

AREA C.4, 6, 8, 9, 10

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The easternmost five Squares of Area C, on the western slope of Tell Heshbân, were my responsibility in 1976. Square C.4, located furthest down the slope to the west, had already been excavated to bedrock in the 1968 and 1971 seasons. Just to the east, Squares C.6 (excavated in 1971 and 1974) and C.8 (also excavated in 1974) were worked throughout the 1976 season.¹ Further up the slope to the southeast two new Squares were opened to link Area C with Area A on the acropolis. These two new Squares were designated C.9 and C.10. Both were worked through most of the season. Square C.10 measured 7.00 m. east-west by 3.00 m. north-south, while Square C.9 measured 7.00 m. east-west by 6.00 m. north-south and was subdivided into two 3.00 x 7.00 m. halves. The northern half was excavated in the normal manner, but the southern half, designated the "Test Square," was excavated in a somewhat different manner.²

The primary objective for the 1976 season in the eastern sector of Area C was to complete a section of the *tell* from topsoil to bedrock along an east-west axis from the acropolis down the western slope. A secondary objective was to elucidate further the Mamlūk domestic complex found in C.4, C.6, and C.8 in previous seasons. It was also hoped that some kind of access route leading up to the acropolis could be located, which indeed had been a factor in the original decision to open Area C in 1968.³ To a

¹ For the results of the 1968, 1971, and 1974 seasons, cf. H. O. Thompson, "Heshbon 1968: Area C," *AUSS* 7 (1969): 127-141; id., "Heshbon 1971: Area C," *AUSS* 11 (1973): 72-88; W. H. Mare, "Heshbon 1974: Area C," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 63-78. No Squares of this portion of Area C were excavated during the 1973 season.

² The "Test Square" procedures and results are briefly noted on pp. 10, 14, 241, 242.

³ Cf. Thompson, "Heshbon 1968: Area C," p. 127. At that time the surface topography of Area C suggested a possible ancient gateway.

large extent all these objectives were achieved this season. The major disappointment was our failure to reach bedrock in C.10. The results of this work are described and interpreted here. In addition, the results of the earlier seasons from Area C are presented and fully incorporated into the present report.

Stratum I: Modern (ca. A.D. 1870-1976)

Description: Several modern objects were found on the ground surface, but there was no evidence of any modern stratification.⁴

Interpretation: The objects suggested that there was slight human activity in this sector of the site since the resettlement of Ḥesbân early in this century.⁵ But the complete lack of modern stratification suggests that this portion of the *tell* was not reoccupied by the modern villagers.

Post-Stratum II: Gap (ca. A.D. 1456-1870)

Description: The latest attested pottery was invariably Ayyūbid/Mamlūk, and the latest coin was dated to A.D. 1382-1399.

Interpretation: The complete absence of any pottery, coins, or stratification from the Ottoman or later periods (as over the site generally) strongly implied a sitewide gap in occupation from the Ottoman period onward, as did the absence of any literary references to Ḥesbân.⁶ J. A. Sauer has reasonably argued that a mid-15th century abandonment was related to a "gradual partial depopulation of Transjordan which occurred during the Late Mamlūk and Ottoman periods."⁷

⁴ Cleanup prior to regular excavation included loci C.4:47, C.6:10, 26, C.8:16. The pottery from all these loci was predominantly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk. These loci also produced the following registered artifacts: from C.4:47 a Nabataean coin of Aretas IV (9 B.C. - A.D. 40), object 1018 (hereafter the word object will be omitted), and two glass beads (335, 336); from C.6:10 an iron ring (1770), iron hook (1772); from C.8:16 a Roman millstone (2201), bead (2204), and bronze spatula (2212).

⁵ For a discussion of the modern village and population, cf. Ø. S. LaBianca, "The Village of Ḥesbân: An Ethnographic Preliminary Report," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 189-200.

⁶ For the literary references cf. W. Vyhmeister, "The History of Heshbon from the Literary Sources," *AUSS* 6 (1968): 173.

⁷ J. A. Sauer, "Heshbon 1971: Area B," *AUSS* 11 (1973): 36. But in the

Strata II-III: Mamlūk (ca. A.D. 1260-1456)

Description: All five Squares before excavation were covered by a loose brownish gray topsoil littered with numerous cut and uncut stones—many randomly scattered, but many aligned into several clearly discernible protruding walls, especially in Squares C.8 and C.9. This soil (Locus 1 in each Square) was 0.10 to 0.30 m. deep, badly disturbed by plant roots and animal burrows. It contained large amounts of pottery (the latest uniformly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk), bones, (including sheep/goat, donkey, and cattle), and *mollusca* shells. Numerous objects, mostly small or broken, of stone, iron, bronze, glass, and clay, with two coins, one silver, were dated Ayyūbid/Mamlūk, A.D. 1171-1342).⁸ In all Squares a number of walls lay immediately beneath topsoil.

In the north sector of C.4 and C.6 was found a rather substantial building (called the "north building" in previous reports). Its south wall was a major structure (C.4:2/9 = C.6:2) composed of two roughly hewn masonry faces with an interior of soil and rubble.⁹ Of varying thickness (1.00-1.45 m.), it extended eastward from C.4 through the balk into C.6 for some 8.05 m., preserved up to five courses high in places. Several of the top stones of the inner face tilted northward, probably as the springers of a vaulted roof. Perpendicular to and bonded into this wall on the west was Wall C.4:8/70.¹⁰ This wall, preserved in up to eight courses, extended 1.70 m. into the north balk. The upper courses yielded mostly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, but few in the lower courses, in which Early Byzantine pottery predominated. Among the objects of Wall C.4:2 was a coin of Justinian I (A.D. 527-565).¹¹ Two entrances were found in the building. One arched doorway permitted access through Wall C.4:2, 9 near the balk between C.4 and C.6. This doorway was secondarily blocked in two stages.¹² The upper (C.4:60) consisted of loose brown soil and neatly laid small stones, with a thickness of 1.06 m.; the lower (C.4:61), of harder, reddish brown soil and small stones, 0.06 m. thick. The pottery from both loci was uniformly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk.

Another entrance was found to the east, between the north face of Wall C.6:2 and Wall C.6:19, which ran from the north balk 0.63 m. southward, and

eastern part of Area C, as will be seen below, the Mamlūk occupation came to an end very shortly after A.D. 1400.

⁸ The Ayyūbid coin (2590) came from C.9:10.

⁹ The locus number C.4:2 was assigned to the exterior (southern) face of this wall; C.4:9 to the inner (northern) face; the whole wall is here designated C.4:2/9.

¹⁰ The exterior (western) face was designated C.4:8; the interior (eastern) face, C.4:70; the whole wall, C.4:8/70.

¹¹ A. Terian, "Coins from the 1971 Excavations at Heshbon" (hereafter as "Coins 1971"), *AUSS* 12 (1974): 38. Originally, it had been ("Heshbon 1971: Area C," p. 74) erroneously reported that Wall C.4:2 produced four pails of Umayyad pottery; actually, the wall yielded *no* Umayyad pottery. Wall C.6:2 was particularly rich in objects, producing several iron nails (2420, 2416, 2498), iron saw blade fragment (2393), bronze earring (2417), basalt rubbing stone (2442), ceramic loom weight (2430), and several glass fragments.

¹² See "Heshbon, 1971," Pl. VII:A.

consisted of two rows 0.84 m. wide. It was preserved to a height of three courses and formed part of the east wall of the building. An interesting feature of this wall was a partially preserved window sill protruding through the north balk. Wall C.6:19 dated Ayyūbid/Mamlūk. In between Walls C.6:2 and C.6:19 was the entrance itself, in the form of a sunken stone-paved threshold (C.6:28) with double door sockets still *in situ* (see Pl. VII:A). Among the registered objects in this Ayyūbid/Mamlūk locus were an iron knife blade fragment (2333), glass ring fragment (2331), and a blue bead (2314).

Attached at a right angle to the outer face of the west wall (C.4:8) of the north building was Wall C.4:10, which ran westward for 1.50 m. before disappearing into the north balk. Preserved to five courses high, this wall abutted Wall C.4:8, and rested on soil Layer C.4:25. Another wall abutting the north building was Wall C.4:15, the north end of which was laid up against the blockage of the south entrance (C.4:60, 61) and Wall C.4:2. Wall C.4:15 was built in two rows of large irregular field stones with chinks, and survived to a height of two courses (0.70 m. high); 1.25 m. wide, it ran southward for approximately 2.50 m. Dated Ayyūbid/Mamlūk, it produced two registered objects, a glass bead (658) and an iron nail (782).

Inside the north building, immediately beneath the topsoil loci, were several subsoil layers (C.4:11, 21, 24; C.6:5, 10, 17), which extended from Wall C.4:9 = C.6:2 to the north balk. These layers were brownish gray or reddish gray, containing many large cut and uncut stones, and some chunks of *huwwar*. The depth of each layer varied from 0.20 to 1.00 m. The latest pottery from all six loci was uniformly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk. All but one of these soil layers produced registered objects, but especially important were two coins. C.4:11 yielded a Mamlūk coin (more precise identification was impossible), while C.4:24 produced another Mamlūk coin dated A.D. 1363-1377.¹³ Beneath C.4:24 and C.6:17 was *huwwar* Floor C.4:26 = C.6:21. This floor, which was laid in very thin layers, measured 6.68 x 2.49 m. at its greatest extent and averaged 0.08 to 0.20 m. in thickness. It touched the north balk and all the inside walls of the building (Walls C.4:9, 70; C.6:2, 19). Included in this Ayyūbid/Mamlūk floor locus was a thin layer of reddish soil immediately under the floor.¹⁴ At the eastern entrance the floor was cut by C.6:40, the foundation trench for Threshold C.6:28. This trench extended from Wall C.6:2 northward to C.6:19, and penetrated through several lower soil layers to a depth of 0.30 m. The latest pottery was again Ayyūbid/Mamlūk, and the trench produced one registered object, a knife blade with its rivet still in place (2332). The floor was also riddled by a complex of animal holes (C.4:41, 47) and by an Ayyūbid/Mamlūk fire pit (C.6:42) filled with charcoal and ash along the north balk. It measured 0.30 x 1.30 m., and its average depth was 0.07 m.

Beneath the *huwwar* floor of the north building a series of four superimposed earth floors appeared (C.4:30, 34, 37, 43; C.6:45, 48, 51, 72), pri-

¹³ Terian, "Coins 1971," object 193, published coin 83. Among the objects in C.6:5 were a basalt grinder (1137), stone weight (1190), iron sickle point (1138), and bronze ring fragment (1189).

¹⁴ Floor C.6:21 yielded the following registered objects: iron nail (2353), and slingstone fragment (2386).

marily composed of hard-packed reddish brown earth and small stones, but also containing considerable *huwwar*, ash, and flat-lying sherds. Floors C.4:30, 34, 37, 43, all extended from the north balk to Wall C.4:9, and all but C.4:43 reached Wall C.4:70 to the west. In C.6, however, the situation was considerably complicated by pits (C.6:50, 73) and animal burrows (C.6:49, 52, 56). Animal Hole C.6:49 was found along the north face of Wall C.6:2, where it had cut through Floors C.6:21, 45, 48. Holes C.6:52, 56 cut through Floor C.6:51 and through Pit C.6:73. Sealed under Floor C.6:45 was Pit C.6:50, which was filled with some debris (small stones, ash, mud brick fragments, and bones) but very little pottery, the latest of which was Early Byzantine. This pit measured 1.72 x 0.19 m. and disappeared into the north balk. Beneath this was another pit (C.6:73) that also extended along the north balk, reached Wall C.6:2, and measured 1.67 x 1.35 m. Its depth was at least 0.50 m., but its bottom was not reached. This was a particularly rich pit, containing large amounts of pottery (Ayyūbid/Mamlūk the latest), bones, wood and dung ash, glass, shell, and a bone needle (2802).¹⁵

Floor C.6:45 = C.4:30 was a hard, compacted dirt layer filled with ash, charcoal, bone, mud brick fragments, and small pieces of *huwwar*, and averaged 0.13 to 0.15 m. in thickness. It touched inner Walls C.4:70, C.4:9 = C.6:2 but was cut on the east by C.6:40, the foundation trench for the east threshold (C.6:28). It was an extremely rich floor in both pottery and objects. C.6:45 produced an Ayyūbid coin dated A.D. 1171-1342 (2472), a Mamlūk coin (2469, no date), the base of a glass vessel (2413), and bronze ring with an inscribed silver disc (2453).¹⁶ C.4:30 also yielded an Ayyūbid coin (381, dated A.D. 1171-1342),¹⁷ rod (370), and stone pendant fragment (379). The latest pottery was uniformly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk.

Beneath Floor C.6:45 was *huwwar* Floor C.6:48 = C.4:34 and the makeup(?) layer beneath it. It again reached Walls C.4:9 and 70 and was cut on the east by foundation Trench C.6:40. Measuring up to 0.24 m. thick, this Ayyūbid/Mamlūk floor was composed of *huwwar*, small stones, ash, and charcoal. It was not particularly rich in bones or objects. Under this third floor of the building was yet another, Floor C.6:51 = C.4:37. This was again a hard-compacted dirt floor with some *huwwar* fragments, ash, charcoal, and considerable bone.¹⁸ In the western sector it touched Walls C.4:9 and 70, but it was heavily trenched and pitted to the east, especially by animal activity. Among the registered objects (all from C.4:37) were nails (422-425), two slingstones (440, 444), and a sickle blade fragment (445). Especially significant was the discovery of a lamp (1008) in a niche against a plastered bench (C.4:38) built along the south wall.¹⁹ The lamp contained a coin hoard of 66 pieces, which

¹⁵ Pit C.6:73 produced the following bones: 7 sheep/goat, 10 large mammal, 10 chicken, 1 fish, 18 undistinguishable, 66 scrap.

