

Andrews University

Digital Commons @ Andrews University

---

Faculty Publications

---

2009

## Preliminary Report on the Tall Jalul 2007 Season: Field A

Paul Z. Gregor

Helena Gregor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs>

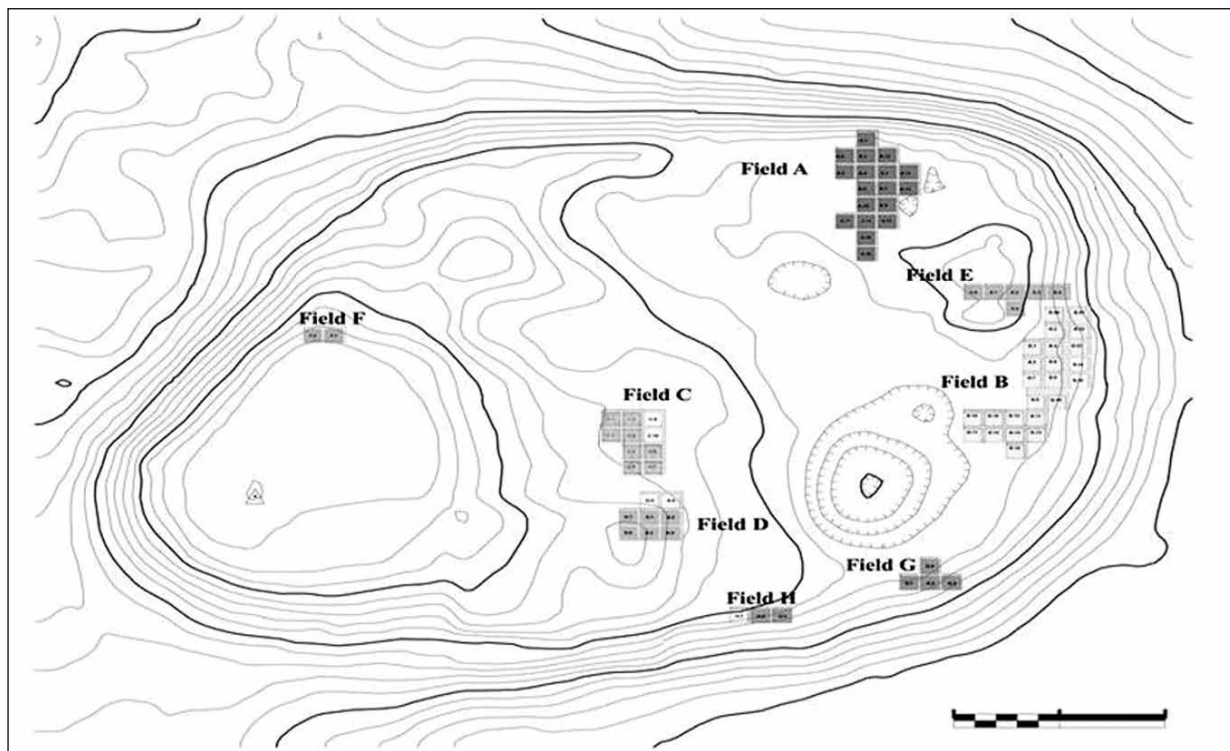
---

## PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE TALL JALŪL 2007 SEASON: FIELD A<sup>1</sup>

*Paul and Helena Gregor*

The primary goal in opening Field A on the north-eastern ridge of the tall (see **Fig. 1**) was to expose a possible city wall defensive system. During the previous seasons of excavation (1992, 1994 and 1996), Field A revealed seventh and eighth century BC architectural remains but

not city walls. Most likely, exterior building walls served as city defensive walls during these periods. During the 1999 season, a decision was made to excavate the layers under the remains of seventh and eighth century BC buildings in hope of finding earlier structures. Notwithstand-



