

APHEK-ANTIPATRIS I

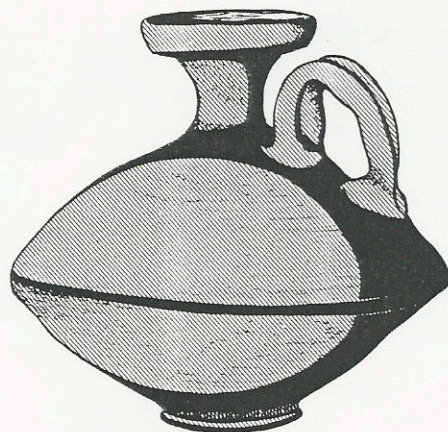
EXCAVATION OF AREAS A AND B THE 1972-1976 SEASONS

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ROMAN MILESTONES IN THE VICINITY OF APHEK-ANTIPATRIS

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Over the years several milestones have been discovered along three of the main Roman roads leading to the town of Antipatris and within a radius of 12 km. from it (Fig. 4.1). Nos. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8, found in 1972-1973, were examined by the author in the framework of the Sharon Archaeological Survey, undertaken by a team from the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University under the direction of M. Kochavi (see Chapter 1). No. 5 was discovered by M. Fischer during his excavations at Khirbet Zikrin, and No. 11 was found by M. Meggidon. Both are published here by their kind permission. Inscriptions Nos. 4 and 11 were studied by the author as part of his work on the Israel Milestone Committee; the former together with B. Isaac and the latter with M. Gichon. The present locations of Nos. 2, 9 and 10 are not known to the author and the data given below are based on earlier publications.¹

All the milestones are made of local limestone. Their location is indicated as follows: a) the findspot according to the Israel Grid Reference system (IGR); b) the distance from the nearest modern site in a straight line; c) the distance from the Roman *forum* at Antipatris along the extant or presumed line of the Roman road.

Only stones which include base and column, or parts of both, are numbered and dealt with separately. Parts of columns, bases or plinths found together with a milestone that has both base and column, are discussed in conjunction with this milestone. Dimensions are given in metres: Column: height (h.); upper diameter (u.d.); lower diameter (l.d.); Base: height (h.); length (l.); width (w.).

ANTIPATRIS - CAESAREA MARITIMA

No. 1.

IGR 1434.1693, at 1.5 km. (= one Roman mile) north of Antipatris. There are no traces of inscription.

Broken column, straightened at the upper part of front, and plinth.

Column: h. = 1.25; u.d. = 0.36; l.d. = 0.42. Plinth: h. = 0.25; l. = 0.70; w. = 0.50.

No. 2.

The files of the Department of Antiquities and Museums (*Dep. Ant. Files* 1976:86) mention a "broken milestone" at Tell edh-Dhahab (IGR 1437.1717) 4 km. north of Antipatris. Registered in 1939. The stone has not been seen again.

¹ For an up-to-date discussion on the Roman roads in the Land of Israel see Roll 1999:103-113, 2000:131-141.