¹⁶ Locus C.6:45 produced the following bones: 6 sheep/goat, 3 chicken, 1 turtle, 10 undistinguishable, 8 scrap.

¹⁷ Terian, "Coins 1971," no. 182.

¹⁸ Locus C.6:51 yielded the following bones: 14 sheep/goat, 1 cattle, 4 chicken, 2 fish, 1 undistinguishable, 18 scrap.

¹⁹ See "Heshbon 1971," Pl. VI:A.

were primarily dated A.D. 1260-1277.²⁰ Once again, the latest pottery was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk.

The plastered bench (C.4:38), built up against Walls C.4:9 and 70, was founded on soil Layer C.4:53, to be discussed below. The plaster on top of the bench continued up the sides of both adjacent walls. The bench itself measured 3.20 x 0.65 m. and was 0.60 m. high. It was constructed of worked building stones and incorporated a column drum laid horizontally. Floor Loci C.4:34, 37, 43 ran up against the bench, while Floor C.4:30 covered it completely. The latest pottery from the bench was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk.

Below Floor C.6:51 = C.4:37 was soil Layer C.6:67 = C.4:43, composed of grayish-brown soil, small to medium stones, and ash. This layer also reached Walls C.4:70 and C.4:9 = C.6:2, but was heavily disturbed elsewhere (by Pits C.4:42, C.6:50, 73, and by animal Hole C.6:56). Ayyūbid/Mamlūk was again the latest pottery attested.²¹ Beneath soil Layer C.6:67 in the eastern sector of the building was a remnant of a badly preserved plaster surface (C.6:72), which had been cut by Pit C.6:50 and various animal burrows. It was not clearly associated with any walls of the north building, although its latest pottery was also Ayyūbid/Mamlūk. It produced a bronze coin dated ca. A.D. 400 (2676).

Outside the north building to the south were a number of other architectural features in C.4 and C.6. Partially exposed above the topsoil along the balk between the two Squares was Wall C.4:16 = C.6:6. Composed mostly of worked stones in two rows with a rubble interior, it extended northward from the south balk of C.4 for 5.00 m. and abutted Wall C.6:2 of the north building. In places Wall C.4:16 = C.6:6 survived to a height of six courses and averaged 0.60 m. in width. Only the portion of the wall in C.6 was dismantled and this operation produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.

West of this wall and beneath the topsoil (C.4:1) were subsoil Layers C.4:3, 5. The former was gray to yellow in color and averaged 0.10 m. in depth. The latter was dark brown, littered with large stones, and averaging 0.30 m. in depth. Both soil layers covered the entire Square except for the north building and yielded Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.²² Beneath these soil layers in the southern sector of the Square a cistern cut in bedrock (C.4:7) was found. A masonry collar had been constructed around its mouth. Only partially filled by debris, the cistern was bell shaped with a maximum interior diameter of 2.70 m. and a depth of 5.05 m. The collar diameter was 0.85 m., while the diameter of the mouth was 0.38 m. Three courses of masonry were built above the collar stone, forming a kind of lip around the opening of the cistern. Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds were found inside, in a silt cone of debris 2.00 m. high (C.4:14). Among the 68 pails of pottery

²⁰ The latest datable Mamlūk coin was A.D. 1268/9; thus Terian suggests that the coin hoard may have been left in the early 1270's ("Coins 1971," published coins 96-161, pp. 41-46).

²¹ Locus C.6:67 produced one registered object, an ivory die (2653).

²² Locus C.4:3 produced an undated bronze coin (251). Locus C.4:5 yielded a basalt basin fragment (271), iron spike (261), and two datable coins: one from the 3d century A.D. and the other from the Mamlūk period ("Coins 1968," nos. 9, 38).

from the cistern were several whole or restorable vessels, as well as a Nabataean coin. The mouth of the cistern was sealed by soil Layer C.4:5.

Beneath C.4:5 elsewhere in this sector (between Walls C.4:2 and 16, and the east and south balks) were soil Layers C.4:6, 17 (=19), 23, 33. These layers were of mixed colors and hardness, but all contained many large and small stones and fine-grained soil. A number of worked, rectangular building stones were found in these loci, as well as considerable Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and objects. Under C.4:6 was soil Layer C.4:17 = C.4:19. Within this layer were patches of charcoal and ash, as well as bones—sheep/goat, donkey, pig, chicken, and fish.²³ Soil Layer C.4:19 was rich in objects, yielding an arrowhead (365), clay disc (412, found in a charred condition), slingstone (420), glass tessera (522), and basalt grinder fragment (657). Near the corner of the west and south balks was soil Layer C.4:23, which produced an Umayyad coin (A.D. 661-750)²⁴ and a slingstone (427). This soil layer partially overlay Wall C.4:13, a massive north-south wall which ran from Wall C.4:2 to the south balk. This massive wall is fully discussed elsewhere in this issue, in the context of the defenses of the site.²⁵

Between Walls C.4:2, 13, and 15, and beneath Layer C.4:17 in the center of the Square, *huwwar* Surface C.4:28 was discovered. This surface touched all three walls as well as a *ṭabun* (C.4:36) located in the angle formed by the juncture of Walls C.4:2 and 13. Surface C.4:28, composed of a thin *huwwar* layer plus a firm gray soil immediately underneath, measured 1.50 x 2.00 m. and averaged 0.20 m. thick. Its latest pottery was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk. The *ṭabun* (C.4:36) was ca. 0.90 m. in diameter. Both the *ṭabun* and the *huwwar* surface were founded on soil Layer C.4:41, which seemingly dated from an earlier period and will be discussed below (under Strata IX-XIV). Under Layer C.4:6, to the east of Wall C.4:15 and west of the east balk, was soil Layer C.4:33, composed of gray, pebbly soil and large scattered rocks strewn in a north-south line 2.20 m. long. It also produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and rested on C.4:41.

West of Walls C.4:8 and 13, beneath Layers C.4:5, 6, were soil Layers C.4:22, 25, 31. Relatively thin (0.09 m.) but heavily rock strewn, C.4:25 ran under Wall C.4:10 (which abutted the north building) and into the north and west balks. All three loci reached the west balk and yielded Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, although considerable Byzantine pottery was also present. While Layer C.4:31 lay partially under C.4:25, all three loci overlay soil Layer C.4:39 and should probably be considered contiguous.²⁶

The cistern (C.4:7) in the southern sector of the Square has been mentioned above. It was connected to two bedrock-cut water channels (C.4:32, 68), the former of which ran from the cistern to a rock-cut basin (C.4:71). Water Channel C.4:32 extended southeast from the cistern for 3.50 m., with

²³ LaBianca, "The Zooarchaeological Remains from Tell Ḥesbān," *AUSS* 11 (1973): 135-138.

²⁴ Terian, "Coins 1971," no. 65.

²⁵ Mare, "Area C.1, 2, 3, 5, 7," above.

²⁶ The three loci produced the following registered objects: C.4:22—iron rod (421); C.4:25—carved stone fragment (396), nail (404), ring (403), balance weight (519), slingstone (551), worked quartz (552); C.4:31—iron object (374).

a maximum width of ca. 1.00 m. at its southeast end. Connecting the west side of the cistern with the rock-cut basin, C.4:68 consisted of two channels. The straighter, east-west channel measured 0.88 m. long and averaged 0.08 m. wide, while the curved channel was 1.60 m. long and averaged 0.08 to 0.10 m. in width. The rock-cut basin measured 1.15 x 0.65 m. and was at least 0.35 m. deep, but its bottom was never reached.²⁷ All three loci (C.4:32, 68, 71) produced pottery from several periods, but the latest from each was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk.

In C.6, besides the eastern end of the north building discussed above, several other major walls appeared immediately below the topsoil. Wall C.6:6 = C.4:16, which abutted Wall C.6:2 to the north, has also been examined previously. In the southwest corner of the Square was Wall C.6:3, a small curving single row of stones surviving to three courses high, which ran from the south balk to the west balk. It abutted Wall C.6:6 in the west balk and measured 2.30 m. long. When dismantled it produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery. Just to the east, Wall C.6:4 emerged from the south balk and extended northward for 3.50 m. It was constructed of a double face of both cut and uncut stones with a rubble-and-fill interior. This wall was 0.75 m. wide and was preserved to a height of four courses. Demolition of this wall yielded large amounts of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, an Umayyad coin (A.D. 661-750), a *ballista* (2366), and a basalt grinder (2375).²⁸ Abutting this wall on its northeast end was Wall C.6:7, which formed a doorpost adjacent to Threshold C.6:37. This threshold (see Pl. VII:B), flanked on the east by Wall C.6:29, served as a northern entrance into a room (hereafter called the "south room") formed by Walls C.6:4 on the west, C.6:7, 29 on the north, C.6:36 on the east (which could be seen in the east balk but was not excavated), and the south balk. Connecting Wall C.6:4 of the south room with Wall C.6:2 of the north building was Wall C.6:15, a curving north-south wall constructed of two faces of coursed masonry with a rubble interior. This wall abutted both Walls C.6:2, 4 and measured 1.45 m. long and 1.00 m. wide. By connecting the north building to the south room, Wall C.6:15 divided the remainder of C.6 into two distinct courtyards: one in the southwest sector formed by Walls C.6:6, 2, 3, 4, 15 and the other in the northeast bounded by Walls C.6:2, 4, 7, 8 (a wall in the northeast corner but covered by our access stairs), 19, 29 and Thresholds C.6:28, 37. Excavation of Wall C.6:15 produced a Nabataean coin of Aretas IV (9 B.C. - A.D. 40),²⁹ several other objects,³⁰ and Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery. Some bone material was also found within the wall.³¹

²⁷ This locus also produced a possible whetstone (418). Thompson in his 1971 report noted the possible parallel of a rock-cut cistern, water channel, and settling basin found by N. Glueck at Sela in southern Jordan (*The Other Side of the Jordan*, 2d ed.; Cambridge, Mass., 1970, p. 204).

²⁸ This locus produced the following bones: 17 sheep/goat, 6 chicken, 2 large mammal, 21 undistinguishable.

²⁹ Terian, "Coins from the 1973 and 1974 Excavations at Heshbon" (hereafter as "Coins 1973-74"), *AUSS* 14 (1976): 138, published coin 272.

³⁰ Iron disc (1940), iron nail (1941), whetstone (1943).

³¹ Locus C.6:15 contained the following bones: 19 sheep/goat (1 charred), 5 large mammal, 1 fish.

Beneath the topsoil of C.6 was subsoil Layer C.6:5 (already discussed above in connection with the north building), which covered almost the entire Square and varied in depth from 0.25 to 1.00 m. Under this layer, outside the sector covered by the north building, were soil Layers C.6:9, 11, 12 (=16), 13. All these loci were heavily strewn with large stones, were rich in objects and bones, and yielded large amounts of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery. Soil Layer C.6:11, found on both sides of Wall C.6:4, produced an Ayyūbid coin (dated A.D. 1193-1198),³² several bronze objects, and many bones.³³ It touched Walls C.6:2, 3, 4, 6, 15 in the southwest courtyard and extended into the southeast room where it touched Walls C.6:4, 7. Under C.6:11 in this room and extending northward into the northeast courtyard was soil Layer C.6:12 = 16, composed of loose gray soil and large stones, and averaging 0.33 to 0.70 m. in depth. It reached Walls C.6:4, 7, 8, 15, 19, 29 and the north, east, and south balks. This soil layer was also extremely rich in objects and bones.³⁴ Especially noteworthy among the objects was a Mamlūk ostrakon with the fragmentary inscription "and four."³⁵ Within soil Layer C.6:16, against the east face of Wall C.6:15, was Pit C.6:14, filled with loose gray and black soil, *ṭabun* material, and ash. It produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, a few bones, and several metal objects.³⁶ Its dimensions were difficult to ascertain since it blended into C.6:16. Directly under C.6:11 and over the threshold (C.6:37) was soil Layer C.6:13, which was 0.25 m. thick and contained two objects: an iron hook (1820) and iron cleat (1821).

Three of the walls surrounding the southwest courtyard (C.6:2, 4, 6) proved to be rebuilds over earlier-phase walls. Wall C.6:2 of the north building was rebuilt over Wall C.6:57. Wall C.6:4 of the south room was constructed above Wall C.6:62, and Wall C.6:6 was a rebuild of Wall C.6:32 along and partially within the west balk. Two of the walls (C.6:32, 57) were constructed of two faces of masonry with an interior rubble fill. But the third (C.6:62) was built of only a single row of mostly cut stones. Wall C.6:32 abutted C.6:57 on its south face, but there was no direct connection

³² Terian, "Coins 1973-74," published coin 293.

³³ Locus C.6:11 yielded a bronze ring (1771), bronze ring fragment (1819), bronze rod (2003), as well as a lamp handle (1883). It also produced the following bones: 44 sheep/goat, 3 large mammal, 7 cattle, 2 pig, 6 chicken, 1 fish, 6 undistinguishable.

³⁴ Locus C.6:12 included a lamp fragment (2047), as well as the following bones: 14 sheep/goat, 4 undistinguishable. Locus C.6:16 yielded a decorated marble fragment (1803), stone disc (1868), stone fragment (1866), possible slingstone (1881), two iron nails (1800, 1814), iron mirror (1874), iron hook (1867), iron bar (1860), iron rod (1887), toggle pin fragment (1888), jewelry (1863). The same locus produced the following bones: 57 sheep/goat, 7 cattle, 1 chicken, 3 parrot fish, 11 undistinguishable.

