



## Durham E-Theses

---

### *Mauretania Caesartiensis: an archaeological and geographical survey*

Lawless, R. I.

#### How to cite:

---

Lawless, R. I. (1969) *Mauretania Caesartiensis: an archaeological and geographical survey*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/9282/>

#### Use policy

---

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a [link](#) is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the [full Durham E-Theses policy](#) for further details.

VOLUME TWO.

INDIVIDUAL SITES: A NATIVE 1 - 15  
B ROMAN 16 - 86

1. El Aïoun.

In the area around El Aïoun in eastern Morocco, Colonel Voinot discovered the ruins of several native villages. Most of the villages occupy sites with some natural protection, and a number were also surrounded by defensive walls. They vary greatly in size; the largest covered an area of 10 hectares, but others were under one hectare in area. They were built of dry-stone but few of the walls were standing above ground level, and in some places not even the foundations were visible. Consequently, Voinot could draw very few conclusions about the internal lay-out of these sites. However, at three of the sites, Quefa Maalla, Ras Irsane, and Kerkour Aghram, he was able to distinguish traces of small houses, several large courtyards, and one or two silos.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Voinot, L., 'Note sur les tumuli et quelques ruines des environs d'El Aïoun - Sidi Mellouk (Maroc oriental)', B.d'O., 1916, pp. 264 - 277.

## 2. Sidi Medjahed.

Although this site was recorded by Gsell in his 'Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie' (1911), it was not investigated until 1955. In that year Couvert and Marion, under the general direction of Janier, surveyed the site, and made a number of trial excavations. The results of their work, including a general description of the ruins, was published in 1959.<sup>1</sup>

The ruins at Sidi Medjahed are situated twelve kilometres to the south-east of Marnia, and occupy a promontory enclosed on three sides by a meander of the Oued Tafna. This promontory site is naturally protected by steep, almost cliff-like, slopes, and is only accessible along its northern edges, where the remains of stout ramparts can be seen (fig.1). The ramparts, which are 100 metres long on the west side and 130-140 metres long on the east side, are built with a double facing, the interval being filled with unworked stones cemented together, but not forming regular courses. The east rampart is very well preserved, in parts, and is constructed on a raft of very large worked stones. The west rampart, which is of inferior construction, is less well preserved; parts of the central core and a section of the inner wall constructed of worked stones of medium dimensions are still visible, and both rest directly on bedrock.

There are four defended gateways through the ramparts; three on the east and one on the west side (fig.1). Gateway 2 was excavated, and was found to be constructed of large regular ashlar. An inscription I (or T) E R N A T E N E L A V R E N T I (or A) (fig.2 B) had been carved on the mortar layer between two of these blocks. The individual letters were approximately 7 cms high. A second inscription V E R E C U N D E was discovered on one of the blocks built into the south wall of the gateway. The letters were formed of broken line incisions (fig. 2 C). At Gateway 1, Janier discovered two pillars 2.25 m high and a lintel 2.4 m long with moulding on one of the faces (fig 3A). Two other pillars 1.80m high were found in place. These discoveries suggest to Marion that this was a monumental gateway, and the main entrance into the enclosed area. Twenty-two masons' marks were found on the stone blocks used in the construction of the ramparts and gateways (fig. 2A); nos. 1-2 at Gateway 4; 3-8 between Gateways 4 and 3; 9-12 near Gateway 3; 13-15 at Gateway 3; 17-19 between Gateway 2 and the north angle of the ramparts; and 20-22 at Gateway 1. On the summit of the promontory Marion discovered two or three silos.

The small objects found at Sidi Medjahed in 1955 include:

1. numerous sherds of coarse pottery; Couvert was able to reconstruct two pots (fig. 3 C).
2. several fragments of glass.
3. a sherd of pottery of the Arab period.

4. the base of a jar with the mark of a cross on it.
5. copper nails and a copper clamp or clip; found at Gateway 2.
6. a capital, one side of which is decorated with a Berber and probably Christian motif (dimensions - upper surface 65x50 cms lower surface 40x38 cms., height 48 cms); found on the bed of the Oued Tafna below Gateway 2 (fig. 3 B).
7. fragment of a flat, polished stone axe; found on the summit of the promontory.
8. a sherd of pottery decorated with a 'chrisme' flanked with an alpha and omega; found on the summit of the promontory.
9. fragment of an inscription; only four letters can be made out, I L L A ; found near the north angle of the ramparts.

But what do these ruins represent? The promontory site naturally protected by its very nature with the most vulnerable parts reinforced by a defensive wall, together with its position to the south of the Severan limes in the north-western part of the Monts de Tlemcen ( map 7 ) suggests that Sidi Medjahed is a native rather than a Roman site. No internal buildings are visible and no excavations were carried out on the summit of the promontory, but the stout ramparts must have been constructed to protect something. The site, which covers an area of under one hectare, is too small to represent a fortified village, and one would not expect the inhabitants of a hamlet or isolated farmstead to construct such impressive ramparts or the monumental gateway. The decorated capital discovered there implies that there was at least one substantial building at Sidi Medjahed, and it seems probable that this site represents the fortified residence of a native chief.

The use of dressed stones in the construction of the ramparts and gateway, the three inscriptions, the masons' marks, the sherd of pottery decorated with a 'chrisme' flanked by an alpha and omega, and the capital decorated with a Berber and Christian motif, all prove that this site was occupied during the Roman or immediate post-Roman periods<sup>2</sup> by a native who was in some degree Romanised. Marion makes the interesting suggestion that Sidi Medjahed was perhaps a stronghold of Masuna, King of the Moors and the Romans.<sup>3</sup> What we do not know, and what only excavations paying careful attention to stratigraphy will reveal, is whether Sidi Medjahed was first occupied during the Roman or immediate post-Roman periods, having been chosen by a native chief as the site for a fortified residence; or whether the site was occupied before the Roman period and was, at a later date, rebuilt in its present form by the occupant who had assimilated something of Roman civilisation. The polished stone axe discovered on the summit of the promontory implies that the site was occupied at an early date, perhaps as early as the neolithic, although it is not proof of a permanent settlement there.

- 
1. Marion, J., 'L'éperon fortifié de Sidi-Medjahed (Oranie)', L.A.E., Vol.7, 1959, pp.27-41.
  2. Although Mauretania Caesariensis ceased to be a Roman province in the first half of the 5th century Romanised communities continued to occupy several settlements - Altava, Pomaria, Aquae Sirenses, - during the 6th and 7th centuries.
  3. He recalls the famous inscription (C.I.L. 9835) which was set up for the health of Masuna, rex Maurorum et Romanorum at Altava in AD 508 (Marion, J., 1959, *idem*, p. 41.).



FIG.1

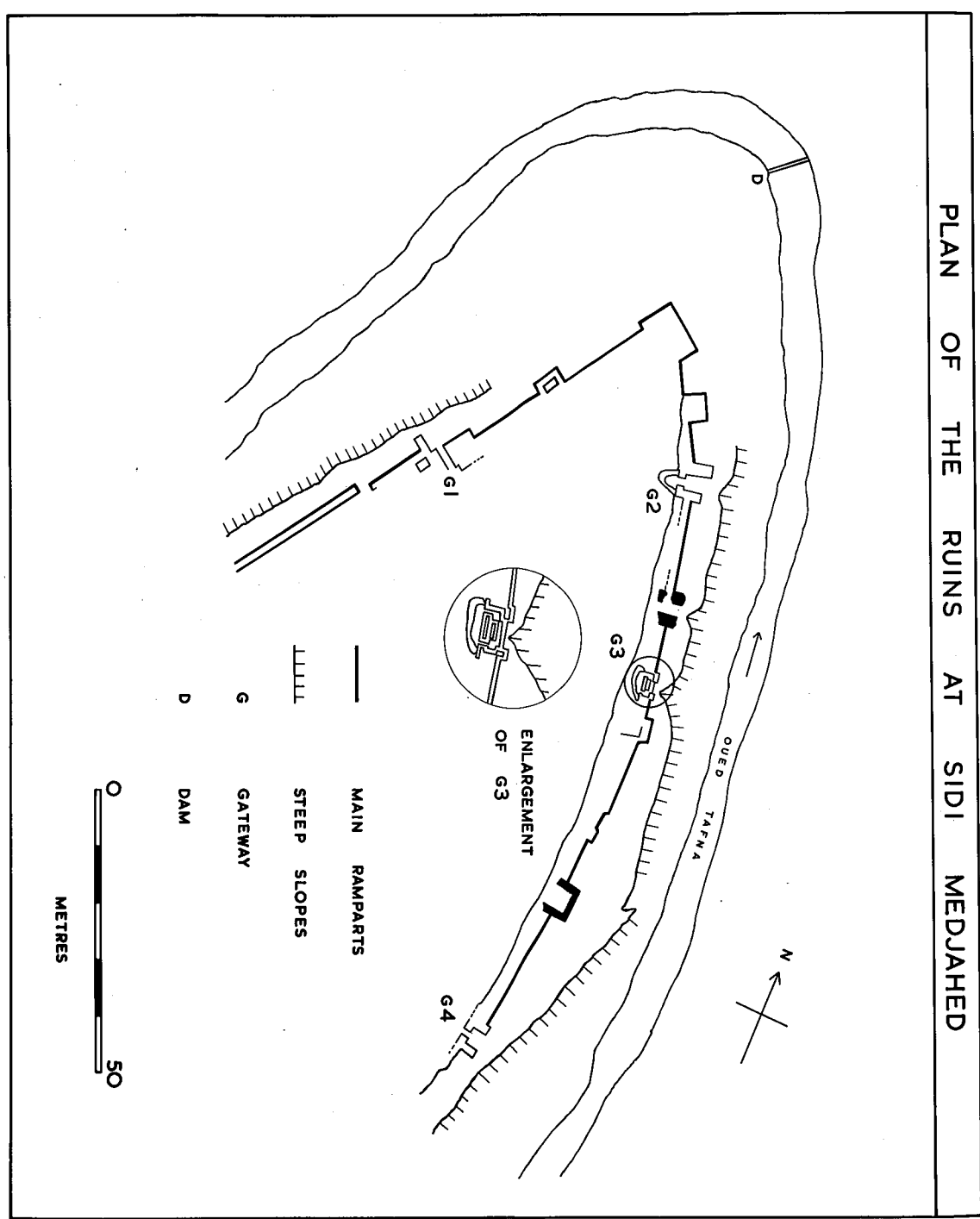


FIG. 2

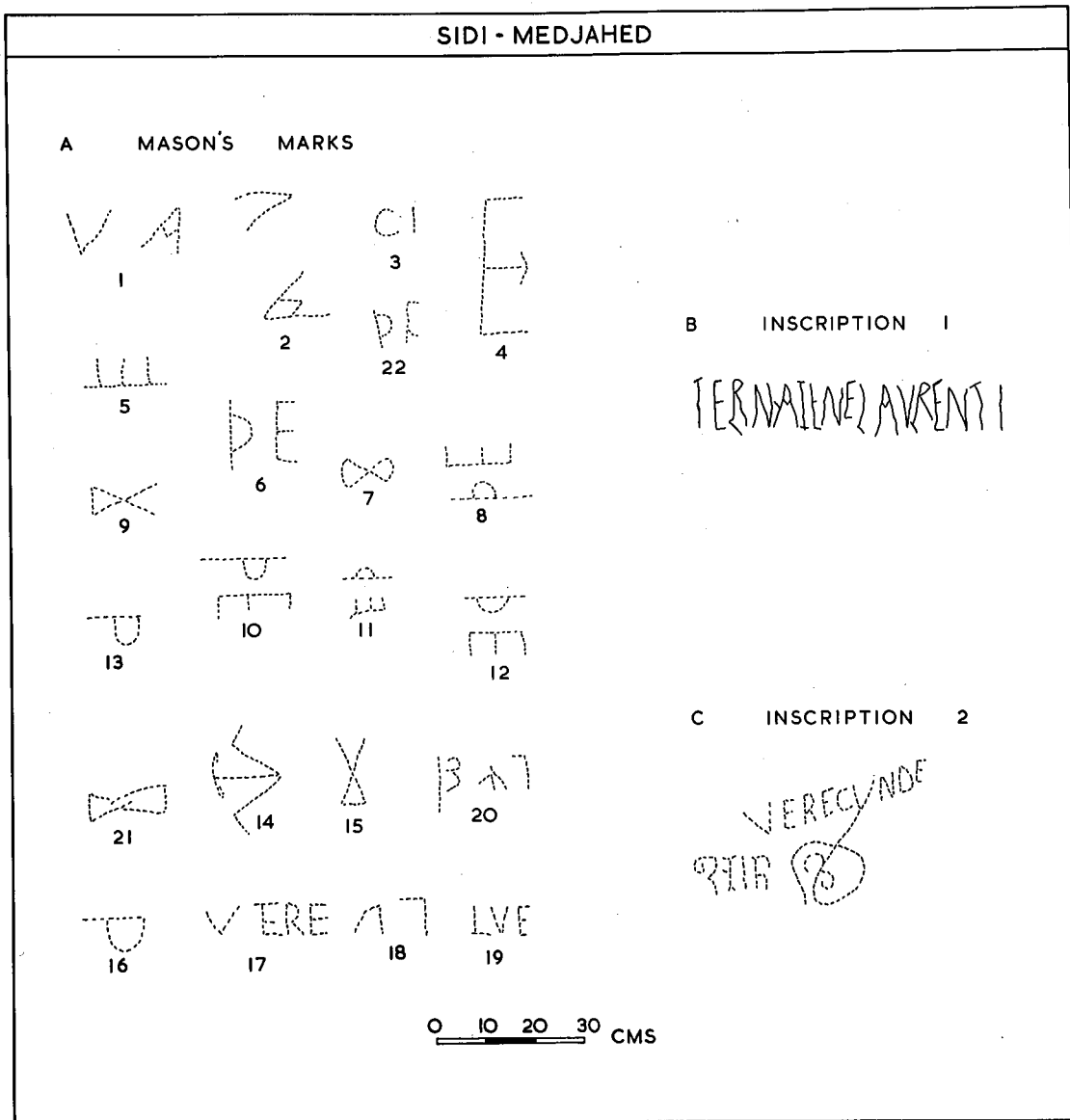
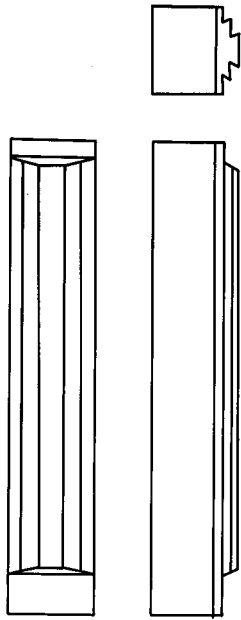


FIG. 3

SIDI - MEDJAHED

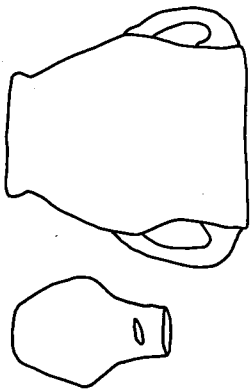
A. THE LINTEL FROM GATEWAY ONE



B. TWO OPPOSITE FACES OF  
A DECORATED CAPITAL  
FOUND BELOW GATEWAY TWO



C. TWO POTS [RECONSTRUCTED]



3. Koudiat-er-Roum.

4. Koudiat-en-Nessara.

Gsell in his 'Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie' records the existence of a large enclosure at Koudiat-er-Roum (Map 42 no. 17). But there is nothing of importance at Site 17, and it is at Site 18 that the hillock known as Koudiat-er-Roum, and the native ruins, are to be found. Koudiat-er-Roum, which rises to a height of 891 metres, dominates the small village of Tleta situated in the 'douar des Azail' twenty-five kilometres to the south-west of Tlemçen. The flat-topped hillock has steep slopes on all except the northern side where the land slopes gently down to the Oued Tafna. On the summit of this hillock are the remains of an irregular enclosure 200 metres long and 100 metres wide, which is protected by numerous square towers. The ramparts are between 1.30 and 1.40 m in thickness and are carefully constructed of dressed stones joined together with mortar. Inside the perimeter wall which encloses an area of 2 hectares there are traces of a number of rectangular houses. They appear to have been constructed with care, and the corners form almost perfect right angles.

There are similar ruins on the summit of a nearby hillock known as Koudiat-en-Nessara (900 metres) which overlooks the village of Taffessera.<sup>1</sup>

The ruins at Koudiat-er-Roum and Koudiat-en-Nessara appear to represent two native villages which were certainly occupied during the Roman or immediate post-Roman periods, since the inhabitants were strongly

influenced by Roman building techniques. Roman influences are apparent in the construction of the main ramparts at Koudiat-er-Roum, which are similar to the north ramparts of the Roman city of Altava, and in the carefully constructed, rectangular houses. Two Christian tombstones of the 6th century now in the Tlemçen Museum are reported as having been discovered at Zahra and Taffessera, but Courtot<sup>2</sup> informs me that this is not certain and, while it is possible that they were discovered there, they might equally have come from the Roman ruins at Tlemçen itself. From such a brief description of the ruins it is impossible to determine whether the villages were founded during the Roman or the immediate post-Roman periods by Berber communities who had acquired some knowledge of Roman building techniques, or whether they were in existence before the Roman period and were rebuilt at a later date by the villagers who had learnt more sophisticated building techniques from their contact with the Romanised areas further north.

---

1. B.A.C., 1954, pp.71-73
2. Paul Courtot was formerly the director of the 14th 'Circonscription Archéologique' with its centre at Ouled Mimoun, the Roman Altava.

5. Ain el Turck.

In the area around Ain el Turck, which is situated between the northern slopes of the Djebel Murdjadjo and the Mediterranean coast, Blanché discovered the ruins of eight Berber villages. They occupy defensive sites, and also appear to have been protected by ramparts. The villages vary greatly in size; the largest covers an area of 30 hectares, and the smallest only one hectare. Both the ramparts and the house walls were constructed of dry-stone; they were formed of two rows of large slabs with a core of earth and rubble. One feature which characterised this group of native sites was the large number of grain silos: - Blanché found as many as 60 at one village. He also found several mill-stones and sherds of pottery.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Blanché, F., 'Ruines berbères des environs d'Ain Turck', B.d'O., 1913, pp. 223-230.

6. Ain Nekrouf.

In 1920 Blanché published a short description of the native ruins near Ain Nekrouf, which is situated on the northern slopes of the Monts de Tlemçen,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres to the south of Tafaman station. The ruins occupy three low hillocks. On the first hillock, which is 100 metres long, Blanché found traces of an oval enclosure (40x30 metres) with walls 0.80 - 1 m. in thickness. On the northern part of the second hillock he found the remains of a wall 30 metres long. A hundred metres from this wall, and on the same line, was another wall 50 metres long. On one of the slopes of this hillock he found a grain silo. The third hillock was covered with unworked stones, but Blanché was able to distinguish traces of several walls.<sup>1</sup>

The ruins which occupy the second hillock may represent a small native village or hamlet.

---

1. Blanché, F., 'L'Ain Nekrouf et les ruines berbères', B.d'O., Vol. 40, 1920, pp. 167-172.

## 7. Kersout.

There were native ruins on the narrow, flat-topped summit of the Djebel Kersout, (782 metres), which is one of the northern spurs of the Monts de Daya. This is a promontory site, naturally protected by very steep slopes. De la Blanchère found traces of a perimeter wall enclosing a large area; inside, the walls of numerous small houses were still visible, some standing to two metres above ground level. Most of the houses consisted of only two rooms, although a number were surrounded by a small enclosure. He also found several grain silos.<sup>1</sup>

The ruins represent a large, fortified, native village.

---

1. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'étude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne, Extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, pp. 29-31.



8. Koliaa.

The native ruins at Koliaa occupy a promontory site with steep, almost vertical, slopes. De la Blanchère found traces of a defensive wall constructed all round the edges of the summit of the promontory, and inside the enclosed area he found numerous small houses and silos.<sup>1</sup> The discovery of a cistern of Roman construction implies that this native village was occupied during the Roman or immediate post-Roman periods and that the inhabitants were influenced by Roman building techniques.

---

1. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'étude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne, Extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, p.31.