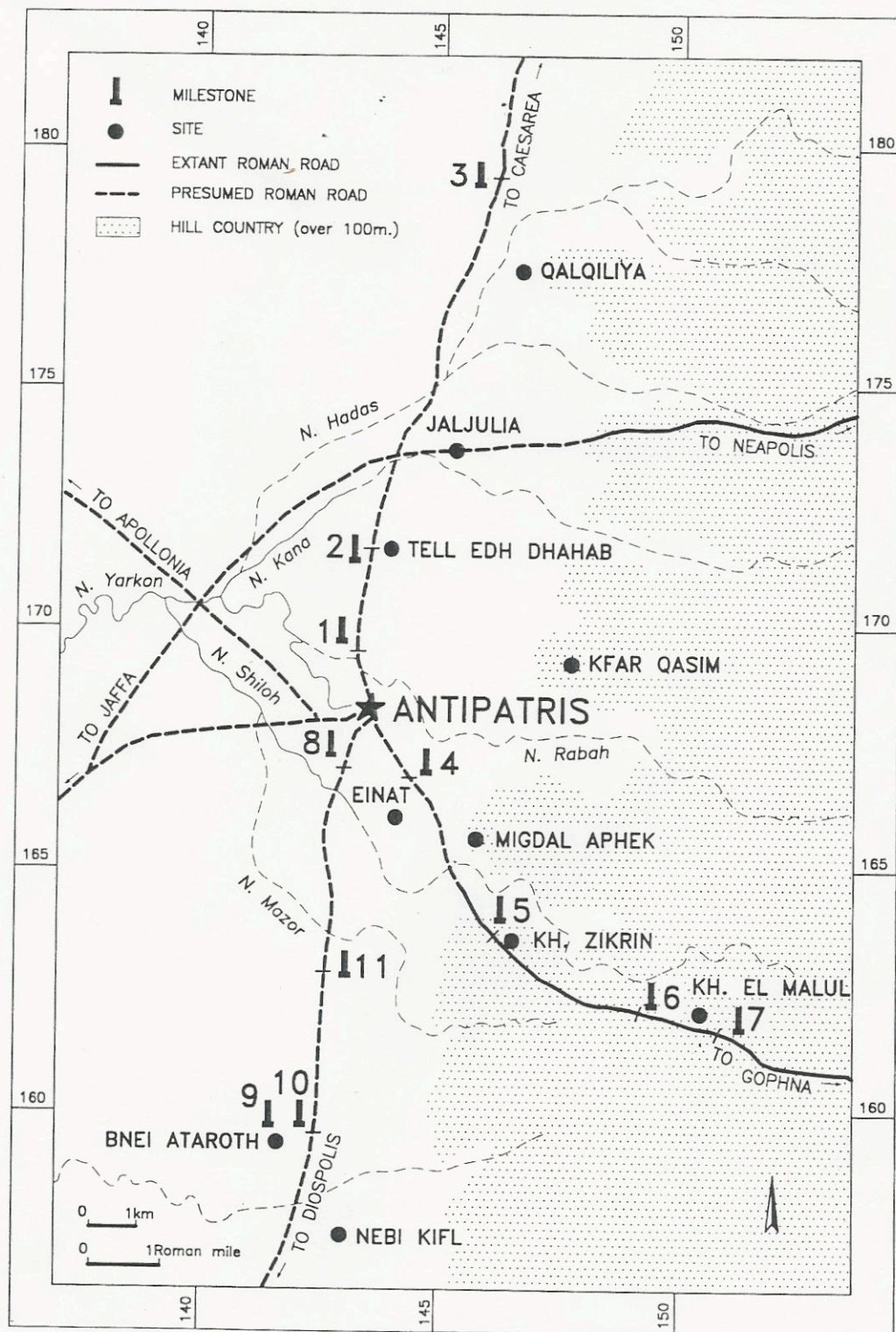


Fig. 4.1: Roman roads and milestones in the vicinity of Antipatris.

No. 3.

IGR 1462.1795 at 2 km. north of Qalqiliya and 12 km. (= 8 Roman miles) north of Antipatris. Broken milestone in a heap of stones near a stony field along which the line of an ancient road is still visible for 300 m. No traces of inscription.

Lower part of column and front part of base in very bad condition. Column: h. = 0.50; l.d. = 0.37.

Base: h. = 0.44; l. = 0.51; w. = 0.43.

Another milestone, found 1 km. northwest of No. 2, belonged to the road Neapolis–Jaffa which bypassed Antipatris. It will therefore not be treated here.

C. R. Conder (1874:185) mentions that the Roman road Antipatris–Caesarea “was marked in one place by a milestone”. As no further details are given, it is impossible to conclude whether we are dealing with one of the stones discussed above or not.²

ANTIPATRIS – GOPHNA

No. 4.

IGR 1446.1666, 0.9 km. north of Kibbutz Einat and 1.6 km. southeast of Antipatris. Inscribed milestone now at Einat (Fig. 4.2).

Base and column, in good condition. Column: h. = 1.08; u.d. = 0.50; l.d. = 0.50;

Base: h. = 0.55; l. = 0.43; w. = 0.50.

On the column is the following carved and well-preserved inscription :



Inscription

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------|
| 1 | <i>[Imp(eratori) C]ae[s(ari)]</i> | |
| 2 | <i>Marc[o] Aurelio</i> | |
| 3 | <i>Antonino [p]io</i> | |
| 4 | <i>Aug(usto) fel(ici) trib(uniciae)</i> | |
| 5 | <i>potest(at)is co(n)s(uli) II</i> | |
| 6 | <i>divi</i> | |
| 7 | <i>Antonini p(ilio)</i> | <i>(sic !)</i> |
| 8 | <i>et divi Se-</i> | |
| 9 | <i>[ve]ri nep(oti)</i> | |

Fig. 4.2: Milestone No. 4.

² For a general discussion of this road see Dar and Applebaum 1973:91-99; Neef 1981:74-80; Roll and Ayalon 1986-7:152-155; Appelbaum 1987:137-140; Roll 1996:558.

The letters are irregular in height (from 0.04 to 0.06) as well as in depth (from 0.002 to 0.003). The text shows several inconsistencies.

- In Line 4 *fel(ici)* appears after, instead of before, *Aug(usto)*.
- At the right end of Line 7 *p(ilio)* instead of *f(ilio)*.
- In lines 6 and 8 the letter *d* was carved in Greek instead of Latin.