³⁵ E. Nitowski, "An Inscribed Mamlūk Sherd," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 163-164. The ostrakon was originally part of a glazed bowl base. Nitowski suggests that the inscription may have been part of a date, commemorative number, or measurement number.

³⁶ Locus C.6:14 contained a bronze wire ring (1720), iron ring (1842), iron tack (1845).

between C.6:57 and C.6:62. None of these walls was excavated, but both C.6:32 and C.6:62 were founded on bedrock.

Beneath C.6:11 in the southwest courtyard were two more soil layers (C.6:20, 22 = 54), which rested on a hard-packed surface composed of gray soil, stones, and *huwwar* (C.6:23 = 55, 58). All these loci were located between Walls C.6:2, 3, 4, 15, and the south and west balks, and all produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery. Soil Layer C.6:20, immediately under C.6:11, averaged 0.20 to 0.25 m. thick. Many of its stones were worked building stones but were randomly scattered. It was rich in bone remains and also produced several objects.³⁷ Beneath C.6:20 was Layer C.6:22 = 54, composed of multicolored soil, small stones, and some *huwwar* fragments. It averaged 0.20 to 0.35 m. thick and produced a Mamlūk coin dated A.D. 1361-1363.³⁸ It also yielded a bronze rod (1706) and several bones.³⁹ Under this soil layer was a *huwwar* surface (C.6:23 = 55, 58), 0.25 to 0.30 m. thick, which ran up to and touched earlier-phase Walls C.6:32, 57, 62. But Walls C.6:3, 15 were both founded on this surface. It produced several objects and a very large number of bones.⁴⁰

Beneath Surface C.6:23 was soil Layer C.6:25 = 69, which was composed of soft brown soil with some large worked stones. This layer covered the entire southwest courtyard and varied in thickness from 0.25 to 0.70 m. The locus yielded two objects and its latest pottery was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk.⁴¹ Removal of C.6:25 revealed an east-west oriented wall (C.6:31) and two more surfaces, one north (C.6:33 = 71) and another south (C.6:30 = 70) of the wall. This wall ran under both Wall C.6:32 to the west and Wall C.6:62 to the east. Consisting of only one row of mostly cut stones and surviving one course high, it measured 2.22 x 0.26 m. Surface C.6:33 = 71 ran up to and over Wall C.6:31 on the north, while Surface C.6:30 = 70 touched the wall on its south face at a slightly lower level. Thus the wall formed a kind of step between the two surfaces. The more northern of these surfaces (C.6:33 = 71) was composed of hard-compacted *huwwar* layers and soil, and touched Walls C.6:31, 32, 57, 62. Its latest pottery was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk. Intrusive through this surface and reaching bedrock was Pit C.6:75, which was located just north of the intersection of Walls C.6:31 and C.6:62. Measuring 0.84 m. in diameter x 0.57 m. deep, it contained considerable ash, no bone, and a few

³⁷ This locus included the following bones: 28 sheep/goat, 3 large mammal, 1 possible cat, 1 possible camel, 1 pig, 1 chicken. This locus also yielded the following registered objects: bronze sheet (1894), iron nail (1895), blue bead fragment (1898), faience and stone ring (1889).

³⁸ Terian, "Coins 1973-74," published coin 300.

³⁹ Equivalent Locus C.6:54 yielded a stone bead (2517), and the following bones: 17 sheep/goat, 7 horse, 3 large mammal, 16 undistinguishable, 58 scrap.

⁴⁰ Locus C.6:23 yielded an iron ring (1979), bronze wire (2020), faience bead (2024), bead (2025), and the following bones: 76 sheep/goat, 21 large mammal, 8 cattle, 3 camel, 1 horse, 3 fish, 15 undistinguishable. Equivalent Locus C.6:54 contained an iron pipe (2563), glass bead (2556), as well as the following bones: 2 sheep/goat, 2 chicken, 1 fish, 3 scrap. Locus C.6:43 yielded a bronze rod (2655) and the following bones: 3 sheep/goat, 2 undistinguishable, 20 scrap.

⁴¹ Locus C.6:25 contained a bead (2068) and a bracelet (2075).

sherds, the latest of which were Late Roman. Beneath the Surface (C.6:33 = 71) were two additional soil layers (C.6:76, 77). Both touched and were located between Walls C.6:31, 32, 62, while only C.6:77 reached Wall C.6:57 to the north. Layer C.6:76, the upper layer, yielded a glass bead (2687) and a few sherds, the latest being Late Roman. Beneath it was Layer C.6:77, which rested on bedrock. It produced two objects (iron hook 2742; iron ring 2753), several bones, and Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.⁴²

South of Wall C.6:31 and under C.6:25 was *huwwar* surface and sub-floor Layer C.6:30 = 70, which rested on bedrock. Averaging 0.05 to 0.10 m. in thickness, this surface touched Walls C.6:32, 31, 62 and reached the south balk. The latest pottery from the surface was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk.⁴³ Near the intersection of Walls C.6:31 and C.6:62 was a small pit (C.6:88) cut into bedrock and measuring 0.60 m. in diameter. Surface C.6:30 = 70 ran up to the pit, which was encircled by a ring of small stones. It contained loose soil, wood ash, several bones,⁴⁴ a rubbing stone (2859), and Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.

Returning now to the southeast room, beneath soil Layer C.6:12 = 16 was soil Layer C.6:18, a hard-packed light-brown soil with a few rocks and traces of burning. It reached Walls C.6:4, 7, 29, extended over the threshold (C.6:37), and averaged 0.30 to 0.35 m. in depth. This soil layer yielded several iron objects, a few bones, and Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.⁴⁵ Under C.6:18, 13 was the threshold, about 0.81 m. wide and composed of four cut stones of roughly equal size. Cut into one stone was a door socket (see Pl. VII:B). Touching Walls C.6:7, 29, this threshold yielded no pottery or other occupational material. Beneath the threshold and Layer C.6:18, two floors (C.6:24, 35) were encountered. Both of these were composed of hard-compacted soil and patches of *huwwar* plaster. The upper of these floors (C.6:24) touched Walls C.6:4, 7, 29 and the east and south balks. Thus it covered the entire room (1.96 x 2.18 m.) and averaged 0.05 to 0.15 m. thick. This floor was very rich in pottery (Ayyūbid/Mamlūk predominating), bones, and metal objects.⁴⁶ The lower floor (C.6:35), however, was cut by foundation Trench C.6:44 (for Wall C.6:4 along its eastern face) and by soil Layer C.6:60 (a small patch of soil under C.6:7). It did appear to touch Wall C.6:29, as well as the east and south balks. The floor averaged 0.07 m. thick. Its latest pottery was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk but, unlike the floor above, it produced no objects and only a few bones.

Foundation Trench C.6:44, which cut Floor C.6:35, was sealed over by

⁴² Locus C.6:77 produced the following bones: 10 sheep/goat, 1 chicken, 4 undistinguishable, 22 scrap.

⁴³ Locus C.6:30 produced the following bones: 3 sheep/goat, 2 cattle, 1 horse, 1 large mammal, 5 undistinguishable, 15 scrap.

⁴⁴ 10 sheep/goat, 1 large mammal, 14 scrap.

⁴⁵ Locus C.6:18 yielded two iron nails (1921, 1966), iron bracelet fragment (1922). It also produced the following bones: 11 sheep/goat, 2 rat.

⁴⁶ Locus C.6:24 produced a bronze wire (2251), iron knife point (2252), iron buckle (2250), iron nail (2264), worked sandstone fragment (2281); also the following bones: 22 sheep/goat, 2 large mammal, 3 chicken, 3 undistinguishable, 107 scrap.

Floor C.6:24. The trench ran northward along the east face of Wall C.6:4 until it reached Wall C.6:7. It measured 1.81 m. long by 0.11 m. wide with an average depth of 0.10. It produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, a bronze ring (2362), and a few bones. Under the foundation trench and the second floor a cobbled floor (C.6:59) was found. This floor did not extend over the entire southeast room but hugged the south and east balks, touching Wall C.6:62 (the earlier-phase wall beneath C.6:4). The cobbles themselves, irregularly shaped but of relatively uniform size, overlay a hard, compact layer (considered part of the same locus). Its latest pottery was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk, although a number of sherds from the Early Byzantine period were also represented.⁴⁷

Just north of the southeast room, below Layer C.6:16 = 12 in the northeast courtyard, was soil Layer C.6:27. Composed of fine granular soil, charcoal flecks, and small stones, it extended westward from the east balk up to Walls C.6:4, 7, 29, and Threshold C.6:37. It thus covered the entire courtyard (2.94 x 2.40 m.) to an average depth of 0.12 m. It produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and a few bones. Below C.6:27 was a cobbled surface (C.6:34) that covered the entire courtyard and extended a little beyond its confines. Constructed of mostly uncut but uniform-sized stones and compacted brown soil, the floor extended from the east and south balks and ran under Walls C.6:7, 19, Thresholds C.6:27, 37, and the northern part of Floor C.6:24 in the southeast room. But it ran up to and touched Walls C.6:29, 57 (the earlier phase of C.6:2), and 62 (earlier phase of C.6:4). Averaging 0.20 to 0.30 m. thick, this cobbled surface yielded large amounts of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, numerous bones,⁴⁸ and a stone weight (2280). Beneath this surface was Layer C.6:46 = 61, which was thickly strewn with stones from pebbles to boulders in size and covered almost all the courtyard to an average depth of 0.20 m., producing a few Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds though most of its pottery was Early Byzantine.⁴⁹ What seemed to be a continuation of this layer to the south was C.6:61, located in the southeast room under cobbled Floor C.6:59. Like C.6:46 this layer averaged 0.20 m. in depth and was filled with different-sized stones, loose dark-brown soil, and some charcoal flecks. Its pottery was also similar: a few Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds were present but Early Byzantine pottery was predominant.⁵⁰ It touched Wall C.6:62 to the west but ran under Wall C.6:29 along the east balk.

Two entrances into the northeast courtyard have already been discussed above. Threshold C.6:28 provided access from the courtyard into the north building, while Threshold C.6:37 connected the southeast room with the courtyard. A third doorway was found on the east side of the courtyard in the balk between C.6 and C.8. Within this latter Square more evidence was

⁴⁷ Locus C.6:59 yielded the following bones: 2 sheep/goat, 2 cattle, 1 fish, 7 scrap.

⁴⁸ Locus C.6:34 produced the following bones: 24 sheep/goat, 9 large mammal, 1 cattle, 1 rodent, 8 chicken, 56 undistinguishable, 11 scrap.

⁴⁹ Locus C.6:46 yielded the following bones: 10 sheep/goat, 3 large mammal, 4 cattle, 6 chicken, 6 undistinguishable, 68 scrap.

⁵⁰ Locus C.6:61 produced the following bones: 8 sheep/goat, 4 large mammal, 1 donkey, 2 undistinguishable, 24 scrap.

discovered which indicated an extension of the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk building complex eastward, further up the slope of the tell.

Beneath the topsoil (C.8:1) of C.8 a subsoil layer (C.8:2) was encountered, which covered the entire Square (8.00 x 6.00 m.). It was light brown in color, heavily strewn with large stones, and produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery. Layer C.8:2 averaged 0.10 m. in depth and yielded a bead (2044) and a ceramic disc (2045).⁵¹

Removal of the topsoil and subsoil layers revealed a number of well defined walls. Extending northward from the doorway mentioned above, in the common balk between C.6 and C.8, was Wall C.8:14. Constructed mainly of undressed limestone and surviving to a height of five courses, this wall measured 1.80 x 0.90 m. Only its eastern face was exposed, however, since the western face was obscured by the balk. This wall formed part of the eastern side of the northeast courtyard in C.6. Abutting this wall on its northern end was east-west Wall C.8:6 = 10, which was composed of two rows of coursed stones with a rubble interior. It extended into the west balk, and is possibly equivalent to Wall C.6:8. Thus, this wall formed the northern boundary of the northeast courtyard of C.6 as well as the western room of C.8. In this latter Square the wall survived in places up to four courses high of both cut and uncut stones, with an average width of 0.60 m. and measuring 2.95 m. in length. Bonded into the eastern end of C.8:6 was Wall C.8:5 = 7, which extended southward almost the full length of the Square and disappeared into the south balk. The northern half of this wall was a skin wall attached to the west face of Wall C.8:4, while the southern half was free standing. The total length of this wall was 5.35 m., while the width varied from 0.50 m. (for the skin wall) to 1.00 m. (for the free standing portion). It was preserved in places up to seven courses high. Bonded into this wall near its juncture with the south balk was Wall C.8:8, which served as the south wall of this room. It ran westward from Wall C.8:5 = 7 for 1.80 m. before disappearing into the west balk, where it may have connected with Wall C.6:36 of the southeast room. Only the northern face of Wall C.8:8 was situated outside the balk. Upon excavation this wall produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, a pestle (2947), and several bones.

In the center of the Square was Wall C.8:4, already referred to in the preceding paragraph. Composed of two rows of coursed stones with a rubble interior, this wall measured 3.50 x 1.20 m. and survived to a height of seven courses on its eastern (exposed) face. Abutting this wall on its southeast end was Wall C.8:9, which extended eastward into the east balk. Following the typical pattern of wall construction in the entire complex, it consisted of two rows with an interior rubble fill. Four of its courses were preserved on the north face, but only 2½ on the south. Its maximum length (south face) was 3.40 m., while it averaged 0.90 m. wide. Removal of this wall revealed an earlier-phase wall beneath, to be discussed below. This operation also produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, two objects, and a large number of bones.⁵² Abutting Wall C.8:4 to the northeast was Wall C.8:15, consisting

⁵¹ Locus C.8:2 contained the following bones: 7 sheep/goat, 2 rat, 2 undistinguishable.

