

AREA C.1, 2, 3, 5, 7

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Area C was set along the main east-west axis of the site map down the west slope from the acropolis to the edge of the *tell*. In 1976, work was continued in Area C in Squares C.1, C.5, and C.7, and in each Square bedrock was reached. In the northwest sector of Square C.1, it was found that the Iron Age material had been cut through to set the bottom of the northeast corner of the Early Roman tower on bedrock. Work was continued in the north sector of Square C.5 in and around part of the tower complex, while in the south sector, that dump material which had been left unexcavated in previous seasons was now excavated from the ground surface down, along the south balk to bedrock. In the process, additional aspects of the tower were uncovered. In the north sector of C.7 further clearing was done in and around the Iron II/Persian wall down to bedrock. In the south sector, excavation showed that the Iron II/Persian wall ended or was interrupted by a doorway (with lintel) which led east and down to the entrance of a three-room cave cut in bedrock.

This report includes a description, analysis, and interpretation of (1) the work done in the 1976 season, and (2) the integration of this into an analysis and interpretation of all the work done in the various seasons, in C.1, 2, 3, 5, 7 (and also in G.6, 7 and 9—soundings excavated in 1974 in the *wadi* west of the *tell*, in which no further work was done in 1976).

Strata II-IV: Ayyūbid/Mamlūk (ca. A.D. 1200-1456)

Description: Additional evidence of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk Strata II-IV was found in Area C.1, 5, and 7 in 1976. Only loci with pottery fragments from

this period were attested, however, and no additional structural remains were found. Included were the between-season debris Loci C.7:45 (over the entire Square), C.1:119-122 (in the northwest corner of the Square), C.5:75 and 85 (north of the subsidiary south balk), and C.5:84 (south of the subsidiary balk to the true south balk). These loci evidenced contamination from the eroded balks and from the between-seasons erosion deposit which came down the west slope of the *tell*. In addition, in the southwest quadrant of C.7, there appeared one Ayyūbid/Mamlūk soil layer (C.7:46), and at the north balk of C.5 another (C.5:88) which was due to balk trimming there. Extensive excavation in C.5 in the sector south of the subsidiary balk produced a number of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk soil loci (C.5:87, 89, 91, 93, 94, 98, 99, 101, 103, 104, 111, 113, 134, 138, 142, 145, 148, 149, 151, 153, 156, 158, 160, 161, and 162) that filled the sector on ca. a 15-to-20-degree slope down east to west. They had accumulated to a depth of ca. 2.75 m. at the east balk and 1.75 m. at the west balk. The sector measured east-west 5.81 m. on the north and 5.99 m. on the south, and north-south 2.77 m. on the east and 3.54 m. on the west.

The four previous seasons of work in Area C.1, 2, 3, 5, and 7; and Area G.6, 7, 9 had produced a large quantity of evidence of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk occupation on this western slope of the *tell*. The structural remains showed themselves more prominently in the Squares farther east up the slope. C.7, 3, 2, and 1 showed such structures, but C.5, at the bottom of the slope, showed none.

Area G.6 and 7, down in the *wadi* west of the *tell*, also produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk structures, while Area G.9, also in the *wadi*, yielded only Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds.

In C.7, at midpoint down the west slope of the *tell*, Loci C.7:2-12 included several wall fragments, all of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk construction; Loci C.7:13-37 and 39, primarily Ayyūbid/Mamlūk also, were soil layers found within, around, and under these wall fragments. Wall C.7:2 ran south from the north balk 2.40 m. to near, but not joined to, Wall C.7:3, which extended east 1.40 m. from the west balk. It was possible that Walls C.7:2 and 3, together with Installation C.7:12 (a semicircular row of stones abutting Wall C.7:2 on its west face and which could have been a manger) formed a part of an Ayyūbid/Mamlūk courtyard. Walls C.7:4, 5, and 6 were located in the southeast sector. Wall C.7:4 ran west from the east balk 1.45 m. Walls C.7:4 (east-west) and 2 (north-south) may have formed part of a room, possibly a domicile (cf. the bone needle found there in the hard-packed, pebbly brown soil) a part of which was preserved in the northeast corner of the Square. Wall C.7:5 extended north from the south balk for 2.50 m. and lay at a right angle to Wall C.7:4, while Wall C.7:6 lay southeast of Walls C.7:4 and 5.

Square C.3, just to the north of C.7, and lying north of the main east-west axis in line with C.2, 1 and 5, had several Ayyūbid/Mamlūk structures. Wall C.3:2 near the ground surface extended east from the west balk across the Square and then began to turn south as it neared the east balk. Wall C.3:3 at a level near the bottom of the ground-surface soil extended north from the south balk. Also in C.3 was Wall C.3:9 which extended 1.50 m. south from the north balk about 1.75 m. west of the east balk. Wall C.3:10, also in the northeast sector, was a rough line of stones tilted as if it were a course of stones fallen off a wall farther to the west, possibly Wall C.3:9. At the

subsidiary south balk toward the west balk, Loci C.3:45-47 consisted of layers of stone material, possibly part of a wall. These loci, together with soil Layers C.3:4, 5, 12, 13-15, 17, 22-23, 44, 49, 53, 61, 62; Surfaces C.3:7 for 2.50 m. (from the west balk east); and Surface C.3:11 (possibly a surface in the northeast sector of the Square) constituted the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk material in C.3.

Area C.2 produced two walls of the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk period. Wall C.2:5 extended from the west to the east balk at a point 3.00 m. south of the north-west corner of the Square. Wall C.2:11 entered into the west balk at the northwest stair. These walls together with Loci C.2:2, 3, 4, 6, 8 (a rock fall from the building at the north end of the Square); C.2:3 and 7 (a rock fall along the east and south balks); and the erosion material C.2:8, 9, and 16 (the latter covering the entire Square) constituted the evidence of the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk habitation in C.2.

Square C.1 produced in the ground surface soil an L-shaped wall (Loci 2-3) which extended north out of the south balk for 4.17 m. and then made a right turn into the east balk. Wall C.1:7 ran from the east balk at a point 2.50 m. south of the north balk and extended 8.00 m. southwest. These walls together with soil Layers C.1:4, 5, 6, 10, 21, 74 and 102; and Surfaces C.1:9 and 11 (located in the north sector of the Square) constituted the evidence for the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk periods excavated in the 1968 to the 1974 season.

In Area C.5 Ayyūbid/Mamlūk dump or erosion deposit was encountered in the northern sector of the Square in 1971 and 1974 seasons in Loci C.5:1-5, 50-52, 54 to a depth of about 3.00 m. In the south sector in 1976 the same layering was encountered, as was indicated above, to a depth of about 1.75 m. to 2.75 m. But in this dump or erosion deposit there were no building remains found.

In Sounding G.6 all loci except one or two were dated Ayyūbid/Mamlūk (see the 1974 report) and this included north-south Wall G.6:8 and Vault G.6:9, which was west of Wall G.6:8 and faced west.

Sounding G.7 with its Walls 4, 6, and 7, together with accompanying soil Loci G.7:1-3, found north of Wall G.7:6, showed Ayyūbid/Mamlūk occupation, with only G.7:5, a soil and rock tumble indicating a possible earlier Byzantine occupation.

