The third season of excavations at Heshbon yielded the smallest number of coins: 35. Yet among them was found the long awaited city coin of Esbus (no. 249), minted during the reign of Elagabalus (A.D. 218-222), who elevated the city to municipal status. This coin is undoubtedly the best specimen of its rare type.

Other interesting finds of the same year include a denarius or drachma (no. 247) of Trajan (A.D. 98-117) and a stater or tetradrachm (no. 248) of Caracalla (A.D. 211-217). The italicized words are familiar to Bible students: the one (dēnariōn) as the ordinary pay for a day’s work or as the “tribute money,” the other (statēr), the equivalent of four denarii or a shekel, as for paying the temple dues for two.

No Islamic coins of particular importance were found.

The 35 coins are catalogued as follows:

1. The numismatic reports on the first two seasons: 1968 and 1971, appeared in AUSS 9 (1971): 147-160 and 12 (1974): 35-46 respectively. These earlier reports are referred to by the years in which excavations were made.
2. The coins of Esbus, like those of most other cities in the Province of Arabia, are our only source of information on this status. See Michael Avi-Yonah, The Holy Land (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1966), p. 117.
4. Mt 20:2, 9, 10, 13. The denarius was worth 18 cents, devalued to 8 cents during the reign of Nero (A.D. 54-68). Rev 6:6 may betray the inflationary prices of a later time when about a quart of wheat was sold for a denarius. Cf. Mk 6:37; Mt 14:21, where a denarius is estimated as enough to buy bread for more than 25 people.
6. Mt 17:27.
7. Six coins are not included in this catalogue because of their very poor and hardly recognizable condition. Of these, nos. 263-267 (1517, A.6:3; 1526, D.6:59; 1538, B.2:80; 1540, A.7:61; 1541, Tomb F.16:5) are possibly Late Ro-
Phoenician

234. (1644-B.4:88, yellow-brown, crumbly, clayish soil.) Tyre, 96/5 B.C. Similar to no. 1 in the 1968 report.

Maccabean


236. (1523-B.4:124, soft, moist, brown soil.) Antigonus Mattathias, 40-37 B.C. Obv. Double cornucopias; around, from l. below and between horns: \(\text{ mater} /\text{ mater} \text{ reu} /\text{ mater} \text{ reu} \).
Rev. Ivy wreath; around, from l. above: \(\text{ BACIAE} \text{OC \[ANTIGONOT]}\).

Nabataean

237. (1646-B.3:72, loose brown soil with rocks of various sizes.) Aretas IV, 9 B.C.-A.D. 40. Similar to no. 2 in the 1968 report.

238. (1645-B.4:120E LC, over an E-W wall split into two sections by bedrock.) Similar to the preceding.

239-244. (1650-1655—Tomb F.18:8, western half of the chamber to the floor, under Locus 7 and over 9.) Similar to the preceding.

245. (1528—D.1:53, probe trench in SW corner of square.) Uncertain.
Obv. Head r., laurate; border.
Rev. Horn of plenty r.; ear of barley or wheat l., with pomegranate (?) above.8

Provincial Roman

246. (1521—D.6W:56B, NS wall in SW corner of square.) Judaea; Pontius Pilate, A.D. 31/2. Similar to no. 5 in the 1968 report.

247. (1647—D.2:36, continuation of substructure from stair 32.) Denarius (2.93 gm.) of Trajan, ca. A.D. 105.9
Obv. Head of Trajan (98-117) r., laureate; around: IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P; plated.
Rev. Fortuna standing l., draped, holding rudder or prow in r. hand and cornucopias in l.; around: COS VP P S P Q R OPTIMO PRINC; plated.10

Man, belonging either to the reign of Valentinian II, A.D. 375-392, or to that of one of his contemporaries. No. 268 (1649, Tomb F.18:8) is worn beyond recognition.

8 Identical with Hill, Arabia, Pl. XLIX, no. 9, except that l. and r. objects on the rev. are reversed, owing perhaps to a printing error there in mirror image.


10 Referring to the reigns of Nerva to Hadrian, Mattingly says, “In this period they [plated denarii] usually offer irregular combinations of types and
   Obv. Head of Caracalla, laureate; around: ATT. KAEL. ANTONINO (sic) CEB; border of dots.
   Rev. Eagle with wings spread, head r., holding wreath in beak, standing on thunderbolt; two stars in field; around: ΔΗΜΑΡΧ. Ε.Ε. ΤΙΑΤΟC ΤΟ Γ (Gaza ?);11 border of dots.