⁵² Locus C.8:9 yielded an iron disc (2622) and a glass bead (2603). It also

of a single row of stones (1.10 x 0.45 m.) one course high, which reached the east balk. This wall also produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and was built upon an earlier-phase wall (C.8:20).

Thus, these walls of C.8 bounded part of three distinct rooms of the complex. The western room of C.8 was surrounded by Walls C.8:5 (=7), 6, 8, 10, and the west balk, which also contained the doorway leading to the northeast courtyard of C.6. Walls C.8:4, 9, 15 and the east balk enclosed the eastern room. A distinct north-south wall protruded through the ground surface just beyond the east balk, and thus probably formed the east wall of this room. The juncture of Walls C.8:5 = 7 and C.8:9 in the southeast sector formed an L-shaped corner of a possible third room. No entrances were apparent in either of these latter two rooms, but doorways could have been located beyond the balks.

Beneath the topsoil and subsoil loci (C.8:1,2) in the western room was soil Layer C.8:11 = 26, composed of loose brown soil filled with numerous large stones and averaging 1.22 m. thick. This layer covered the entire room (5.80 x 2.00 m.) and touched Walls C.8:5 (=7), 6, 8, 14, and the west balk. This layer was rich in Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, bones, and objects, including a 3d century A.D. coin of Neapolis.⁵³ Beneath this thick soil layer several superimposed floors and occupational layers were encountered (C.8:28, 35, 39, 42, 44), all of which produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and were located in the northern half of the room. Floor C.8:28, the uppermost of these, was a badly damaged *huwwar* floor with large pockets of ash. Covering space 1.72 x 1.65 m. and averaging 0.10 m. thick, this floor touched Walls C.8:5, 14, and Installation C.8:29 (a semi-circular ring of stones containing some ash, probably a hearth). Floor C.8:28 also ran up to the doorway in the west balk and ran under C.8:27, a secondary blockage of the doorway.⁵⁴ The hearth (C.8:29) was 0.64 m. in diameter but produced no bones nor objects.

Beneath Floor C.8:28 was soil Layer C.8:35, very thin (0.03 m.), which touched Walls C.8:5, 6, 14, and Hearth C.8:29. It produced only a few sherds, bones, and *ṭabun* fragments. This layer sealed a second floor (C.8:39), as well as a partly preserved *ṭabun* (C.8:38). This second floor was similar to C.8:28. It was composed of *huwwar* but was somewhat thicker, averaging 0.20 m. Relatively sterile in content, the floor touched Walls C.8:5, 6, 14, and Hearth(?) C.8:29. This floor was founded on a third floor (C.8:42) of beaten earth approximately 0.15 m. thick. It reached Walls C.8:5, 6, 14, Hearth C.8:29, and *Ṭabun* C.8:38. The last of these loci from the northern sector

produced the following bones: 23 sheep/goat, 4 large mammal, 1 donkey, 1 fish, 10 undistinguishable, 53 scrap.

⁵³ The coin was object 2476. Locus C.8:11 yielded the following registered objects: iron ring (2286), iron arrowhead (2274), iron spatula fragment (2464), iron slag fragment (2532), two iron nails (2463, 2518), stone strainer (2407), ceramic disc (2572), mortar fragment (2571). The locus also produced the following bones: 79 sheep/goat, 18 large mammal, 2 cattle, 1 dog, 1 rodent, 12 chicken, 2 fish, 50 undistinguishable, 282 scrap.

⁵⁴ Locus C.8:28 produced an iron nail (2682) and the following bones: 1 sheep/goat, 1 chicken, 1 fish, 2 undistinguishable, 38 scrap.

of the room was soil Layer C.8:44, found immediately below Floor C.8:42. Measuring 2.30 x 1.45 m. and 0.35 m. in depth, this layer was composed of loose soil, stones, and chips of *nari* limestone. Containing a bronze bar (2816) and some bones,⁵⁵ this layer ran under Walls C.8:5, 6, 14. Hearth(?) C.8:29 and *Ṭabun* C.8:38 were both founded on this layer, which extended southward to Wall C.8:30 = C.6:84, an earlier-phase wall discussed below.

In the eastern room of C.8, removal of the topsoil and subsoil loci revealed a thick soil layer (C.8:3) packed with large stones, similar to C.8:11 = 26 in the west room. Averaging 0.25 m. in depth, Layer C.8:3 touched Walls C.8:4, 9, and the east balk, and covered Wall C.8:15 to the north. This layer produced an Arabic lamp (2094), Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, and a few bones. Two coins were also associated with this locus. Although identification of the coins was hampered by their poor state of preservation, one was possibly Umayyad (A.D. 661-750) while the other was possibly Ayyūbid (A.D. 1171-1342).⁵⁶ Under C.8:3 in this room was soil Layer C.8:17, composed of loose brown soil with a few small stones. Extending over the entire room (3.26 x 2.33 m.) to an average depth of 0.40 m., this locus touched Walls C.8:4, 9, 15, and the east balk. It contained Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, considerable bone, and one interesting but unidentified object.⁵⁷ Beneath this layer was a badly pitted *huwwar* floor (C.8:18) with charcoal pockets. It was heavily damaged by animal holes and rock fall, and was completely lost in places. The floor was trenched by Wall C.8:15 to the north, but touched Walls C.8:4, 9. Averaging 0.10 m. thick, the floor contained large amounts of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, bone, and objects, among which was a Mamlūk coin of Az-Zahir (2471, dated A.D. 1382-1399) and a whole lamp (2379).⁵⁸ Also beneath C.8:17 and founded on Floor C.8:18 was Installation C.8:21, an enclosed corner near the juncture of Walls C.8:4, 9. The space was marked off by a single row of five stones, enclosing a sector 0.60 x 1.00 m.

Floor C.8:18 sealed two other installations: a *ṭabun* (C.8:23), located near the north face of Wall C.8:9, and a storage installation (C.8:24) which extended into the east balk. The *ṭabun* was in a fragmentary state of preservation, with only the bottom and side walls left *in situ*. It was covered by two distinct layers of stones and was filled with ash and charcoal. It contained very little pottery (Ayyūbid/Mamlūk), bone (one charred), and a ceramic loom weight fragment.⁵⁹ The *ṭabun* measured 0.80 m. in diameter. In the northeast corner was Installation C.8:24, a rectangular storage area (1.45 x

⁵⁵ Locus C.8:44 contained the following bones: 12 sheep/goat, 6 large mammal, 2 chicken, 1 undistinguishable, 32 scrap.

⁵⁶ Terian, "Coins 1973-74," pp. 140-141, published coins 293, 294.

⁵⁷ Locus C.8:17 produced an undefined perforated stone and iron fragment (2247); also the following bones: 6 sheep/goat, 1 fish, 12 undistinguishable, 63 scrap.

⁵⁸ Locus C.8:18 produced also an iron hook (2290), two iron nails (2307), iron hinge fragment (2356), slingstone (2300); also the following bones: 34 sheep/goat, 5 large mammal, 1 cattle, 6 chicken, 3 fish, 24 undistinguishable, 5 scrap.

⁵⁹ Locus C.8:23 produced the following bones: 1 sheep/goat, 1 large mammal, 1 rodent (charred), 1 undistinguishable, 6 scrap.

0.48 m.) bounded by a single row of uncut stones standing up to four courses. Inside the installation was soil and ash, beneath which was an interior *huwwar* surface (C.8:33). Excavation of the installation produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and a few bones, but no other evidence to suggest function.

Beneath Floor C.8:18 was soil Layer C.8:22, a thick (0.45 m.) subfloor layer rich in remains which covered the entire room. It was composed of fairly compact soil with small rocks and chunks of ash. It touched Walls C.8:4, 9, and 20, the last an earlier-phase wall under C.8:15. The layer contained large amounts of Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, much bone, and several objects.⁶⁰ The *ṭabun* (C.8:23) was founded on this soil layer, which was cut by Installation C.8:24. Below C.8:22 was soil Layer C.8:25 = 40, the bottom Mamlūk layer within the eastern room. Installation C.8:24 was founded on this layer, which touched Walls C.8:4, 9, 20, and the east balk. Composed of firm soil with chunks of limestone and clay, this layer averaged 0.30 m. in depth and covered the entire room. It contained some Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, but earlier ceramic forms, especially Late Roman, tended to predominate. Soil Layer C.8:25 also produced a whole Mamlūk juglet (2419), glass bead (2677), bronze rod (2648), and a Nabataean coin (2873, no precise date, but certainly pre-A.D. 106). The locus was also exceptionally rich in bone remains.⁶¹

In the northern sector of the Square, between Walls C.8:6, 10, 15, and the north and east balks, removal of the topsoil and subsoil layers revealed a thick rock-filled soil layer (C.8:13) over 1.00 m. deep. For lack of time the bottom of this layer was not reached, and no surfaces associated with this end of the building complex were found. The latest pottery from this locus was uniformly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk, and it also produced a coin of Constantine, A.D. 306-337 (2667).⁶²

In the southeast portion of C.8, between Walls C.8:7, 9, and the south and east balks, four similar rock-strewn layers were encountered (C.8:12, 19, 31, 43). All contained loose soil and Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery. Soil Layer C.8:12 measured 3.74 x 1.80 m. and averaged 0.52 m. in depth. It contained a whetstone (2090), plus a few bones. Beneath C.8:12 was Layer C.8:19. It was strewn with different-sized stones, ash pockets, and chunks of *huwwar*. It averaged 0.70 m. deep. Among the objects from this locus was a coin (2318), perhaps late Ptolemaic in date (pre-30 B.C.). Animal bones were found in abundance.⁶³ Below C.8:19 was a much thinner (0.13 m.) soil layer (C.8:31), which covered only a portion of this sector (3.21 x 1.62 m.). It was also com-

⁶⁰ Locus C.8:22 yielded the following registered objects: iron tag (2305), iron hook (2365), iron nail fragment (2364), glass bead (2363), ceramic pendant (2506). It also produced the following bones: 69 sheep/goat, 8 large mammal, 9 cattle, 5 dog, 13 chicken, 1 fish, 109 undistinguishable, 37 scrap.

⁶¹ Locus C.8:25 produced the following bones: 47 sheep/goat, 7 large mammal, 1 cattle, 8 pig, 2 camel, 5 chicken, 17 undistinguishable, 121 scrap.

⁶² Locus C.8:13 also yielded an iron nail (2681) and produced the following bones: 39 sheep/goat, 3 large mammal, 3 cattle, 5 dog, 3 rodent, 8 chicken, 15 undistinguishable, 54 scrap.

⁶³ Locus C.8:19 contained a sea shell fragment (2283) and the following bones: 28 sheep/goat, 7 large mammal, 1 cattle, 3 chicken, 1 fish, 17 undistinguishable, 122 scrap.

posed of large stones, fine loose soil, and pockets of ash. It contained a silver ring (2609) and several bones. Immediately beneath C.8:31 was soil Layer C.8:43. By this time removal of Wall C.8:9 to the north and excavation of the upper soil layers in this sector had revealed several earlier-phase walls (C.8:48, 50, 53) which seemed to have supported a vaulted roof (C.8:32), now mostly collapsed. Soil Layer C.8:43, which partially covered the remnants of this vault, was filled with many large and obviously worked building stones and measured 3.21 x 1.62 m. with an average thickness of 1.04 m. Although its latest associated pottery was Ayyūbid/Mamlūk, many Umayyad sherds were also present. This locus touched earlier-phase Walls C.8:48, 50, 53.

The fifth and last of these heavily rock-strewn layers from this sector was C.8:46, found beneath C.8:43. For lack of time only a limited part of this locus (2.25 x 1.70 m.) was excavated. This lay between earlier-phase Walls C.8:48, 50, 53, and the south balk. Its average depth was 1.16 m., and it produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.⁶⁴ Bedrock was reached beneath this layer. Cut into the bedrock was a circular hole (C.8:56) measuring 0.70 m. in diameter and filled with loose soil. The close of the 1976 season unfortunately prevented the clearing of this installation, which perhaps served as a cistern or grain silo. The earlier-phase walls located around this installation will be discussed below.

In C.9 and C.10, the two new Squares opened during the 1976 season, further evidence of the Mamlūk building came to light. Beneath the topsoil (C.9:1, 10; C.10:1) a fairly thick subsoil layer was encountered (C.9:2, 3, 5, 14; C.10:2, 3, 4, 13). This brown layer covered virtually all of both Squares. It was heavily strewn with stones ranging in size from pebbles to boulders, and some of these were obviously worked building stones. The pottery from this subsoil layer was quite mixed, but the latest datable sherds were uniformly Ayyūbid/Mamlūk. Of particular interest was the numismatic evidence. Locus C.9:3 contained a Nabataean coin (2474), while Locus C.9:14 included two Mamlūk coins (2664, 2673, not precisely dated but which must fall between A.D. 1250-1517), and a Roman coin of Antoninus Pius (2668, A.D. 138-161). Locus C.10:4 yielded a coin of Justin II (2478, A.D. 565-578). This soil layer was also rich in bone material and produced a number of objects.⁶⁵

By the time removal of these loci was completed, the outlines of a rather substantial building had appeared (see Fig. 7, over). Only a portion of this

⁶⁴ Locus C.8:46 produced the following registered objects: steatite bead (2804), agate fragment (2913).