In Area G.9:1-4, the only loci excavated, only Ayyūbid/Mamlūk evidence appeared and no structures were attested.

Interpretation: In conjunction with the cumulative numismatic evidence from Area C.1, 2, 3, 5, 7, the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk loci may now be divided into two periods, that of Early Mamlūk Stratum III (A.D. 1260-1400) and that of Ayyūbid Stratum IV (A.D. 1200-1260).

The evidence from ground surface soil Locus C.2:1 with its Mamlūk coin (published coin 39 [registered object 131], A.D. 1293-1341) certainly dated it as no earlier than Stratum III, and the soil layers Loci C.1:4 and 6 with the later Mamlūk coin (published coin 44 [registered object 120], A.D. 1382-99) were

dated no earlier than late Stratum III. The L-shaped wall structure of C.1:2-3, C.2:5, and C.3:2, which extended east from C.1 through C.2 and C.3 for 15.00 m. and began to turn south in a broad curve as it entered the east balk of C.3 with its east face appearing in the west balk of C.4, belonged no earlier than Ayyūbid Stratum IV, based on the evidence of the coin (published coin 34 [registered object 197]) found in C.1:2. Though this coin was uncertain in date, it was thought to be of the Ayyūbid period. This L-shaped wall structure has been thought to be a courtyard wall.¹

Another structure within, to the south of, and more deeply founded than the courtyard just described, was that of Walls C.2:10 and C.3:3, which as it turned south into the south balk of C.3 may have included Wall C.7:2 (which was about at the same level and lineup as its counterpart, Wall C.3:3). All of this may have belonged to the house, part of which was in C.7 described above. Though there was no numismatic evidence here, it was concluded that this wall complex was properly Stratum IV (Ayyūbid). The structure of C.6 may also have been part of this house,² and was not earlier than Ayyūbid date (cf. published coin 293 [registered object 1769], A.D. 1193-98, from C.6:11).

This occupation may have corresponded to that of the Ayyūbid Pit B.7:4 with its D.2:16 = D.3:9 extension and possibly also to Pit D.4:7, 8,³ as well as to Cistern D.6:33.⁴

The C.5:1-5 loci seemed to represent a mixture of both Mamlūk and Ayyūbid materials with their Islamic coins of A.D. 1382-99 (published coin 94 [registered object 581]) in C.5:1, and of A.D. 1216-36 (published coin 74 [registered object 1020]) in C.5:2. The layers in the south sector of C.5 were taken to represent the same mixed Ayyūbid/Mamlūk dump or erosion deposit

¹ H. O. Thompson, "Heshbon 1968: Area C," *AUSS* 7 (1969): 130.

² W. H. Mare, "Heshbon 1974: Area C," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 74-75.

³ J. A. Sauer, "Heshbon 1974: Area B and Square D4," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 38.

⁴ L. T. Geraty, "Heshbon 1973: Area D," *AUSS* 13 (1975): 187; for coin evidence for D.6:33 see Sauer, *Heshbon Pottery 1971* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1973), pp. 57, 58.

coming down from the upper slopes.

Squares C.1, 2, 3, 5, and 7 also attested the Post-Stratum V Gap (A.D. 969-1200).

The Area G.6, 7, and 9 soundings represented the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk periods, there being no definitive evidence for a clearer demarcation of strata. The only coin here, that of G.9:2 (published coin 283 [registered object 1731]) was dated A.D. 306-37 and did not help in further differentiating the Strata.

Stratum V: 'Abbāsīd (ca. A.D. 750-969)

Description: No new 'Abbāsīd remains were dug in Area C.1, 5, 7 in 1976.

In previous seasons 'Abbāsīd loci were attested in Squares C.2, 3, 5, and 7, but no structural remains were encountered. There was an 'Abbāsīd Locus (C.7:21) and a possible one (C.7:35) in the northeast corner of C.7. Loci C.3:51 and 52 at the south balk of C.3, and also possibly the shallow fire Pit C.3:16 in the middle of the Square were dated to the period. In C.2 there was an 'Abbāsīd soil layer (C.2:18), extending over most of the Square, and continued by Loci C.2:20, 21, and 22, together with C.2:19 (a localized gray fire-ash layer extending west from the east balk). The only 'Abbāsīd material in C.5 was Locus C.5:53, a hard, red-brown soil layer with small *huwwar* stones, located in the southeast sector of the Square.

Interpretation: Based only on ceramic evidence, it was concluded that 'Abbāsīd habitation here and possibly elsewhere on the *tell* was extremely sparse. However, there seemed to be a small concentration of the evidence accumulated at the northeast corner of C.7 (C.7:35), the southwest corner of C.3 (C.3:51 and 52) and the south sector, particularly, of C.2 (C.2:18 and 22), that of C.2 being part of an accumulation dumped in from the slope above.

Stratum VI: Umayyad (ca. A.D. 661-750)

Description: There were no structures of the Umayyad Stratum uncovered in 1976, and only a few Umayyad soil layers in C.7, in the south sector of the Square (Loci C.7:46, 48 and C.7:61).

In previous seasons Umayyad loci were found concentrated in the northwest sector of C.7, in the south and southwest sector of C.3, and in the south sectors of C.2 and C.1. The concentration in C.7 was in soil Layers C.7:25, 38, 40-42, and that in C.3, in soil Layers C.3:23, 27, 50, 55, 56-58; in Wall C.3:48, which projected north out of the south balk; and Wall C.3:24, which ex-

tended out of the east balk in the south sector. An Umayyad surface (C.3:25) was attested in the northeast sector. C.2 in its south sector evidenced soil Layers C.2:12, 13, and Wall C.2:10 located in the southeast corner. The south sector of C.1 attested rocky soil Layers C.1:16, 23, and 32, and Wall C.1:7, an 8.00-m.-long wall reused as part of a retaining barrier for the deep dump of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk times. A few Umayyad soil layers (C.1:20, 34, and 35) were uncovered in the north sector of C.1. No evidence for the Umayyad period was attested in C.5 or in Area G.6, 7, and 9.

There was no numismatic evidence for this period.

Interpretation: The evidence for Stratum VI in Area C.1, 2, 5, and 7 comprised ceramic remains and a few walls, all being considerably sparse. This evidence indicated that the habitation was slight. The function of Wall C.2:10 was not clear, and there was no certainty that it was connected with Wall C.1:7, which seemed to have been reused as a retaining wall at least in the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk period. The soil layers dated to the period appeared to be dump or erosion deposits from clearing operations or from the gradual decay of minor undiagnosed structures.

Other comparable Umayyad habitation on the *tell* was that seen in the Umayyad reuse of the Byzantine Floor D.1:33/34 = D-5:11 and in the room built comprising Walls D.9:15 = D.5:9, D.1:24 = D.6:54 butting up against the acropolis perimeter wall on the south and against the south wall of the Byzantine church on the north.⁵

Strata VII-XIV: Byzantine (ca. A.D. 324-661)

Description: Additional evidence of Byzantine Strata VII-XIV was attested in Area C.1, 5, and 7 in 1976.