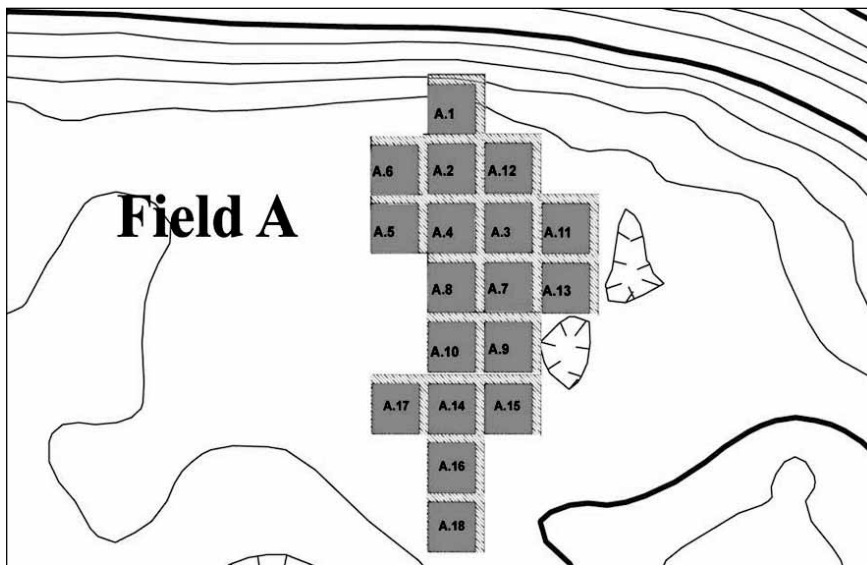
1. Topographical map of Tall Jalul.

1. The authors of this report would like to express their gratitude to volunteers and staff members who participated in this Field. Further, our gratitude is extended to our major sponsoring institutions: Andrews University, Northern Caribbean University and Cincinnati Christian University. Also, we would like to thank the Director General of Antiquities, Dr Fawwaz al-Khraysh, for the support the Department of Antiquities of Jordan provided this season. The overall project directors were Randall W. Younker and Constance E. Gane; as-

sociate directors were Paul Z. Gregor (Field A), Jennifer Groves (Field D), Robert Bates (Field E) and Mark Ziese (Fields G and H). Associate Field A supervisor was Helena R. Gregor; square supervisors were Vassel Kerr (A14), Helen Dixon (A16 and A18), Mr Bassem Nail al-Mohamed (A17). Rodrigo de Silva, Eva Katarina Glazer, Stanley Maxwell, Roxanne Maxwell, Nigel Maxwell, Phemie Maxwell and Yvette Remfort were volunteers.

ing the excavation of Squares A3, A4, A7 and A8, which are clustered together (see **Fig. 2**), the excavations of 1999 and 2005 did not bring desirable results. During those two seasons of excavations, the layers below the buildings were carefully removed. In spite of the fact that in some places excavation extended more than 3m below the eighth century BC building, no architectural remains of any kind were discovered. However, at the end of the 2005 season, a sig-

nificant discovery was made with respect to the position of the lowest excavated layers. These layers seemed to be sloping, indicating that the ridge of the tall, with its Iron Age I and possibly earlier city wall defenses, was probably located more inward of the tall (see **Fig. 3**). Following this rationale, four new squares (A14, A16, A17 and A18) were opened during the last season of excavation in 2007. Squares A14, A16, and A18 are aligned on a north-south axis, while A17<sup>2</sup>



2. Field A.



3. Square A3 sloping layers with Iron I pottery.

2. Because of a lack of manpower, Square A17 was not excavated deep enough to produce any material cul-

ture, except for a phase of abandonment after the Persian period.

was located west of A14 (see **Fig. 2**). The reason to open Square A17 west of A14 was guided by the fact that on the surface was evidence of a possible wall, which turned out to belong to some kind of structure from later periods (possibly an Islamic period animal enclosure). The dating of this wall was difficult owing to the fact that only two courses of stones survived, very close to the ground surface, which has been heavily disturbed over the past two centuries by the digging of graves for servants or slaves of the local tribe. During the 2007 season, Field A with its four squares revealed two phases of occupation (Phase 1: seventh century BC; Phase 3: Persian period), each followed by a phase of abandonment (Phases 2 and 4).