9. Karkab.

The native ruins at Karkab occupy a plateau with steep, near vertical slopes. De la Blanchère found traces of a defensive wall enclosing an area 580 paces long by 390 paces wide. Inside the enclosure, which was constructed of dry, unworked stones, were the remains of numerous houses also constructed of unworked stones. In the nearby cemetery he discovered a pre-Roman, Libyan inscription which implies that this village was occupied before the Roman period. No traces of Roman influences were indicated, so that we do not know whether this site continued to be occupied during the Roman period.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'étude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne, Extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, pp. 43-45.

## 10. Tidernatin.

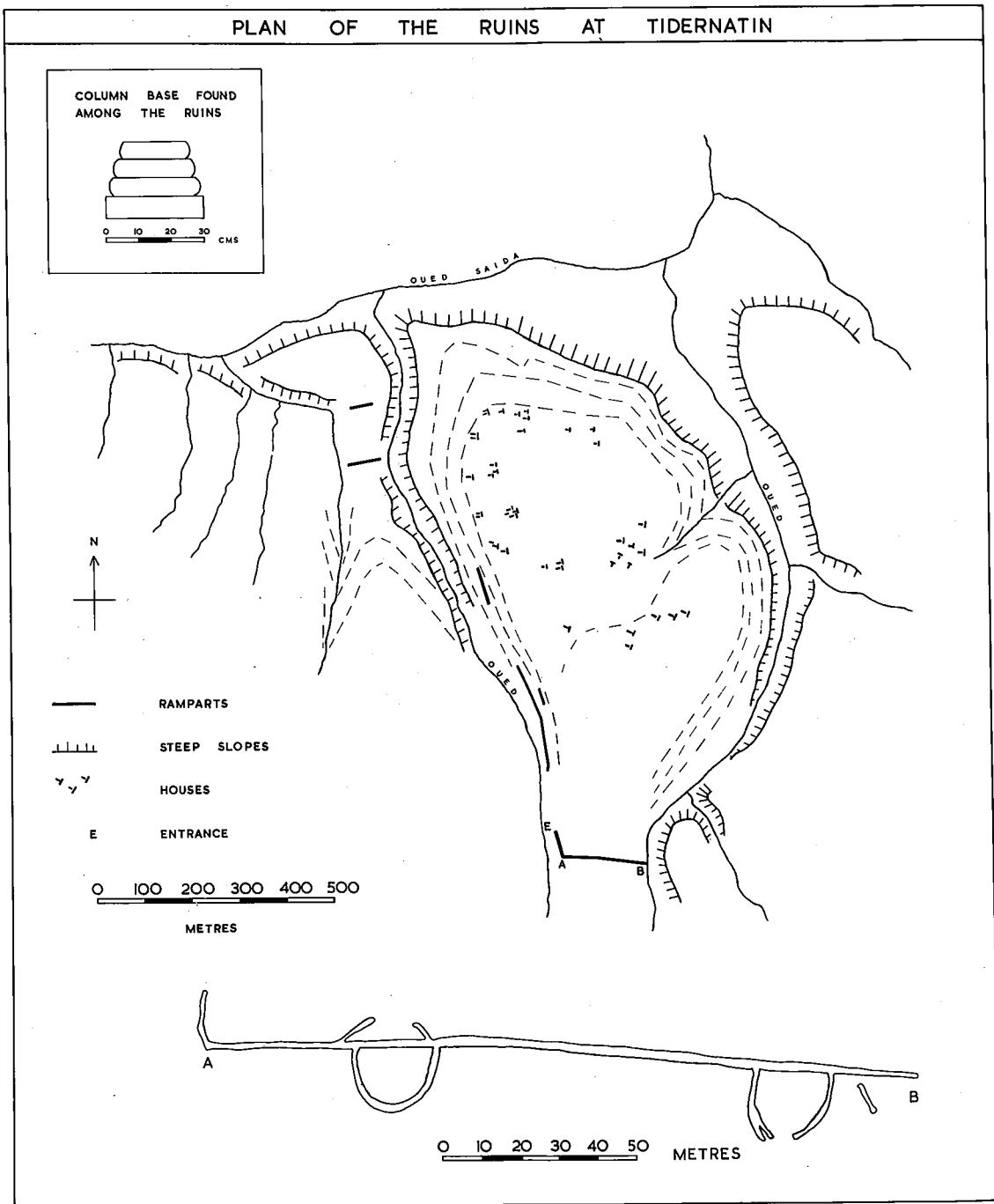
Both de la Blanchère and Fort visited the native ruins at Tidernatin, which is situated five kilometres to the south of Saïda. The ruins occupy the summit of a flat-topped plateau (1100 metres long by 600 metres wide) with very steep slopes down to the Oued Saïda in the north, and down to a deep ravine to the east. The western slopes are more gentle, but the main access to this promontory site is from the south (fig.4). De la Blanchère<sup>1</sup> found traces of a wall constructed to protect the west side of the plateau, and a second wall A B (fig.4), which was still standing to a height of 1.50 m., across the narrow isthmus on the south side of the site. The latter, which was 1.40 m. thick, was constructed of large, unworked stones. A narrow gateway in the west side of this wall, between the wall and the steep slope of the plateau, appeared to be the only entrance to the site. De la Blanchère also described two semi-circular enclosures, 20 metres in diameter, constructed against the second wall A B (fig.4). Although they looked like bastions, because of their size he concluded that they were probably animal enclosures. Irregularly dispersed inside the main enclosure, which covers an area of 50 hectares, were traces of a number of square and rectangular houses 4 - 5 m. long. The walls of these structures consisted of an inner and outer face, with a core of rubble and earth. A millstone was found in one of the buildings, and in others, carbonised cereal grains. Tidernatin was clearly a large fortified village.

An interesting discovery was a crudely worked base of a small column (23 cms high and 30 cms wide) which may have belonged to a more substantial building (fig.4). This piece of evidence does suggest that the inhabitants of Tidernatin were not totally isolated from Roman influences.

---

L. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'étude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne, Extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, pp.46-48.

FIG. 4



11. Mtalsa.

Baras of the 'Bureau Arabe de Daya' described in some detail the extensive native ruins at Mtalsa, situated five kilometres to the north-west of Ain Timetlas in that part of the High Plains which lies immediately to the south of the Monts de Saïda. The ruins occupied a low hill (1,150 metres) from which there was a commanding view of the surrounding plain. The walls of an irregular enclosure (650 metres long and 150-200 metres wide) were still visible, and in a number of places they stood to between 1m and 1.50 m high (fig. 5). They were constructed of heavy stones, many of which had been worked. Baras found no trace of a ditch surrounding the enclosure.

Inside the perimeter wall were the remains of numerous houses arranged with a certain regularity. They were constructed of dry-stone, and a few stones had been roughly worked. Walls constructed in this way would probably have had a maximum height of about two metres, so that wood must have been an important supplementary building material. The type of house most commonly found was composed of a rectangular courtyard with a range of four rooms along one side. Inside the courtyard were one or two towers between 0.50 - 1 m in diameter, which de la Blanchère believed to be granaries (fig. 5 inset). Baras also discovered a large number of stone-lined grain silos. The ruins at Mtalsa cover an area of 13 hectares, and this was clearly a fortified native village of some importance.

Around the village there were numerous garden walls, and beyond, many isolated houses. On the right bank of the Oued Timetlas, which flows to the east of the village, Baras found traces of a second, smaller enclosure which he believed to be a suburb (fig.5). Numerous stone-lined wells had been sunk into the bed of the Oued Timetlas which at the present time - and probably also during the early historical period - has an irregular flow; de la Blanchère maintained that the wells and the native village were contemporary.

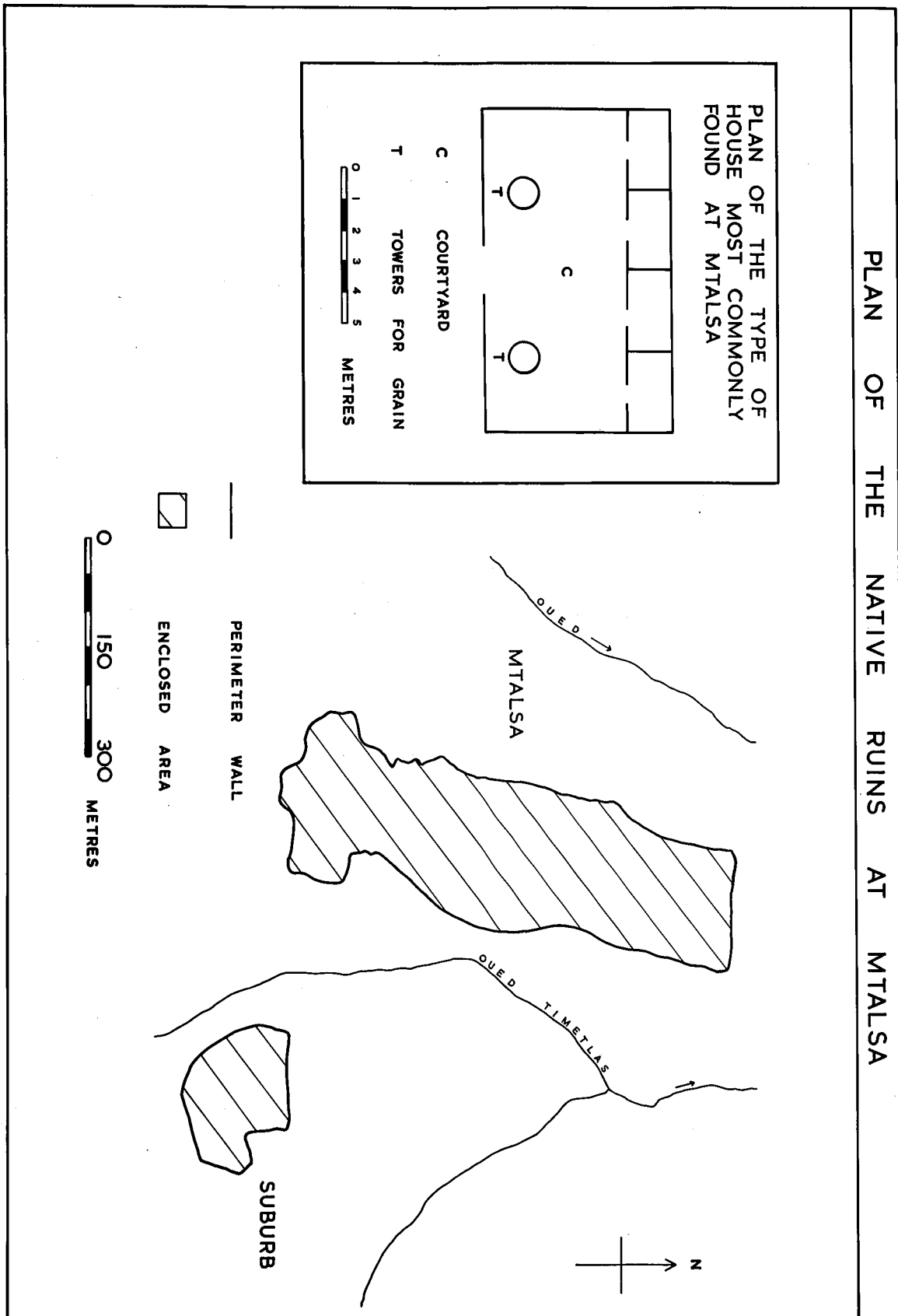
A large quantity of coarse pottery, very different from that used by present-day inhabitants of this area, was found among the ruins. The presence of several sherds of fine pottery suggested to de la Blanchère that occupation continued at Timetlas during the Roman period.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'étude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne, Extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, pp. 55-57.

FIG. 5

PLAN OF THE NATIVE RUINS AT MTALSA





## 12. Ain Balloul.

Fort visited the ruins at Ain Balloul in 1907. He found the remains of a rectangular enclosure, (1500 x 300 metres) constructed of large, irregular and unworked stones (fig.6). Inside the enclosure were what appeared to be a number of long, narrow buildings divided up into several rooms or compartments, as well as many isolated secondary walls. These internal walls were also constructed of unworked stone, although there were a few more regular stone blocks which may have been worked and perhaps formed the angles of the buildings.<sup>1</sup>

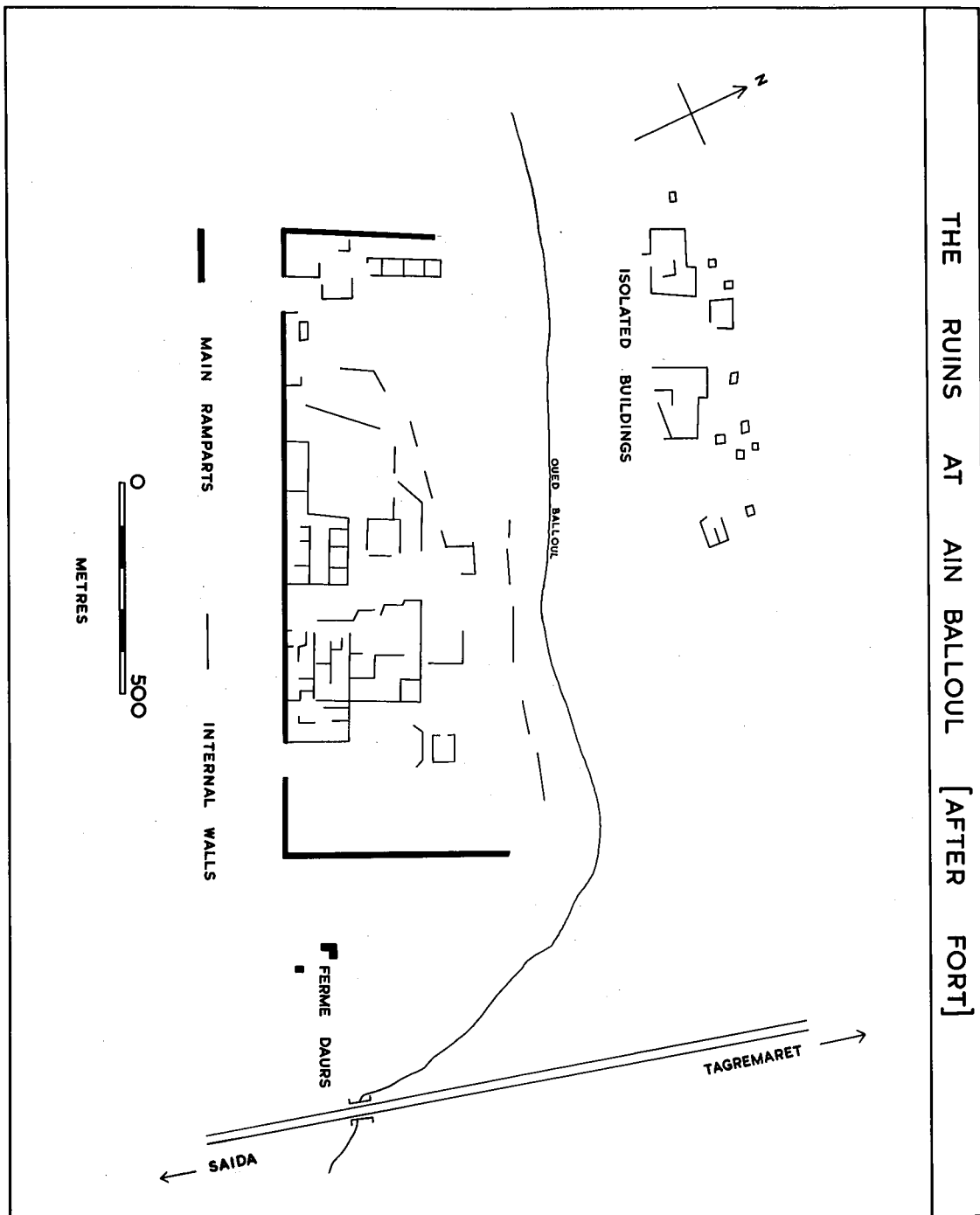
It is difficult to determine what the site at Ain Balloul in fact represents. Gsell in his 'Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie' has suggested that this was a Roman fort.<sup>2</sup> Albertini was convinced that Ain Balloul was situated on the Roman road which linked Cohors Breucorum and Ala Miliaria,<sup>3</sup> although Gauthier has since proved that this road took a more northerly route.<sup>4</sup> Salama maintains that this site represents a southern outpost of the Severan limes.<sup>5</sup> From Fort's description and plan of the site, Ain Balloul was certainly not a Roman fort. The widespread use of unworked stone and the fact that the ruins cover a very large area (45 hectares) suggest that Ain Balloul was a Berber settlement, while the regular form of the main enclosure and some of the internal buildings may reflect the influence of Roman building techniques.

---

1. Fort, 'Note sur les vestiges archéologiques d'Ain Balloul', B.d'O., Vol27, 1907, pp.237-242.  
(and overleaf.)

2. Gsell, S., Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie, Paris, 1911, Map 32, site no. 126
3. Albertini, E., 'La route-frontière de la Maurétanie Césarienne entre Boghar et Lalla-Maghnia', B.d'O., 1928, p.38.
4. Gauthier, R., 'Contribution à l'étude tracé de la route-frontière de la Maurétanie Césarienne', R.A., 1933, pp. 449-457
5. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol.3,1955, p.351, Note 135.

FIG. 6



13. The Sersou.

Joly visited the ruins of many native villages in the western High Plain of Sersou, and on the northern slopes of the Djebel Nador. He noted that the majority of the villages occupied sites that were not easily accessible and that many were also protected by stout ramparts. Only two or three villages were situated in the plain. He was convinced that some of these sites were occupied during the Roman period, and among the ruins of one village in the Djebel Noukhra near the Oued Touil he discovered sherds of Roman pottery.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. B.A.C., 1900, pp. CLXIV-CLXVI.

14. Chellala15. Zenina.

Joly visited many of the native ruins around Chellala in the Djebel ben Hammad, one of the narrow chains which project above the general level of the interior High Plains, and near Zenina in the northern part of the Monts des Ouled Nail. He was able to distinguish five types of native site:

1. Enclosures without interior buildings.
2. Oval enclosures with one to three interior rooms (fig.7 A and B).
3. Rectangular houses consisting of a courtyard with two rooms along one side (fig.7 C and D). Near Zenina a number of these houses are found grouped together to form a small hamlet, but in the area around Chellala they are widely dispersed.
4. Fortified hamlets; the houses are arranged in rows around the edges of a rectangular enclosure and open on to an interior courtyard. There is usually only one entrance but in several cases, where the enclosure is divided into two quarters, each quarter has its own entrance. This type of site appears to be relatively recent (fig. 7 E and F).
5. Large fortified villages occupying defensive sites.