Though there were no Byzantine architectural remains found in C.7 in 1976, there were a number of loci uncovered in Byzantine Strata VII-XIV. Early Byzantine soil Layers C.7:47, 49-52, 55-58 (Strata IX-XIV, A.D. 324-450) were found just above and on the east and west sides of the Iron II/Persian Wall C.7:44, and more generally there were Byzantine materials uncovered in the further clearing operations in C.7:70 and 71 in the sector farther east of Wall C.7:44 and in the rock formation there (C.7:53) that seemed to be a platform. Soil Layer C.7:63, in the sector east of Wall C.7:44 was dated to the Late Byzantine Strata VII-VIII (ca. A.D. 450-661), as was also C.7:77, a soil layer in the southwest sector east of the lintel and doorway and before the entrance to Cave C.7:86. Late Byzantine Stratum VII (ca. A.D. 614-661)

⁵ Geraty, "Heshbon 1973: Area D," p. 188.

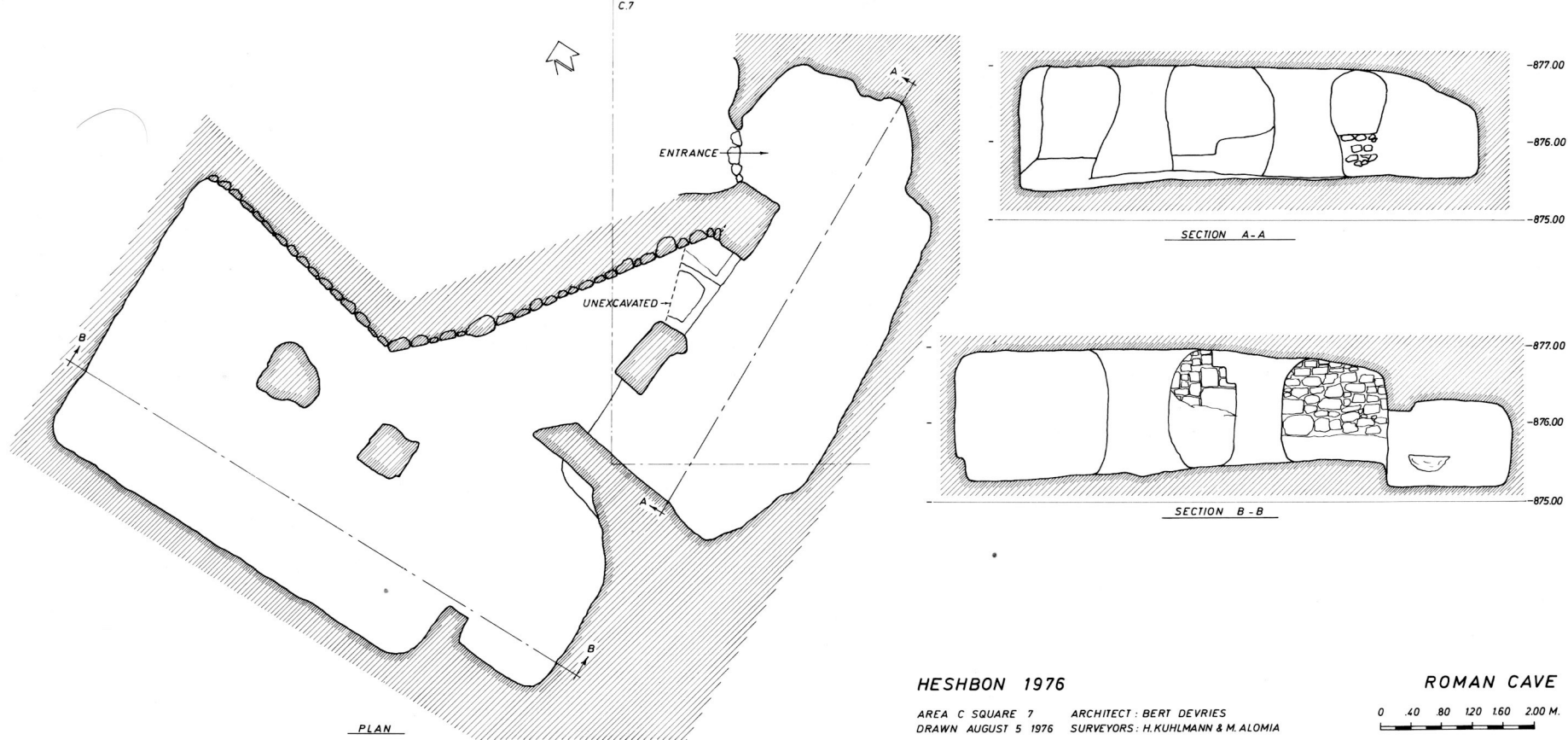


Fig. 6. Plan and sections of Late Roman Cave C.7:86 (Strata XV-XVI).

was attested inside Cave C.7:86, in soil Layer C.7:90 in the hallway between rooms 1 and 2, and in C.7:101, the material that had evidently fallen and sifted into room 3 of Cave C.7:86. In probing into the rock platform (C.7:53) east of Wall C.7:44, further evidence of Byzantine Strata VII-XIV was found in soil Layers C.7:92 and 93, and a more specifically Early Byzantine stratum was in the soil and rock layer, Locus C.7:91, of the platform.

There was no evidence of Byzantine Strata VII-XIV in the 1976 excavation in C.1, but C.5 did produce such evidence. Soil Layer C.5:120, west of Doorway C.5:199 at the corner of the subsidiary south balk and the west balk, was Byzantine. Late Byzantine Stratum VII (ca. A.D. 614-61) was attested in the dump-erosion deposit Loci C.5:167, 169, 174, 176, 177, and 181 in the south sector of C.5, as well as in the soil layers (C.5:188 and 191) of the probe that exposed Wall C.5:190 in the southwest sector of C.5. The wall extended from its north end at the tower Doorway C.5:199 south into the south balk. This probe also exposed Pavement C.5:202 west of the south doorpost of C.5:199.

Early Byzantine Strata IX-XIV (ca. A.D. 324-450) were attested in C.5 within the tower (soil Layers C.5:90 and 91), in soil Layer C.5:96 in the tower's doorway, in the soil layers (C.5:115 and 116) west of the doorway and south of Wall C.5:82, in soil Layers C.5:92, 100, 106 north of Wall C.5:82 and west of Wall C.5:77; and also in the possible foundation Trench C.5:95 for Wall C.5:77, which was part of the west wall of the Tower. In the south sector of C.5 Early Byzantine strata were encountered in the yellow-brown soil layer (C.5:195) over Pavement C.5:202 just to the west of Wall C.5:190; and also in the probes of rock and dirt removed from the sector south of the interior Wall C.5:200 (extending east from the tower's doorway to the east balk) and east of the tower's exterior Wall C.5:190 (extending from the doorway south to the south balk). In this sector soil Layers C.5:198, 203, 204, and 208 south of Wall C.5:200 showed Early Byzantine evidence, as did also soil Layer C.5:201 in the same sector, though Late Byzantine might have been attested in this latter locus. In the same sector soil Layers C.5:209, 210, 215-17, 219-22 and Surfaces C.5:212 and 214, as well as Locus C.5:211 west of Wall C.5:190, were also Early Byzantine. C.5:211 showed Early Byzantine II-III, C.5:215-17, 219-21 Early Byzantine I-II, and C.5:214 and 22 Early Byzantine I.

