse.) Petra.
Obv. Bust of Hadrian r., laureate, draped, and wearing gorgoneion on breast; around: $\text{AYTOKPATWP KAICAP TPAIANOC CEBACTOC}$.
Rev. City-goddess seated l. on rock, l. foot forward, wearing turreted crown, veil, long chiton, and mantle; l. hand holding trophy, r. extended open; around: ΠΕΤΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ .⁷
325. (2479—D.4:99, soil surface in NW corner of walls 100-103 and 108.) Aelia Capitolina; Antoninus Pius, A.D. 138-161.
Obv. Similar to no. 279 in the 1974 report.
Rev. Bust of Faustina I r., draped; obliterated inscr. around.
326. (2938—C.8:54, soil layer between W balk and walls 7 and 30.) Caesarea; Marcus Aurelius, under Antoninus Pius, A.D. 139-161.
Obv. Bust of Aurelius r., bareheaded; inscr. around: AV[RELIO CAES ANTON AVG P F].
Rev. Bust of Serapis r., hatted; inscr. around: COL P[RIM. . .] .

⁷Note the difference in Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 34, no. 1, where the obv. drape has less pleats and rev. feet are brought together.

327. (2668—C.9:14, subsoil with rock tumble.) Philadelphia (?).
Obv. Bust of Aurelius (?) r., bareheaded, wearing paludamentum and cuirass; obliterated inscr. around.
Rev. Cart with domed canopy supported by four pillars, drawn r. by four horses; obliterated inscr. above (and in exergue?).
328. (2476—C.8:11, collapse debris in W room.) Neapolis, Diadumenian, A.D. 217-218. Similar to no. 8 in the 1968 report, but in poorer condition.
329. (2318—C.8:19, collapse debris in SE corner, NW/SE wall.) Uncertain.⁸
Obv. Bust of emperor r., laureate and draped; around: . . . OCCEBOYC.
Rev. Bust of Zeus Serapis r., Laureate and wearing modius; illegible inscr. around.

Late Roman

330. (2319—C.7:47, soil layer S of wall 3.) Gallienus, A.D. 253-268.
Obv. Bust of Galienus r., radiate and draped; around: GALLIENVS P F AVG; border of dots.
Rev. Soldier standing l., r. hand on shield, l. holding spear; around: VIRTVS AVG; border of dots.
331. (2667—C.8:13, collapse debris N of wall 15, 20.) Diocletian, A.D. 284-305.
Obv. Bust of Diocletian r., radiate and draped; around: IMP C C V[AL DIOCLET]IANVS P F AVG; pierced.
Rev. Similar to no. 282 in the 1974 report; obliterated field; pierced.
332. (2672—C.6:66, clayey, mud-like buildup.) Maximian, A.D. 286-305.
Similar to no. 282 in the 1974 report; obv. inscr.: IMP C M A MAXIMIANVS P F AVG.
333. (2875—G.14:23, soil layer E of wall 3.) Constantine I, A.D. 307-337.
Obv. Bust of Constantine I r., wearing wreath, helmet, and cuirass; around: [CONSTA]NTINVS AVG.
Rev. Obliterated.
334. (2874—F.31:21, rubble and soil fill in locus 7.) Constantius II, A.D. 337-346.
Obv. Head of Constantius II (A.D. 337-361) r., with pearl-diadem; around: [D N CONSTANTIVS P F AVG.
Rev. Inscr. within wreath: VOT/XX/MVLT/XXX; obliterated exergue.
335. (2315—G.11:3, earliest phase of late Mamlūk tumble.) A.D. 346-354.
Obv. Bust of Constantius II r., with pearl-diadem and cuirass; around: [D N CONSTANT]IVS P F AVG.
Rev. Soldier advancing l., spearing fallen horseman; upper l. field: S; around: FEL TEMP REPARATIO; obliterated exergue.
336. (2665—F.31:13, collapsed ceiling and soil layer.) A.D. 354-361.
Obv. Similar to the preceding.
Rev. Soldier advancing l., spearing fallen enemy; around: [FEL] TEMP REPA[RATIO]; obliterated exergue.
337. (2940—C.5:219, soil layer S of wall 200.)
Similar to the preceding.
338. (2941—G.15:28, pit in earliest early Mamlūk phase, cut in floor of tabun 30.)
Similar to the preceding.
339. (2666—F.34:4D, soil layer on bedrock.) Valens, A.D. 364-378.
Similar to no. 284 in the 1974 report.
340. (2942—C.5:217, soil layer S of wall 200, E of wall 190.)
Similar to the preceding.

⁸Reminiscent of the coins of Alexandria.

341. (2876—C.9:37, collapse debris in SE room.) Arcadius, A.D. 383-408.
 Obv. Bust of Arcadius r., with pearl-diadem, cuirass, and holding spear; around:
 D N ARCADIVS P F AVG.
 Rev. Victory advancing l., carrying trophy and dragging captive; around:
 SALVS REIPVBLICAE: obliterated exergue.