### **Phase 1**

Architectural evidence of this phase surfaced in all three squares (A14, A16 and A18) of Field A. Square A14 revealed remains of a structure of an undetermined nature. Owing to the twin facts that this square was covered with graves dug during the last few centuries, and that the remains of a seventh century BC building were just 2 to 3 feet under the surface, only a few stones of this structure remained intact. In spite of this disturbance, preliminary pottery readings indicate that the building was erected and used during the seventh century BC. It is likely that the remaining stones represent the first course of the wall (Locus 11) since smaller sized stones were placed next to the wall stones to stabilize and to strengthen their position in the ground (see **Fig. 4**). The wall is composed of small to medium sized, roughly hewn field stones. It runs from the south-east corner of the square in a north-westerly direction, and ends abruptly in the middle of the square, possibly representing the corner of a building (see **Fig. 4**). The direction of the wall is more or less parallel with the western wall of the pillared building excavated in previous seasons; this wall comes from the same time period.

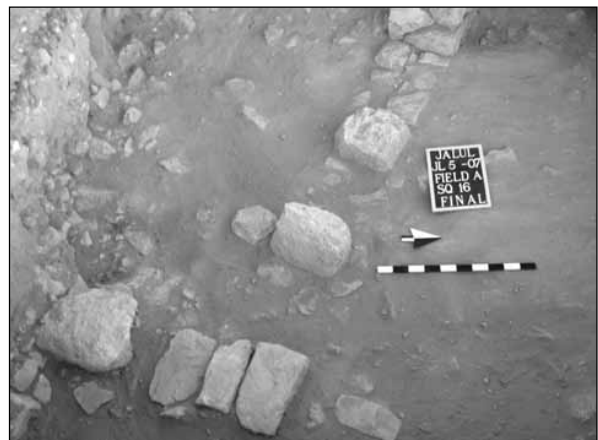
The same phase is also represented in Square A16 with a similar wall (Locus 10). It is made of slightly better quality stones than those used in Wall 11 in Square A14, but both run parallel to each other. It clearly represents the north-eastern corner of a structure. Its remains come from the middle of the western balk and run toward the



*4. Square A14 seventh century BC building.*

south-eastern corner of the square, but it ends before the eastern side of the square and turns toward the southern balk at a 90 degree angle. It is not yet clear if the stones represent the first course of its foundation or upper courses, but it is evident that there was a door or entrance in the north-eastern corner of the structure (see **Fig. 5**). The wall was made of small to medium sized, roughly hewn stones. Both walls (10 and 11) were at approximately the same level and preliminary pottery readings indicate that they date to the same period, the seventh century BC.

While Phase 1, dating to the seventh century BC, is represented by Wall 11 in Square A14 and Wall 10 in Square A16, the same phase is represented in Square A18 with a wall (Locus 18) and two floors (Loci 10 and 16), indicating that this phase had two Sub-phases, 1A and 1B. Wall 18 is only partially visible since most of it is in the northern balk, but it is evident that it runs parallel to walls 10 and 11. A possible



*5. Square A16 seventh century BC building.*

door or entrance to the structure is also present (see Fig. 6). The structure represented by Wall 18 was occupied in both sub-phases, 1A and 1B, since both floors were attached to it. When Wall 18 was built, the floor was placed on its southern side. The floor was constructed of heavily beaten earth packed with pottery sherds, which had been carefully placed to strengthen the surface (see Fig. 7). After some time, another floor (see Fig. 8) of a similar nature was constructed about 20 to 30cm above the first floor (see Fig. 9). The material between the floors was densely packed with a large quantity of pottery sherds. Unfortunately, Square A18, along with Squares A14 and A16, was honeycombed during the last two centuries by grave digging, since the whole area was used as a burial ground. However, it was possible to isolate a few undisturbed square feet of both floors which represented sealed loci and enabled the floors to be properly dated. Pottery sherds collected above the upper floor