In previous seasons' work in Area C.1, 2, 3, 5, and 7, Byzantine Strata VII-XIV were attested in the Byzantine wall (C.1:8) that extended southeast to the south balk, in the water channel (C.1:15) that extended southwest into the south balk, and in the fragmentary walls in the northeast sector (C.5:7, 11 and 55). It had been conjectured that Wall C.5:11, represented by a large rock protruding from the east balk of C.5, 1.42 m. south of the northeast corner, was a continuation of Wall C.1:49, but the latter turned out to be Early Roman. All the other Byzantine loci scattered throughout the Squares were various soil layers (C.1:10, 17, 19, 22, 26, 27, 29, 39; C.2:14, 24; C.3:19, 20, 59; C.5:6, 9, 10, 57, 59, 63, 65, 66, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 79, 80, 81; C.7:33).

In Area G.6, 7, 9 there were only a few soil loci of Byzantine date. Byzantine sherds were found in the pits at bedrock in G.6 (Loci 20, 21 a and b) and in G.6:30 around and under the lowest course of Wall G.6:8 at bedrock. G.7:5, a soil and rock tumble layer between Walls G.7:4, 6 and 7, did indicate Byzantine deposit there.

Interpretation: The evidence from the Byzantine Strata VII-XIV in Area C.1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 suggested that there were no major independent structures which remained intact here. As has been noted above, not only was the whole Byzantine period (Strata VII-XIV) represented, but also Late Byzantine, Stratum VII (ca. A.D. 614-61) and Early Byzantine Strata IX-XIV (ca. A.D. 324-450) were separable in C.7 in particular.

A coin (unpublished coin [registered object 2940], A.D. 343-50, Stratum XIII) was found in C.5:219 (at the south balk of C.5), a locus in the lower part of the large Byzantine tumble within the tower of C.1 and C.5. This would argue that a large part of the Byzantine tumble in Area C.1 and 5, and particularly that which fell inside the tower, occurred during the A.D. 365 earthquake (Stratum XI). The pottery evidence from C.5:219 showed Early Byzantine I-III (Strata XII-XIV), as did Loci C.5:214-17 and C.5:220-22, which could have meant that all of the debris above C.5:214 tumbled in later at the time of that earthquake (Stratum XI). The fact that the earth Surface C.5:212 (an Early Byzantine locus) sealed over the top of the cistern (C.5:228) located south of Wall C.5:200 between it and the C.5 south balk, indicated that the cistern went out of use in the Early Byzantine period.

Besides the Byzantine rubble that had tumbled into the Early Roman tower, there was evidence that the western part of the tower complex had undergone at least a rebuilding phase in the Early Byzantine period. In the soil under the top surviving course of Wall C.5:77, which ran south from the east-west Early Roman Wall C.5:60, came a four-spouted Early Byzantine lamp. This evidence meant either that this portion of the tower was reused or rebuilt in Early Byzantine times or that Wall C.5:77 was a newly built extension in the Byzantine period. That C.5:95 just west of Wall C.5:77 could have been this wall's foundation trench lent further credence to the view that Wall C.5:77 was either newly constructed or underwent extensive rebuilding in the Early Byzantine period (see Pl. VI:A, B).

There was no absolute proof that Early Byzantine Wall C.1:8, which extended from the west balk of C.1 southeast to the south balk and which seemed to have been part of a retaining wall on the western slope of the *tell*, had any connection with Wall C.5:7, which extended out of the east balk of C.5 at about the same level (ca. 875.25 m.) as C.1:8, since the pottery connected with C.5:7 included Umayyad material. However, although there was no foundation trench discernible for Wall C.5:7, it was noted that just below this wall there was a sandy layer (C.5:10), Early Byzantine in date, which could have been laid down as footing for Wall C.5:7.

In C.7 the Early Byzantine layers just above and on the west and east sides of the Iron II/Persian Wall C.7:44 suggested that this wall was retained in use and/or abandoned as late as the Early Byzantine period.

The presence of two Byzantine sherds on the floor in the entrance of Cave C.7:86 where the evidence was mainly Late Roman may have been an indication of contamination, since materials had fallen in from outside the mouth of Cave C.7:86 when it was opened. Late Byzantine Stratum-VII sherds in the soil layer (C.7:90) in the hallway between rooms 1 and 2 of Cave C.7:86 may have been contamination, also, since this locus was under a loose layer that seemed to have sifted in from an opening to the cave at its south end (a large boulder had fallen in there with the sifted material). The same was no doubt true of the Byzantine pottery in C.7:101 material which had evidently fallen into room 3 at the south end of Cave C.7:86 from this same opening above room 3.

The evidence for Byzantine Strata VII-XIV in Area C correlated with the Late Byzantine of Area D, Pavement D.5:42 and the foundation trench for the church's south wall (D.5:12); with the Early Byzantine plaster, soil layers, and rock tumble layer of Area B;⁶ and with the Early Byzantine church phases in Area A.⁷

⁶ L. G. Herr, "Heshbon 1974: Area D," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 85.

⁷ B. Van Elderen, "Heshbon 1968: Area A," *AUSS* 7 (1969): 156-164.

Strata XV-XVI: Late Roman (ca. A.D. 135-324)

Description: Additional remains of Late Roman Strata XV-XVI were evident in Area C.5 and C.7 in 1976.

There were no architectural remains of the Late Roman Strata XV-XVI attested in 1976 except for the hewn cave C.7:86 and possibly Wall C.5:82, which was west of the Roman tower entrance. Probes into the north face of Wall C.5:82 showed a Late Roman II-III (ca. A.D. 160-250) construction date.

There were a number of Late Roman soil layers attested in C.7 and C.5. Late Roman loci were attested in C.7, particularly in layers east of the Iron II/Persian Wall C.7:44, the platform farther east, in the south sector in layers east of the lintel doorway (C.7:81) leading east to the bedrock Cave C.7:86, as well as in the cave itself. The Iron II/Persian Wall C.7:44 had been bonded on its east to what seemed to be a stone platform, and in Locus C.7:67, near to the bedrock, Late Roman III-IV (ca. A.D. 193-324) ceramics were attested. Beneath this locus, in C.7:80 directly over bedrock, Late Roman was also attested.

Several Late Roman loci were located in uncovering the lintel doorway (C.7:81) which lay at the south end of Wall C.7:44. This led to the conclusion that the Iron II/Persian Wall either had been cut later for the lintel doorway or had originally ended there and the lintel doorway added. In any case in the layers beneath the lintel itself (which was in the southwest corner of C.7) and in the sector east of the lintel doorway which led to the entrance of Cave C.7:86 a number of Late Roman soil loci appeared. They represented Late Roman I-IV as follows: C.7:66, Late Roman III-IV (Stratum XV, ca. A.D. 193-324); C.7:68, Late Roman I-II (Stratum XVI, ca. A.D. 135-93); C.7:77, Late Roman I-IV; C.7:78, the sill over bedrock, Late Roman I; C.7:83, Late Roman I-II; C.7:104 over bedrock, Late Roman I. These loci were supplemented by two Early Roman loci: C.7:84 (Early Roman III, Stratum XVIII, ca. A.D. 20-70) located near the mouth of the cave; and C.7:103, Early Roman II-III (Stratum XVIII, ca. 31 B.C. - A.D. 70) found east of the lintel doorway. Two loci (C.7:64 and 65) found below and just west of the lintel doorway were dated Late Roman III-IV and I-II, respectively.