All these sites were constructed of dry stone. The walls were formed of two rows of flags set on end with a core of earth and rubble. However, Joly noted that to

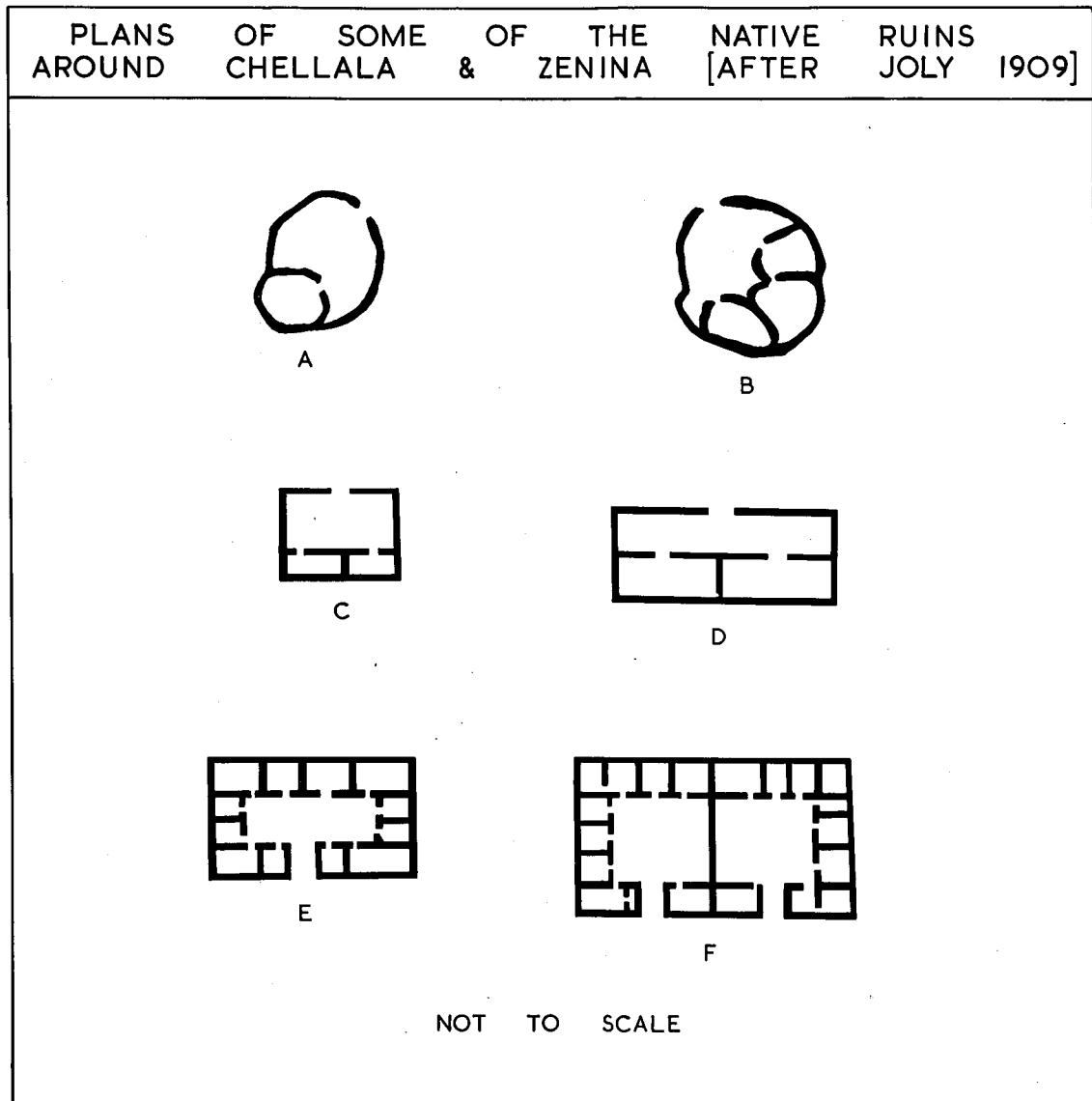
the north of Zenina a number of rectangular houses were constructed of worked stones carefully laid in courses.

In the area around Zenina and Chellala he also found the remains of small dams constructed across the oueds. The aim was to retain not the water but the soil carried by the irregular torrents. The small terraces created in this way would be favourable for tree crops and small fields of cereals.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Joly, A., Répartition et Caractère des Vestiges Anciens dans l'Atlas Tellien (Ouest Oranais) et dans les Steppes Oranaises et Algézaïres', R.A., Vol. 53, 1909, pp.13-17.

FIG. 7



## 16. Damous.

The Roman ruins at Damous are situated on the right bank of the Oued Tafna, three kilometres upstream from Mechera-Gueddara on the old road from Tlemçen to Nemours. They cover an area of approximately ten hectares and are enclosed on three sides by a meander of the Oued Tafna. Although the site of the Roman centre has been cleared in part for cultivation, one can still see a large number of stones, including some worked stones, and the pressing floor of an olive press with a circular channel to receive the oil.<sup>1</sup> On the left bank of the Oued Tafna, 1,200 metres to the north-east, were the remains of a rectangular enclosure 200 x 100 metres.<sup>2</sup>

Only one inscription from Damous is included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (21797); it is a civilian tombstone set up in AD 484. In 1950 Courtot and Janier discovered a second inscription among the ruins; it is the tombstone of Valerius Soricinus who died in AD 409. Leschi visited Damous in 1953 and discovered a third inscription among the ruins; it is a civilian tombstone set up in AD 409. In 1953 Bouteille, a former mayor of Pont de l'Isser, and a landowner in the neighbourhood of Damous, discovered two inscriptions among the ruins which were transported to his house in Pont de l'Isser, and copied there by Courtot and Janier. The inscriptions are both civilian tombstones set up in AD 389 and 379 respectively.<sup>3</sup> A sixth inscription was discovered by Janier in 1954<sup>4</sup> but the text has not been published.



The ruins at Damous are those of a small Roman town which was certainly occupied in the 4th and 5th centuries. The pressing floor discovered among the ruins proves that a section of the community living there were farmers. Damous was situated on the Roman road which linked Numerus Syrorum to Siga, and which was constructed during the first half of the 3rd century.<sup>5</sup> But we know nothing about the origins of the settlement and the elucidation of its detailed history must await excavation.

- 
1. Courtot, P., 'Une ancienne cité romaine, Damous' B.S.A.V.T., 1954, pp.60-63.
  2. Canal, J., 'Monographie de l'arrondissement de Tlemçen', B.d'O., Vol 8, 1888, p.63.
  3. Courtot, P., 1954, idem., pp.60-62.
  4. Leglay, M., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1954', L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, p.186.
  5. Salama, P., 'La Voie Romaine de la Vallée de la Tafna', B.A.A., Vol.2, 1966-67, pp. 211-216.

17. NUMERUS SYRORUM.

In the early 19th century there were still important Roman ruins at Marnia, which is situated at a height of 390 metres on the left bank of the Oued Mehaguene, one of the tributaries of the Oued Tafna. Marnia lies several kilometres to the north-west of the Monts de Tlemçen in the dry Plaine de Marnia, and at the entrance to the vast Plaine des Angad of eastern Morocco.

Gsell in his 'Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie' (1911) provides a valuable summary of the early descriptions of the Roman ruins. According to Azéma de Montgravier, they consisted of a rectangular enclosure (400 metres long and 250 metres wide) with four gateways each flanked by towers. Inside the walls, which were protected by square bastions, were the remains of numerous buildings. The entire settlement was surrounded by a deep ditch. Callier, on the other hand, calculated that the enclosure measured 250 x 225 metres, and beyond it to the south and south-east were numerous tombstones. The walls of the enclosure were 1.50 m. in thickness. <sup>1</sup>

In 1844 the French army occupied this area and constructed a fort on the site of the Roman settlement. Later, those parts of the ruins that had not already been destroyed were used as a quarry by colonists who came to settle outside the fort, and all traces of the Roman settlement rapidly disappeared.

The Inscriptions from Marnia.

Forty inscriptions, including three milestones, from Marnia are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (9961 - 9987, 21799 - 21808, 10468 - 10470). Two milestones found at Hammam bou Ghara and one milestone discovered at Larbout between Marnia and Siga are also included in the Corpus (22626 - 22628). In 1906 Bel published the text of an undated tombstone from Marnia.<sup>2</sup> Fabre published an inscription from Marnia in 1925; it is a Christian tombstone set up in AD 383.<sup>3</sup> In 1956 Janier published the texts of two inscriptions from Marnia now in the Tlemçen Museum. The first is a tombstone of a decurion, Domitius Germanus, who died in AD 336; and the second is an undated and probably pagan tombstone.<sup>4</sup> In 1966 Salama published three new milestones discovered along the Roman road which linked Marnia to Siga. The first was found 5½ kms to the south-west of Mechera Gueddara and was set up in AD 217 - 218 to mark the 18th mile from Numerous Syrorum<sup>5</sup>; the second was found on the right bank of the Tafna between Mechera Gueddara and Damous, and was set up between AD 218 - 222 to mark the 21st mile<sup>6</sup>; and the third was found 1 km to the south-west of Mechera Gueddara, and was set up during the reign of Severus Alexander to mark the 22nd mile from Numerus Syrorum<sup>7</sup>.

What do we know of the origins and history of the Roman settlement?

1. A military unit, the numerus Syrorum, was stationed at Marnia before the reign of the Emperor Macrinus<sup>8</sup>, (AD 217 - 218). This unit gave its name to the fort there.<sup>9</sup> The date when the fort was constructed is uncertain.

However, its situation at the western extremity of the frontier which was established during the reign of Septimius Severus, and secondly the fact that the new limes appears to have been conceived and executed as a whole, suggests that Numerus Syrorum was a Severan foundation.<sup>10</sup>

The inscription C.I.L. 9967 is the tombstone of a centurion, Valerius Germanus, whose unit is not named but who died at Numerus Syrorum in AD 353 at the age of 58 years. The tombstone was set up by the man's family so that Valerius Germanus was no doubt a native of this place. The inscription implies the presence of a military unit at Numerus Syrorum in the second half of the 4th century, but it would be idle to speculate about its strength and military effectiveness.

2. Numerus Syrorum was linked by road to Siga<sup>11</sup> in the north-east and to Pomaria<sup>12</sup> in the east. No milestones have been discovered along the road which linked the military camps at Numerus Syrorum and Pomaria<sup>13</sup>, but it was probably constructed at the beginning of the 3rd century as part of the organisation of the new limes. The road from Numerus Syrorum to Siga, which follows the valley of the Oued Tafna, was of the greatest strategic importance; it linked Numerus Syrorum to the coast and probably formed the effective western boundary of the province.<sup>14</sup> Although the earliest milestones discovered along this route were set up during the reign of Macrinus<sup>15</sup> we cannot exclude the possibility that it was constructed at the beginning of the 3rd century as part of the re-organisation of the defences of Mauretania Caesariensis by Septimius Severus. This road was kept in regular repair during the first decades of the 3rd century.<sup>16</sup>

Several milestones set up along the Roman road from Numerus Syrorum to Siga were found in place, so that we know the exact location of the 8th, 15th, 18th, 21st, and 22nd miles. Salama has been able to trace the exact route taken by this road from Marnia itself to one kilometre to the south-west of Mechera-Gueddara where the milestone set up to mark the 22nd mile from Numerus Syrorum was discovered. Beyond Mechera Gueddara the precise route taken by this road is uncertain, but the distance from Mechera Gueddara to Siga is 33 kms or 23 Roman miles; this makes the total distance from Numerus Syrorum to Siga approximately 45 Roman miles (66.600 kms). However, the milestone C.I.L. 10470, which was set up at Numerus Syrorum itself, records a distance of 37 Roman miles from Numerus Syrorum to Siga. The same inscription records a distance of 29 Roman miles (42,920 kms) from Numerus Syrorum to Pomaria, and yet the distance along the modern road from Marnia to Tlemçen is 56 kms. Salama offers an interesting explanation for this anomaly. He suggests that the figures recorded on the milestone do not refer to the distances from Numerus Syrorum to Siga and Pomaria but to the limits of the territory of Numerus Syrorum in two directions.<sup>17</sup> The numerus Syrorum had therefore the task of guarding an exceedingly large frontier sector, including the Monts des Trara to the north and the Monts de Tlemçen to the south and east; this unit may also have been responsible for patrolling the corridor leading to the Oued Moulouya and beyond it to the province of Mauretania Tingitana.

3. There was an important civilian population at Numerus Syrorum in the early 4th century. One of the inscriptions published by Janier in 1956 is a tombstone set up in AD 336 in memory of the decurion Domitius Germanus.<sup>18</sup> This proves that by AD 336 the civil settlement outside the fort had achieved the rank of a chartered town. No dated civilian tombstones of the 3rd century have been discovered at Numerus Syrorum but the presence of a military unit<sup>19</sup> no doubt attracted a civilian population to the fort soon after it was founded. The settlement grew to cover an area of 10 hectares. It was protected by a wall with projecting bastions which suggests that the defences were constructed after AD 300<sup>20</sup>. Numerus Syrorum continued to be occupied at least until the early 5th century<sup>21</sup>.

4. There was a Christian community at Numerus Syrorum in the 4th<sup>22</sup> and early 5th centuries. C.I.L. 9966 is the tombstone of a priest who died in AD 402.

---

1. Azéma de Montgravier's description of the ruins appears to be the one most widely accepted. Notably by Salama, (Salama, P., 'La Voie Romaine de la Vallée de la Tafna', B.A.A., Vol.2, 1966-67, p.216 note 3).

2. Bel, A., 'Quatre inscriptions (latines) du musée de Tlemçen', B.d'O., 1906, p.491.

3. Fabre, S., 'Inscription de Lalla Maghnia', B.d'O., 1925, pp.129 - 130.

4. Janier, E., 'Inscriptions latines du Musée de Tlemçen', L.A.E., Vol.4, 1956, pp.80-84.

5. Salama, P., 1966-67, idem, pp.191-192 (Borne 7).

6. Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, pp. 193-194 (Borne 8).
7. Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, pp. 194-195 (Borne 9).
8. Two milestones, discovered between Marnia and Siga, were set up during the reign of Macrinus (AD 217-218) to mark the 8th and 18th miles from Numerus Syrorum (C.I.L. 22626 and Salama, P., 1966-67., p. 191 Borne 7).
9. The name Numerus Syrorum is recorded on the following inscriptions (C.I.L. 9962, 10468-10470, 22626, Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, p. 191 Borne 7 and p. 194 Borne 9).
10. Large sections of the Severan frontier, including the forts of Kaputtasaccura, Lucu, and Ala Miliaria to the east of Numerus Syrorum were constructed in AD 201.
11. C.I.L. 10468-10470, 22626-22628, Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, pp. 191-195 Borne 7, 8, and 9.
12. C.I.L. 10470.
13. C.I.L. 10470, which records 29 Roman miles from Numerus Syrorum to Pomaria, was set up at Numerus Syrorum itself.
14. The means by which this road was protected remains to be investigated further.
15. C.I.L. 22626, 22628, Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, p. 191 Borne 7.
16. Milestones of the Emperors Elagabalus (AD 218-222) (Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, p. 193 Borne 8) and Severus Alexander (AD 222-235) (C.I.L. 10468-10470, Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, p. 194, Borne 9) have been discovered along this road.
17. Salama, P., 1966-67, *idem.*, p. 210.
18. Janier, E., 1956, *idem.*, pp. 80-82. This is the earliest civilian inscription to be discovered at Numerus Syrorum.
19. We do not know the strength of the numerus Syrorum but the fact that it occupied a position of some strategic importance implies that it was a fairly large unit.
20. The enclosure described by Azéma de Montgravier does not represent the military camp as Salama maintains, (Salama, P., 1966-67., *idem.*, p. 216 note 3), but the defences of the vicus which grew up around the fort. The exact location and the dimensions of the military camp are not recorded.

21. The most recent inscription to be discovered at Numerus Syrorum is of the year AD 429 (C.I.L. 9984).
22. The inscription published by Janier and dated to AD 336 is a Christian tombstone (Janier, E., 1956, *idem.*, pp.80-82).



18. Guiard.

There were very extensive Roman ruins to the north-east of the present village of Guiard until the impact of European colonisation on this region. Fey<sup>1</sup> described a wall around the Roman 'town' and a fort on the highest part of the hill. The Roman settlement was supplied with water from two nearby springs; one to the north-west at Ain Tolba, and another to the south at Si. Slimane. There was a cemetery to the south of the Roman town. According to Demaeght, writing in 1902, "Cette place couvrait un mamelon de la rive droite de l'Oued Ghazer, et commandait cette vallée, celle de l'Oued Allèche, la Tafna au nord de Montagnac et, enfin, l'ancienne voie de Siga (Takembrit) à Albulae (Ain Temouchent). On y voyait encore, il y a quelques années, les fondations d'une enceinte fortifiée et des alignements de maisons en pierres de taille." <sup>2</sup> At the present time there are few visible remains of the Roman town.

Although a number of latin inscriptions have been discovered there many have been destroyed and others were never recorded. The Corpus gives the text of only one inscription from Guiard (21664) which is undated; it is a tombstone. In 1956 Janier, in an article in *Libyca*,<sup>3</sup> mentioned a new inscription from Guiard not included in the Corpus, but he does not give the text of the inscription.

In 1890 Demaeght recorded that a crudely worked capital decorated with acanthus leaves, discovered among the ruins at Guiard, had been presented to the Oran Museum by Heintz.<sup>4</sup>

On the limited evidence available it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the site near Guiard began as a small fort guarding the road from Albulae to Siga. A civil settlement developed outside the fort, and was itself protected by a wall. Because of the lack of inscriptions it is impossible to determine the length of time the site was occupied.

---

1. Fey, R.A., Vol.3, 1858-9, p.427.
2. Demaeght, 'Catalogue Raisonné des Objets Archeologiques contenus dans le Musée d'Oran', B.d'O., 1902, p.62.
3. Janier, E., 'Inscriptions latines du Musée de Tlemçen', L.A.E., Vol.4, 1956, p.73.
4. Demaeght, 'Inscriptions inédites de la Province d'Oran', B.d'O., Vol.10, 1890, p.221.

19. PRAESIDIUM SUFATIVE/ALBULAE.

Until the second half of the 19th century, important Roman ruins extended over the area which is now occupied by the northern suburbs of the town of Ain Témouchent. The ruins occupied a low plateau (250 metres) at the foot of the northern slopes of the Djebel Tessala near the junction of the Oueds Nat le Senane and Temouchent. The hills of the Djebel Tessala rarely rise above 600 metres and present no real obstacle to movement.

In 1846 the abbé Barges visited the ruins and saw several "grandes pierres carrées, entassées çà et là, les unes sur les autres, des pans de murailles encore debout avec des portes et des seuils, des dalles ayant servi de pavés et restant encore fixées dans le sol, des fragments de briques, de verres et de vieux ustensiles gisant pêle-mêle au milieu des décombres et des buissons qui en dissimulaient une partie à la vue."<sup>1</sup> Other visitors to the site in the second half of the 19th century described two cemeteries, one to the north and the other to the south of the Roman settlement. Pagan tombstones have been discovered in the southern cemetery, which is probably the oldest, and the most recent inscriptions come from the northern cemetery. In 1904 a large cistern was discovered among the ruins, and in 1911 Gsell described traces of an aqueduct leading to the Roman settlement from the north. None of the early visitors to this site recorded the dimensions of the Roman settlement.

From the creation of Ain Témouchent, the Roman ruins were used as a quarry, and dressed stones, together with stones bearing inscriptions, were incorporated in the first military constructions and later in the houses built by European colonists. In this way a large number of inscriptions and works of art have been lost. Ain Témouchent continued to grow and its northern suburbs now cover the site of the Roman settlement. Déjardins had this comment to make about the unhappy history of the ruins at Ain Témouchent; "Ce qui reste ne représente donc qu'une trop petite partie des découvertes archéologiques faites à Ain Témouchent depuis l'occupation française. Encore faut-il déplorer qu'un certain nombre de documents épigraphiques et d'autres objets intéressants soient dispersés chez les habitants de la ville - alors que leur place normale serait au Musée d'Oran." <sup>2</sup>

#### The Inscriptions from Ain Témouchent.

A large number of inscriptions have survived. The Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum includes 69 inscriptions from Ain Témouchent, (9795-9825, 21665-21703 and 22629). In 1901 Flahault published five new inscriptions discovered among the ruins.<sup>3</sup> They are all tombstones; two are undated; another is the tombstone of a soldier of the army of Germany; and the remaining two are 5th century tombstones, one of which was set up in AD 454. An inscription of the Hadrianic period, recording the building of the Praesidium Sufative in AD 119 was published by de Pachtere in 1913.<sup>4</sup> In 1917 Fabre published two undated tombstones from Ain Témouchent<sup>5</sup> and in 1923<sup>6</sup> he published three more inscriptions from this site; two are undated, and one is dated to AD 537. Albertini published an undated dedication to the god Mercury from Ain Témouchent in 1936.<sup>7</sup> In 1939

Déjardins published the texts of two civilian tombstones,<sup>8</sup> set up in AD 409 and 476 respectively, which were originally discovered in the northern cemetery. In an article on the Roman centre at Ain Témouchent Déjardins refers to a number of inscriptions which do not appear to be included in the Corpus;<sup>9</sup> they are mainly tombstones of the 5th century but two are of the 6th century and can be dated to AD 541 and AD 544.

Some of the objects found among the ruins can now be seen in the Oran Museum. They are listed in the *Catalogue Raisonné des Objets Archéologiques du Musée de la ville d'Oran*, Part 1, by Demaeght (2nd edition by Doumergue) Oran, 1932, nos. 17-19, 21, 29, 33, 39, 40, 168, 330, 342, 369, 379, 409, 426, 448, 503, 505, and 508.