249. (1522—B.4:113, red soil with huwwar bits.) Esbus (Heshbon) ; Elagabalus, A.D. 218-222.
   Obv. Bust of Elagabalus r., laureate and draped; around: AVT C M AVR ANTONINVS.
   Rev. Within a temple showing four columns, central arch and flat roof to wings, city-goddess stands l., wearing turreted crown and short chiton; her r. foot rests on small figure, l. hand rests on spear or standard and r. holds another small figure; inscr. above the temple wings: Α V; in exergue: ECBOVC (Aurelia Esbus).

Late Roman

   Similar to no. 60 in the 1971 report.

   Similar to no. 12 in the 1968 report.

   Similar to no. 15 in the 1968 report.

Byzantine

   Similar to no. 17 in the 1968 report: official code no. Α instead of Ε.

   Obv. Bust of Justinian I (527-565) facing, wearing cuirass, plumed helmet with diadem from which two pearls hang on either side; r. hand holds globus cruciger; shield showing horseman on l. shoulder; cross in r. field; around: DNIVSTINI ANVSPPAVC; border of dots.
   Rev. M (prominent mark of value—40 nummi); within: A (official code no.); above: cross; l. segment: ANNO; r. segment: X-II-L (539/40); in exergue: KYZ (Cyzicus); border of dots.

other peculiarities, and may be attributed confidently to the work of the false moneyer. We can be certain that they were not issued by the regular mints. It is less certain whether there may not have been irregular local mints in the provinces issuing imitations of imperial coins which might be tolerated . . . in general circulation” (ibid., p. xix).

11 See George F. Hill, Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Palestine: Galilee, Samaria and Judaea (London. 1914), p. lxxviii, though no such coin is illustrated in the plates.
255. (1533–G.1:9, along N balk, a wide wall) Až-Zāhir Ghāzī (Halab branch), 1186-1216. Similar to no. 68 in the 1971 report.


257. (1530–G.1:1, topsoil) Uncertain. Obv. Within two horizontal lines across the field: Al-Malik; traces of borders, the outer dotted. Rev. Arabesque; traces of border.


261. (1527–D.4:1, topsoil) Similar to the preceding.

262. (1532–G.1:5, tan soil, speckled with limestone pieces) Similar to the preceding.

Except for the Esbus coin, none of the coins hitherto found bears any of the ancient mint names of Transjordan. The Nabataean coins were presumably struck at Petra. The rest of the non-Islamic coins still represent an extensive geographical range of provenance. Of the Islamic coins, the Mamlūk fulūs (nos. 257, 259-261, like nos. 41, 45 in the 1968 report and nos. 84-86, 91-94 in the 1971 report), were struck at Damascus. The coin evidence so far does not alter the conclusions on the occupational history of Heshbon made in the 1968 report.

Coins from the 1974 Excavations

The 1974 coins, 38 in number, add two significant points to the earlier reports. The first coin in this catalogue (no. 269) is the oldest coin hitherto found at Heshbon, dating from 246-221 B.C. and belonging to the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes. Another

12 End of the Ḥamāh branch.

13 Bahri Mamlūk (1250-1382), Burdji Mamlūk (1382-1517).

14 Hill, Arabia, p. xii.
COINS FROM HESHBON

The 38 coins are catalogued as follows:16

Ptolemaic

269. (2050—D.3:93, a very sandy, gravelly soil layer.) Ptolemy III, 246-221 B.C.
   Obv. Head of Zeus Ammon r.
   Rev. Two eagles on thunderbolts, facing 1.; inscr. 1.: [ΠΤΟΛΕΜ]ΑΙΩΤ;
        r.: obliterated [ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ]; between legs of eagle on 1.: Θ;
        border of dots.

Maccabean

270. (1730—C.5:66, hard light brown soil with plaster sherds and ash
        pockets.) Uncertain.
   Obv. Obliterated.
   Rev. Traces of two cornucopias.

15 Ibid., pp. xxii-xliv, 14-44.
16 Some discernible marks made the following identifications of very poor
   coins possible: no. 302 (2105, C.5:81) is Late Roman, similar perhaps to no. 16
   in the 1968 report; no. 303 (2057, D.4:62) is Umayyad, owing to some traces
   of the Moslem profession of faith in Kuf; nos. 304-305 (1711, A.9:10 and 2039,
   G.9:3) are Byzantine folleis showing traces of large M; no. 306 (1733, C.3:59)
   is worn beyond recognition.
Phoenician

271. (1768—B.4:211, blackish-brown, thick clay layer.) Tyre, A.D. 64-109.\textsuperscript{17}
Obv. Similar to no. 1 in the 1968 report.
Rev. Palm tree with two bunches of fruit; obliterated inscr. in the field.