Byzantine

342. (2478—C.10:4, subsoil and collapse debris.) Half *Follis* of Justin II, A.D. 575/6.
 Obv. Similar to no. 19 in the 1968 report, but smaller and not pierced.
 Rev. K (prominent mark of value—20 *nummi*); above, cross; beneath, []
 (Antioch); l. segment: ANNO; r. segment: IX (575/6); border of dots.
 343. (2589—G.11:25A, foundation trench for latest early Mamluk phase cistern.) A.D.
 572/3.
 Similar to the preceding, regnal year **UI** (572/3).

Umayyad

344. (2877—G.14:26, soil layer W of apse wall 4.) 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, 685-705.
 Obv. Caliph standing, draped; outward inscr., clockwise, beginning top r.: *Li-*
'Abd Allah 'Abd al-Malik Amīr al-Mu'minīn.
 Rev. M; below **Ā**; outward inscr., clockwise, beginning top r.: *Lā ilāh illā 'llah*
Muhammad Rasūl Allah; border of dots.
 345. (2475—C.6:4, W wall of SE room in latest early Mamluk phase.)
 Similar to no. 21 in the 1968 report, but in poorer condition.
 346. (2592—F.31:11, soil layer.)
 Obv. Similar to no. 23 in the 1968 report.
 Rev. Similar to no. 22 in the 1968 report, but the starlike flower is smaller and
 the inscr. is in three lines.
 347. (2878—G.14:22, soil layer W of apse wall 4.)
 Obv. Similar to no. 23 in the 1968 report.
 Rev. Obliterated.

'Abbāsīd

348. (2590—C.9:10, surface soil.) *Dirham* (2.61 gm.) of Abū Muḥammad 'Alī al-
 Muktafī, 902-908.
 Obv. Obliterated.
 Rev. [*Li-'llah*]/*Muhammad/Rasūl/Allah/al-Muk* [*tafī bi-'llah*]; linear border;
 illegible margin.

Ayyūbid (1171-1342)⁹

349. (2587—G.4:22, surface debris in cistern 5.) Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn, 1169-1193.
 Obv. *Al-Malik/an-Nāṣir*; border of dots; illegible margin.
 Rev. *Yūsuf/Bin Ayyūb*: border of dots, illegible margin.
 350. (2350—G.11:1, surface soil and tumble including recent shallow-founded wall.)
 Obv. *Yū* (continued as the last line) *al-Malik an-Nāṣir* (last two consonants
 downward)/*suf* (continuation of the 1st line); border of dots; illegible
 margin.
 Rev. *Al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ / bi-'l-'adil*; border of dots; around: *Ḍuriba hadḥā 'l-fils*
bi-Dimaṣḥk sanat . . . waḥḥamanīn (i.e. [5]8[-] A.H., A.D. 1185-1193).
 351. (2588—C.5:134, fill layer.) Al-Kamīl Muḥammad (Egyptian Branch), 1218-1238.
 Similar to no. 75 in the 1971 report.

⁹End of the Hamah branch.

352. (2472—C.6:45, last floor in earliest early Mamlūk phase, N building.) An-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf (Ḥalab Branch), 1236-1260.
Similar to no. 31 in the 1968 report, but in poorer condition.

Mamlūk (1250-1517)¹⁰

353. (2673—C.9:14, subsoil with rock tumble.) An-Nāṣir Muḥammad, 1293-1294, 1299-1309, 1310-1341.
Obv. [Allah] / wa mā an-naṣr illā min 'ind/lā ilah illā 'llah Muḥammad /
Rev. [Bi-Dimashk] / [sanat] khams [wa thalathīn] / [a]s-Sultān al-Malik an-Nāṣir / [Nāṣir ad-Dunyā wa 'd-Dīn [Muḥammad] / [Bin] al-Malik Almansūr / Kalāūn (i.e. [7]35A.H., A.D. 1334).
354. (2471—C.8:18, ḥuwwār surface in E room.) Aḏ-Ḍāhir Barḳūk, 1382-1399.
Obv. Ḍurī[ba] / bi-'l-Ḳāhī[ā].
Rev. As-Sultān al-Malik / aḏ-Ḍāhir . . . /

The fact that 'Abbāsīd coins at Tell Ḥesbān are almost nonexistent is not to be taken as an indication of no occupation during that period. The extreme scarcity of 'Abbāsīd coins could partly be due to the fact that these coins are predominantly silver, a commodity well sought by succeeding generations. In the absence of such coins, I had observed at the end of the first report that "there were either short periods of nomadic settlement or a lengthy sparse occupation during the 9th-12th centuries."¹¹ Some scant evidences of 'Abbāsīd occupation have come to light since 1973,¹² which, along with the recent discovery of the coin (no. 348), do not alter the conclusions reached earlier. In spite of the ever-increasing number of coins since the publication of the first report and the updating of the earliest coins to the Ptolemaic period, the occupational history outlined on the basis of the coins from the 1968 excavations remains virtually unchanged.

¹⁰Baḥrī Mamlūk (1250-1382), Burdjī Mamlūk (1382-1517).

¹¹AUSS 9 (1971): 160.

¹²See, e.g., J.A. Sauer, "Area B and Square D.4" AUSS 13 (1975): 138-139; H. O. Thompson, "Area C," AUSS 13 (1975): 170-171; etc.