As there are no visible remains of the Roman settlement, and as the early descriptions of the site are very incomplete, it is on the basis of the epigraphic evidence that we must try to reconstruct the evolution of this centre.

1. An inscription<sup>10</sup> records the construction of a fort, the Praesidium Sufative, at Ain Témouchent in AD 119. It was one of a series of forts established across the province of Mauretania Caesariensis during the course of the 2nd century. The fort was constructed by the 1st Cohort of the *Musulamii*, but there is no evidence to suggest how long this unit remained there. Three inscriptions<sup>11</sup> attest the presence of reinforcements from Germany in the middle of the 2nd century and in the late 3rd century.

Another inscription (C.I.L. 22629) records that between AD 184 - 185 the Emperor Commodus established new posts in the province and re-established milestones along the roads. A similar inscription comes from the neighbourhood of Auzia.<sup>12</sup> They both point to repairs and the reinforcement of the 2nd century military line after disturbed conditions throughout Mauretania Caesariensis.

It is highly probable that the fort continued to be garrisoned until the beginning of the 3rd century when the units stationed along the 2nd century military line were moved south to permanent camps along a new limes established by Septimius Severus.

2. From its foundation, Praesidium Sufative was linked by road to Regiae and Tasaccura in the east, where military units may have been stationed in the early 2nd century. After the new limes was established further south at the beginning of the 3rd century, roads were constructed to link Praesidium Sufative to Numerus Syrorum and Pomaria, permanent camps at the western end of this frontier line. It is possible that these roads were built as part of the Severan re-organisation. Praesidium Sufative was also linked to Siga in the west and to Portus Magnus in the north - east.

3. A civilian population no doubt gathered around the fort at an early date. Soldiers who had completed their period of service in the Roman army often settled down outside the fort where they had been stationed, and where many had already established families. Three inscriptions attest the presence of

veterans at Praesidium Sufative.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the presence of a military unit with perhaps 500 men each receiving regular pay must have attracted some of the local inhabitants to the fort soon after it was established. They could provide certain services for the soldiers of the garrison. When the military unit was withdrawn at the beginning of the 3rd century, a civil settlement of some importance had developed at Praesidium Sufative, and occupation continued there until the middle of the 6th century.<sup>14</sup>

It is possible that the civil settlement achieved the rank of a self-governing Roman community during the reign of Septimius Severus, when the organisation of a new frontier line further south brought greater security to the region around Praesidium Sufative. An inscription of AD 199-210 (C.I.L. 9797) records that a certain Q. Januarius, a veteran and former decurion, set up a statue to Septimius Severus on the occasion of his being invested with several magistracies. C.I.L. 9799 (21672) is a tombstone set by Aurelius Abiginaeus, who held the municipal office of decurion, in memory of his son who died aged 11 years. The inscription is undated, but can confidently be assigned to the 3rd century.

The inscription C.I.L. 21665 is particularly interesting. It was set up in AD 299 and records that C. Julius Fortunatus was curator ac dispunctor reipublicae Albulensis. We know that the civil

settlement at Praesidium Sufative achieved independent status earlier in the 3rd century, and this inscription indicates that the Roman city became known as Albulae. Furthermore, it tells us something about the structure of municipal government by naming some of the municipal officers: e.g. aediles and duumvirs (joint chief magistrates). We know of a decurion from the inscription C.I.L. 9799. But the most important person in Albulae in AD 299 was C. Julius Fortunatus who had the title of curator and dispunctor, which means that he controlled the municipal administration and finances.

4. Before the spread of Christianity to Albulae the citizens worshipped a number of divinities. There was a temple dedicated to the dea Maura, a purely Berber divinity, at Albulae, and it was rebuilt by the municipality in AD 299 (C.I.L. 21665). Fragments of a statue of this goddess have been found among the ruins. The Punic pantheon was represented by the goddess Caelestis. The inscription C.I.L. 9796, which is unfortunately undated, records that a temple dedicated to this goddess was reconstructed by the soldiers of an ala. A small altar to the god Mercury <sup>15</sup> and a bronze statue representing the same god have been discovered among the ruins. This is our only evidence of a god belonging to the Roman pantheon.

5. The earliest evidence of a Christian community at Albulae is in the first years of the 5th century,<sup>16</sup> although Christianity had probably reached this area sometime in the 3rd or early 4th centuries. Neither



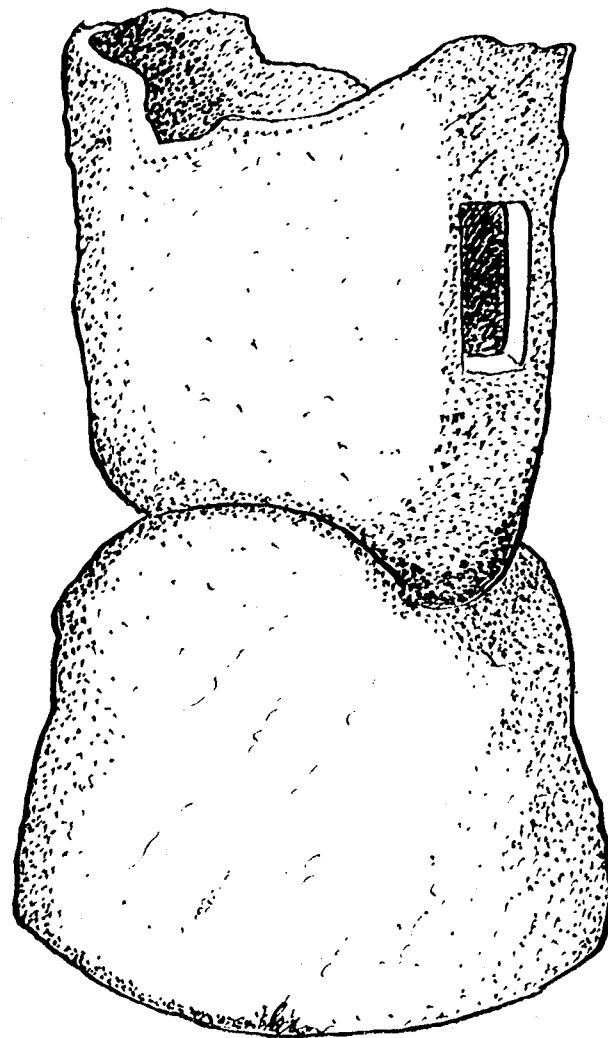
a Catholic nor a Donatist bishop of Albulae are listed in the proceedings of the Council of Carthage in AD 411. However, the list of Catholic bishops from Mauretania Caesariensis who attended the Council of AD 484 includes a Bishop Tacanus of Albulae. A Christian community continued to flourish there at least until the middle of the 6th century; the most recent inscription discovered at Albulae is a Christian tombstone.<sup>17</sup>

6. The discovery of two Roman corn-mills<sup>18</sup> (fig. 8) and a trapetum<sup>19</sup> (fig. 9) among the ruins at Ain Témouchent suggests that some of the citizens of Albulae were farmers, cultivating cereals and olives in fields outside the city. A trapetum is used for separating the stone from the pulp of the olive. It has been described in detail by Mme. Camps-Fabrer. She writes: "Au milieu d'une cuve ronde (mortarium) s'élève une courte colonne de pierre (milliarium) qui supporte une pièce rectangulaire de bois de hêtre ou d'orme, recouverte de lamelles de métal et tournant sur un pivot de bois (columella). Aux extrémités s'insèrent deux pièces de bois (modioli) qui traversent deux hémisphères de pierre (orbes), plates à l'intérieur, convexes au bord de la cuve; les orbes se déplacent circulairement dans la cuve. Ils sont maintenus à distance des parois et des anneaux qui enserrrent les modioli et règlent leurs déplacements. Quand le mortarium est rempli d'olives, deux hommes font tourner les orbes autour de la columella à l'aide des modioli, tandis que d'autres brassent à l'aide d'une pelle de fer (rutrum ferreum) la boue noirâtre pour en faire sortir l'amura." <sup>20</sup> The pulp is then placed in the olive press and the oil extracted. Two presses can be supplied by one trapetum.

1. Déjardins, V., 'Essai historique sur Albulae',  
B.d'O., 1940, pp.217-218.
2. Déjardins, V., 1940, *idem.*, p. 241.
3. Flahault, E., 'Fouilles à Ain Témouchent (Albulae),  
B.d'O., Vol.21, 1901, pp.32-38
4. de Pachtere, F.G., 'Les origines romaines d'Albulae  
(Ain Témouchent) et la frontière de Maurétanie  
Césarienne au 11<sup>e</sup> siècle', B.d'O., 1913 pp.340-348.
5. Fabre, 'Inscriptions romaines d'Ain Témouchent',  
B.d'O., 1917, p.203.
6. Fabre, 'Trois inscriptions funéraires trouvées à  
Ain Témouchent', B.d'O., Vol 57, 1923, pp 212-214
7. Albertini, E., 'Deux inscriptions nouvelles d'Oranie',  
B.d'O., 1940, pp.217-244.
8. Déjardins, V., 'Deux inscriptions chrétiennes d'Albulae',  
B.d'O., Vol.60., 1939, pp.18-19
9. Déjardins, V., 1940, *idem.*, p.241
10. de Pachtere, F.G., 1913, *idem.*, pp.340-348.
11. C.I.L. 21669, 21668, 9798.
12. C.I.L. 20816.
13. C.I.L. 9797, 21670, 21674
14. The most recent inscriptions to be discovered at this  
site are dated to AD 541 and 544 respectively,  
(Déjardins, V., 1940, *idem.*, p.241).
15. Albertini, E., 1940., *idem.*, pp.217 - 244.
16. Déjardins, V., 1940, *idem.*, p.241.
17. It was set up in AD 544 (Déjardins, V., 1940, *idem.*,  
p.242).
18. Demaeght, 'Catalogue raisonné du Musée d'Oran - Arch-  
éologie', B.d'O., Vol.15, 1895, p.80. nos.494 and  
495.
19. Demaeght, 1895, *idem.*, p.80 no 498.
20. Camps-Fabrer, H., L'Olivier et l'Huile dans l'Afrique  
Romaine, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie,  
Service des Antiquités, Missions Archéologiques,  
Alger, 1953, - p.40.

FIG. 8

ROMAN CORN-MILL  
DISCOVERED AT ALBULAE



CATILLUS

META

HEIGHT 0.88 METRES

20. Farm Fages.

No detailed information is available about the Roman ruins near Farm Fages. Three inscriptions from the site are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, (21704 - 6). C.I.L. 21704 is a dedication to the god Aulisva<sup>1</sup> by the prefect of an ala; there is also a reference to the Cohors 11 Sardorum. C.I.L. 21705 - 6 are civilian tombstones. The Roman ruins are situated 1500 metres from the Roman road which linked Albulae to Pomaria.

It is possible that this site represents a small fort guarding the road from Albulae to Pomaria, and the civil settlement that grew up around the fort.

---

1. This divinity is also honoured at Pomaria (C.I.L. 9906).

21 Ain el Bridj.

The Roman ruins at Ain el Bridj are situated on the road that linked Albulae to Tepidae. This site has produced a large number of inscriptions, but many have been destroyed. Of the recorded inscriptions published in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, nos. 21707 - 21714 are undated tombstones, and no. 9825 is a fragmentary Christian tombstone of a late date. One of the buildings there may have been a Christian church. A dolium and a Roman lamp have been found among the ruins and are now in the Oran Museum. <sup>1</sup>

On available evidence it is difficult to determine what the Roman ruins at Ain el Bridj represent. A civilian population certainly occupied this 'settlement' and occupation continued during the Later Empire. The ruins may represent either a small fort around which a civilian population clustered for protection, or a Roman village, or small town.

---

1. Demaeght, *Catalogue Raisonné des Objets Archéologiques du Musée d'Oran*, Part 1 (2nd edition by M.F. Doumergue) Oran, 1932, nos. 172 - 364.

22. POMARIA.

The Roman city of Pomaria was situated at Agadir, to the north-east of present-day Tlemçen. Early travellers and historians commented on the fine orchards of the Tlemçen region, and perhaps it was because of this that the Romans named their military post 'Pomaria.'

This region is dominated by the Monts de Tlemçen which form a barrier to the south of the city, where they rise to a height of 1,200 metres. The northern slopes of these mountains descend to the plain below in a series of steps which look like enormous terraces. Here, the natural vegetation is thinner in contrast to the steep, densely forested slopes of the higher mountains. The Roman settlement was situated on the lowest terrace at a height of 750 metres. The site is naturally protected to the north and east where the land slopes steeply down to the plain below; but to the south and west there is no protection, and the land has only a very gentle slope. From this site there is a commanding view over the Tlemçen plain as far as the southern slopes of the Djebel Tessala to the north, and as far as the Djebel er Ramlya to the east. There is a small but very fertile plain immediately to the north of Tlemçen, separated from the Plaine des Ghossels by a series of small hills - the Djebels el Hadid, Aine el Hout, and bou Djlida - which all rise to heights of around 650 metres.

In the late 7th century the Arab invaders reached this region and established their city, Agadir, on the site of the Roman settlement. Dressed stone from buildings at Pomaria, which were perhaps already in a state of disrepair

or ruin, were taken for use in the construction of the Arab capital. The lower half of the minaret at Agadir, which still survives, is built of good Roman masonry, and some of the stones bear inscriptions of the Roman period.

In 1889 Canal published a detailed description and a plan (fig.10) of the Roman ruins at Tlemçen.<sup>1</sup> He states, "Telle qu'elle est figurée sur notre plan, cette enceinte pouvait avoir 350 mètres de longueur, est-ouest, et 200 mètres de largeur nord-sud. La superficie ne couvrait à l'origine que sept hectares environ, ce qui est vraisemblable, eu égard au peu d'importance de la garnison romaine, qui ne se composait, nous le savons, que d'une aile de cavalerie, forte d'environ deux cents chevaux, et de trois ou quatre cents hommes de troupes auxiliaires, recrutés dans le pays.

Les dispositions du castellum étaient les suivantes: à l'est sur l'emplacement de la porte arabe Bab-el-Ahkbet ou de Sidi Daoudi, se trouvait l'entrée décumane du camp. Elle donnait accès au casernement des troupes et des chevaux, situé à droite et à gauche et séparé par la voie prétorienne, laquelle conduisait à un carrefour central où se trouvait, élevé en plein air, l'ara ou autel dédié au dieu Aulisvae, patron tutélaire de la localité.

La voie principale, très large, coupait cette voie prétorienne du nord au sud, et aboutissait à deux autres portes. A gauche de l'autel, longeant la grande voie s'élevaient les palais des tribuns et du questeur (trésorier de l'armée) encadrant le palais du Préfet. A ces édifices était adossé, du côté ouest, le prétoire occupant la partie centrale du camp. Au nord et au sud

du prétoire, deux grandes places étaient affectées, l'une au forum tribunal et l'autre au questorium augural. Deux grandes tribunes adossées aux murs latéraux du prétoire recevaient les orateurs et les hauts fonctionnaires.

Enfin, dans la partie ouest du camp, à droite et à gauche de la voie qui donnait accès à la porte prétorienne, réservée aux officiers et au préfet se trouvaient les casernements des cavaliers d'élite de la garde préfectorale et les vélites auxiliaires de l'aile des explorateurs.

Plus tard, sous Alexandre Sévère, lorsque Pomaria devint municipe, siège d'un évêché et fut érigée avec toutes ses institutions reipublicae, une cité se forma au sud du camp, dans la partie actuellement encadrée; au nord, par le chemin d'Agadir; à l'est, par les escarpements remparés qui bordent les propriétés Fauqueux et Guérin; au sud, par le chemin creux qui va de l'allée des mûriers à Sidi-Yacoub, et à l'ouest, par le chemin qui va de l'angle des propriétés Ortola et Lenepveu, vers la villa Barat, c'est-à-dire au croisement de ce dernier chemin avec celui allant de Sidi-Lhassen aux tanneries." <sup>2</sup>

According to MacCarthy, "On peut lire encore exactement sur le sol les limites de Pomaria, dont l'angle nord-ouest, en pierres taillées, est demeuré intact, au milieu des constructions de la vaste enceinte des Zianides. Sa superficie était d'environ seize hectares. Il est même facile encore de déterminer la situation et la forme de son ancien castrum . . . Les montants de la porte arabe d'Agadir sont en pierres romaines et celles qui forment la base du grand et beau minaret situé près de là jusqu'à une hauteur de six mètres, ont la même origine." <sup>3</sup>



Since the early 20th century, the nearby city of Tlemçen has expanded in size, and modern buildings and gardens now cover a part of the site of the Roman settlement. Few remains are visible above ground level, and an examination of air photographs in an attempt to determine the plan and dimensions of the Roman centre has proved unrewarding.

#### The Inscriptions from Pomaria.

Seventy-one inscriptions from this site are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (9906 - 9960, 21778 - 21795), together with a number of milestones discovered along the Roman road which linked Pomaria to Altava in the east (22619 - 21, 10462 - 65). In 1903 Bel published an inscription found in the Oued Methkana to the south-east of Pomaria.<sup>4</sup> It is a tombstone, perhaps of the 6th century, and it seems probable that it originally came from Pomaria. Bel published an undated but Christian inscription from Pomaria in 1905<sup>5</sup> and in the following year he published three undated tombstones from this site.<sup>6</sup> In 1956 Janier published the texts of four new inscriptions from Pomaria which were in the Tlemçen Museum<sup>7</sup>. Three are undated tombstones and the fourth is a tombstone of the 6th century.

#### What do we know of the origins and evolution of Pomaria?

1. A military unit was stationed at Pomaria in the early 3rd century. C.I.L. 9906 is a dedication to the god Aulisva by a prefect of the Ala Exploratorum Pomariensium; it was set up between AD 222 and 235. This unit took its name from the fort whereas at Numerus Syrorum to the west it

was the unit which gave its name to the military camp, and later to the civil settlement which grew up outside it. C.I.L. 21779 is the tombstone of a soldier of the Ala Parthorum, but it is undated.

The exact date when a fort was established at Pomaria is uncertain. The earliest inscription from the site is a milestone set up between AD 218 and 222<sup>8</sup>. It mentions the R(es) p(ublica) Pomariensium which implies that a civil settlement had already grown up around the fort by this date, and that it had achieved the rank of a chartered town. It seems most probable, therefore, that Pomaria was established at the beginning of the 3rd century as one of the permanent camps on the Severan lines.

Canal's plan of 1889 (fig.10) shows an enclosure 350 x 200 metres, and he maintained that it was the original military camp. However, with an area of 7 hectares, this enclosure is much too big for a military camp; the fort of Ala Miliaria, built to accommodate a cavalry unit 1000 strong covers an area of only 5.70 hectares. What Canal described was a wall surrounding the civil settlement which we know grew up around the fort.

The location of Pomaria is very different from that of the nearby forts of Numerus Syrorum, Altava, and Kaputtasaccura. Pomaria is situated in a cul-de-sac with no natural opening to the south, whereas Numerus Syrorum dominated the Plaine des Angad; Altava commanded an important routeway through the Atlas Tabulaire by way of the valley of the Oued Isser; and Kaputtasaccura was well placed to control movements along the upper valley of the Oued Mekerra to the south.

2. From its foundation Pomaria was linked by the nova praetentura to Numerus Syrorum and Altava. Roads were also built between Pomaria and Praesidium Sufative, on the earlier military line, and to Siga.

3. A civilian population, no doubt composed of veterans and peregrini, settled outside the fort at an early date. By AD 218 - 222 the civil settlement had been granted the rights of a Roman self-governing community. Occupation continued at Pomaria at least until the second half of the 7th century; the most recent inscription from this site is of AD 651.<sup>9</sup> It is particularly interesting that a Christian population, which continued to set up inscriptions written in latin and dated to the year of the Roman province, survived many years after Roman rule had ended in Mauretania Caesariensis.