Cave C.7:86, uncovered in 1976, extended approximately west-east 9.70 m., starting under the south sector of C.7, running east beyond the east balk of C.7 and then south for 7.80 m. The cave consisted of three rooms; the first one (2.50 m. wide) extended west to east 6.00 m. On its east was a limestone wall separating it from a smaller room 2, which was reached through a doorway south of room 1. Also a "hallway" ran east to the entrance to room 2, which room measured about 2.00 m. north-south and about 2.80 m. west-east. This hallway led to a larger room 3 (5.50 m. north-south and from 3.50 m. to 4.00 m. west-east) south of room 2. The cave extended further south of room 1 and the hallway and west of room 3, but it was largely filled up there with some boulders and soil that had fallen and sifted in, evidently from a ceiling collapse or another entrance, visible in a depression, to the south of C.7, which eventually had been filled in to its present ground surface level. Time prohibited the investigation of this accumulation. The floors of the three rooms of Cave C.7:86 were virtually clear of debris except for some

medium sized stones and a thin layer of soil and *huwwar* deposit lying over the bedrock floor surface. In several places there was evidence of carved niches in the walls for small oil lamps. The ceramic evidence pointed to the Late Roman period as the latest period of the cave's occupation. On the floor of room 1 (Locus C.7:88) was found a ribbed jar (object 2739, complete except for its top) which was dated Late Roman I. Ceramic evidence from soil Layer C.7:95 just south of room 2 also proved to be Late Roman, as well as that of Locus C.7:102 (Late Roman I) in room 3. So, too, was Locus C.7:89 in the cave's hallway and Locus C.7:87 (Late Roman III-IV) just inside the main entrance to the cave. Two Byzantine sherds were found in C.7:88, but this was considered contamination since this locus was near the cave's main entrance, into which some extraneous material had fallen when the cave was opened. The Late Byzantine Locus C.7:90 found in the east end of the cave's hallway between rooms 1 and 3 was also contamination since it was found under the loose soil that had fallen in at the south end of the cave. The cave also produced two loci dated Early Roman (C.7:94, Early Roman III-IV, over bedrock in room 2; and C.7:107, Early Roman II-III, on the shelf south of room 1).

Late Roman loci were found in 1976 in several sectors of C.5. In the north-west sector, west of Wall C.5:77 (which ran south from its connection with the Early Roman Wall C.5:60) and north of Wall C.5:82 (which extended west from Doorway C.5:199 at the south end of Wall C.5:77), there appeared several Late Roman soil layers and surface. Surface C.5:108 (Late Roman II-IV); soil Layers C.5:125 (Late Roman III-IV), C.5:128 (Late Roman II-IV), and C.5:133 (Late Roman I-II); Surface C.5:137 (Late Roman); soil Layers C.5:140, 141, 143 (Late Roman III-IV), C.5:154 (Late Roman I-II); Wall fragment C.5:186 (Late Roman II-III), the north face of Wall C.5:82, were all below the probable foundation trench (Locus C.5:95) for Wall C.5:77, which trench was Early Byzantine.

West of Doorway C.5:199 the sector extending to the west balk between Wall C.5:82 on the north and the subsidiary south balk also included a number of Late Roman soil layers: C.5:120, 127 (Late Roman); C.5:121 (Late Roman II-III); C.5:122, 124, 126 (Late Roman III-IV); and C.5:135 (Late Roman I-II).

Late Roman soil layers were also encountered in the south sector of C.5. The whole sector south of the subsidiary south balk to the main south balk and from the east to the west balks measured 5.90 m. east-west on its south side, 5.81 m. east-west on its north side, 2.77 m. north-south on its east side, and 3.54 m. north-south on its west side. This included a stairway cut on the west balk at the southwest corner for use by the crew. This sector was excavated in 1976 almost from the current ground surface down to bedrock at the south balk, a mean depth of 7.00 m. In this south sector of C.5, in that part south of Wall C.5:200 and extending east across the tower interior from Doorway C.5:199, lying east of Wall C.5:190 (running south from Doorway C.5:199), several Late Roman soil layers were uncovered below the heavy concentration of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk and Byzantine materials at a depth of ca. 6.00 m. down from the ground surface. These Late Roman loci were: Surface C.5:223, upon which Wall C.5:190 was possibly laid (Late Roman IV); soil Layers C.5:224 (Late Roman I-II); and C.5:225, 226 (Late Roman II-III).

The lowest locus in this sector at the south balk, just over bedrock at 870.64 m., was soil Layer C.5:227, which yielded Early Roman II-III sherds. This locus was below the founding level of Wall C.5:190.

In previous seasons Area C.5:1, 2, 3, 5, 7 produced few Late Roman walls and soil layers. Late Roman Wall C.1:12, at the southeast corner of C.1, extended into the south and east balks of C.1. It was probably connected with the rocky Locus C.2:29 in the west balk of C.2. In that Square several Late Roman soil layers (C.2:25, 29, 30, 45, C.3:31, and C.5:8) were attested, but that was about all.

There were no Late Roman materials found in G.6, 7, or 9.

Interpretation: The evidence presented above argued for considerable human activity in Areas C.5 and C.7 in the Late Roman period generally and in Late Roman III-IV in particular. Cave C.7:86 evidenced its latest occupation to be Late Roman III-IV, although two Early Roman loci within the cave may have indicated an earlier use of the cave as well. The entranceway to the cave, in the sector from lintel Doorway C.7:81 east to the cave, also showed the latest habitation to be in Late Roman III-IV. Wall C.7:44 and the platform to its east also seemed to have been in use in that period.

In Area C.5 the number of Late Roman loci, as late as III-IV, west of Wall C.5:77, north of Wall C.5:82, and below the level of C.5:77's probable foundation trench (Early Byzantine Locus C.5:95), argued for an earlier occupation in that sector before Wall C.5:77 was built or rebuilt in Early Byzantine times.⁸ That there was a wall earlier than Early Byzantine in the location of Wall C.5:77 was indicated by the fact that Late Roman Wall C.5:82 (a Late Roman II-III wall extending west) must have extended west from the end of such a wall and the adjoining Doorway C.5:199. The Late Roman I-IV loci south of Wall C.5:82 and west of it in front of Doorway C.5:199 argued for the same conclusion.

Also the Late Roman loci, as late as IV, in the south portion of the tower argued for an earlier occupation than Early Byzantine.

⁸ See discussion above, p. 58.

This evidence of the Late Roman period corresponded to the Late Roman occupation attested in the use of the stairs in Area D,⁹ the plastered layers in Area B,¹⁰ the well-constructed wall (in Squares A.7 and 9), and the platform stylobate wall (in Square A.6), that rested on the acropolis bedrock.¹¹

Strata XVII-XIX: Early Roman (ca. 63 B.C. - A.D. 135)

Description: Additional remains of Early Roman Strata XVII-XIX were evident in Squares C.1, 5, and 7 in 1976.