Nabataean

272. (1947—C.6:15, a double wall connecting Wall 2 and Wall 4.) Aretas IV, 9 B.C.—A.D. 40.
Similar to no. 2 in the 1968 report, but 3d line of rev. inscr. off the flan.
273. (1739—D.3:67, hard surface of huwwar.)
Similar to the preceding, but rev. inscr. obliterated.
274. (1805—D.3:80, predominantly brown soil layer in the eastern third
of the square [NS].)
Similar to the preceding, but 3d line of rev. inscr. off the flan.
275. (1740—D.3:57c, 2d uncontaminated layer in Locus 57, cistern.)
Obv. Bust of Aretas Philopatris r., laureate, with long hair; border
dots.
Rev. Two crossed cornucopias; one or two unintelligible letters
between them.
276. (2101—G.10:14, brown soil, loose on top, firmer toward bottom.)
Rabbel II, A.D. 71-106.
Obv. Busts of Rabbel and Gamilath (his sister and queen) r.
Rev. Similar to no. 3 in the 1968 report.

Provincial Roman

277. (1767—D.3:78, soil layer semi-arbitrarily separated from Locus 71.)
Judaea; Pontius Pilate, A.D. 30-32.
Similar to no. 5 in the 1968 report, but obv. inscr. and rev.
obliterated.
278. (1743—D.4:41, some huwwar rocks, fairly loose, with loose brown soil
sloping to W balk.) Arabia; Hadrian, A.D. 117-138.
Obv. Bust of Hadrian r., laureate, undraped; around: \{AVTOKPAT
KAICAP T\}PAIANOC ADPIANOC C; border of dots.
Rev. Bust of Arabia r., wearing turreted crown and flowing mantle;
each arm holding a small seated figure of a child; in exergue:
APABIA; traces of border.
279. (1713—D.2:44, clearing debris of winter erosion.) Aelia Capitolina;
joint principate of Antonius Pius and Marcus Aurelius, A.D. 146-161.
Obv. Bust of Pius (138-161) r., bearded, laureate, and draped;
obliterated inscr. around.
Rev. Bust of Aurelius (161-180) r., bareheaded and draped; around:
AVRELIO CAES AVG; in exergue: CA[C] (Colonia Aelia
Capitolina).\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{17}Hill, Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Phoenicia (London, 1910), pp. 258-259.

\textsuperscript{18}Cf. Hill, Palestine, p. 88, nos. 34, 35.
COINS FROM HESHBON

280. (2104–B.1:13, variegated brown-black soil covered by a huwwar surface of varying thickness, extending over the square.) Esbus (Heshbon); Elagabalus, A.D. 218-222.

Similar to no. 249 in the 1973 report, but in extremely poor condition. With the exception of part of the rev. (exergue: [ECB]OVC), inscr. is obliterated.

Late Roman


Rev. Mercury standing l., holding purse and caduceus; around: FIDES A[VG]; in exergue: PXV (Tribunician year [A.D. 267]).

282. (1702–A.7:97, hard packed, light brown, gravelly soil on which mosaic foundation, Loci 94-96, was set and into which tabun foundation pit was cut.) Maximian, A.D. 296-305.

Obv. Bust of Maximian r., radiate and draped; around: IMP C M AV MAXIMIANVS [S . . . ].

Rev. Emperor standing r., holding paragonium, receiving Victory on globe from Jupiter, standing l., holding scepter; around: CONCONCOR[DIA MI]LITVM; in the field: KA (mark of value).


Obv. Bust of Constantine I r., laureate and draped; around: IMP C CONSTANTINVS P F AVG.

Rev. Three standards; around: S P Q R OPTIMO PRINCIPI.

284. (1736–G.5B:31, soil layer W of Wall 15 and running up to it.) Valens, A.D. 364-378.

Obv. Bust of Valens r., with pearl diadem and cuirass; around: D N VALEN. . . .

Rev. Emperor advancing r. with standard in l. hand and dragging a captive with the r.; around: GLORIA ROMANORVM.

285. (2058–G.5F:1, arbitrary soil layer all over the square above rock tumble from reservoir wall.) Similar to the preceding, but inscr. is obliterated.

286. (1701–A.5:77, hard packed, light brown, gravelly soil on which mosaic 73 installation was founded, Loci 74-76, into which foundation pit for tabun A.7:73 was dug, extending down to bedrock.) Theodosius I, A.D. 378-395.

Obv. Traces of bust, r.