⁶⁵ Locus C.9:3 produced an Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pilgrim's flask (2475). Locus C.9:5 yielded a bullet (2302), bronze pin fragment (2303). Locus C.9:14 produced a possible stone weight (2586), iron ring (2647), glass bead (2629). All these loci (plus C.9:2) produced the following bones: 59 sheep/goat, 9 large mammal, 1 cattle, 4 chicken, 3 turtle, 63 undistinguishable, 633 scrap (the large amount of scrap bone is at least partly caused by the sifting process used in the "Test Square," which facilitated the recovery of small bone fragments ordinarily missed during normal excavation). Locus C.10:4 produced an incense-altar fragment of limestone (2446). Loci C.10:2, 3, 4, 13, produced the following bones: 77 sheep/goat, 7 large mammal, 2 cattle, 1 donkey, 2 camel, 2 possible gazelle, 7 chicken, 13 undistinguishable, 734 scrap.

building could be exposed, but even the exposed part measured 8.50 x 7.00 m. and included at least three rooms. The northern largest room was only partially exposed. It was delineated by Walls C.9:4, 8 (= C.10:27), C.10:5, and the north balk of both Squares. Wall C.9:4, the south wall of this room, survived in four courses of mostly worked stones extending southward 2.63 m. from the north balk and founded on bedrock. Running eastward from this wall was Wall C.9:8 = C.10:27, a well constructed wall of limestone blocks surviving up to eight courses. It formed the south wall of the room. The pronounced lean of its upper courses to the north suggested that it formed part of a vault (see Pl. VIII:A). This wall formed part of an exterior northern face of a triple wall some 2.50 m. thick. It consisted of an inner middle wall (C.9:21), two outer walls (C.9:8, 25, 35), and a rubble fill in between. The southern face of this massive wall served as the northern limit of the two smaller rooms to be discussed below. The eastern limit of the northern room was formed by Wall C.10:5, a single row of stones preserved to a height of at least six courses, although its bottom was not reached. It abutted Wall C.9:8 = C.10:27 to the south and reached the north balk. It was constructed of both worked and unworked stones, and measured 2.00 x 0.25 m. Behind this end wall of the building to the east, a foundation trench had been cut into the earlier soil layers. This trench had then been filled with soil, large and small stones, and other debris (C.10:17, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31). The fill was composed of loose gray soil with a few chunks of cement. It contained Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, some bone, but almost no objects.⁶⁶

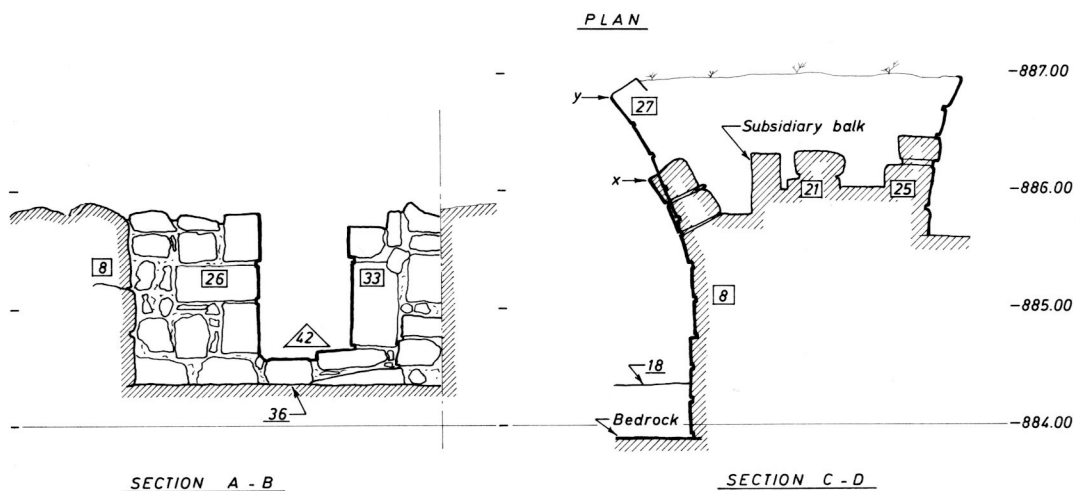
Inside this northern room, immediately below the subsoil loci, were several thick soil layers choked with large cut building stones (C.9:7 = C.10:15; C.9:9, 11, 13). Some of these stones (especially in C.9:9) were found in clearly discernible rows or lines, suggesting wall or ceiling collapse. These soil layers were composed of compacted, clay-like soil with some ash flecks. They contained considerable pottery (the latest being Ayyūbid/Mamlūk) and bone remains, but almost no objects.⁶⁷ The combined maximum depth of these layers in C.9 was 1.47 m. Its bottom was not reached in C.10.

Beneath these loci the large cut building stones gave out, as soil Layer C.9:20 was encountered. It was composed of brown clay-like soil with some charcoal flecks, limestone pebbles, and chunks of reddish fired mud brick. It touched Walls C.9:4, 8 and the east and north balks. It measured 2.25 x 4.20 m. and its average depth was 0.25 m. Despite the fact that this locus lay directly on the uppermost floor of the room, the layer contained only very few sherds (Ayyūbid/Mamlūk), no objects, and only a few small bones.

Floor C.9:18, immediately below C.9:20, was composed of multiple thin earth layers closely packed together with *huwwar* pockets and bits of charcoal. It ran up to and touched Walls C.9:4, 8, and the north and east balks. Averaging 0.15 to 0.20 m. thick, it contained Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, two

⁶⁶ Locus C.10:29 produced a glass bead (2678). Loci C.10:17, 23, 29 yielded the following bones: 10 sheep/goat, 2 large mammal, 1 cattle, 1 chicken, 7 undistinguishable, 44 scrap.

⁶⁷ Locus C.9:11 yielded an iron sheet (2640). Loci C.9:7, 11, C.10:15 produced the following bones: 50 sheep/goat, 21 large mammal, 3 cattle, 8 chicken, 38 undistinguishable, 282 scrap.



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 AYYUBID - MAMLUK HOUSE
 DRAWN JULY 1976 BY:
 BERT DEVRIES
 DAVID PIPER
 ANITA VAN ELDEREN
 DANIEL SALZMANN

0 40 80 120 160 200M.

Fig. 7. Partial plan and sections of Mamlūk domestic complex in Squares C.9, 10 (cf. Fig. 13 in 1974 report).

slingstones (2789, 2820), and a few bones. A curious feature of this floor was four pairs of circular cup-like depressions, filled with reddish earth and nothing else (see Pl. VIII:B). Each depression measured ca. 0.09 m. in diameter, with an average depth of 0.05 m.

Under this floor of the northern room were two soil layers (C.9:45, 46), which in turn rested on a second floor (C.9:48). Both of these soil layers were composed of brown soil, *huwwar* chunks, and small stones. Both also produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and extended from Walls C.9:4, 8 to the north and east balks. Soil Layer C.9:45 averaged 0.10 m. in depth and contained a slingstone (2894) and several bones. Layer C.9:46 averaged 0.15 m. deep and produced an iron sickle fragment (2882), bronze pin (2884), iron ring (2899), slingstone (2911), and some bones.⁶⁸

Beneath soil Layer C.9:46 were *huwwar* Floor C.9:48, soil Layer C.9:49, and Pits C.9:47, 58, 61. Floor C.9:48, in the western end of the room, touched Walls C.9:4, 8, and the north balk. Measuring 2.90 x 0.70 m. and averaging 0.08 m. thick, it suddenly broke off to the east. It contained no pottery or other artifactual remains. Partially beneath it but extending almost the entire length of the room was soil Layer C.9:49, a very thin (0.05 m.) locus similar in color and composition to C.9:46. It contained Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery but no bones or objects. Below this layer in places was bedrock, while above it and against the east balk was Pit C.9:47, filled with black earth, ash, and charcoal. It measured 0.50 x 0.12 m. with an average thickness of 0.03 m. Its latest pottery was Umayyad, though it contained only a few sherds. Under C.9:49 along the east face of Wall C.9:4 was fill Layer C.9:63, which was laid into a cut in bedrock. It was excavated to a depth of 0.35 m. but its bottom was not reached. Composed of loose dirt and small rocks, it also produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.

No entrance was found into the northern room of the building, though one certainly could have existed to the north beyond the balk. Entrances for the other two rooms, however, were located to the south. Exterior access to the southwestern room was located to the west between Walls C.9:4 and C.9:31. The former of these walls extended southwestward from the north balk for 2.63 m. and survived up to four courses. It averaged 1.20 m. wide and was constructed of both dressed and undressed limestone blocks. Wall C.9:31 extended northeastward from the west balk. It was built of dressed limestone blocks with smaller, irregular stones on top. These two walls flanked a threshold (C.9:62) which provided access into the building from the west. Elsewhere the room was bounded by Walls C.9:35 to the north, C.9:26, 33 to the east, and C.9:28 (a slightly curving wall) to the south. Between Walls C.9:26 and C.9:33 was Threshold C.9:42, which provided access into the third, or southeastern room of the building. This room was thus bounded by Walls C.9:26, 33 to the west, C.9:25 to the north, and the east and south balks. None of these walls was excavated, but all were constructed of both worked and unworked stones and small chink stones. Walls C.9:26, 33, 28(= 32), 25 were all composed of two facings of coursed masonry with a rubble interior.

⁶⁸ Loci C.9:45, 46 produced the following bones: 9 sheep/goat, 3 chicken, 11 undistinguishable, 46 scrap.

Turning first to the southwestern room (3.00 x 3.25 m.), beneath the top-soil and subsoil layers three additional layers were encountered: C.9:29 (= 30), 36, 38. All three were composed of loose soil and filled with stones of all sizes, particularly large building stones. These layers extended over the entire room to a depth of ca. 1.00 m. and all produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.⁶⁹ Beneath these soil layers was Floor C.9:51, composed of patchy *huwwar* and dark-brown hard-packed earth with traces of burning. For lack of time this floor was exposed in only a 1.00 x 2.00 m. probe trench against the face of Wall C.9:35 in the northern sector of the room, as were all lower loci in this room. Under this floor was a thin (0.03 m.) soil layer (C.9:52), which in turn rested upon a second *huwwar* floor (C.9:53). This lower floor also showed traces of burning in small patches and averaged 0.09 m. thick. Finally, under Floor C.9:53 was soil Layer C.9:56, the lowest level reached in the probe before the close of excavation. All these loci uniformly contained Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery and all touched Wall C.9:35. None produced any registered objects, however, and almost no bone.

Beneath soil Layer C.9:38, in the corner of the southwestern room formed by Walls C.9:28, 33, was Pit C.9:40, filled with brownish-red soil, chunks of charcoal, and some pieces of burned Ayyūbid/Mamlūk cooking pots. The depth of the pit was 0.15 m., and its maximum depth was ca. 1.00 m.

The southeastern room of the building (2.25 x 2.00 m.) presented similar stratigraphy. Beneath the subsoil were two soil layers (C.9:22, 37) heavily strewn with large cut and uncut stones. Layer C.9:22 averaged 0.42 m. in depth and contained an iron nail (2720) and many small bones.⁷⁰ Layer C.9:37, somewhat lighter in color and about the same thickness (0.41 m.), contained an iron ring fragment (2792) and two coins. The earlier of these (2876), dated to the reign of the Roman Emperor Arcadius (A.D. 395-408), while the other (2880) was Mamlūk (A.D. 1250-1517). This locus was also rich in bone remains.⁷¹ Under these two layers the absence of large cut building stones was noticed in the next soil layer (C.9:39). It was composed of clay-like, hard-packed soil with streaks of disintegrated limestone and ash. This layer was thinner (0.20 m.) and contained a few bones. All three loci touched Walls C.9:25, 33 and the east and south balks, and all produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery.

Beneath these soil layers was a series of three superimposed floors (C.9:41, 43, 44). All were composed partly of *huwwar* chips and partly of hard-packed earth and small stones. Floor C.9:41, the uppermost, covered the entire room, averaged 0.20 m. thick, and extended over Threshold C.9:42. This threshold

⁶⁹ Locus C.9:29 = 30 yielded an iron horseshoe (2696) and two possible stone weights (2699, 2700). Locus C.9:36 produced an iron nail (2867), while Locus C.9:38 yielded another iron nail (2791), loom weight (2829), and a bronze Nabataean coin (2871). These loci also produced the following bones: 69 sheep/goat, 23 large mammal, 3 cattle, 1 dog, 1 donkey, 10 chicken, 1 fish, 63 undistinguishable, 1156 scrap.

⁷⁰ Locus C.9:22 contained the following bones: 12 sheep/goat, 1 chicken, 9 undistinguishable, 188 scrap.

⁷¹ Locus C.9:37 produced the following bones: 31 sheep/goat, 2 cattle, 2 chicken, 14 undistinguishable, 409 scrap.

was constructed of two large, flat, dressed limestone blocks forming an opening 0.82 m. wide. Floor C.9:43 was much thinner (0.05 m.) but yielded a few bones. The bottom floor (C.9:44) was similar to Floor C.9:43 in composition.⁷² All three floors produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery but no registered objects. All three also touched Walls C.9:25, 26, 33, and the east and south balks. Under Floors C.9:43, 44 two pits (C.9:50, 54) were discovered, as well as soil Layer C.9:60, which was not excavated for lack of time. Pit C.9:50 (0.30 x 0.67 m.) was located in the northwest corner, formed by Walls C.9:25, 26, bounded on the east and south by four large stones in a semi-circular arrangement. It contained dark reddish-brown soil, black charcoal, gray ash, and small pebbles. The pit was intrusive through Floor C.9:44, while Floor C.9:43 touched it. The pit was not excavated. Pit C.9:54 (0.64 x 0.58 m.) was encountered sealed beneath Floor C.9:44. It also contained dark reddish soil, some ash, and small pebbles. Excavated to a depth of 0.25 m., its bottom was not reached before the close of excavation. It produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, but no objects.