The plan which Canal made of the Roman ruins at Pomaria (fig.10) may be interpreted in two different ways. First, the small enclosure, covering an area of 7 hectares, may represent the first stage in the growth of the civil settlement. The exact location of the military camp is uncertain, but it seems highly probable that it was situated in the north-eastern part of this enclosure, where the steep slope of the land provides natural protection on two sides. According to this theory, the first civilians settled to the south of the camp, where the land has only a gentle slope, and at a later date a wall was built to protect the settlement. As the city continued to expand, it became necessary to build a second wall, enclosing a total area of 16 hectares to protect the new

suburbs. Second, it is possible that the civil settlement grew to cover an area of 16 hectares before it was protected by a defensive wall. Then, perhaps during the disturbed conditions of the Later Empire, the city may have declined in size, in which case the small enclosure would represent an attempt to protect those areas still occupied. On the other hand, if there was no decline in the size of the city, the small enclosure may represent a citadel to which the citizens withdrew in time of danger or attack.

4. The earliest Christian inscription from Pomaria is of the year AD 458<sup>10</sup> but Christianity probably spread to this area at a much earlier date. Several Christian inscriptions of the 6th and 7th centuries have been discovered at Pomaria, and a Christian community may have continued to live there after the first Arab invasion at the end of the 7th century. As late as the 11th century El Bekri wrote, "On y trouve les ruines de plusieurs monuments anciens et les restes d'une population chrétienne qui s'est conservée jusqu'à nos jours. Il y a aussi une église qui est encore fréquentée par les chrétiens."<sup>11</sup>

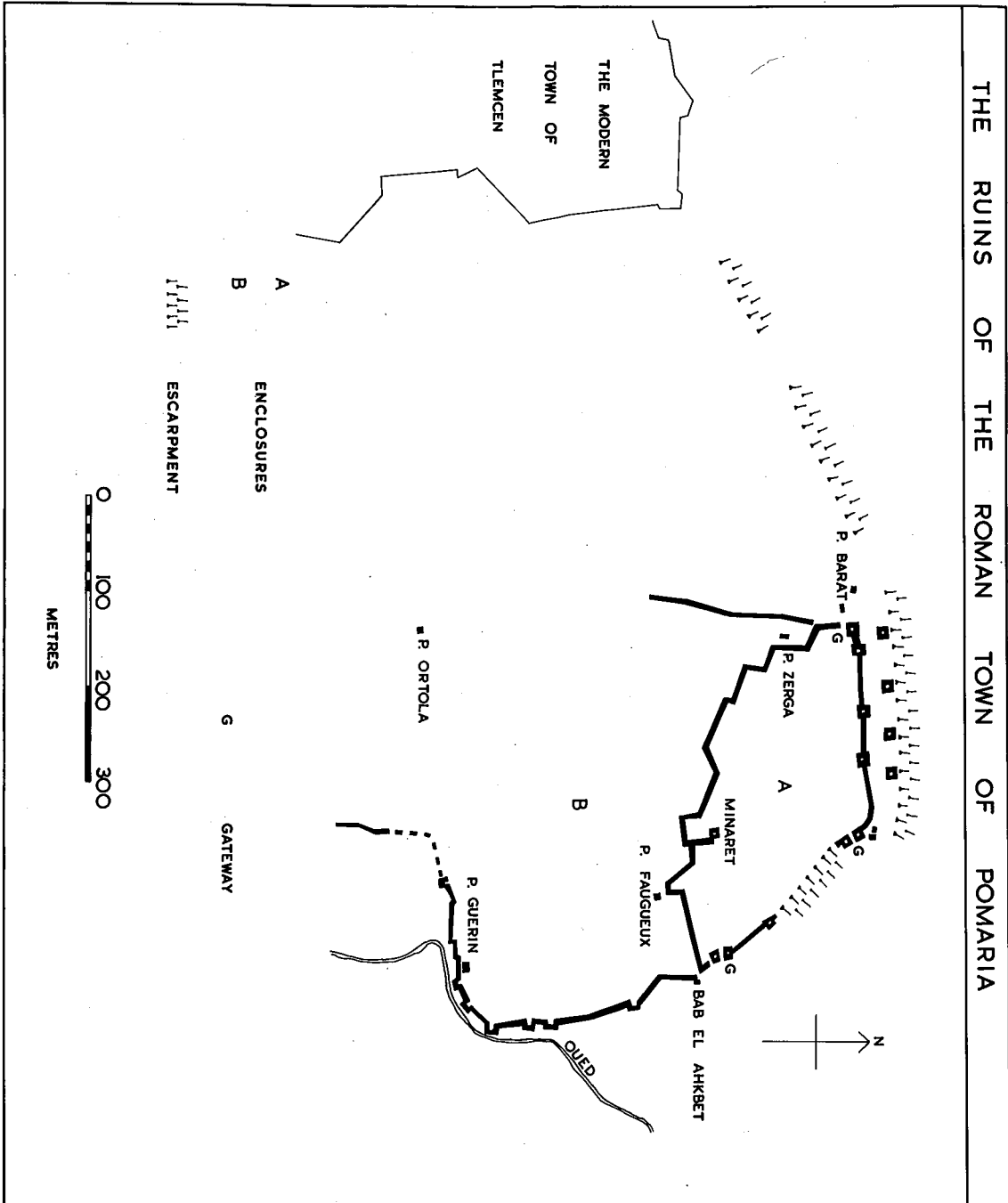
5. Some of the inhabitants of this city were probably farmers cultivating fields in the surrounding area. The piedmont zone around Tlemçen is very fertile, and flourishing olive groves and vineyards can be seen there at the present time. Mme. Camps-Fabrer has indicated that several olive presses have been found among the ruins of Pomaria.<sup>12</sup>

6. During the Middle Ages, Tlemçen became the capital of a kingdom whose power and wealth is well attested by the

magnificent buildings of this period for which the city is famous. The Museum at Tlemçen is almost entirely devoted to the Muslim period. Because of this emphasis it is not surprising that the Roman remains have so far received little attention. It is to be hoped that a more balanced view of the archaeological remains in and around Tlemçen will prevail in the future.

- 
1. Canal, J., 'Pomaria', B.d'O., Vol.9, 1889, pp.257-325.
  2. Canal, J., 1889, idem, pp. 322 - 323.
  3. MacCarthy, M., R.A., Vol.1., 1856, p.94.
  4. Bel, A., 'Inscription de l'oued Methkana', B.d'O.,  
1903, p.146.
  5. Bel, A., 'Une inscription latine de Pomaria',  
R.A., 1905, p. 235.
  6. Bel, A., 'Quatre inscriptions nouvelles (latines)  
du musée de Tlemçen', B.d'O., 1906, pp.491 - 496.
  7. Janier, E., 'Inscriptions latines du Musée de Tlemçen',  
L.A.E., Vol.4, 1956, pp. 71- 84.
  8. C.I.L., 10465
  9. C.I.L. 9935
  10. C.I.L. 21792.
  11. El Bekri, Description de l'Afrique septentrionale,  
Alger, Jourdan, 1913, p. 179.
  12. Camps-Fabrer, H., 'L'Olivier et l'Huile dans l'Afrique  
Romaine, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie,  
Service des Antiquités, Missions Archeologiques,  
Alger, 1953, p.30.

FIG. 10



23. ALTAVA.

There were formerly extensive Roman ruins on the plateau of Hadjar Roum to the east of the village of Ouled Mimoun. This flat-topped plateau, at a height of just over 700 metres, is only a little higher than the surrounding plain, and its slopes are fairly gentle. It offers but the minimum of natural protection, and its northern slopes presented no obstacle to the expansion of the Roman settlement. To the south and east of Hadjar Roum there is a small but fertile plain between the plateau and the steep slopes of the Djebel bou Acha. Immediately to the north is the fertile plain of El Ghor drained by the Oued Khalfoun, a tributary of the Oued Isser.

From this site, at the north-eastern extremity of the Monts de Tlemçen, there is a commanding view to the north over the Plaine des Abdellys. To the west, the Djebel er Ramlya, which rises to 1206 metres, separates the area around Ouled Mimoun from the Tlemçen region. However, a narrow corridor between the Djebel er Ramlya and the main range of the Monts de Tlemçen makes movement between these two regions relatively easy. There are easy communications to the south, along the upper valley of the Oued Isser.

The Roman settlement was located at the southern edge of a piedmont zone, at the point of contact between the higher parts of the Monts de Tlemçen, represented by the Dahar Menndjel and the Djebel bou Acha (1200 metres), and the Plaine des Abdellys (500 metres.) This piedmont zone (500 - 750 metres) is characterised by slopes less steep than those of the Djebel bou Acha to the south; by a more open, natural vegetation; by numerous springs along its

southern edge which give rise to small streams flowing south to join the Isser; and it lacks the monotony of the plains to north and east.

The name Hadjar Roum means Roman stones. Unfortunately, the Roman ruins suffered considerably after the creation in 1852 of the village of Ouled Mimoun which was re-named Lamoricière in 1874.<sup>1</sup> The village was built at the expense of the nearby ruins which provided a convenient supply of worked stone. Later, the north-east angle of the ramparts which surrounded the Roman settlement, was destroyed with the opening of Route Nationale 7 linking Sidi bel Abbès to Tlemçen. In 1886 the railway serving western Algeria was constructed across the Roman site from east to west, and the station itself was built at the centre of the ruins. As a result of these events there are few visible remains of the Roman settlement at the present time.

The section on Altava in the text of Gsell's 'Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie' (1911) contains a valuable synthesis of the accounts of travellers who visited the site during the second half of the 19th century. MacCarthy described two settlements. The first - 'a military town' - formed a rectangle 370 metres long and 317 metres wide, - (according to de Tugny, 380 x 270 metres). The south, east, and west walls of the main defences formed straight lines, while the north wall followed the natural form of the plateau. In the south-west angle there was a fortified stronghold (70 x 48 metres). A second settlement, which was much more irregular in plan, had developed between the north wall of the 'military town' and the northern edge of the plateau. MacCarthy also indicated



cemeteries to the east, south, and north-west of the Roman settlement, and a dam built across the Isser, above Altava.

The results of excavations carried out at Altava.

In the early 1930's Courtot began to investigate the Roman site. He discovered many new inscriptions, and in 1952 and 1953 he directed three excavations at Altava. In the autumn of 1954 Courtot was joined by Pouthier of the French School at Rome for the fourth excavation. Unfortunately only interim reports of these excavations have been published, and they are not accompanied by plans to show the structures that were discovered and the exact location of the areas excavated.<sup>2</sup> However, in 1956 Pouthier published an article on the Roman settlement at Altava<sup>3</sup> in which he includes a small sketch-plan (not drawn to scale) of the area excavated there between 1952 and 1954, and a valuable summary of what these excavations have in fact revealed.

The excavations carried out in 1952 and 1953 revealed a section of one of the main streets of the Roman settlement. As it was orientated roughly from north to south and was situated 160 metres from the east rampart, and 170 metres from the west rampart, Courtot concluded that it was the cardo maximus. Traces of this road, which was unpaved, were found for a length of 130 metres to the north of the railway station. Most of the buildings which bordered the road were constructed at a late period. On the east side of the cardo maximus Courtot excavated a small house containing an olive press, a corn-mill, and a bread oven.

He also found a large quantity of carbonised cereal grains there. Fifty metres to the north, but on the west side of the cardo, he began to investigate a building known as the 'maison à mosaïque'. Thirty metres further north the cardo was interrupted by a group of very complex buildings, and in one of them Courtot found an olive press, a corn-mill, and three dolia.<sup>4</sup>

In the autumn of 1954 excavations were carried out in three different parts of the Roman settlement. First, a section of the north rampart was investigated. This wall was carefully constructed with small masonry joined together with mortar, and it was 1.30 m - 1.40 m in thickness. The remains of a small tower built against the inside face of the rampart were also discovered. Second, several dwelling houses and shops were excavated to the north-east of the cardo maximus, and to the north of this street, and at right angles to it, there were traces of another wide road, bordered by several buildings. One of the buildings contained an olive press, and another building, of a late period, was composed of several rooms built around a large, rectangular courtyard, where a Christian lamp was discovered. Third, the exact position of the east rampart was determined. This wall varied in thickness from 1.30 m to 1.60 m, and it was bordered by several houses of a late period. One of these dwellings contained fragments of several dolia, and part of a Roman corn-mill.<sup>5</sup>

Pouthier has described the results of the excavations carried out at Altava between 1952 and 1954 in some detail<sup>6</sup>, but since the report was accompanied by a very inadequate sketch-plan of the excavated area it adds nothing to the

interim reports by Courtot. However, Pouthier's conclusions about the growth of the settlement, as revealed by excavation, are more valuable. On the sketch-plan which he published (fig.11)<sup>7</sup> the points C and D mark the end of the cardo maximus. Immediately to the north is a wide street CM - NP at right angles to the cardo, and beyond it a part of the northern suburbs of the Roman settlement where Courtot carried out some of his excavations. Pouthier has suggested that the wide road which crosses the end of the cardo maximus represents an important stage in the growth of the Roman settlement. The settlement had expanded to the line C D by the beginning of the 4th century and although expansion continued the northern suburbs were separated from the early built-up area by this wide street. In the middle of the 4th century, when the original settlement at Altava together with the new suburbs were protected by a defensive wall, the north rampart was constructed 40 metres from the end of the cardo maximus at the northern limit of the new suburbs.<sup>8</sup>

Pouthier also examined the stratigraphy of the site as revealed during the 1954 excavations. He distinguishes three dated levels. The finest pottery came from the deepest level. It was very similar to that which Thouvenot discovered at Volubilis, and which he assigned to the 3rd century. The second level was the thickest. In its lowest parts it produced sherds similar to those found in the preceding level, but it was characterised by pottery less finely executed, and becoming progressively coarser. The third level, which was very close to the modern surface, was characterised by thick and coarse pottery. Pouthier

dates the levels by discoveries made in tombs excavated by Courtot, and by comparison with the pottery from Volubilis. By this method the deepest level is dated to the 3rd century, the last level represents the 6th and 7th centuries, and the second level encloses pottery of the 4th and 5th centuries. <sup>9</sup>

Altava is one of a small number of Roman sites in western Algeria where excavations have been carried out in recent years. It is particularly unfortunate that because of the lack of plans the results of these excavations are difficult to interpret, and thus of only limited value.

#### The Inscriptions from Altava.

131 inscriptions from Altava are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (9831 - 9905, 21720- 21777) together with several milestones discovered along the road between Altava and Pomaria (22619, 22620 - 22, 22624). Since 1904 many new inscriptions have been discovered among the ruins at Hadjar Roum. Some have been published but others remain unpublished. In 1964 Marcillet-Jaubert completed a dissertation entitled 'Les Inscriptions d'Altava,' presented to obtain a 'doctorat du troisième cycle' at the Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université d'Alger. This includes all the published inscriptions from Altava together with many that are still unpublished. <sup>10</sup> It reveals that out of a total number of 326 inscriptions discovered at Altava 224 can be dated accurately. A list of the dated inscriptions arranged in chronological order is included at the end of this dossier (list A). Each

inscription is given a number and dated inscriptions mentioned in the text below are referred to by these numbers. Undated inscriptions are referred to by their number in the Corpus.

What do we know of the origins and evolution of  
Altava?

1. The Roman name for this settlement, Altava, is provided by the milestones nos. 11, 12, and 14, and by the inscriptions nos. 8, 122, and 194.
2. Altava originated as one of the permanent camps on the Severan limes. The earliest inscriptions from this site are of the reign of Septimius Severus (1, 2, 3, 4), and two of them attest the presence of the Cohors 11 Sardorum (2, 3). This unit was stationed at Rapidum during the 2nd century,<sup>11</sup> but it appears to have been moved south when the Severan frontier was organised at the beginning of the 3rd century. The exact date of the military foundation at Altava is uncertain, but it is possible that it was in AD 201. During the course of this year, a large section of the new limes, including the three military camps further east - Kaputtasaccura, Lucu, and Ala Miliaria, was inaugurated by the procurator Aelius Peregrinus. The Cohors 11 Sardorum remained at Altava at least until the reign of Severus Alexander (10) and an inscription set up between AD 227 and 237 mentions the Ala Parthorum (10). It may be noted that tombstones of soldiers are rare.
3. Milestones show a well-organised road system. Altava was linked to Kaputtasaccura and Pomaria by the nova praetentura which was constructed at the beginning of the

3rd century as part of the new lines. Towards the north-west, a road led to Tepidae, and from there to Albulae on the earlier military line. Another road led to Tasaccura to the north-east. The milestones found along these roads (4,5,6,7,9,11,12,13,14) are dated from the reign of Caracalla to the reign of Philip.

4. At an early date a civilian population, no doubt composed of veterans<sup>12</sup> and peregrini, settled outside the fort. By AD 220 the civil settlement had already achieved independent status as a Roman self-governing community. The municipal evolution of the new city has been examined in some detail by Pouthier.<sup>13</sup> He points out that from the outset the municipal council was made up of men who were often taking their first step into the Roman world. There was no deep attachment to Roman civilisation. Although the city had been endowed with all the apparatus of a Roman self-governing community, the municipal organisation was a facade more than a reality. It very rapidly evolved towards an oligarchy which, from an early date, tended to be dominated by one man. During the 3rd century the inhabitants of the city were divided between the ordo and the populares<sup>(8)</sup>. But within the ordo real power came to rest with the decemprini<sup>14</sup> and one of them had a particularly important role in the government.<sup>15</sup> This evolution accelerated during the 4th century when political power came to rest in the hands of a few of the wealthier decurions who were known as primores (67). They nominated one of their number as head of the municipal government. He was known as the dispunctor (67) and he had charge of the administration of the city, tax collection and relations with the provincial administration.

In this community, where there had been no deep penetration of Roman civilisation, a simplification of the municipal organisation had therefore taken place, and real power and responsibility were delegated to a few of the wealthier families. A similar situation must have prevailed in other civil settlements around forts in the interior of the province which achieved independent status.

An inscription set up in honour of the Emperors Constantius and Constans (AD 349 and 350) commemorates the construction of ramparts to protect the city by order of the dispunctor and the primores, (67). This, together with another imperial dedication set up between AD 408 and 423 (122) is incompatible with the theory put forward by Carcopino<sup>16</sup> and Courtois<sup>17</sup> who suggested that the western part of Mauretania Caesariensis was abandoned by Rome at the end of the 3rd century. The inscription in honour of Honorius and Theodosius seems to indicate effective Roman occupation of the Altava region until the Vandal invasion.

But if the Vandal invasion meant the end of Roman rule in Mauretania Caesariensis, it had little real effect on the city of Altava. The settlement continued to be occupied by a Christian population who set up inscriptions written in latin, and dated to the year of the Roman province. During the 5th century Altava must have formed an autonomous republic with a form of civilisation that was still quite distinct from that of the Berber tribes further south. Nevertheless, the Berber element grew stronger during this period, and as early as the second half of the 4th century the decoration on tombstones from this

site reveals a combination of Berber and Christian techniques. By the first decade of the 6th century Altava had come under the control of Masuna, rex Maurorum et Romanorum (194) who was no doubt a local Berber chief-tain, but it still retained its distinct character at least until the end of the 6th century. The most recent inscription discovered there belongs to the year AD 599 (224).

The name of Altava still appears in the 7th century on a tombstone discovered at Volubilis in Mauretania Tingitana. It is dated to AD 655 and mentions a certain Iulia Rogativa.<sup>18</sup> This inscription is important because it indicates that there was some contact between Altava and Volubilis during the immediate post-Roman period across a region - now eastern Morocco - where there is no evidence of Roman military or civilian occupation.<sup>19</sup> It is, however, insufficient evidence for an 'effective alliance' or a 'federation' between Altava and Volubilis as envisaged by Carcopino.<sup>20</sup>

5. According to figures published by MacCarthy, the Roman ruins at Hadjar Roum covered an area of 11.7 hectares (10.2 hectares according to the figures given by Tugny). This is too large to represent the original military camp and must refer to the civil settlement which grew up outside it. MacCarthy also indicated a stronghold (70 x 48 metres) in the south-west corner of the perimeter wall of the city. Marcillet-Jaubert consulted airphotographs of the plateau of Hadjar Roum, and was able to identify a rectangular enclosure 430 x 330 metres - an area of 14 hectares. Airphotographs<sup>21</sup> do reveal clear traces of the south wall, and sections of the east and west walls of an enclosure (fig.12). The south wall is 330 metres in length and the visible sections of the east and west walls



are 200 and 180 metres in length respectively. A small enclosure (120 x 70 metres) can be seen in the south-west corner of the ramparts. Unfortunately, that part of the Roman city which now lies to the north of the railway line has been built over by modern constructions, and no trace of the perimeter wall can be seen on airphotographs (fig.12). However, during Courtot's excavations in this area, traces of the east and west walls of the main enclosure were found, and he noted that the cardo maximus was 160 metres from the east wall and 170 metres from the west wall. The east and west walls were therefore approximately 330 metres apart, and this corresponds to the length of the south wall calculated from airphotographs. In the same report Courtot states that the cardo maximus was traced for 130 metres from the railway station, and Pouthier in his report notes that the north rampart was constructed 40 metres from the end of the cardo maximus. This makes the total distance from the railway line to the north rampart approximately 170 metres. The total length of the east rampart is therefore approximately  $170 + 200$  metres = 370 metres, and the west rampart approximately  $170 + 180$  metres = 350 metres. The perimeter wall of the city, which was rectangular in shape, encloses an area of approximately 12 hectares. It probably represents the ramparts constructed in AD 349 - 350 (67). The small enclosure in the south-west corner of the main ramparts may represent a late citadel. The exact position of the original military camp remains uncertain.