Nevertheless, the inscription indicates that the stone was erected in the reign of Elagabalus, during his second consulate, i.e., 219/220 C.E.. It also indicates construction works undertaken by the Roman authorities along the road leading from Antipatris eastwards to Gophna, from which Jerusalem or Jericho could be reached. Antipatris flourished during the Severan period and hence the care expended on the roads leading to and from it (cf. Nos. 9 and 10). The stone marked the first milestone from Antipatris and its Elagabalic inscription is the first of its kind found to date in *Judaea*.

No. 5.

Anepigraphic milestone found in secondary use in the Byzantine complex of Khirbet Zikrin, 5.5 km. southeast of Antipatris (Fischer 1989:1790, n. 6). It certainly belonged to the Roman road, the remains of which are clearly visible south of the site.

Base and lower end of column, in very bad condition. Column: h. = 0.35; l.d. = 0.52.

Base: h. = 0.60; l. = 0.60; w. = 0.60.

No. 6.

IGR 1497.1617; 1.1 km. west of Khirbet el-Malul and 9.5 km. southeast of Antipatris. Fallen milestones on the northern edge of the well-preserved Roman road. There are no traces of inscription. Base and lower end of column, in very bad condition. Base: h. = 0.28; l. = 0.45; w. = 0.42.

Two more pieces have been found at the same place. They seem to have marked the sixth mile from Antipatris.

- a. Column without base, in bad condition: h. = 1.85; u.d. = 0.50; l.d. = 0.50. No traces of inscription.
- b. Upper part of column, straightened at the rear, in very bad condition: h. = 1.05; u.d. = 0.38; l.d. = 0.58. No traces of inscription.

No. 7.

IGR 1513.1613; 0.5 km. southeast of Khirbet el-Malul and 11.1 km. (= 7 Roman miles) southeast of Antipatris. Fallen milestone on the northern edge of the well-preserved Roman road.³ No traces of inscription.

Base and part of column, in very bad condition. Column: h. = 1.20; u.d. = 0.50; l.d. = 0.52.

Base: h. = 0.45; l. = 0.57; w. = 0.56.

Three additional pieces, in very bad condition and with no traces of inscription, have been found at the same place:

- a. Part of column, h. = 0.70; u.d. = 0.38.
- b. Part of column, h. = 0.63; l.d. = 0.48.
- c. Small part of column.

3 For a discussion of the road see: Finkelstein 1977:171-180; Roll and Ayalon 1986:121, 125.

No. 8.

IGR 1434.1671; 1.5 km. northwest of Kibbutz Einat and 1 km. south of Antipatris. Fallen milestone at the western end of a cultivated field. No traces of inscription. Further to the north, a small segment of a well-paved Roman road with the remains of three later phases on top of it was uncovered during a rescue excavation by the Israel Antiquities Authority. The segment apparently belonged to the Roman Imperial highway that extended from Antipatris southward, and the milestone seems to have marked the first mile from the city.

Base and column, in good condition. Column: h. = 1.30; u.d. = 0.50; l.d. = 0.65.

Base: h. = 0.60; l. = 0.70; w. = 0.53.

No. 9.

Inscribed milestone found in the early years of the 20th century at the northeastern limits of the former German colony of Wilhelma (today Bnei Ataroth) and moved by one of the colonists to his courtyard. The stone was published for the first time by G. Dalman (1908:269). It was transferred to the Deutsches Evangelisches Institut für Altertumswissenschaft in Jerusalem and published again by P. Thomsen (1913:126, 1917:20, No. 20). It was seen again at the Syrian orphanage (Jerusalem), and published with major corrections by A. Rabinowitz (1943:108-112). The present location of the stone is unknown. Rabinowitz's reading is given below:

- 1 *Imp(erator) Ca[e]s(ar) L(ucius) S[e]*
- 2 *pti(mius) Severus Pius*
- 3 *Pert(inax) Aug(ustus) Arab(icus) Ad(iabenicus)*
- 4 *Par(thicus) Max(imus) tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) XVIII <et>*
- 5 *Imp(erator) Caes(ar) M(arcus) Aur(elius) Anton-*
- 6 *[i]nus Pius Aug(ustus) tri(bunicia) pot(estate)*
- 7 *XIII Imp(erator) II Co(n)s(ul) <III> Pro (consul) <et>*
- 8 *[[[Imp(erator) Caes(ar) P(ublius) Septi(mius) Ge-]]]*
- 9 *[[[ta Pius Aug(ustus) tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) II]]]*
- 10 *Invic(ti) Imp[eratores.....]*

The height of letters varies from 0.07 to 0.085, and their depth is 0.005.