The western sector of C.9, lying outside the building, was also investigated. Beneath the topsoil (C.9:1 = 10) subsoil Layers C.9:5, 17 (= 15), 19 were encountered. These loci also produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, a few bones, and together averaged 0.80 m. in depth. Under Layer C.9:19, the lowest of these loci, bedrock was reached. A deep cut running north to south and parallel to Wall C.9:4 had been made in the bedrock. Into this cut a large number of regular-sized stones (ca. 0.10 x 0.10 m.) had been tightly packed, forming a sump (C.9:34 = 54). Above the sump was a water channel (C.9:24) built of two parallel curving rows of unworked stones (ca. 0.20 m. apart) which extended 1.07 m. from the north balk to the west balk. Within the water channel was a Roman coin (2937) of Pontius Pilate (A.D. 31/32). Both the water channel and the sump produced Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery, but no other artifactual remains. The depth of the sump was at least 0.50 m., but its bottom was not reached before the end of excavations.

Interpretation: It seemed clear from the evidence cited above that there was a substantial occupation in this sector of Tell Ḥesbān during the Mamlūk period. Virtually all other sectors of the site have also produced considerable material from this period. Within the eastern Squares of Area C the large number of *ṭabuns*, fire pits, small storage installations, numerous domestic artifacts, and thousands of animal bones all suggest a domestic function for the building complex. This is further suggested by the relatively modest size of the rooms, the entrances (with the exception of the double-socket Threshold C.6:28 in the north building), and the absence of any architectural or artifactual evidence

⁷² Loci C.9:39, 43, 44 produced the following bones: 5 sheep/goat, 1 large mammal, 1 horse, 1 chicken, 4 undistinguishable, 47 scrap.

which would suggest public structures. Because all the buildings have been only partially exposed, the actual number of individual buildings cannot be determined. But certainly the north building of C.4, C.6, the structure within C.8, and the east building of C.9, C.10 represent independent structures. Part of a possible fourth building may be represented by the southeast room of C.6, but this is uncertain.

The Mamlūk period occupation in C.4, C.6, and C.8 seems to fall into three phases: 1) the initial resettlement of this sector (beginning ca. A.D. 1260) involving the leveling of the ground surface, demolition or rebuilding of earlier walls, and construction of the major buildings and installations of the Area, 2) a period of rebuilding and modification of the phase-one structures, 3) a time of abandonment and disuse (beginning ca. A.D. 1400) leading to the collapse and filling in of these structures.

During the resettlement of phase one, the Mamlūk period inhabitants employed no uniform or consistent method of preparing this sector of the site for their structures. In some places, such as the north building, they merely rebuilt existing walls left from the Byzantine period. They leveled parts of this sector with a rubble fill (C.6:46=61) and cleaned out the C.4 water channels (C.4:32, 68, 71) and cistern (C.4:7) for reuse. A similar pattern appears in C.8, where previously existing Roman walls were utilized as foundations for the Mamlūk structures. But in C.9 this sector was leveled down to bedrock before the erection of the east building. This can also be observed in the southwestern courtyard of C.6, where Ayyūbid/Mamlūk soil layers were found directly over bedrock. Apparently, much of this cleared material and debris was pushed down the slope to the west, where thick layers of deep fill were found.⁷³

The best evidence for dating this initial occupation phase is the coin hoard found in Floor C.4:37 (the lowest of a series of superimposed floor levels) against the bench (C.4:38) from with-

⁷³ Thompson, "Heshbon 1971: Area C," pp. 72-73.

in the north building. The hoard contained coins dated A.D. 1260-1277 and thus was probably deposited in the 1270's. This would support the suggestion of J. A. Sauer that "a major occupation commenced at Heshbân in ca. 1260."⁷⁴ This first phase witnessed the construction of the north building and perhaps the other major structures of the Area as well, with the possible exception of the east building in C.9 and C.10.

The date of the start of the second phase cannot be precisely determined, but it almost certainly falls in the 14th century. Again, the numismatic evidence should be considered. A coin dated A.D. 1363-1377 came from C.4:24, an occupation layer immediately above the uppermost floor (C.4:26) of the north building. By this time the bench (C.4:38) had been completely covered over and the arched doorway in the south wall had been blocked (C.4:60, 61). Another coin dated A.D. 1382-1399 was imbedded in the uppermost floor (C.8:18) of the C.8 building to the east. From C.6:22, an occupation layer immediately above the uppermost *huwwar* surface (C.6:23) of the southwestern courtyard, came another coin dated A.D. 1361-1363. Thus, these coins provide a *terminus post quem* of ca. A.D. 1380-1400 for the end of the second phase. The evidence again supports Sauer's suggestion that "the Mongol invasion under Tamerlane would probably have caused the essential abandonment of the site in ca. 1400/1401."⁷⁵

Several architectural modifications were carried out within the building complex during the second phase of occupation. In C.4 Wall C.4:10 was attached to the west end of the north building⁷⁶ possibly indicating an extension or enlargement of the structure. The arched doorway in the south wall was blocked in

⁷⁴ Sauer, "Heshbon 1971: Area B," p. 38. (Sauer's suggestion that this re-occupation occurred after the defeat of the Mongol forces ca. A.D. 1260 by the Mamlûks under Baybars I [A.D. 1260-1277] seems to fit the evidence best.)

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Wall C.4:10, which abutted Wall C.4:8, was founded on soil Layer C.4:25, which ran up to and touched Wall C.4:8. Thus Wall C.4:10 represents a later addition to the building.

two stages (C.4:60, 61), as has been mentioned above. Since the north end of Wall C.4:15 rested against the blockage of the doorway, it must be even later in date. On the east end the elaborate sunken stone-paved threshold (C.6:28), with its double door sockets, was also a later modification of the north building. This is illustrated by the foundation trench (C.6:40) of the threshold, which cut through all the floor layers of the building. Also probably belonging to this later phase are Walls C.6:3, 15, both of which were founded on Surface C.6:23, the uppermost surface of the southwestern courtyard. The construction of Wall C.6:15, which abutted Walls C.6:2, 4, then divided the northeast and southwest sectors into two separate courtyards. The function of the northeast courtyard would primarily have been to serve as an access route connecting the east threshold of the north building (C.6:28), the north doorway (C.6:37) of the southeast room, and the doorway in the balk between C.6 and C.8 — although this doorway was also later blocked (C.8:27). Secondary functions could have included domestic cooking, as suggested by the fire pit (C.6:14) built against Wall C.6:15 and thus also belonging to this phase.

The southwestern courtyard, on the other hand, may have served as an animal enclosure. This is suggested by the architectural nature of Walls C.6:3, 15, which seem too insubstantial and poorly constructed for house walls. Wall C.6:3 in particular seems suitable as a kind of trough for feeding animals. Further, Surface C.6:23, upon which both walls were built and thus initially used, produced very large numbers of domestic animal bones, including sheep/goat, cattle, chicken, camel, and large mammal. The occupation layers above this surface also contained similar faunal remains.⁷⁷ Threshold C.6:37 of the southeast room may also be placed in this later phase; it touched and was

⁷⁷ Loci C.6:11, 20, 22, 23 together produced the following bones: 164 sheep/goat, 27 large mammal, 21 cattle, 4 camel, 1 horse, 1 cat, 3 pig, 7 chicken, 4 fish, 22 undistinguishable.

in primary association with Floor C.6:24, the uppermost floor of the room.

The development of the structures in C.8 as well as the east building of C.9 and C.10 was much less clear. This was primarily due to the relative lack of associated contemporary numismatic evidence,⁷⁸ and the inability to excavate more fully several of the rooms in both of these buildings. This was particularly felt in the two southern rooms of the east building, where most of the occupation layers and floors were reached only by small probes. In the vaulted north room of the east building, however, where bedrock was reached, the presence of only two *huwwar* floors (C.9:18, 48) and a total occupation depth of only ca. 0.50 m. suggest a fairly brief period of use. Perhaps this building was constructed somewhat later than the other Mamlūk structures (possibly in the 14th century?), but this is simply conjecture.

The third and final phase of the Mamlūk period was characterized by the disuse of at least this sector of Area C. The coin dated A.D. 1382-1399 from the uppermost floor (C.8:18) of the C.8 building, another dated A.D. 1363-1377 from the occupation layer (C.4:24) above the uppermost floor of the north building, and a third dated A.D. 1361-1363 from the occupation layer (C.6:22) above the uppermost surface of the southwest courtyard of C.6 all suggested that this disuse phase began ca. A.D. 1400. This was further supported by the lack of any precisely datable coins after A.D. 1400 and the complete absence of any Ottoman period pottery. This phase was characterized by the collapse of ceilings and walls and the gradual filling in of the rooms and courtyards by the thick subsoil layers strewn with tumbled building stones. The earthquake of A.D. 1456 probably hastened this process, although the buildings were never completely covered. There was no evidence of a widespread conflagration or a systematic destruction of the complex. This evi-

⁷⁸ Several coins of Nabataean or Roman date appeared in sealed loci in C.8 and C.9, but the presence of considerable Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery suggested that these coins were found outside their primary stratigraphic context.

dence rather suggested an abandonment, quite possibly caused, as Sauer suggests, by the advance of the Mongol forces in A.D. 1400.

Without much doubt the Mamlūk period inhabitants relied on domestic animals for a major part of their economic subsistence. The faunal remains from this period suggested the particular importance of sheep, goat, cattle, and chicken as food sources. The much rarer appearance of camel, donkey, horse, dog, and cat bones suggested their use as work animals. The occasional finds of gazelle, turtle, and fish bones may indicate that hunting and fishing made a minor contribution to the food supply in this period. Although ancient botanical remains were quite rare, the presence of such artifacts as sickle blades, mortars, and a basalt grinding mill suggested that agriculture was also practiced. Site-wide flotation samples have produced considerable evidence of barley, wheat, pulses (such as lentil, broad bean, bitter vetch), and olives.⁷⁹ Much of the economic prosperity enjoyed by the inhabitants of this period can possibly be attributed to the site's role as a postal station along the Damascus-Cairo route and possibly as a Ḥāj station along the pilgrimage route to Mecca.⁸⁰

Post-Stratum VI Gap (ca. A.D. 750-1260)

Description: There was no stratigraphic evidence in the eastern sector of Area C between the Mamlūk domestic complex of Strata II-III and the Umayyad remains of Stratum VI. Although the lower levels of the domestic complex were carefully examined for evidence of an earlier Ayyūbid phase, none was found (only several Ayyūbid coins in Mamlūk loci). There was a complete absence of any numismatic evidence from the 'Abbāsīd period (A.D. 750-969), although 'Abbāsīd pottery occasionally appeared.

Interpretation: This negative evidence implied an occupational gap during ca. A.D. 750-1260 in Area C. This corresponded to a

⁷⁹ P. Crawford, Ø. LaBianca, and R. Stewart, "Heshbon 1974: The Flotation Remains," *AUSS* 14 (1976): 185-187; although these results were published without their exact stratigraphic context.

⁸⁰ Sauer, "Heshbon 1971: Area B," p. 38, n. 21 (with full references). The pilgrimage route was reopened by Baybars I after his victory over the Mon-

site-wide abandonment or extremely sparse occupation in the 'Ab-bāsid period, though there was evidence of Ayyūbid occupation elsewhere.⁸¹ The massive leveling, filling, and construction operation of the Mamlūk period might have eradicated all stratified evidence of this period.

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

Description: Stratified evidence of occupation in these Area C Squares came only from C.4. Beneath Wall C.4:8 of the north building, Wall C.4:12 was encountered. Measuring 1.15 m. long and surviving to a height of two courses, this wall consisted of a single row of stones. When dismantled it produced two Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds, as well as Umayyad and earlier pottery. Under Layer C.4:19 in the southern half of the Square, near the cistern (C.4:7), soil Layers C.4:35 = 27, 44 were found. Measuring 3.50 x 2.00 m., they touched the cistern and lay over bedrock. With the exception of two Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds, the latest pottery was Umayyad. These layers also produced several objects.⁸²

Interpretation: The evidence suggested a relatively minor use of a limited portion of the Area during the Umayyad period, primarily associated with a reuse of the cistern of C.4 (the few Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds being probably intrusive). Wall C.4:12 and the large amount of Umayyad pottery found in the later Ayyūbid/Mamlūk strata suggested a substantial Umayyad occupation, though most stratified Umayyad evidence might have been eradicated by the later Mamlūk leveling and construction operations. The original excavator of C.4 considered Wall C.4:50 and soil Layer C.4:51 to be Umayyad.⁸³ But neither produced any Umayyad pottery, and Byzantine pottery clearly predominated; so it seemed preferable to consider these loci as Early Byzantine.

gols ca. 1260. See Philip Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 5th ed. (London, 1953), pp. 674-676.

⁸¹ Vyhmeister, "History of Heshbon," p. 171. Sauer, "Heshbon 1971: Area B," pp. 42-43.

⁸² Locus C.4:35 produced a stone stopper (538), lamp fragment (571), stone vessel fragment (572). Locus C.4:27 also produced several objects: nail (380), slingstone fragment (402), possible ceramic weight (396). Locus C.4:44 yielded an ivory needle fragment (553), sculptured stone fragment (554), lamp fragment (571).

⁸³ Thompson, "Heshbon 1971: Area C," p. 78.

Post-Stratum IX Gap (ca. A.D. 450-661)

Description: There was no stratigraphic evidence in this sector of Area C between the Umayyad loci of Stratum VI and the Early Byzantine loci of Stratum IX. There were scattered finds of Late Byzantine pottery in several of the Squares, however, and two 6th-century coins.⁸⁴

Interpretation: This evidence suggested a gap in occupation here ca. A.D. 450-661. While some ceramic and numismatic evidence might suggest a slight Late Byzantine occupation that was later eradicated by the Stratum III occupation, the complete absence of any Late Byzantine stratification seemed rather to indicate that this sector was unoccupied in this period.