6. Square A18 seventh century BC structure.



7. Square A18 seventh century BC lower floor.



8. Square A18 seventh century BC upper floor.



9. Square A18 seventh century BC floor both phases.

(Locus 10) represented sub-phase 1B. Pottery collected between the two floors, and pottery collected from under the lower floor (Locus 18) represented Sub-phase 1A and was virtually the same, indicating that the time between these two sub-phases was very short. Preliminary pottery readings indicate that Wall 18, with its two floors 10 and 16, was in use during the latter part of the Iron Age II period, or the seventh century BC.

Some of the pottery assemblage found in association with these walls (Wall 11 in Square A14, Wall 10 in Square A16, and Wall 18 in Square A 18), together with floors 10 and 16 in Square A 18, consisted primarily of kitchen ware, represented by bowls of various sizes, plates, small jars, jugs etc., along with a small number of storage jars. Some of the bowls were highly burnished with a red, yellow or black slip, all of which were traditionally used in the region during the last part of the Iron Age II period.

Bones found in the layers associated with this

period, i.e. the seventh century BC, were mainly of sheep and goats. In addition to occasional remains of bird, a few small mammal bones were also found. Cow and donkey bones were occasionally present, but there were not as many as sheep and goat bones. The predominance of sheep and goats suggests that there was a heavy pastoral component in the animal economies of the site during the seventh century BC. However, the presence of cattle suggests that the inhabitants of the site were also engaged in some kind of sedentary agriculture, at least for part of the year.

### **Phase 2**

Phase 2 is an abandonment phase in Field A that is represented in all three squares. The layers representing the abandonment of the site at this time are between 30cm (Squares A14 and A18) and 60cm (Square A16) thick. The lack of burned material around the walls and the absence of objects on the floor clearly indicate that the site was abandoned for not more than one century.

### **Phase 3**

This phase is represented in Squares A14 and A18, but not in Square A16. A pavement constructed of small to medium sized flagstones was discovered in Square A14, and covered one quarter of the northern part of the square (Locus 4). It was found only 20 to 30cm under the ground surface, and was damaged by grave-

digging in the 18th and 19th centuries (see **Fig. 10**). Only a small section of the pavement was undisturbed; most of it was removed in ancient and more recent times when stones were robbed for use in other structures in the vicinity of Tall Jalūl. Furthermore, the flagstones in this pavement themselves most probably derive from earlier periods, since the size and shape of the pavers were very similar to those found in the floor of the seventh century BC pillared building.

In addition to the pavement in Square A14, a wall was found in Square A18 just 5 to 10 cm under the surface (Locus 11). The wall was approximately 40cm wide and was constructed primarily of small field stones, of which only two courses survived (see **Fig. 11**). The wall



*10. Square A14 Persian pavement.*



*11. Square A18 Persian wall.*

*ADAJ 53 (2009)*

belonged to a structure, the purpose of which remains unknown as so little of it survived in Square A18. It runs from the north-eastern corner of the square, just south of and almost parallel with the northern balk. The wall is about 3m long and ends abruptly. It is probable that the missing portion was removed by grave digging activities.

Pottery found in and around the base of Wall 11 in Square A18, and under pavement 4 in Square A14, indicates that both were constructed and occupied during the very latest parts of the Iron Age II and Persian periods. The animal bone

from these layers is very similar to that of Phase 1, or the seventh century BC, indicating very similar subsistence patterns during Phases 1 and 3, most probably of a semi-nomadic character.

#### **Phase 4**

Similar to Phase 2, Phase 4 is also a non-occupational phase, the debris of which accumulated after the Persian period. It is represented in all squares in Field A.

Paul and Helena Gregor  
Andrews University