Rev. Victory advancing l., dragging a captive; around: [SALV]S REIP[VBLICAE]; in exergue: SMAN (Antioch).

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20 Cf. ibid., pt. 2, p. 610, nn. 1, 2.
287. (2059—C.3:53, reddish-brown soil with chunks of *huwwar.*) Uncertain. 
Obv. Bust r., laureate and draped; blundered inscr. around. 
Rev. Sol standing l., radiate head, draped, holding a crown (?); 
around: SOLI INVICTO [COMITI]; obliterated inscr. in exergue. 

*Byzantine*

Obv. Bust of Justinian I r., with pearl diadem and cuirassed. 
Rev. *Chrismon*.

289. (1811—D.1:74, reddish brown to almost tan, firmly packed soil.) *Follis* of Tiberius II, A.D. 580/1. 
Obv. Bust of Tiberius II (578-82), facing, wearing consular robes and regalia, crown with a cross and two pearls hanging on either side; r. hand holds mappa, l. scepter with eagle surmounted by a cross; around: [OM] TibCONS. TANTPPAV [1]; border. 
Rev. M (prominent mark of value—40 *nummi*); above: cross; l. segment: ANNO; r. segment: U-II (year 7 from his becoming co-emperor in 574); in exergue: CON (Constantinople).

*Umayyad*

290. (1737—A.8:1, surface and top soil, rock tumble, across entire square.) 
Obv. Obliterated. 
Rev. Central dot surrounded by a semicircle and three serrate circles. 

291. (1946—C.7:34, medium brown, hard packed soil layer with *huwwar* chunks.) 

292. (2062—C.8:3, light brown subsoil under C.8:2.) 
Obv. Similar to no. 26 in the 1968 report, but no traces of border. 
Rev. Obliterated.

*Ayyūbid (1171-1342)*

293. (1769—C.6:11, loose, powdery gray soil.) Al-‘Azīz ‘Uthmān (Egyptian branch), 1193-1198. 
Obv. ‘Uthmān/al-Malik al-‘Azīz; ornament beneath; border with illegible margin. 
Rev. suf (continuation of the last line) /Bin al-Malik an-Nāsir (last two consonants downward)/Yū (continued as the 1st line); border with illegible margin. 

Obv. . . . /ad-Dīn/al-Malik al-‘A[dil]/ . . . ; border of dots; traces of obliterated margin. 
Rev. . . . /Abū Bakr Bin . . . / . . . ; border of dots; traces of obliterated margin. 

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*End of the Ḥamāh branch.*
295. (2061—C.8:3, light brown sub-soil under C.8:2.) Uncertain.
Obv. Obliterated.
Rev. Arabesque within circle.

Mamlūk (1250-1517)

296. (1735—A.9:7, fill dirt, sterile, in SW corner of square, with evidence of a doorway in extreme SW corner.) Dirham (2.61 gm.) of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad, 1293-1294, 1299-1309, 1310-1341.
Rev. As-Sultān al-Malik/an-Nāṣir ad-Dunyā/wa 'd-Dīn Muḥammad . . . .

297. (1741—B.7:10, loose brown soil under Locus 3.)
Obv. Allah (continuation of 2d line) /wa mā an-naṣr [īllā min 'ind] (continued as the 1st line) /lā ilah ʾillā ['llah Muḥammad]/ . . . ; traces of border.
Rev. . . . /Nāṣir ad-Dunyā [wa]/'d-Dīn Muḥammad Bin Ka[lān]/ . . . .

298. (1924—A.9:34, hard packed brown dirt, with charcoal and white granules, SW corner of square.) Dirham (3.22 gm.) of An-Nāṣir Ḥasan, 1347-51, 1354-61.

299. (2063—C.6, balk trim.) Al-Manṣūr Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Muḥammad, 1361-1363.
Obv. Obliterated.

300. (1712—C.6:22, hard packed brown soil with lighter brown clay, some orange soil, some huwwar and small stones.) Similar to no. 41 in the 1968 report.

301. (1960—A.9:34, see no. 298.) Half-dirham (0.90 gm.). Uncertain.
Obv. . . . / . . . ʾillā 'llah Muḥammad/ . . . Allah ārsalahu/ . . .

The 1974 coins yielded not only the oldest coin found at Heshbon (no. 278), but also two more specimens from the ancient mints of Transjordan (nos. 278, 280). No new conclusions on the occupational history of Heshbon through the coin evidence are in sight. A final report is planned to follow the excavations scheduled for the summer of 1976.

Bahri Mamlūk (1250-1382), Burdji Mamlūk (1382-1517).