6. The gods of the Roman pantheon appear to have been almost unknown to the majority of the inhabitants of Altava.

Only a few inscriptions record Roman divinities, (9832, 9831, 21721) and these dedications were all made by military personnel attached to units stationed at Altava. This shows very clearly the lack of any real penetration of the Roman religion, and most of the citizens no doubt remained faithful to native gods - perhaps the famous dii Mauri (10).

7. We know very little about the origins of Christianity at Altava. Our earliest evidence is an inscription of AD 309 which records the building of a church (19). A bishop Auus of Altava attended the council which met at Carthage in AD 484, and another bishop of Altava, Ulpus Maximus, died there in AD 529 aged 85 years (197). A priest, Iulius Capsarius, died at Altava in AD 495 (190) and a deacon is attested there in AD 423 (138). Many Christian tombstones have been discovered at Altava. There was a large cemetery of the Christian period to the north-east of the city, and another cemetery near the Oued Isser to the south-east.

8. Many of the citizens of Altava were peasant farmers, cultivating fields of cereals outside the city, and grafting the wild olive trees which formed part of the surrounding natural vegetation. Excavations carried out in the northern suburbs revealed a number of small houses which appear to be early 4th century in date, each containing an olive press and a corn-mill. No olive mills (huilleries) or flour mills were discovered. The families who occupied these dwellings were no doubt producing their own foodstuffs and basic raw materials, pressing their own olives and milling their own flour. There can have been little specialisation. Five olive

presses were discovered during the excavations carried out at Altava between 1952 and 1954, and the fact that a large number of weightstones were also found proves that many other presses have been destroyed. Twenty Roman corn-mills (mola manuaris) have been found and from the carbonised cereal grains which Courtot discovered we know that the farmers of Altava grew both hard and soft wheat and also spelt.<sup>22</sup>

9. Courtot informs me that he has discovered the remains of a number of Roman farms in the Plain of El Ghor to the north of Altava. Unfortunately he has not calculated their exact location so that the sites cannot be marked on a map. No olive presses or corn-mills have been found among the ruins, but Courtot stresses that they are neither villas nor large farms, but small, peasant dwellings. One of these sites has produced two Christian inscriptions of a late period.<sup>23</sup> They are both tombstones, the first dated AD 447 and the second AD 552. This particular farm was therefore occupied after Roman rule ended in Mauretania Caesariensis and at a time when this area was included in the territory ruled by Masuna, 'king of the Moors and the Romans.'

Courtot is convinced that these farms were only established at a late date. In support of this theory it should be noted that there are traces of a Roman farm near Palissy (to the north of Kaputtasaccura) which was certainly occupied in the 5th century.<sup>24</sup> This evidence of a dispersed form of settlement at a late date is very interesting, particularly as it appears in that part of Mauretania Caesariensis where, at an earlier period, civilian settlement seems to have taken place only around

the forts where there would be a measure of protection. But we must add a note of caution. It is quite possible that these farm sites were occupied at a much earlier date, and evidence of this has not yet come to light. Any definite conclusion must await trial excavations at one or more of the sites or further epigraphic discoveries.

- 
1. Since Algerian independence the village has been re-named Ouled Mimoun.
  2. Courtot has told me (Algiers, April 1968) that no plans of the areas excavated were made. A number of rough sketches and photographs are the only record of the excavations.
  3. Pouthier, P., 'Evolution Municipale d'Altava, aux 111<sup>e</sup> et 1V<sup>e</sup> siècles ap.J.C.', M.E.F.R., Vol.68, 1956, pp. 205 - 245.
  4. Leglay, M., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1953', R.A., 1954, pp.215 - 216.
  5. Leglay, M., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1954', L.A.E., Vol3, 1955, p.185.
  6. Pouthier, P., 1956, *idem.*, pp. 219 - 220.
  7. An approximate scale has been added.
  8. Pouthier, P., 1956, *idem.*, pp. 220 - 222.
  9. Pouthier, P., 1956, *idem.*, pp. 223 - 225.
  10. I am indebted to Monsieur H - G Pflaum of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Université de Paris, for allowing me to consult his copy of this thesis.
  11. Rapidum, 78, 2.
  12. Only one inscription from Altava mentions a veteran. It is an undated inscription which is not included in the Corpus. It is included in Marcillet-Jaubert's thesis no. 294.

13. Pouthier, P., 1956, *idem.*, pp. 205 - 245.
14. They are recorded on an undated inscription published for the first time by Pouthier. It is the tombstone of: Titius Faussanus prior civitatis suae ex decemprimis (Pouthier, P., 1956, *idem.*, p. 208).
15. The important role played by one man in the municipal government of Altava during the 3rd century is revealed by two undated inscriptions. The text of the first has already been given in note 14. The second, which Pouthier suggests is earlier in date, mentions a rex sacrorum, prior princeps civitatis nostrae Q. Sittius Maximus.  
It was first published by Leschi in 1932 (Leschi, L., B.A.C., 1932, pp. 248 - 254).
16. Carcopino, J., 'La fin du Maroc romain', M.E.F.R., 1940, pp. 349 - 448.
17. Courtois, C., Les Vandales et l'Afrique, Paris, 1955, pp. 88 - 89.
18. Carcopino, J., 'Note sur une inscription chrétienne de Volubilis', Hes., 1928, pp. 135 - 145.
19. It should be noted that we have no evidence that contact took place between the inhabitants of these two regions during the Roman period itself.
20. Carcopino, J., Le Maroc Antique, Paris, Gallimard, 1947, p. 296.
21. Consulted at the Photothèque of the Institut Géographique National, Saint Mandé, France.
22. Leglay, M., 1954, *idem.*, p. 216.
23. Leschi, L., 'Inscriptions d'Altava', Etudes d'Epigraphie d'Archéologie et d'Histoire Africaines, Paris, 1957, pp. 409 - 410.
24. Palissy, 27.

FIG. II

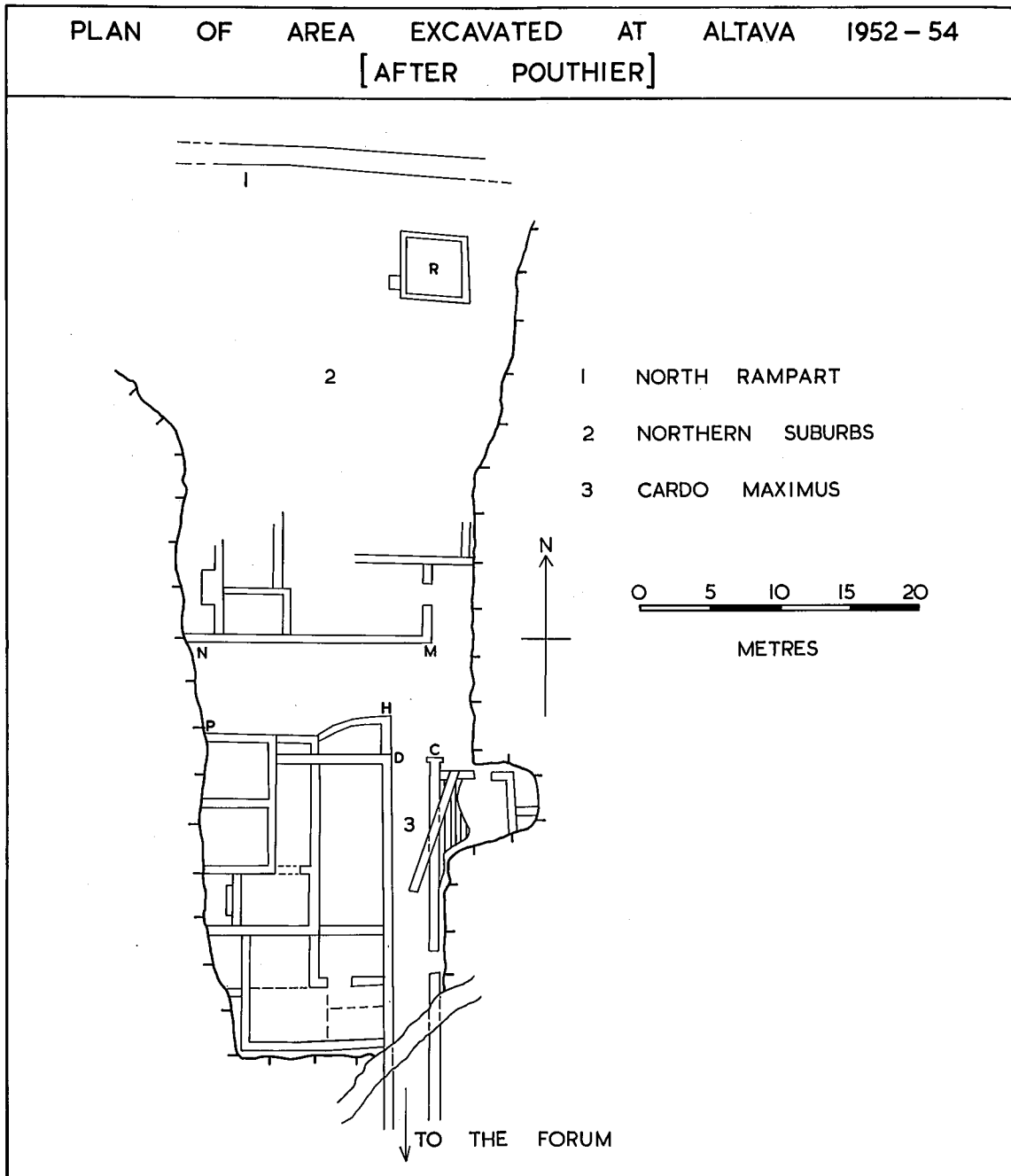
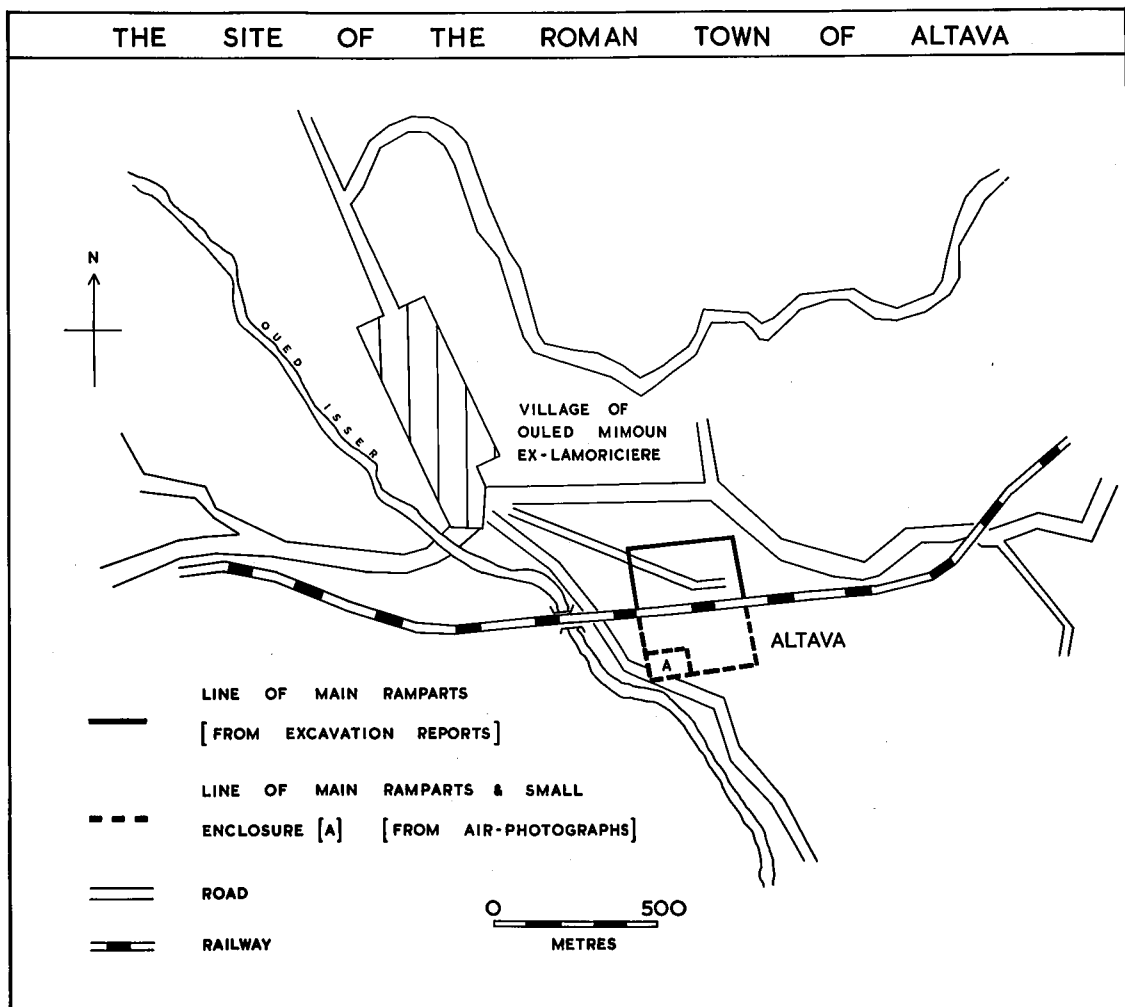


FIG.12



LIST A.

This list includes only the dated inscriptions from Altava which are arranged in chronological order. The list is compiled from the thesis 'Les Inscriptions d'Altava' presented by Marcillet-Jaubert at the Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université d'Alger in 1964.

1. Dedication to Geta, AD 201-209, (C.I.L. 9833)
2. Dedication to Nemesis, AD 208, (C.I.L. 10949)
3. Dedication to Diana, AD 208, (published by  
P.Courtot, B.d'O., 1931, p. 370.)
4. Milestone AD 212 (C.I.L. 22622)
5. Milestone AD 217-218 (published by  
L.Leschi, B.A.C., 1938-40, p. 208)
6. Milestone AD 218-222 (C.I.L. 22623)
7. Milestone, AD 218-222 (C.I.L. 10461)
8. Dedication to Elagabalus, AD 220, (C.I.L. 21723)
9. Milestone AD 222-223 (published by  
M.Fabre, B.d'O., 1928,  
pp. 29 - 30.)
10. Dedication to the dii Mauri, AD 227-237,  
(C.I.L. 21720)
11. Milestone AD 235 (C.I.L. 22619)
12. Milestone AD 236-238 (C.I.L. 22624)
13. Milestone AD 238 (C.I.L. 22620)
14. Milestone AD 244 (C.I.L. 22621)
15. Dedication AD 257 (C.I.L. 21724)
16. Tombstone AD 301-305 (C.I.L. 9885.)
17. Tombstone AD 302 (C.I.L. 9862)
18. Tombstone AD 305-308 (published by  
P.Courtot, B.d'O., 1933, pp 393-394.)
19. Inscription to commemorate the building of a  
church in AD 309. (unpublished.)
20. Tombstone AD 309-315 (unpublished.)



21.	Tombstone	AD 311	(C.I.L. 21734)
22.	Tombstone	AD 312	(C.I.L. 21750)
23.	Tombstone	AD 313	(unpublished)
24.	Tombstone	AD 309-338	(unpublished)
25.	Tombstone	AD 318	(C.I.L. 9892 )
26.	Tombstone	AD 323	(unpublished)
27.	Tombstone	AD 323	(C.I.L. 9855)
28.	Tombstone	AD 324	(C.I.L. 9868)
29.	Tombstone	AD 326	(unpublished)
30.	Tombstone	AD 327	(C.I.L. 9890)
31.	Tombstone	AD 329	(unpublished)
32.	Tombstone	AD 329,	(published by M.Fabre, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1928, p.32)
33.	Tombstone	AD 329	(unpublished)
34.	Tombstone	AD 330	(unpublished)
35.	Tombstone	AD 330	(unpublished)
36.	Tombstone	AD 330,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1929, pp. 187-188.)
37.	Tombstone	AD 331	(unpublished)
38.	Tombstone	AD 331,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1931, pp. 371-372.)
39.	Tombstone	AD 332	(C.I.L. 9861)
40.	Tombstone	AD 333	(unpublished)
41.	Tombstone	AD 333	(C.I.L. 9856)
42.	Tombstone	AD 333	(C.I.L. 21772)
43.	Tombstone	AD 333	(C.I.L. 21753)
44.	Tombstone	AD 334	(C.I.L. 9851)
45.	Tombstone	AD 335	(unpublished)
46.	Tombstone	AD 335	(C.I.L. 9840)
47.	Tombstone	AD 338,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1929 pp. 186-187.)
48.	Tombstone	AD 339,	(published by M.Fabre, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1928, p.33.)