In a probe into the foundation trench (C.1:110) just north of Wall C.1:49, the latest ceramics read at its bottom showed Early Roman I (Stratum XIX), although some Iron I A or B sherds in the lower layers of the trench backfill evidenced some mixing when the Iron I material had been dug through to lay the foundation for the Early Roman wall. Other Early Roman loci (C.1:123 and 125, both Early Roman I-II) were found in a probe of soil and rocky layers down to bedrock in the northwest sector of C.1, lying north of Wall C.1:49 and extending all the way to the north and west balks.

In C.7 Early Roman strata were attested by soil Layers C.7:69 and, lower, C.7:76 (right over bedrock) in the sector between Wall C.7:44 and the west balk. Just north of Doorway C.7:81, down at bedrock, was another Early Roman locus (C.7:79), the possible foundation trench for the doorway construction. An Early Roman III soil layer (C.7:84) was attested at the mouth of Cave C.7:86, and Early Roman II-III soil layers (C.7:85 and 103) were found in the sector between Doorway C.7:81 and the cave. Over bedrock in room 2 of the cave, soil Layer C.7:94 was Early Roman III-IV, and soil Layer C.7:107, on the shelf west of room 1, was Early Roman II-III. As has been mentioned, these Early Roman loci in and at the mouth of Cave C.7:86 may have indicated an earlier use of the cave than that in the Late Roman Period.

During the 1976 season C.5 yielded a number of Early Roman soil layers, several of which were in the sector west of Wall C.5:77 and north of Wall C.5:82. This was true of the Early Roman soil Layers C.5:157 and 175, and of Early Roman II-III soil Layer C.5:165. In the extreme northwest corner of C.5, along the stairs and the west balk, soil Layer C.5:16 was dated Early Roman I-II. Just west of the tower Doorway C.5:199 and south of Wall C.5:82 lay Early Roman soil Layer C.5:179 under Byzantine soil Layer C.5:178 and over Iron I A or B soil Layer C.5:173.

Within the tower, possibly running under Wall C.5:60 on the north and bounded by Wall C.5:77 on the west, Wall C.5:200 on the south, and the east balk, was the hard yellowish Surface C.5:102, which lay at a level 0.20 m.

⁹ Herr, "Heshbon 1974: Area D," p. 87.

¹⁰ Sauer, "Heshbon 1974: Area B and Square D.4," p. 44.

¹¹ Van Elderen, "Heshbon 1974: Area A," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 28.

below the bottom course of Wall C.5:60 on its south side. This surface was left unexcavated except for a small probe (C.5:213) in the northwest sector near the conjunction of Walls C.5:77 and C.5:60. Right under Surface C.5:102, soil Layer C.5:213 attested Early Roman.

Further evidence of the Early Roman period in C.5 was found at the south balk below and east of Wall C.5:190, where soil Layer C.5:227, just over bedrock, was dated Early Roman II-III.

Previous seasons of work in Area C produced considerable evidence for the Early Roman period, particularly in C.1 and C.2 (some in C.5).

Because of its deeper founding, Wall C.1:13, which ran north-northeast about 1.30 m. west of the east balk to the stairs, could be considered constructed somewhat earlier than Walls C.1:37 and C.1:14; a coin (object 49, Aretas IV, 9 B.C. - A.D. 40) found in soil Layer C.1:41, which extended over Wall C.1:13 and under *huwwar* Surface C.1:39, indicated that Stratum XVIII was the earliest to be posited for construction of Wall C.1:13. Wall C.1:37 ran perpendicular to and abutted Wall C.1:13 at its southern end, a fact that suggested that these two walls (C.1:13 and C.1:37) were part of an Early Roman structure. Wall C.1:37 ran at a slight angle to Wall C.1:14, which extended west from the east balk 4.45 m. and had *huwwar* Surface C.1:36 and 39 (traced primarily in the east balk) running up against it. This wall, C.1:14, has been suggested as the latest Early Roman construction in C.1, with Walls C.1:13-C.1:37 built slightly earlier;¹² it extended west almost to the north end of Wall C.1:40. There were also other Early Roman soil layers in this Square (C.1:46, 50, 56, 64, 65, 67-70, 73, 75, 77-81, 101, 104, 105, 113-17).

A soil layer (C.1:54, 61, 62) from 0.75 m. to over 2.00 m thick (at the south balk) lay under the three walls mentioned above and partly up against Walls C.1:40 and 63.

The second group of important Early Roman walls in C.1 was attested in the west sector of the Square. This included Wall C.1:40 (and its Early Roman foundation Trench C.1:38) which extended north from the south balk and was joined by a north extension in C.1:63 (with its Early Roman foundation Trench C.1:73), all of which was bonded to Wall C.1:49 (with its Early Roman foundation Trench C.1:110), which wall extended west into the west balk and into Square C.5 as Wall C.5:60. North of the bond of Walls C.1:63 and C.1:49 ran the additional Wall fragment C.1:30, (with its Early Roman foundation Trenches C.1:109, C.1:111).

To the west, in Square C.5, all that had been found of the period were Early Roman Wall C.5:60 (and its Early Roman foundation Trench C.5:62) and Wall C.5:77, also presumed to be Early Roman when first found.

Uphill east in Square C.2, Early Roman strata were evident in the soil layer (C.2:27) between Iron Age Wall C.2:26 (which ran northwest out of the east balk near the southeast corner of C.2) and the north balk, and in soil Layers C.2:34 (which covered most of the Square) and C.2:15 in the northwest corner of C.2. Also Early Roman were the fill layers (C.2:32, 37) of a pit in the southwest corner of the Square, together with the pit lining (C.2:36) and the Early Roman soil layer (C.2:42) on its south face. Wall

¹² Thompson, "Heshbon 1971: Area C," *AUSS* 11 (1973): 84.

C.2:38 (with its Early Roman foundation Trench C.2:33) was a stub extending east from the west balk about 3.50 m. north of the south balk. It appeared to be the eastern segment of Walls C.1:14 and C.1:37. There was also an Early Roman soil layer, C.2:27, in the south part of C.2, as well as rock tumble C.2:28.

Interpretation: In Square C.7 the presence of several Early Roman loci in the entrance way to Cave C.7:86, as well as in the cave itself, suggested the possible use of the cave earlier than in the Late Roman period. Also, Early Roman loci west of the Iron II/Persian Wall C.7:44 and over bedrock there suggested that Wall C.7:44 was in use in the Early Roman period.

The presence of a thick soil layer between the walls of Square C.1 suggested that three stages were represented there in the Early Roman period: a) a late stage of Early Roman, possibly Strata XVII-XVIII (31 B.C. - A.D. 135) comprising Wall C.1:14 (with its extension east into Square C.2 as Wall C.2:38) and *huwwar* Surface C.1:36 and 39, together with Walls C.1:37 and 13; b) an intervening heavy soil layer (C.1:54, 61, 62); and c) an earlier Early Roman Stratum (XIX) comprising Walls C.1:40, 63, 49, 30. This Early Roman Stratum XIX was seen also in the westward extension of Wall C.1:49 as C.5:60 with its Early Roman foundation trench (C.5:62) on its north face. This complex in C.1 and C.5 comprising Walls C.1:40, 63, 49, C.5:60 seemed to have been part of an Early Roman defense tower (see Fig. 11, p. 64, in 1974 Area C report).