Strata IX-XIV: Early Byzantine (ca. A.D. 324-450)

Description: Considerable evidence from this period was found, primarily within C.4, C.6, and C.10.

Beneath the north building in C.4 was soil Layer C.4:41 = 53 = 54, a reddish, compact layer flecked with *huwwar*. Averaging 0.25 m. thick, this layer extended southward from the north balk and touched Wall C.4:45. This wall, founded on bedrock, bisected the Square, running northeastward from under Wall C.4:13 for ca. 3.00 m. Walls C.4:2, 9, 70 (all of the north building) were founded on Layer C.4:41 = 53 = 54. This layer contained Early Byzantine pottery, a coin dated to the 4th or 5th century A.D.,⁸⁵ many objects,⁸⁶ and an articulated skeleton of an infant burial, found under a large storage-jar sherd.⁸⁷ Associated with the infant was a bronze buckle (832) and 53 small beads (860).⁸⁸ Within this layer was the foundation trench (C.4:48) for Wall C.4:2 along its south face. It extended eastward from Wall C.4:13 for 2.47 m. and also yielded Early Byzantine pottery. Just to the west was the foundation trench (C.4:76) for Wall C.4:70. It also produced Early Byzantine pottery.

Just to the west and emerging from the north balk was Wall C.4:50, of one row of uncut stones, 1.90 m. long and in three courses, built on and par-

⁸⁴ Wall C.4:2 produced a coin of Justinian dated A.D. 527-565 ("Coins 1971," published coin 64). Soil Layer C.10:4 yielded a coin (2474) of Justin II (A.D. 565-578).

⁸⁵ Terian, "Coins 1971," published coin 178. The coin is a Roman *aes* IV type and its date can be only approximated.

⁸⁶ C.4:41 = 53 = 54 produced the following registered objects: glass bead (576), ivory button fragment (783), black bead (784), stone spindle whorl (861), bronze needle (826), lamp fragment (827).

⁸⁷ See "Heshbon 1971," Pl. VI:B.

⁸⁸ The original excavator of the burial made two very plausible suggestions: that the buckle served as a clasp for the infant's clothes, since the imprint of the clothing fibers could still be recognized on the buckle; and that the small beads (found along the waist) may have served as decoration on the cloth ("Heshbon 1971: Area C," p. 80).

tially covered by several Early Byzantine soil layers (C.4:51, 58, 66, and 55).⁸⁰ Excavation stopped at this point in this sector of the Square.

Beneath soil Layer C.4:41 = 53 = 54 was *huwwar* Surface C.4:52, which ran up to and touched Walls C.4:13, 45. Averaging 0.20 m. thick, this surface produced Early Byzantine pottery and marked the lowest level reached in this sector of the Square.

South of Wall C.4:45, beneath Umayyad soil Layers C.4:27 (= 35), 44 were several Early Byzantine soil layers (C.4:57, 67, 72) around the cistern.

In C.6, as has already been noted, several walls of the Mamlūk domestic complex were founded on three earlier-phase walls (C.6:32, 57, 62). In addition to these was Wall C.6:53 (unexcavated) of two rows of roughly dressed stones extending 1.57 m. from the north balk and exposed to only one course. This wall was touched on the east by Fill C.6:46 (Mamlūk), on the west by soil Layer C.6:74, and was cut on its south end by Wall C.6:57. Soil Layer C.6:74 to the west was composed of clay-like reddish-brown soil and contained Early Byzantine pottery, a few bones, and a worked flint (2755). It was found under Floor C.6:72 (the bottom floor of the Mamlūk north building), and was cut by Wall C.6:57 to the south.

The remaining Early Byzantine loci of C.6 were found in the sector east of Walls C.6:53, 57, 62. Under Fill C.6:46 were soil Layers C.6:66, 78, varying in color from reddish brown to yellow brown and strewn with large stones. Many of these were obviously worked building stones. These layers extended from the north balk to the south balk and touched Walls C.6:53, 57, 62. They contained considerable Early Byzantine pottery (though with a few Ayyūbid/Mamlūk sherds, probably intrusive), many bones,⁸⁰ and a bronze coin (2672) of the Roman Emperor Maximian (A.D. 296-305). Just east of Wall C.6:57 was Surface C.6:65, a badly damaged patch of *huwwar* found under C.6:46 and above C.6:66, averaging 0.04 m. thick. It touched Wall C.6:62 to the south but was cut by Wall C.6:57 to the west. It also contained Early Byzantine pottery. Beneath Layers C.6:66, 78 were soil Layers C.6:79, 83, 85, composed of compact multi-colored soil and many rocks. These layers covered the entire eastern sector along the east balk and touched Wall C.6:62. C.6:83 averaged 0.15 m. in depth, while the bottom of C.6:79, 85 was not reached. These layers contained a few bones, several objects,⁸¹ and Early Byzantine pottery.

Similar remains were found in the southwest corner of C.8. Beneath the thick tumble/collapse (C.8:26) was soil Layer C.8:47, also strewn with large stones (some worked) and composed of fine brown silty soil. Located between Wall C.8:30 and the west and south balks, it averaged 0.65 m. in depth. Wall C.8:7 of the Mamlūk domestic complex was founded on this layer. It included Early Byzantine pottery, an iron implement fragment (2883), plus a few bones. Under C.8:47 were soil Layers C.8:54, 57, both of which overlay bed-

⁸⁰ Locus C.4:55 yielded the following registered objects: marble fragment (824), sherd with a snake design (823).

⁸⁰ Loci C.6:66, 78 produced the following bones: 22 sheep/goat, 5 large mammal, 2 dog, 3 chicken, 5 undistinguishable, 55 scrap.

⁸¹ Locus C.6:79 yielded a ceramic disc (2778). Locus C.6:83 produced a slingstone (2821), while C.6:85 contained an iron nail (2814).

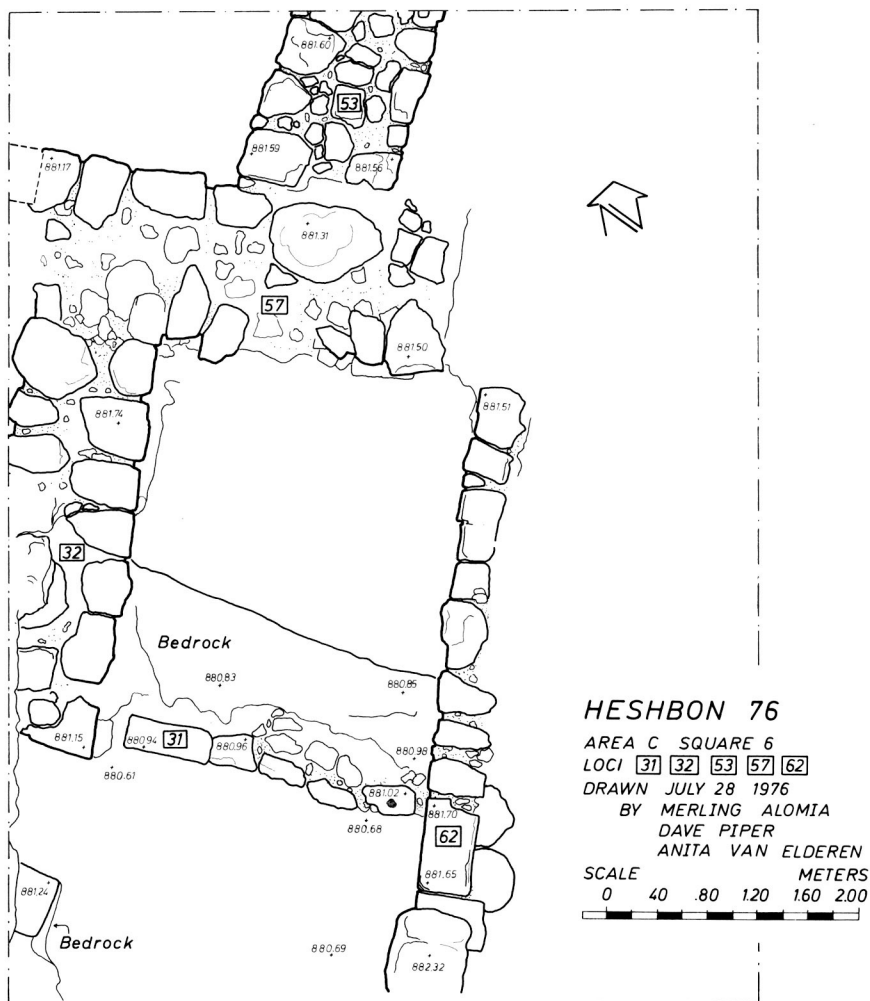


Fig. 8. Plan of Early Byzantine walls exposed in Square C.6.

rock. C.8:54 was composed of fine brown soil with a few stones and *nari* chips. It averaged 0.33 m. in depth, containing a bronze coin of Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138-61),⁹² an iron hinge fragment (2885), and Early Byzantine pottery. Partially under C.8:54 and also against bedrock was soil Layer C.8:57, which contained much ash and *huwwar* and touched Wall C.8:30 on its south face. Averaging 0.15 m. thick, this locus also produced Early Byzantine pottery.

The only evidence from this period in C.9 came from a possible trench (C.9:61) along the north face of Wall C.9:8 inside the northern room of the east building. Measuring 1.21 x 0.21 m. (and thus extending along only a portion of the wall) and averaging 0.22 m. in depth, this trench contained loose brown soil and only a few sherds, the latest being Early Byzantine.

The evidence from C.10 was considerably more complex. Beneath the topsoil and subsoil loci were a number of sloping soil layers, which extended westward until cut off by the foundation trench and back fill (C.10:23 = 24 = 30) of Wall C.10:5, the end wall of the Mamlūk building of C.9 and C.10. The upper of these sloping layers (C.10:7 = 21, 16, 22 = 26) were filled with loose soft soil and strewn with many large rocks. Some also contained chunks of white plaster or loose gravel and all produced Early Byzantine pottery and a few bones. Under Layer C.10:22 = 26 was Wall C.10:20, which extended from the north balk to the south balk and measured 3.00 x 1.20 m. The wall presented a well dressed western face of at least six courses with chink stones throughout and traces of plaster on the lower courses. The stones of the upper courses were smaller and less well dressed. The eastern face was of much poorer construction, however, with no evidence of plaster. The bottom of this wall was not reached before the close of excavation.

Extending from the western face of Wall C.10:20 (and beneath C.10:22 = 26) were additional sloping soil layers (C.10:25, 28, 41, 42). Similar in composition and content to the upper layers, they were also cut by the trench and back-fill of the Mamlūk building to the west. These layers also produced a few bones and Early Byzantine pottery. Beneath these loci were two layers of massive rock tumble (C.10:34, 47), composed of mostly cut building stones (several over 1.00 m. long) and loose orange soil, and containing many air spaces. Averaging 0.75 m. in thickness, these loci also yielded Early Byzantine pottery plus a few bones. Both were also cut by the Mamlūk trench to the west (C.10:24). Under C.10:47 near the north balk was soil Layer C.10:57, composed of loose soil and small rocks, and measuring 1.50 x 1.35 m. It also contained Early Byzantine pottery and was cut by Trench C.10:24.⁹³

Interpretation: In C.4 and C.6 it seemed apparent that a number of walls (C.4:2, 70; C.6:32, 57, 62) which were reused for the Mamlūk domestic complex date to the Early Byzantine

⁹² This was a coin (object 2938) of *Colonia Aelia Capitolina* (Jerusalem).

⁹³ The Early Byzantine loci of Strata IX to XIV produced the following bones (not including bones from C.4, for which data were not available): 82 sheep/goat, 14 large mammal, 3 cattle, 1 donkey, 2 dog, 1 cat, 1 rodent, 10 chicken, 41 undistinguishable, 296 scrap.

period. The foundation trenches (C.4:48 and 76) of Walls C.4:2 and 70, both of which produced Early Byzantine pottery, supported this suggestion. These loci, as well as Wall C.4:50, Surface C.4:52, and Layer C.4:41=53=54 also contained similar pottery, as well as a coin dated to ca. A.D. 400. Thus it appeared that these walls formed one or more buildings (perhaps domestic?) in this eastern sector of Area C. To the south, Early Byzantine Soil Layers C.4:57, 67, 72 around the cistern (C.4:7) suggested a reuse of the cistern in this period. More substantial evidence of occupation may possibly have been destroyed by the massive subsequent Mamlūk occupation.

This was also the problem in interpreting the evidence from C.6, where only one patch of *huwwar* surface (C.6:65) survived to suggest an occupation from the Early Byzantine period. Since this surface touched Wall C.6:62 but was cut by Wall C.6:57 (the earlier phase wall of C.6:2), Wall C.6:62 seemed to be relatively earlier in date. Further, since Wall C.6:57 also cut Wall C.6:53, this latter wall must also be earlier; and earliest of all Wall C.6:31 of the southwestern courtyard, since it ran under both Walls C.6:62 and C.6:32. The Early Byzantine soil layers (C.6:66, 78, 79, 83, 85; C.8:47, 54, 57) to the east of Wall C.6:62 might be interpreted as a massive fill placed to block a huge subterranean chamber (cistern?) found cut into bedrock in the balk between C.6 and C.8. Although this chamber could not be closely investigated, a steel line dropped through an opening indicated that it was at least 13.50 m. deep. An alternate theory was that these loci blocking the chamber were the result of the A.D. 365 earthquake. Either suggestion seemed plausible.