49. Tombstone AD 340, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1934, p. 354.)
50. Tombstone AD 340-349 (unpublished)
51. Tombstone AD 341 (unpublished)
52. Tombstone AD 342 (C.I.L. 21769)
53. Tombstone AD 342 (unpublished)
54. Tombstone AD 343 (unpublished)
55. Tombstone AD 343 (C.I.L. 21735)
56. Tombstone AD 343, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1937, p. 19.)
57. Tombstone AD 344 (unpublished)
58. Tombstone AD 344 (unpublished)
59. Tombstone AD 344 (C.I.L. 9850)
60. Tombstone AD 345, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1936, p. 15.)
61. Tombstone AD 345 (unpublished)
62. Tombstone AD 346, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1937, p.19)
63. Tombstone AD 346-356 (unpublished)
64. Tombstone AD 347 (unpublished)
65. Tombstone AD 347 (C.I.L. 9893)
66. Tombstone AD 347, (published by M. Fabre,  
B.d'O., 1928, p.31.)
67. Dedication in honour of Constantius II and Constans,  
AD 349-350, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1935, pp. 193-197.)
68. Tombstone AD 350 (C.I.L. 9889)
69. Tombstone AD 350 (C.I.L. 21768)
70. Tombstone AD 350-353 (unpublished)
71. Tombstone AD 351 (C.I.L. 21748)
72. Tombstone AD 351 (C.I.L. 9894)
73. Tombstone AD 351 (unpublished)
74. Tombstone AD 351-353 or 380-382,  
(C.I.L. 21760)

75.	Tombstone	AD 352	(C.I.L. 21727)
76.	Tombstone	AD 352	(C.I.L. 21765)
77.	Tombstone	AD 352	(unpublished)
78.	Tombstone	AD 354	(unpublished)
79.	Tombstone	AD 354	(C.I.L. 21751)
80.	Tombstone	AD 360	(unpublished)
81.	Tombstone	AD 361	(unpublished)
82.	Tombstone	AD 361	(C.I.L. 9847)
83.	Tombstone	AD 362	(unpublished)
84.	Tombstone	AD 362	(C.I.L. 9860)
85.	Tombstone	AD 363	(unpublished)
86.	Tombstone	AD 365	(unpublished)
87.	Tombstone	AD 371 or 372	(unpublished)
88.	Tombstone	AD 379-388	(C.I.L. 21763)
89.	Tombstone	AD 382	(C.I.L. 9872)
90.	Tombstone	AD 383	(C.I.L. 21767)
91.	Tombstone	AD 384	(unpublished)
92.	Tombstone	AD 384,	(published by Camps in <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1945-46, p. 37.)
93.	Tombstone	AD 385	(unpublished)
94.	Tombstone	AD 385	(C.I.L. 21757)
95.	Tombstone	AD 387	(unpublished)
96.	Tombstone	AD 387	(unpublished)
97.	Tombstone	AD 388	(unpublished)
98.	Tombstone	AD 389	(unpublished)
99.	Tombstone	AD 390	(C.I.L. 9878)
100.	Tombstone	AD 391	(unpublished)
101.	Tombstone	AD 391,	(published by P. Courtot, 1934, <u>B.d'O.</u> , p. 355)
102.	Tombstone	AD 392	(C.I.L. 9875)
103.	Tombstone	AD 393	(C.I.L. 9897)
104.	Tombstone	AD 393	(unpublished)

105. Tombstone AD 393 (C.I.L. 9848)
106. Tombstone AD 393 (unpublished)
107. Tombstone AD 394 or 396 (C.I.L. 21736)
108. Tombstone AD 398 (C.I.L. 21752)
109. Tombstone AD 399 (C.I.L. 9849)
110. Tombstone AD 399, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1934, pp. 356-357.)
111. Tombstone AD 400-429 (C.I.L. 21754)
112. Tombstone AD 401 (C.I.L. 21766)
113. Tombstone AD 401 (unpublished)
114. Tombstone AD 402 (unpublished)
115. Tombstone AD 403 (unpublished)
116. Tombstone AD 405 (unpublished)
117. Tombstone AD 406, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1937, pp.19-20.)
118. Tombstone AD 406, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1936, pp 12-13.)
119. Tombstone AD 407 (unpublished)
120. Tombstone AD 407, (published by Canal, B.d'O.,  
1887 p.76 - not included in C.I.L.)
121. Tombstone AD 408, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1936, p.13.)
122. Imperial Dedication AD 408-423, (C.I.L. 9834.)
123. Tombstone AD 409 (unpublished)
124. Tombstone AD 409 (unpublished)
125. Tombstone AD 410 (unpublished)
126. Tombstone AD 410 (unpublished)
127. Tombstone AD 412 (C.I.L. 21744)
128. Tombstone AD 412 (unpublished)
129. Tombstone AD 412, (published by P. Courtot,  
B.d'O., 1934, pp. 356-357.)
130. Tombstone AD 412 (unpublished.)
131. Tombstone AD 413, (published by L. Leschi,  
B.A.C., 1938 - 40, p.209.)
132. Tombstone AD 418 (unpublished)

133.	Tombstone	AD 419	(C.I.L. 9865)
134.	Tombstone	AD 419	(unpublished)
135.	Tombstone	AD 419	(unpublished)
136.	Tombstone	AD 420	(C.I.L. 9887)
137.	Tombstone	AD 420	(C.I.L. 21755)
138.	Inscription	AD 423	(unpublished)
139.	Tombstone	AD 423	(C.I.L. 21740)
140.	Tombstone	AD 423	(C.I.L. 21777)
141.	Tombstone	AD 424	(C.I.L. 21770)
142.	Tombstone	AD 424	(unpublished)
143.	Tombstone	AD 425	(C.I.L. 21733)
144.	Tombstone	AD 428 or 429	(C.I.L. 21726)
145.	Tombstone	AD 429	(unpublished)
146.	Tombstone	AD 429, (published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1937, p. 20.)	
147.	Tombstone	AD 429, (published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1934, pp. 357-359.)	
148.	Tombstone	AD 430	(C.I.L. 21747.)
149.	Tombstone	AD 430	(unpublished)
150.	Tombstone	AD 430	(C.I.L. 9859)
151.	Tombstone	AD 432	(C.I.L. 21745)
152.	Tombstone	AD 435	(unpublished)
153.	Tombstone	AD 436	(unpublished)
154.	Tombstone	AD 438	(unpublished)
155.	Tombstone	AD 441	(unpublished)
156.	Tombstone	AD 442	(C.I.L. 9896)
157.	Tombstone	AD 443	(unpublished)
158.	Tombstone	AD 443	(unpublished)
159.	Tombstone	AD 444	(unpublished)
160.	Tombstone	AD 444, (published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1936, pp. 16-18.)	

161.	Tombstone	AD 446	(C.I.L. 21774)
162.	Tombstone	AD 446	(unpublished)
163.	Tombstone	AD 447,	(published by L. Leschi, and included in <i>Études d'Épigraphie d'Archéologie et d'Histoire Africaines</i> , Paris, 1957, pp. 409 - 410).
164.	Tombstone	AD 447	(C.I.L. 9898)
165.	Tombstone	AD 449	(C.I.L. 9866)
166.	Tombstone	AD 450	(C.I.L. 21729)
167.	Tombstone	AD 452	(C.I.L. 9877)
168.	Tombstone	AD 453	(C.I.L. 9852)
169.	Tombstone	AD 456	(unpublished)
170.	Tombstone	AD 456,	(published by Fabre, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1928, p.30.)
171.	Tombstone	AD 462	(C.I.L. 9895)
172.	Tombstone	AD 467	(unpublished)
173.	Tombstone	AD 468,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>L.A.E.</u> , 1958, pp. 153-156.)
174.	Tombstone	AD 469	(unpublished)
175.	Tombstone	AD 471	(unpublished)
176.	Tombstone	AD 471	(unpublished)
177.	Tombstone	AD 471	(unpublished)
178.	Tombstone	AD 478	(unpublished)
179.	Tombstone	AD 480	(C.I.L. 21737)
180.	Tombstone	AD 480 or 481	(C.I.L. 9876)
181.	Tombstone	AD 480,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1936, pp 18-19. )
182.	Tombstone	AD 480	(unpublished)
183.	Tombstone	AD 480,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1936, p. 16)
184.	Tombstone	AD 481	(C.I.L. 21759)
185.	Tombstone	AD 485	(C.I.L. 21762)
186.	Tombstone	AD 487	(unpublished)
187.	Tombstone	AD 489	(C.I.L. 21719)

188.	Tombstone	AD 492	(unpublished)
189.	Tombstone	AD 494	(unpublished)
190.	Tombstone	AD 495	(C.I.L. 21742)
191.	Tombstone	AD 497	(unpublished)
192.	Tombstone	AD 498	(unpublished)
193.	Tombstone	AD 507	(unpublished)
194.	Dedication in honour of King Masuna	AD 508	(C.I.L. 9835)
195.	Tombstone	AD 511	(unpublished)
196.	Tombstone	AD 521	(unpublished)
197.	Tombstone	AD 529	(unpublished)
198.	Tombstone	AD 530,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1936, p.18.)
199.	Tombstone	AD 530	(C.I.L. 21738)
200.	Tombstone	AD 532	(unpublished)
201.	Tombstone	AD 532	(unpublished)
202.	Tombstone	AD 532	(unpublished)
203.	Tombstone	AD 534	(unpublished)
204.	Tombstone	AD 536	(C.I.L. 9869)
205.	Tombstone	AD 537	(unpublished)
206.	Tombstone	AD 538	(unpublished)
207.	Tombstone	AD 539,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1936, pp.19-20)
208.	Tombstone	AD 541	(unpublished)
209.	Tombstone	AD 542	(unpublished)
210.	Tombstone	AD 543,	(published by P. Courtot, <u>B.d'O.</u> , 1936, pp. 112 - 113.)
211.	Tombstone	AD 544	(unpublished.)
212.	Tombstone	AD 544	(unpublished.)
213.	Tombstone	AD 546	(unpublished.)
214.	Tombstone	AD 552,	(published by L. Leschi, and included in Etudes d'Epigraphie d'Archéologie et d'Histoire Africaines, Paris, 1957, p.410,
215.	Tombstone	AD 552	(unpublished.)

- |      |           |        |                                                                  |
|------|-----------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 216. | Tombstone | AD 557 | (C.I.L. 9899)                                                    |
| 217. | Tombstone | AD 558 | (unpublished)                                                    |
| 218. | Tombstone | AD 561 | (unpublished)                                                    |
| 219. | Tombstone | AD 575 | (C.I.L. 21773)                                                   |
| 220. | Tombstone | AD 579 | (unpublished)                                                    |
| 221. | Tombstone | AD 590 | (unpublished)                                                    |
| 222. | Tombstone | AD 592 | (published by Fabre,<br><u>B.d'O.</u> , 1928, p. 31)             |
| 223. | Tombstone | AD 593 | (C.I.L. 9870)                                                    |
| 224. | Tombstone | AD 599 | (published by P. Courtot,<br><u>L.A.E.</u> , 1958, pp. 156-160). |



24. KAPUTTASACCURA.

Roman ruins of some importance formerly occupied the site of the French colonisation village of Chanzy. All trace of these ruins were destroyed when the village was constructed, and an examination of the airphotographic cover reveals nothing.

Visitors to the site in the early 19th century, before the village of Chanzy was founded, describe a rectangular enclosure 180 x 170 metres with walls 0.80 metres in thickness. The enclosure, therefore, covered an area of approximately 3 hectares. None of the early descriptions mention traces of buildings outside this enclosure.

Only eleven inscriptions, including three milestones, have been discovered at or near Chanzy, and they are all included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, (9826 - 30, 21716 - 18, 22616 - 22618).

1. The inscriptions provide us first of all with the Roman name for this centre, Kaputtasaccura (C.I.L. 22616, 22617, 22618).
2. Two inscriptions (C.I.L. 9826 - 28), discovered at Ain Skouna a short distance to the south of Kaputtasaccura, attest the presence of the Ala I Augusta Parthorum between AD 201 - 212. It seems highly probable, therefore, that Kaputtasaccura was one of the permanent camps along the limes established by Septimius Severus at the beginning of the 3rd century. The exact date of the military foundation is uncertain, but it may have been in AD 201 when the procurator, Aelius Peregrinus, inaugurated a large section of the new limes. Another inscription (C.I.L. 9829), unfortunately undated, records the presence of either a unit or a trooper of the Osdroenians.

The enclosure described by visitors to the site in the early 19th century probably represents the ramparts of the original military camp. It was situated at a height of 700 metres overlooking the Oued Mekerra at a point where this river emerges from the Monts de Daya, and enters the vast plain of Sidi bel Abbès. Like the forts at Altava and Pomaria to the west, Kaputtasaccura was established on the edge of a piedmont zone at the point of contact between the steep, heavily wooded slopes of the Monts de Daya and the monotonous plain of Sidi bel Abbès. The valley of the Oued Mekerra provided easy communications south into the Monts de Daya.

3. Kaputtasaccura was linked to Altava and Lucu by the nova praetentura, constructed at the beginning of the 3rd century as part of the Severan Lines. Other roads led to Tenira in the north-east and from there to Aquae Sirenses and to Tasaccura on the earlier military line.

4. No traces of buildings have been recorded outside the fort of Kaputtasaccura but two inscriptions, unfortunately undated, do attest the presence of a civilian population there, (C.I.L. 21717 - 18).

---

25. Ain Mekerreg

26. Ain Skouna

Ain Mekerreg

There were Roman ruins a short distance to the south of Kaputtasaccura at Ain Mekerreg. No details of the ruins themselves are available, but in the surrounding area numerous canals to irrigate the valley of the Oued Mekerreg have been indicated. This site probably represents a Roman farm or village, but as it has produced no inscriptions it is difficult to determine when the settlement was established.

Ain Skouna

The Roman ruins at Ain Skouna, a short distance to the west of Ain Mekerreg, have produced two inscriptions which record the presence of the Ala I Augusta Parthorum between AD 201 - 212. This site may represent a small outpost of the camp of Kaputtasaccura to the north.

27. Palissy.

In 1931 Doumergue recorded the discovery of ten dolia on the right bank of the Oued Mekerra near Palissy,<sup>1</sup> between Sidi bel Abbès and Chanzy. The dolia were found in situ, but covered by almost four metres of alluvium deposited by the Oued Mekerra since the Roman period. Six of the ten dolia have been preserved; five are between 0.85 m and 1 m in height, and the sixth - the largest - measures 1.20 m in height. According to Doumergue, "La poterie est belle, solide, pas excessivement épaisse, de meilleure qualité, et d'un plus beau galbe que celle des dolia de Saint-Leu et de Lamoricière que possède le Musée d'Oran; la surface, bien lissée, est recouverte d'une engobe jaunâtre; les ouvertures sont relativement étroites. L'examen des pièces ayant été assez rapide, je n'ai pas eu le temps matériel de prendre des mesures précises, lesquelles, d'ailleurs, n'offrent qu'un médiocre intérêt.

. . . Chaque dolium était fermé par un bouchon à chapeau en terre cuite. Pas une seule de ces pièces intéressantes, dont le Musée d'Oran ne possède aucun échantillon, n'a pu être mise de côté. Je n'en ai vu qu'un fragment, remarquable par son bord festonné. Deux petites dalles de grès avaient aussi servi de couvercles".<sup>2</sup>

There are potters' stamps on two of the dolia, and designs in relief on the others. The largest dolium bears the following inscription: cun deo rogare dolia si prosuntur. The form of the writing is very similar to that of the 'tablettes de Tébessa' and Albertini<sup>3</sup> would date the dolia to the end of the 5th century. By this date Christianity was so wide-spread in this part of

Mauretania Caesariensis that one is not surprised to find such an inscription on household objects of a rural character.

Doumergue<sup>4</sup> believes that the dolia mark the site of a Roman farm, and that they were used to store wine, oil, or grain. The agricultural workers who first discovered the dolia also found carbonised cereal grains. We do not know when this farm was founded but it was certainly occupied at the end of the 5th century. This evidence of late occupation is interesting, as we know that one of the farms to the north of Altava<sup>5</sup> was occupied at the end of the 5th century and continued to be occupied at least until the second half of the 6th century. It would be extremely valuable if further investigations could be carried out at either of these sites, to determine whether the farms were established at an early date, or whether they represent a dispersed form of rural settlement which only came into existence in these areas at the end of the Roman period.

- 
1. Doumergue, F., 'Découverte de poteries romaines sur le territoire de la commune de Palissy'. B.d'O., Vol.52, 1931, pp. 214-219.
  2. Doumergue, F., 1931, *idem.*, p.217.
  3. Albertini, E., 'Inscription gravée sur un dolium de Palissy', B.d'O., Vol.52, 1931, pp. 373 - 375.
  4. Doumergue, F., 1931, *idem.*, p.219.
  5. Altava, 23,9.

28. MINA.

There were extensive Roman ruins situated  $2\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres to the south of Ighil-Izane. They occupied a low hill (90 metres) on the left bank of the Oued Mina, which rises in the southern High Plain of Sersou, and enters the Chelif twenty-five kilometres to the north of Ighil-Izane.

Rufer visited the Roman ruins in 1907.<sup>1</sup> He found clear traces of the south and east walls of an enclosure (fig. 13). The walls were protected by projecting bastions, and enclosed an area of 10 hectares which was covered with worked stones. In the north-east corner of the enclosure he discovered the ruins of a Christian Church, and he made a plan of the building (figs. 13 and 14). There was a gateway in the east wall of the enclosure, and beyond it the ruins of numerous houses, over a distance of 700 metres on either side of an open water conduit. This conduit, constructed of dressed stone, led water to the settlement from the Oued Anseur, and was over twenty kilometres in length (fig. 15). At the east end of the suburb, which must have covered an area of approximately 12 hectares,<sup>2</sup> there was a second gateway. The settlement possessed two cemeteries, one of the pagan period, situated a short distance to the northwest, and another of the Christian period outside the south wall of the town, (fig 13).

The ruins of the Roman town, which was known as Mina after the nearby river,<sup>3</sup> were used as a quarry by the French colonists from Ighil-Izane, who took large quantities of worked stones to construct their houses. Although there are now very few remains standing above ground-level, the

site has not been built over, and is still available for excavation.

In 1954 Cadenat paid a short visit to the Roman site where he discovered a number of sherds of imported Samian pottery of the late 1st century.<sup>4</sup>

Six inscriptions from Mina are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (C.I.L. 9726, 21535, 21537-40). No other inscriptions from this site have been published.

What do we know of the origins and history of the Roman settlement?

1. The discovery of imported Samian pottery of the 1st century proves that this site was occupied before the Roman military occupation of this part of Mauretania Caesariensis. Cadenat has put forward the theory that the city originated as a Berber settlement, and that some of the wealthier inhabitants were influenced by Roman civilisation, and were able to appreciate and purchase Roman merchandise.<sup>5</sup> It is quite possible that a Berber settlement of considerable size would attract Roman merchants. But there is another possibility. A Roman civilian population, i.e. veterans and their families, may have settled at Mina after the Kingdom of Mauretania was annexed by Rome in the early 1st century, but before permanent garrisons were stationed in this area in the first half of the 2nd century.

2. Mina was situated between Gadaum Castra and Ballene praesidium on the 2nd century military line, so that a military unit may have been stationed there as part of the re-organisation of the defences of the province carried out

during the course of the 2nd century. The inscription C.I.L. 21535 is the tombstone of a veteran who may have served in the garrison. However it is equally possible that he was a native of Mina who had been recruited for service elsewhere in North Africa<sup>6</sup> and had chosen to return home when his period of service in the Roman army had been completed.

3. It was during the early 2nd century that roads were built linking Mina to Ballene praesidium and Castra Nova in the west, and to Gadaum Castra in the east. A Roman road also linked Mina to Aquae Sirenses in the south-west but this road was probably constructed in the first half of the 3rd century.

4. An important civilian population continued to live at Mina after the military occupation of this part of Mauretania Caesariensis,<sup>8</sup> and the settlement no doubt increased in size during this period. The south and east walls of enclosure A (fig.13) have projecting bastions which suggest that they were constructed after AD 300. The suburbs which grew up on either side of the water conduit must have been protected by ramparts, but as only one gateway has survived we do not know the exact size of the area enclosed or the form of the defences. The city was occupied at least until the early 6th century.<sup>9</sup>

*This argument is not necessarily valid for town walls at Tipasa*

5. There was a Christian community at Mina in the 5th and 6th centuries, but we do not know when Christianity first reached this area. In the early 20th century the ruins of a Christian church were still visible at Mina. We know the names of two bishops of Mina; a bishop Caecilius attended the Council of Carthage in AD 484, and



one of the bishops who attended the Council of AD 525 was Secundus, or Secundinus, of Mina.

6. At least a section of the inhabitants of Mina must have been farmers, cultivating fields outside the town. Gsell has described the remains of several diversion dams on the Oued Mina (fig.15) which led water from the river into irrigation canals. Traces of these canals have been recorded in the plain surrounding the Roman centre. Gsell calculated that approximately 5,000 hectares could be irrigated by this technique.<sup>10</sup> As the dams were built to divert rather than to store the waters of the Oued Mina, they can only have been effective during the winter period because the regime of the Mina, dominated by the seasonal variations of the climate, is characterised by a poor summer flow as well as by an annual discharge that varies dramatically from year to year. Because of this limitation, irrigated summer crops would be excluded, and the farmers no doubt concentrated on cereals<sup>11</sup> to supply the needs of the city,<sup>12</sup> together with some tree crops, e.g. the olive, and perhaps also the vine. Herding must have been an important secondary resource.

Not all the farmers lived in the city. Ruins of a number of isolated farms have been discovered around the Roman centre,<sup>13</sup> (fig.15).

1. Rufer, J., 'Etude sur les établissements romains du Bas-Chélif, de la Mina, de l'oued Hillal et de l'oued el Abd', B.d'O., 1907, pp. 321 - 326.
2. The total area of the Roman settlement would therefore be 22 hectares.
3. The Oued Mina has retained its Roman name.
4. Cadenat, P., 'Quiza et Mina (Oranie). Tessons de vases sigillés', L.A.E., Vol. 2., 1954, pp. 243 - 248.
5. Cadenat, P., 1954, *idem.*, pp. 243 - 248.
6. Like the soldier of the 3rd Legion who set up a tombstone at Mina in memory of his father (C.I.L. 21538).
7. Three milestones have been discovered along this road. Two were set up between AD 222 and 235, (C.I.L. 22594 - 95) and a third in AD 244 (C.I.L. 22596).
8. C.I.L. 9726, 21537, 21539, 21540 are all civilian tombstones.
9. A bishop of Mina attended the Council of AD 525
10. Gsell, S., Enquête Administrative sur les Travaux Hydrauliques Anciens en Algérie, 1902, pp. 14 - 19.
11. Cereals can of course be cultivated without irrigation in this area but yields are generally low.
12. A Roman corn mill has been discovered among the ruins (Pellet, H., 'Note sur les ruines de Mina', B.d'O., Vol. 36, 1916, p. 286).
13. Gsell, S., Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie, Paris, 1911, Map 21, nos. 30 - 35.