Lines 8 and 9 have been erased intentionally (*damnatio memoriae*). Both tribunician powers mentioned in the inscription, the eighteenth of Septimius Severus and the thirteenth of Caracalla, point to a date of 210 C.E.

A dozen or so milestones indicate that the road network of the *provincia Palaestina* witnessed much road building and repair during the reign of Septimius Severus (Isaac 1978:51-53; Isaac and Roll 1982:93-94). This was also the case with the main highway of the Roman Orient, that is, the coastal road which ultimately connected Antioch and Alexandria. A northern segment of that highway, near Latakia, was repaired in 197 C.E. (Thomsen 1917:16, No. 1; Goodchild 1949:117, item "W"). The stretch leading from Sidon southward was restored in 198 C.E. (Thomsen 1917:19, Nos. 12, 14, 15, 18; Goodchild 1949:121-126, Nos. 257(I), 258(I), 259 B(I), 260 B). The road which approached Caesarea from the north was repaired some time between 198 and 202 C.E. (Roll 1983:155). Milestone No. 9 indicates that the highway leading south from Antipatris to Diospolis was repaired in 210 C.E. From Diospolis, two highways extended

towards the headquarters of the *legio X Fretensis* in Jerusalem (Roll 1987:121-126; Fischer, Isaac and Roll 1996:70-98), and another highway stretched towards Eleutheropolis which, in Severan times, became the main junction of southern *Palaestina* (Roll and Dagan 1988:175-179)

No. 10.

Inscribed milestone, found and transferred to Wilhelma together with No. 9. It has been published by G. Dalman (1908:269) by P. Thomsen (1917:20, No. 21), and, with some corrections, by A. Alt (1924:92). The stone has not been seen again. Below is Alt's reading.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Imp(eratori) Caesar[i]</i> |
| 2 | <i>Marco Op(ellio)</i> |
| 3 | <i>Se[v]ero Macrino</i> |
| 4 | <i>Pio [In]v(icto?) F[eli]c(i?) Au(gusto)</i> |

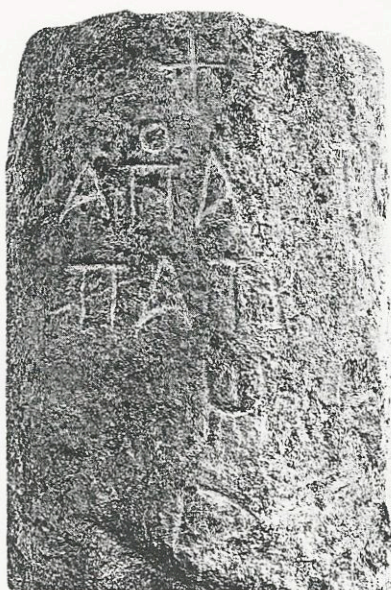
The height of the letters is from 0.04 to 0.06.

Because of his disputed policy, Macrinus (217-218 C.E.) alienated many in his army and administration during his short reign, although he tried hard to win their affection. He also faced serious problems along the eastern frontier. This milestone may commemorate road-works undertaken along the coastal road to facilitate the movements of troops from Egypt to the Euphrates. On the other hand, it could have been erected as a sign of the loyalty of the local governor and his troops, whose support Macrinus managed to win (cf. P. Salama 1964:334-352; see also Baharal 1996:415-432).

No. 11.

IGR 1432.1572; 5.5 km. north of Lod and 11 km. south of Antipatris. An inscribed milestone, found in secondary use in a ruin at Nebi Kifl, and today at the Eretz Israel Museum, Tel Aviv.

Base and column in good condition. Column: h. = 0.72; u.d. = 0.51; l.d. = 0.57. Base: h. = 0.62; l. = 0.64; w. = 0.57. On the column is the following well-preserved carved inscription:



Inscription

- | | |
|----|---------------|
| 1. | (cross) |
| 2. | 'Απὸ 'Α[ν]τι- |
| 3. | πατρ[ί]δ(ος) |
| 4. | μί(λια) |
| 5. | Δ |

Fig. 4.3: Milestone No. 11.

The cross in Line 1 indicates a date in the Byzantine period. The Greek inscription mentions the name of Antipatris, and the distance of four miles from it, which is where it was originally located. Two other inscriptions of the same type, in Greek but without a cross and giving only a city's name and the distance from it, were discovered in Israel. One was found south of Yavne (as yet unpublished) and the other north of Nicopolis (Roll and Ayalon 1986:125; Fischer, Isaac and Roll 1996:295). Another milestone, decorated only with a cross was recorded a century ago north of Eleutheropolis (Séjourné 1892:264). These four milestones indicate that in the Byzantine period as well roads were kept in repair and milestones erected.⁴

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⁴ For a general discussion of the road network of Byzantine Palestine see Roll 1995:1166-1170.

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