That there was Early Roman habitation south of Wall C.5:60 can be argued from Probe C.5:213 under the yellow Surface C.5:102 within the tower, and from Locus C.5:227 (Early Roman II-III) just over bedrock at the south balk. But just when the west wall of the tower (C.5:77 and C.5:190) was built or rebuilt is another question. Roman II-III pottery coming from Locus C.5:186, the north exterior face of Wall C.5:82, suggested that this wall, extending west from C.5:77 and Doorway C.5:199, was built in Late Roman times.

The evidence of an Early Byzantine foundation trench (C.5:95) on the west face of Wall C.5:77 and the Early

Byzantine four-spouted lamp taken from the top course of Wall C.5:77 suggested that this part of the tower complex was rebuilt (possibly for better defense) even later than Wall C.5:82 extending to the west. Since Wall C.5:190 extending south from Doorway C.5:199 seemed to have been founded on Surface C.5:223 (Late Roman IV) and also below C.5:219, where the Early Byzantine Stratum XIII coin (no. 2940, A.D. 343-50) was found, it was argued that this Wall C.5:190 was probably built in the Late Roman IV period. It may be that the Early Roman (Stratum XIX) tower as a whole suffered extensive damage and needed repairs on its downhill side in Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods before the destructive earthquake of A.D. 365.

All these Early Roman loci in C.1, 5, and 7 correlated with similar loci in Area B (Stratum XVII, plaster layers)¹³ and Area D (Stratum XVII, the ramp, and Stratum XVIII, the fill under the ramp, and the cistern).¹⁴

Strata XX-XXI: Hellenistic (ca. 250-63 B.C.)

Description: Additional remains of Hellenistic Strata XX-XXI were attested in Area C.5, C.7 in 1976. There were, however, no Hellenistic structures found; only pottery fragments in a few soil layers.

In the northeast corner of Square C.5, soil Layer C.5:163, which ran along foundation Trench C.5:136, produced two Hellenistic sherds in otherwise Iron II and Iron I material. In the northwest corner of C.5 one Hellenistic sherd was found. The evidence of Hellenistic habitation was indeed sparse in C.5.

Soil Layer C.7:60 in the northwest corner of C.7 produced Hellenistic sherds. The Hellenistic evidence was more concentrated in and around Iron II/Persian Wall C.7:44. Hellenistic materials were encountered in the removal of soil and lower stones (C.7:96, 98) in the platform east of Wall C.7:44, in the fire-pit (C.7:99) cut into bedrock there, and also in the soil (C.7:100) removed under the top surviving course of stones of Wall C.7:44. Just over bedrock in the soil (C.7:97) east of Wall C.7:44, there were Iron Age sherds found. No pottery was found in further probing (Loci C.7:105, 106) both around and under the next lower course of stones of Wall C.7:44.

In previous seasons, a number of Hellenistic loci were identified, all of them being soil layers except for Wall C.2:49 in the southeast corner of Square C.2, where Hellenistic evidence was found in an otherwise Iron Age locus.

¹³ Sauer, "Heshbon 1974: Area B and Square D4," p. 52.

¹⁴ Herr, "Heshbon 1974: Area D," pp. 92-96.

Square C.2 also contained Hellenistic soil Layer C.2:31 (a hard packed layer in the south part of the Square), Fire-Pit C.2:46 in the central sector, and soil Layer C.2:48 in the southwest sector. Square C.3 yielded Hellenistic soil Layers C.3:35, 36, 37 in the northwest sector and ash Pit C.3:29 in the southwest part of the Square.

Square C.1 attested a concentration of evidence for Hellenistic strata in C.1:76, a soil Layer which sloped down from the east balk westward, and in soil Layers C.1:85-89, 92, 93, and 96, in the southeast sector of the Square.

There were no Hellenistic strata evidenced in Area G.6, 7, or 9.

Interpretation: The relatively few Hellenistic loci uncovered in Area C.1, 2, 3, 5, 7 over the various seasons, with no certain architectural remains, argued for a sparse occupation in the Hellenistic period. Only in the southeast sector of Square C.1 near bedrock is there even a meager concentration of evidence for the Hellenistic Strata XX-XXI. It may be suggested that nomads or shepherds camped here but put up no permanent dwellings.

More settled occupation nearer the acropolis may be attested in the Hellenistic use of the caves (B.4:74, 171, and 247) and the cisterns there, as well as the pool (B.4:265) in Area B,¹⁵ and in the threshing floor in Area D.¹⁶

Stratum XXII: Iron II/Persian (ca. 800-500 B.C.)

Description: Additional remains of Iron II/Persian Stratum XXII were attested in Area C (C.5 and possibly in C.1) in 1976, but no additional structures were found.

In Square C.1 soil and rock Layer C.1:122 showed Iron II/Persian remains, with Ayyūbid/Mamlūk and Byzantine contamination from between-season erosion.

In the northeast corner of Square C.5, in the sector between Wall C.5:60 and the north and east balks, several Iron II/Persian loci were identified: C.5:86, 105, 110, 112, and 119—some loci being of soft soil and some of hard clay and pebbles, a mixture indicating debris washed or blown in. The deep probe along the west balk of C.5 was a layer of soil and stones; C.5:196, a mixed Iron I-II locus.

In previous seasons a number of Iron II/Persian loci were attested in C.1, C.2, C.3 and C.7. In the south sector of C.1, Wall C.1:90 entered the east balk not far from the southeast corner of the Square and was continued in C.2 as Wall C.2:52 - C.2:90, which ran east and then south into the south balk of C.2. This wall's foundation trench cut into the *huwwar* material (C.2:73, 83 and probably C.2:92, 94, 96, 98). As has been noted, many of the loci excavated in 1974 in the south sector of Square C.2 were considered dump material

¹⁵ Sauer, "Heshbon 1974: Area B and Square D4," pp. 55-56.

¹⁶ Herr, "Heshbon 1974: Area D," pp. 97-98.

from 8th-6th century B.C. occupation.¹⁷ In addition to the material in the south sector of C.2, there were dated to the same period: Loci C.2:51, a possible pit in the northeast sector of C.2; C.2:40 and 47 toward the center; C.2:41, 44 in the southeast; and C.2:45 and 50 in the southwest sector.

An Iron II/Persian zigzag wall was traced over several seasons in Area C.2, C.3, and C.7. Wall C.2:26, which entered the east balk of C.2 about 1.25 m. north of the south balk, continued into C.3 as Wall C.3:26-C.3:60 and turned south into the C.3 south balk to become Wall C.7:44 as it ran south in C.7. Wall C.3:34 was made of massive boulders founded on a shelf cut into bedrock in the south sector of C.3 and on its east abutted the stone Wall C.3:28. It may also be a part of this zigzag wall, as may be Wall C.3:28, which entered the east balk of C.3 about 3.00 m. north of the south balk to become what seemed to be a part of Wall C.5:45 as it extended east-southeast 3.50 m. into C.4. Wall C.7:44, which was founded on bedrock, continued south in C.7 either until it stopped or until it was cut to make room for the Late Roman lintel doorway (C.7:81) to Cave C.7:86 (see Fig. 12, p. 69, in 1974 report).