The Early Byzantine trench (C.9:61) of Wall C.9:8 also suggested that the Mamlūk inhabitants might have reused an earlier wall from this period when constructing the vaulted building of C.9. However, since the "trench" — possibly only a soft portion caused by root disturbance or animal activity — had a limited length and yielded few sherds, it seemed best to reserve judgment.

In C.10 the sloping soil layers of this period appeared probably best interpreted as wash and tumble, some perhaps from Wall C.10:20, but since many of the stones were worked building stones, some may have tumbled down from the acropolis enclosure wall or perhaps from acropolis buildings. The construction features of Wall C.10:20, which was well dressed and plastered on its western (down-slope) face but was poorly constructed and unplastered on its eastern face, suggested that it was a retaining wall (see the next section).

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

Description: Evidence of Late Roman occupation in this part of Area C was limited for the most part to C.4 and C.10.

In C.4, under Wall C.4:2 of the north building, single-row Wall C.4:73 was found extending southwestward for 4.00 m. to Wall C.4:45, covered for part of its length by Early Byzantine soil Layers C.4:52, 64; it produced no pottery. South of Wall C.4:45 (the retaining wall for the cistern), and under Early Byzantine Layers C.4:69, 72, were soil Layers C.4:74, 75. Layer C.4:74, which averaged 0.10 m. thick, extended along the south face of Wall C.4:45 and reached the west balk. Beneath it was C.4:75, which averaged 0.50 m. in depth, reached the cistern (C.4:7), and was founded on bedrock. Though C.4:74 produced mostly Early Roman pottery, Layer C.4:75 beneath it yielded some Late Roman pottery.

In C.10, behind plastered retaining Wall C.10:20 already described, up the slope to the east, were a number of fill layers (C.10:12, 14, 19, 33, 35, 36, 39) composed of rock rubble and soil (C.10:33, 35), almost pure, sterile gravel (C.10:36), decayed mud brick (C.10:12), broken roof tiles (C.10:19), and mixed soils (C.10:14, 19, 39). All these loci extended from Wall C.10:20 to the east balk and averaged 0.15 to 0.60 m. in depth. Intrusive through these layers were three small pits (C.10:18, 32, 40). Most of these loci produced a few bones, while the latest pottery from them was Late Roman.⁶⁴

Above these layers were several very thin surfaces (C.10:6, 8, 10, 11), all of which touched Wall C.10:20 and reached the east balk. These surfaces sloped gradually upwards towards the south, and measured 2.25 x 0.80 m. The uppermost of these, Surface C.10:6, was hard-compacted soil and chunks of plaster, containing a few Early Byzantine sherds but mostly Late Roman pottery. Directly under C.10:6, was hard plaster Surface C.10:8, averaging 0.03 m. thick, badly pitted by animal holes. Beneath this plaster surface was soil Layer C.10:9, composed of loose soil, gravel, small rocks, and chunks of plaster, then two beaten earth surfaces (C.10:10, 11), which in turn rested

⁶⁴ Locus C.10:32 produced a seal ring with a crystal inset in the shape of a crescent moon (2712).

on the fills described above. All these surfaces produced a few bones,⁹⁵ no objects of any kind, and Late Roman pottery.

West of retaining Wall C.10:20, under the Early Byzantine rock tumble loci (C.10:34, 37), was a Late Roman wall (C.10:50), of uncut stones in a single row, extending southward 1.50 m. from the north balk and preserved three courses high; and west of this wall under Layer C.10:57 (Early Byzantine), was Late Roman soil Layer C.10:61, the lowest layer reached in this sector of C.10.

Interpretation: In C.4 the evidence from soil Layers C.4:74, 75 around the cistern and pottery under one of the slabs covering the related water channels (C.4:68) had suggested a Late Roman use. From this the original excavator of C.4 suggested that the entire system (Cistern C.4:7, Water Channels and Basin C.4:32, 68, 71) may have been constructed in that period.⁹⁶ This remained a strong possibility, though it could not be demonstrated from the existing evidence.

Up the slope to the east, Wall C.10:20 apparently served as a retaining wall for the various layers. The sloping surfaces constructed on top probably functioned as a ramp providing access between the western slope of the tell and the acropolis. Since the sloping surfaces did not continue through the east balk into Square A.11, they cannot have exceeded 1.80 m. in width. It thus appeared unlikely that the ramp was designed for vehicle traffic but was probably suitable for pedestrians, donkeys, and horses. On the basis of the ceramic evidence it appeared to have been constructed in the Late Roman period and to have continued in use into the Early Byzantine period, since pottery from this latter period was found in the uppermost Surface (C.10:6). Above this were wash and tumble soil layers from the Mamlūk period, so it is possible that higher Mamlūk surfaces were destroyed by erosion. Although the main entrance to the acropolis in the Late Roman period was obviously the monumental stairway on the south slope in Areas B and D, this much

⁹⁵ These Late Roman loci of Strata XV-XVI produced the following bones: 13 sheep/goat, 2 large mammal, 2 cattle, 1 chicken, 12 undistinguishable, 174 scrap.

⁹⁶ Thompson, "Heshbon 1971: Area C," pp. 81-82.

smaller ramp of Area C probably served as a subsidiary access route similar to one found in D.4 (probably Early Roman in date but repaired and reused in the Late Roman period).

Strata XVII-XVIII: Early Roman (ca. 31 B.C.-A.D. 135)

Description: Evidence of occupation from this period in the eastern sector of Area C was mostly confined to C.8 and C.10, though minor evidence came from C.6.

In the eastern half of C.6, beneath the Early Byzantine layers (C.6:66, 78, 79, 83, 85), two walls were found: Wall C.6:86 was located in the southwest corner of the Square, extending 1.64 m. from the south balk before entering the east balk. Constructed of dressed stones one row wide and surviving to two courses, it bordered the deep subterranean installation in the east balk. The wall itself was not dismantled, but was covered by Early Byzantine layers (C.6:78, 83). Wall C.6:84 (probably an eastward extension of Wall C.6:31) was also constructed of dressed stones one row wide. It ran eastward from under Wall C.6:62 into the east balk and apparently continued as Wall C.8:30, (which ran under Mamlūk Wall C.8:7), founded on bedrock. The total length of Wall C.6:31(?), 84 = C.8:30 was 5.65 m., and it appeared to border the subterranean installation to the south. This wall was also unexcavated.

Considerably more remains survived in C.8. Bonded into the northern end of Wall C.8:30 was Wall C.8:45, which extended northward 1.70 m. before running under Mamlūk Wall C.8:6. Unexcavated, it was constructed of roughly dressed stones. Mamlūk Wall C.8:7 was built upon its eastern face. At its northern end Wall C.8:45 abutted Wall C.8:20, a massive east-west wall running from Wall C.8:10 in the northwest corner of the Square to the east balk. Measuring 4.50 x 1.34 m., this wall was built of large (0.60 x 0.40 m.), well dressed limestone blocks and survived to at least six courses. Several later Mamlūk walls (C.8:4, 5, 6, 15) were partially or entirely constructed upon it.

South of Wall C.8:20 was a room, bounded on the west by Wall C.8:4, on the south by Walls C.8:48, 49, 53, and to the east by Walls C.8:37, 41. Thus, the room was situated almost exactly beneath the eastern room of C.8 in the Mamlūk domestic complex, though somewhat smaller in size. The lowest Mamlūk occupation layer (C.8:25) in this room yielded large amounts of Late and Early Roman pottery as its lower levels were reached. Finally the Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery gave out altogether. Beneath it was soil Layer C.8:34 = 40, which measured 2.33 x 2.72 m. and averaged at least 0.50 m. in depth, though its bottom was not reached. This soil layer touched Walls C.8:20, 49, 53, overlay Walls C.8:37, 41, and ran under Wall C.8:4. It was composed of loose coarse soil with many small rocks. Except for a few later sherds (probably intrusive), it contained huge amounts of Early Roman III-IV pottery.⁹⁷ The layer was also extremely rich in bone remains, yielding nearly 600 bones.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ The locus yielded 349 registered sherds; many more were discarded. Locus C.8:34 also produced an iron nail (2698) and grinder fragment (2946).

⁹⁸ Locus C.8:34 produced the following bones: 26 sheep/goat, 47 large mam-

In the south wall of this room, formed by Walls C.8:48, 49, 53, there had been an entrance into a room in the southeast corner of the Square. This entrance (0.62 m. wide), flanked by Walls C.8:48, 53, was secondarily blocked by Installation C.8:51. Walls C.8:48, 53 were both constructed of well dressed, rectangular limestone blocks and rested on bedrock. Attached to the north face of C.8:48 was a skin wall (C.8:49) built of uncut stones. The doorway blockage (C.8:51) was composed of small uncut stones and earth and also rested on bedrock.

Bounding this southeastern room on the west was Wall C.8:50, similar in construction to Walls C.8:48, 53, also built on bedrock, and surviving in three courses. It extended 1.22 m. north from the south balk. Mamlūk Wall C.8:7 rested partly upon it. The northern end of Wall C.8:50 and the western end of Wall C.8:48 flanked a second, western entrance into the room. This entrance (0.56 m. wide) had also been blocked secondarily by Installation C.8:52, similar in composition to C.8:51. Cut into bedrock within the room was Installation C.8:56, an earth-filled circular hole 0.70 m. in diameter (discussed above with the Mamlūk material). The top stones of Wall C.8:53 appeared to serve as the springers of a vault, and further evidence of a partly collapsed vault could be seen in the south balk (C.8:32). Unfortunately, no surfaces were associated with any of these loci, and lack of time prevented any excavation of the walls or blockage loci.

The Early Roman material from C.10 was confined to a limited sector east of the retaining wall (C.10:20). Beneath the Late Roman layers which supported the ramp surfaces a number of soil layers were encountered in a probe intended (though unsuccessfully) to reach bedrock. These soil layers (C.10:45, 48, 51, 52, 55, 58, 60, 62, 63, 64) averaged 0.03 to 0.25 m. in thickness, differed widely in color, hardness, and composition, but all produced Early Roman pottery (mostly Early Roman IV, ca. A.D. 70-135). These soil layers were interspersed with a thin ash layer (C.10:49), and several ash pits (C.10:44, 54, 59). Several of these loci also produced a few bones.⁹⁹ Altogether, the total depth of these loci was approximately 1.15 m.

Interpretation: The scarcity of stratified evidence in primary association with the walls of C.6 and C.8 made the dating of these structures very difficult. Since Early Roman Layer C.8:34 touched Walls C.8:20, 49, 53, and Installation C.8:51, and overlay Walls C.8:37, 41, all these loci must have been earlier than C.8:34 and thus can be no later than Early Roman in date. Further, since Wall C.8:49 was a skin wall attached to Wall C.8:48, this latter wall must also have been earlier than C.8:34.

mal, 30 cattle, 2 donkey, 9 pig, 9 dog, 8 horse, 7 chicken, 1 fish, 23 undistinguishable, 431 scrap.

⁹⁹ These Early Roman loci in C.10 produced the following bones: 11 sheep/goat, 3 large mammal, 3 cattle, 1 donkey, 23 undistinguishable, 80 scrap.

The blockage loci (C.8:51, 53) in the west and north doorways must have been relatively later than their flanking walls (C.8:48, 50, 53). The west doorway probably once provided access from the southeast vaulted room of C.8 to the large subterranean installation on the west. Since Ayyūbid/Mamlūk pottery was found in all the soil layers of the room down to bedrock (perhaps indicating a Mamlūk reuse of the circular installation cut into bedrock), these earlier walls could not be dated more precisely. But the rich Early Roman occupation layer (C.8:34) to the north and the relative scarcity of pre-Early Roman pottery in C.8 suggested that these walls were perhaps of the same date.

Wall C.8:30 (=C.6:84, 31) seemed to be a westward continuation of Wall C.8:48 and thus may also have been of the same date. Since Walls C.6:84, 86 were completely covered by Early Byzantine fills (C.6: 78, 83), they were obviously no later than Early Byzantine in date. Walls C.6:86, 84 (=C.8:30), C.8:48, 50 probably served as a retaining wall for the subterranean installation. The function of the rest of the structures of this phase remained uncertain, but wall C.8:20 appeared much too massive and well built for a domestic house.

In C.10 the series of Early Roman soil layers might be interpreted as additional fill serving as makeup for the ramp. But since several of these layers ran under the Late Roman retaining wall (C.10:20) and contained almost exclusively Early Roman pottery, they were thus obviously earlier in date. The position of these layers just below the acropolis perimeter wall and its buttress in Area A, as well as the relative lack of much occupational debris, might suggest that these were erosion layers from the acropolis. The highly mixed composition of these layers also supported this suggestion. This sector of the site might also have been sporadically used for small open fires in this period, as the small ash pits (C.10:44, 54, 59) suggested. These erosion layers probably once extended further down the slope to the west, but were later cut by the ramp construction in the Late Roman period.



A. Square C.6. View to east. Double door sockets within sunken Threshold C.6:28 at the eastern end of the North Building. Photo: Paul H. Denton.



B. Square C.6. View to north. Threshold C.6:37 with its door socket in the Southeast Room. Photo: Paul H. Denton and Henry Lamberton.



A. Square C.9. View to east. Massive wall collapse within northern room of Mamlūk building. Note pronounced lean of Wall C.9:8 on right. Most of the stones fell either from the wall itself or from the vaulted roof it probably supported. Photo: Paul H. Denton and Andrew Kramer.



B. Square C.9. View to east. Circular cup-like depressions imbedded in Floor C.9:18 of the Mamlūk building. Note the white plaster surrounding each depression. Photo: Paul H. Denton and Kaye Barton.