In C.3 there was Iron II/Persian Wall C.3:32 in the south sector, which was a buttressed wall set on bedrock that abutted against Walls C.3:26 and 34; and Wall C.3:43, a line of large boulders in the trench in bedrock which lay under Wall C.3:32. In the south sector of C.3 a number of Iron II/Persian soil layers were attested (C.3:30, 38-42).

There were no Iron II/Persian loci attested in Area G.6, G.7, and G.9.

Interpretation: The absence of any Iron II/Persian structures in C.5, the single wall (C.1:90), in C.1; the presence of only a number of Iron II/Persian soil layers in C.5 (particularly in the northeast sector, with one in the west sector, C.5:196), and one in C.1 (C.1:122) suggested meager Iron II/Persian occupation, if any, this far down on the west slope of the *tell*. Rather in this sector the Iron II/Persian soil and rock material may have been dumped or washed down.

In contrast a major defense perimeter seems to have been built farther up on the slope, as evidenced by the zigzag wall in Squares C.2, 3, 4, and 7. It may be that this occurred because a smaller and higher portion of the *tell* would be more easily defended in this period. As noted above, the Iron II/Persian wall which was continued south from C.3 as Wall C.7:44 either stopped, or was cut off, in the south sector of C.7, and the Late Roman lintel doorway (C.7:81) and the entrance way to Cave 7:86 was put in later. Because of the lack of any Iron II/Persian loci attested on either side of or within the two upper surviving

¹⁷ Mare, "Heshbon 1974: Area C," pp. 67-68.

courses of Wall C.7:44, it may be concluded that this portion of the Iron II/Persian wall in C.7 had been rebuilt or altered in Roman times. It is of note that the lower courses of Wall C.7:44 look rough and unhewn, like parts of this wall in Squares C.2, 3, 4, but two or three stones of the top course in Wall C.7:44 looked somewhat worked.

This evidence for Iron II/Persian in Area C can be correlated to Wall D.2:84 and the reservoir found in Area B.¹⁸

Stratum XXIII: Iron II (ca. 10th to 9th Century B.C.)

Description: Remains of Iron II Stratum XXIII were attested in Area C.5 in 1976. Only soil layers were found, however, all in the north sector of Square C.5.

In the northeast sector of C.5, north of Wall C.5:60, Iron II layers were identified including C.5:109 (a sedimentation layer or thin occupation layer of hard red clay with *huwwar*), C.5:129 (a layer of soil with pebbles and *huwwar*) and C.5:163 (another pebbly layer).

In the northwest sector of C.5 near the access stairs were found: C.5:144 (a layer of pebbly soil) and C.5:180 (a layer of soil and small stones). An isolated Iron II Layer C.5:130 (of soil and *huwwar* flecks) was found west of the tower Doorway C.5:199.

There was no evidence of Iron II found in previous seasons in Area C.1, C.2, C.3, C.7 and Area G.6, G.7, G.9.

Interpretation: From the paucity of Iron II loci attested in Area C it can be concluded that there was little or no habitation in this period on this part of the *tell*. Debris recovered seems to have been eroded or dumped into place.

Stratum XXIV: Iron I (ca. 1200-1000 B.C.)

Description: Additional loci of Iron I Stratum XXIV were attested in Area C (C.1, C.5) in 1976, but no Iron I structures were found.

In previous seasons in Area C there was differentiated only the general period of Iron I, which was attested only in the south and center sectors of C.1 in soil Layers C.1:60, 95, 97-99, and 100 (red-brown soil and *huwwar* over bedrock).

Loci uncovered in C.1 and C.5 in 1976 allowed a refinement in the differentiation of phases within Stratum XXIV, phases distinguishable progressively earlier as the deeper material was dug. The latest of these phases was considered Iron I C/II A identified as C.1:147 (a soil layer in the northeast sector); as C.5:187 (a layer of soil and stone west of the tower entrance C.5:199) and as C.5:206 (along the west balk north of Wall C.5:82). Also of this phase was Iron I B/C-II A (C.5:215, a stony soil layer in the probe at

¹⁸ Sauer, "Heshbon 1974: Area B and Square D.4," pp. 57-59.

the west balk), also Iron I B/Iron II (C.1:155, a soil layer in the northwest sector of C.1).

Slightly earlier was an Iron I B/C stage represented by soil Layers C.1:124, (in the northwest sector); C.5:152, 194 (in the northeast sector); and C.5:189, 192, 193, 205, 206 (in the northwest sector).

Still earlier was Iron I B, attested in the northwest sector of C.1, north of Early Roman Wall C.1:49, by Loci C.1:126-130; also in the northeast corner of C.5 by C.5:155 and 171; and in the northwest sector by C.5:159 and 168.

Earlier still was phase Iron I A/B, represented in the northwest sector of C.1 by the soil and stony Layers C.1:132, 136-140, and 141. In C.5 Iron I A/B was attested in the northeast corner by C.5:172 and C.5:183, in the northwest sector by C.5:164, and in the entry way west of Doorway C.5:199 by C.5:173.

Iron I A, aside from one pebbly soil layer, C.5:184, found west of the tower doorway (C.5:199), was attested only in the northwest sector of C.1 in layers of soil, clay, stones, and charcoal (C.1:131, 133-35, 142, and 143) with C.1:144 on bedrock including only one body sherd.

Interpretation: From the lack of any Iron I structural remains in Area C it was concluded that there was no significant habitation on this part of the *tell*. From the presence of layer upon layer of Iron I soil and stony material in C.1 and C.5, mixed at times with clay and charcoal, it was concluded that Iron I material was filled or dumped here from elsewhere on the *tell*. In C.1 this Iron I material had been cut into later for the founding of Early Roman Wall C.1:49.

The great quantity of loom weights found in the Iron I layers in the northwest sector of C.1 suggested that this material may have been collected from a work zone higher up on the slope and dumped here.

That there was a deliberate dumping of the Iron I material on this slope was concluded from the somewhat orderly way the loci were evident in the northwest sector of C.1:

Iron I B/C	C.1:124
Iron I B	C.1:126-30
Iron I A/B	C.1:132, 136-41
Iron I A	C.1:131, 133-35, 142-44

Evidence of Iron I in Area C.1 and C.5 can be compared to the Iron I channel of Area B.2 and B.3 and the walls and cobblestone pavement of what would seem to be a domestic occupation in D.4:65, 66¹⁹ and the cistern in D.1.²⁰

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 62.

²⁰ Herr, "Heshbon 1974: Area D," p. 99.



A. Square C.5. View to east. Western, Early Byzantine entrance to Early Roman "tower." Note the tumble in the balk in the room above the meter stick and Cistern C.5:228 in the floor across Wall C.5:200. Photo: Paul H. Denton and Loren Calvert.



B. Four-spouted Early Byzantine lamp from Wall C.5:77 (the north-south wall to lower left of meter stick in Pl. VI:A, above). Note zoomorphic handle. Photo: Paul H. Denton.