FIG. 13

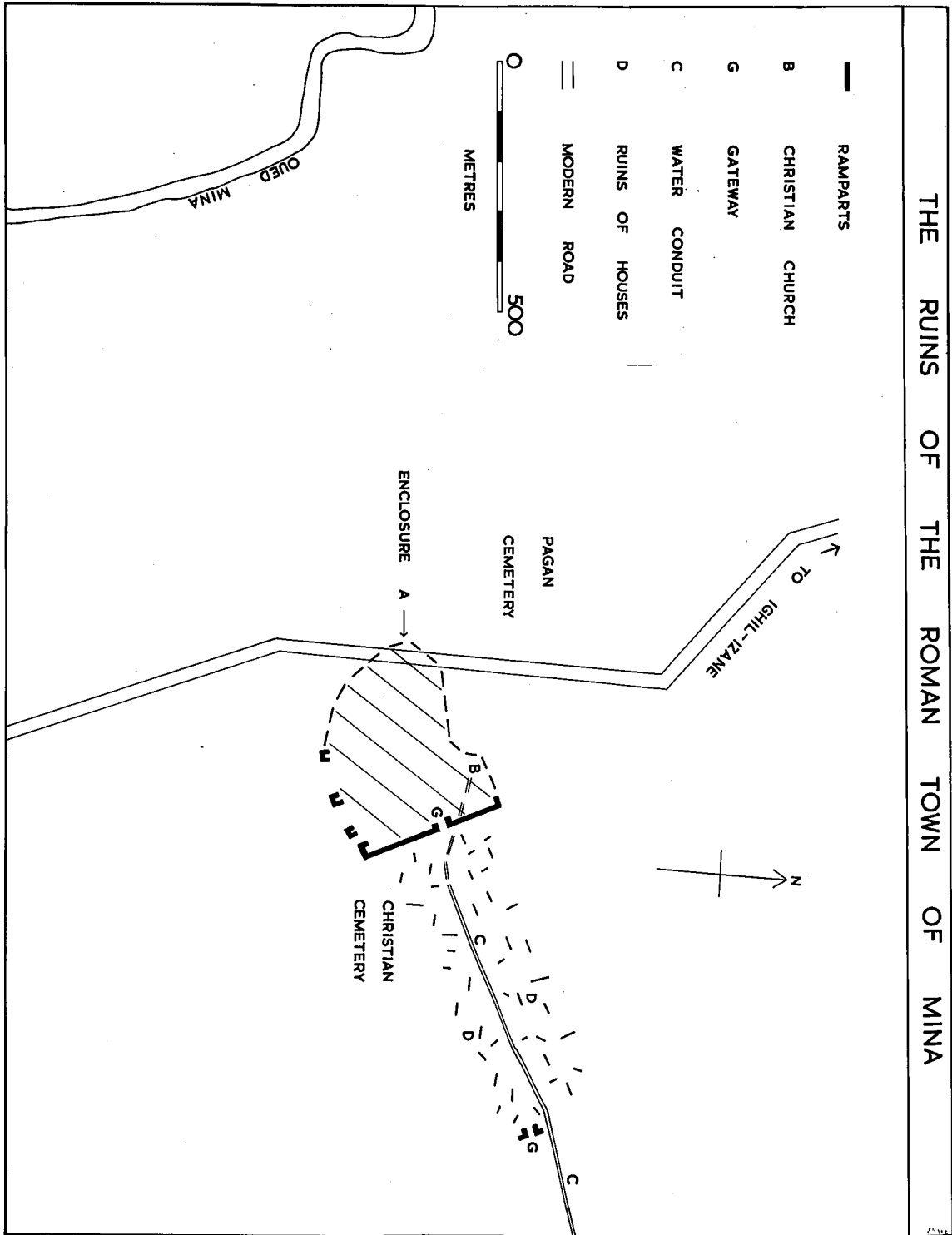


FIG. 14

PLAN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH & ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS AT MINA

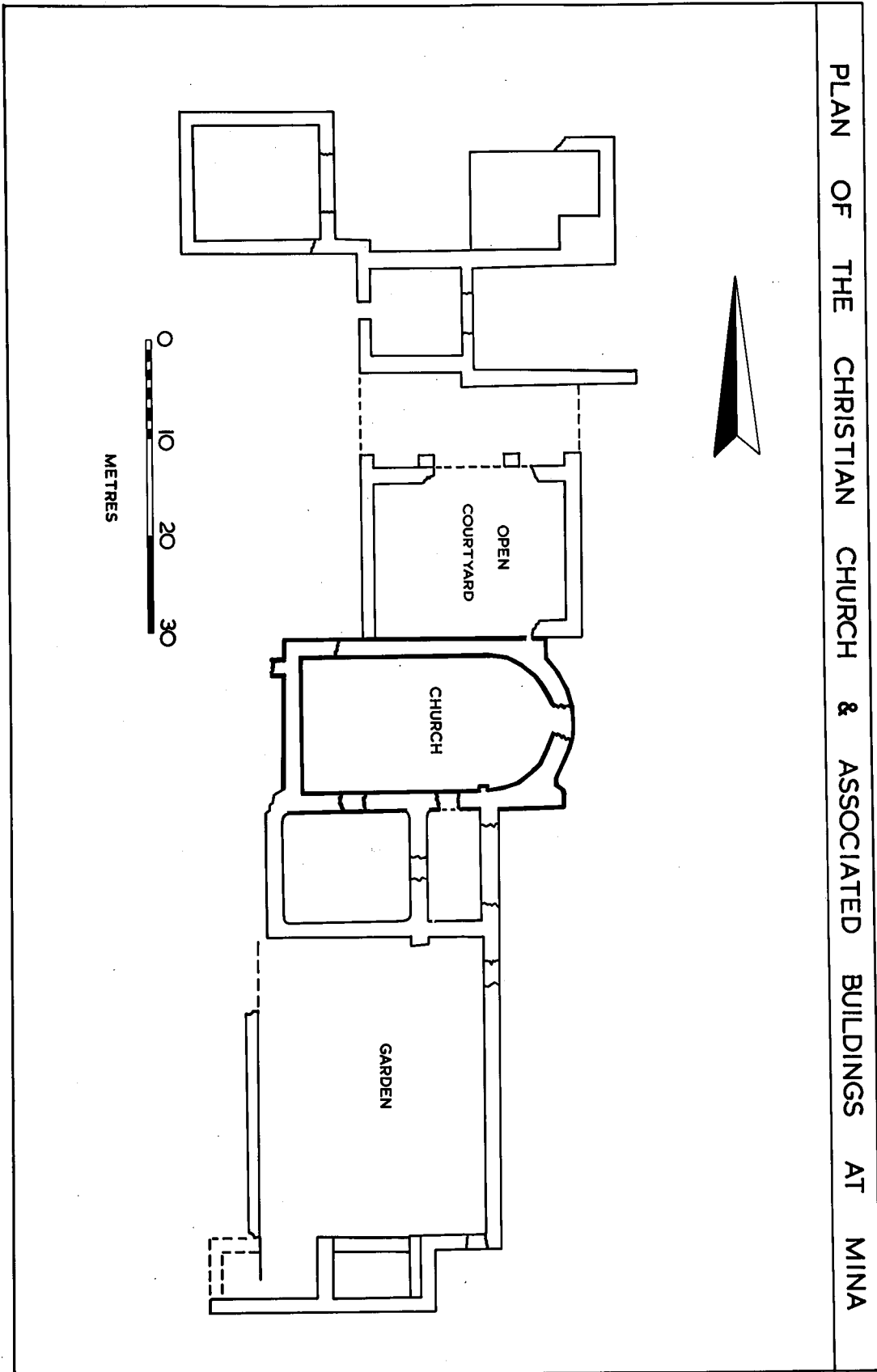
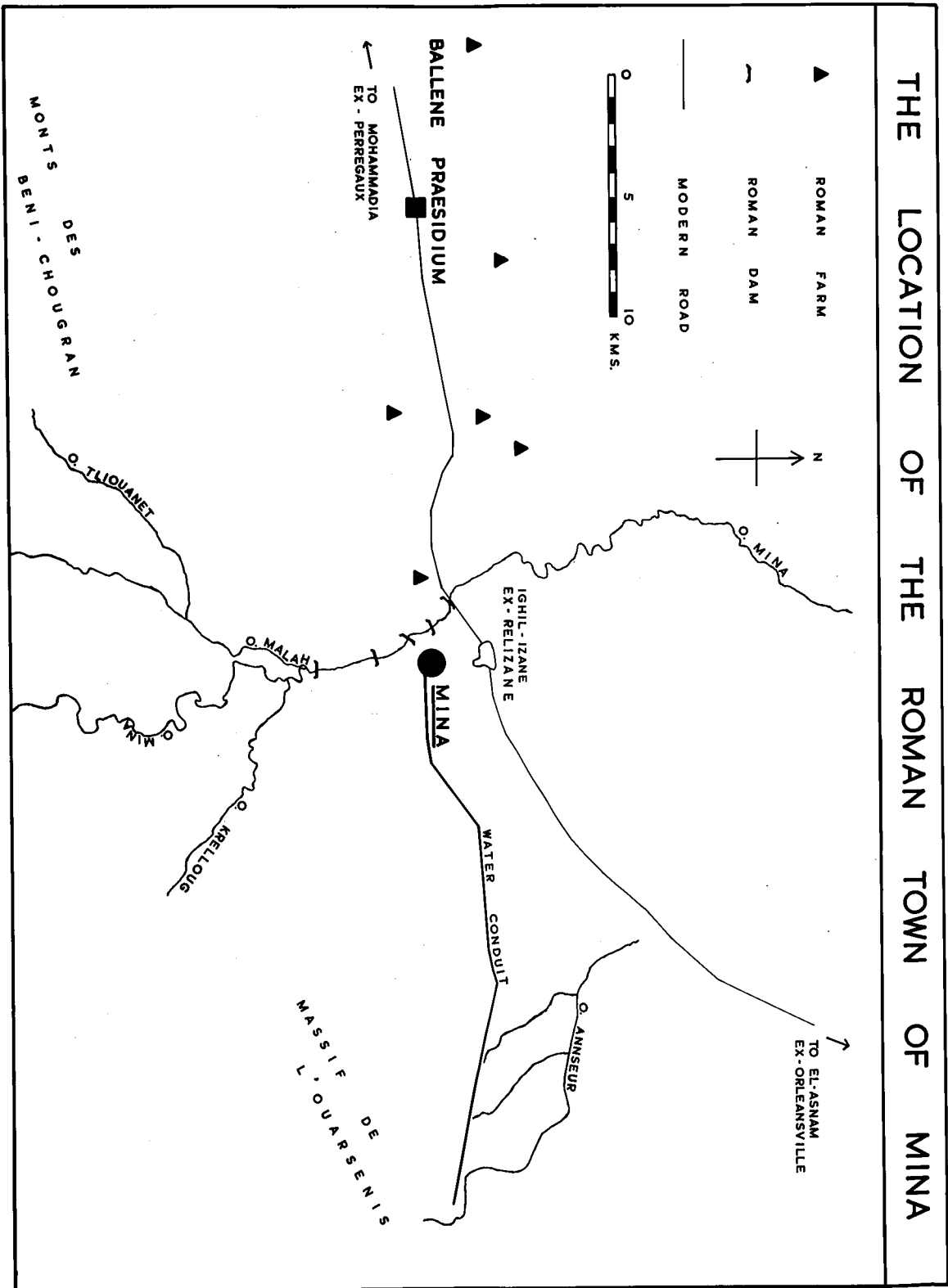


FIG. 15



29. El Ksar.

There are Roman ruins at El Ksar in the Djebel Bou Ziri, 11 kilometres to the south-south-west of Mohamedia. This site is not included in Gsell's Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie'. Salama<sup>1</sup> suggests that the ruins at El Ksar represent a small fort on the Roman road linking Castra Nova and Aquae Sirenses.

---

1. Salama, P., 'Occupation de la Maurétanie Césarienne occidentale sous le Bas-Empire romain', Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire offerts à André Piganiol, Paris, 1966, p.1302.

### 30. Oued el Hammam.

In 1882 there were still extensive Roman ruins situated 500 metres to the south of the village of Oued el Hammam, at the centre of the fertile 'bassin de Dublineau'. They occupied a plateau which dominates the right bank of the Oued el Hammam, and from the site there is an excellent view along this section of the valley. By 1950 the site had been cleared for cultivation, and all trace of the ruins had almost disappeared<sup>1</sup> although one can still find sherds of Roman pottery<sup>2</sup> and a few worked stones there.

Three inscriptions from Oued el Hammam are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum; C.I.L. 9747 is an undated tombstone; C.I.L. 9748 is a defaced inscription which may have been a tombstone; and C.I.L. 21581 is a dedication set up in AD 261. Demaeght published two inscriptions from Oued el Hammam in 1897 which are not included in the Corpus. They are both civilian tombstones set up in AD 348 and AD 414 respectively.<sup>3</sup> In 1966 Salama published the text of a milestone which was first discovered at Oued el Hammam in 1947 and is now in the Oran Museum. It is a milestone of the Later Empire, and belongs to the years AD 333 - 337.<sup>4</sup>

The Roman centre at Oued el Hammam was situated on the Roman road which linked Castra Nova to Aquae Sirenses and Lucu, and which was probably constructed in the early 3rd century.<sup>5</sup> Salama has suggested that the centre originated as a small fort established to protect this route, and that a civil settlement grew up around the camp.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately there is no evidence to support this theory, but we do know that there was a civilian population living at Oued el Hammam in the second half of the 3rd century <sup>7</sup> and that the settlement <sup>8</sup> continued to be occupied by a Romanised and Christian population at least until the early 5th century. <sup>9</sup>

- 
1. Déjardins, V., 'La Commune de Dublineau', B.d'O., Vol.73, 1950, pp. 22 - 25.
  2. In 1959 several amphorae and sherds of Roman pottery were found among the ruins (Archives inédites du Service des Antiquités de l'Algérie - dossier Dublineau).
  3. Demaeght, 'Inscriptions inédites de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.d'O., 1897, p.410.
  4. Salama, P., 'Occupation de la Maurétanie Césarienne occidentale sous le Bas-Empire romain', Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire offerts à André Piganiol, Paris, 1966, pp. 1301 - 1302.
  5. C.I.L. 22593 is a milestone which was set up to mark the 6th mile from Castra Nova to Aquae Sirenses. It can be dated to AD 239. The milestone published by Salama in 1966 points to road repairs along this route in the early 4th century. (Salama, P., 1966, *idem*, pp. 1301 - 1302, no. 14.)
  6. Salama, P., 1966, *idem*, p. 1302. Other 'postes de surveillance' on the same road include El Ksar, 11 kms south-south-west of Mohamedia, and Guethna, 7.700 kms to the south-west of Oued el Hammam.
  7. C.I.L. 21581.
  8. Oued el Hammam was probably a small town.
  9. Demaeght, 1897, *idem*, p. 410.



### 31. Guethna.

There were extensive Roman ruins near the Zaouia d'Abd-el-Kader at Guethna, which is situated on the southern edge of the 'bassin de Dublineau' in the Monts des Beni Chougran, until the area was occupied by European colonists who used the stones to build their farmhouses. Unfortunately, no descriptions of these ruins have been published, and Gsell in his 'Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie' simply records that there were 'ruins of a Roman town' at Guethna.

In 1882 Julien, a colonist, discovered numerous tombstones when ploughing near the site of the Roman centre in what must represent one of the cemeteries. All these inscriptions - a total of 22 - are published in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (21582 - 21602 b - excluding 21602 a which was discovered at Oued el Hamman). They are all civilian tombstones - the earliest is dated to AD 414 and the most recent to AD 524. In 1945 - 46 Déjardins published another inscription which, although found several kilometres from Guethna, presents characteristics which link it to the tombstones found in the Roman cemetery there.<sup>1</sup> The inscription is a civilian tombstone dated to AD 439+.

Roman pottery and other small objects of the Roman period have been found among the ruins. They are now in the Oran Museum.<sup>2</sup>

The origins of this settlement are obscure. It was situated on the Roman road linking Castra Nova to Aquae Sirenses, and Lucu, which appears to have been constructed as a part of, or shortly after the reorganisation of, the defences of the province by Septimius Severus.<sup>3</sup> Salama has suggested that the Roman centre at Guethna, like El Ksar, and

perhaps Oued el Hamman further north, began as a small fort established in the early 3rd century to survey a section of this road, and that at a later date a civil settlement grew up outside the fort.<sup>4</sup> The fact that the earliest dated inscription from the site is of AD 414 does not, of course, exclude the possibility of occupation during the 3rd and 4th centuries. Déjardins, on the other hand, believes that a settlement was not established at Guethna until the beginning of the 5th century. He points out that, "il n'apparaît qu'au moment où la Maurétanie va être soustraite à la domination romaine, il se prolonge en plein VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, alors que la province était retombée depuis des années aux mains de princes berbères indépendants . . . On est tenté d'imaginer un petit groupe de familles romaines occupées à leur terres, loin des agitations du siècle."<sup>5</sup>

However, on the basis of the available evidence i.e. the epigraphic evidence, the only firm conclusion that we are permitted to make is that there was a civilian population, many of whom were Christian, at Guethna, from the early 5th century to the first half of the 6th century.

- 
1. Déjardins, V., 'Deux Inscriptions Romaines d'Oranie', B.d'O., Vol. 66-67, 1945 - 46, pp. 32-34.
  2. Demaeght, Catalogue Raisoné des Objets Archéologiques du Musée de la Ville d'Oran, Part 1, 2nd edition (by Doumergue, F.), Oran, 1932, nos. 250 - 251, 332, 357 - 358.
  3. Salama, P., 'La Voie Romaine de la Vallée de la Tafna' B.A.A., Vol. 2., 1966-67, p.215, note 2.
  4. Salama, P., 'Occupation de la Maurétanie Césarienne occidentale sous le Bas-Empire romain', Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire offerts à André Piganiol, Paris, 1966, p.1302.
  5. Déjardins, V., 'La Commune de Dublineau', B.d'O., Vol 73, 1950, pp.25-26

### 32. AQUAE SIRENSES.

There are extensive Roman ruins on the right bank of the Oued el Hamman, 500 metres to the south of Bou Hanifia. They occupy the lower part of a spur (250 metres) between two tributaries of the Oued el Hamman. To east and west of the site there are a number of low hills, the Djebels Loutza (526 metres), bou Chitane (486 metres), and Rakhmoun el Kebir (508 metres), which form part of the Monts des Beni Chougran. The valley of the Oued el Hamman was one of the important routeways through these mountains during the Roman period.

Gsell visited the ruins in 1899. He calculated that they covered an area of 35 hectares, and he was able to distinguish the remains of numerous houses, and a wall two metres thick, surrounding the Roman settlement. A long canal led water to the town from the thermal springs 1,200 metres to the north.<sup>1</sup>

There were still clear traces of the Roman settlement in 1930, and Mme. Vincent carried out a preliminary survey of the ruins.<sup>2</sup> The wall surrounding this centre could still be seen, and Mme. Vincent calculated that it enclosed an area of 22 hectares. This is probably a more reliable figure than that given by Gsell. She has also provided us with a useful plan of the site (fig. 16). This reveals not one but three enclosures; the first, situated on the highest part of the spur, covers only 2 - 3 hectares; the second, extending to the north and west, covers over double the area of the first; and the third, situated on the lowest part of the plateau near the Oued el Hamman, covers an area of about 14 hectares.

The outer wall of the settlement was two metres in

thickness, and of irregular construction. In some sections it was built of excellent dressed stone, in others of roughly quarried blocks, and in a number of places tombstones, some bearing inscriptions, had been used in its construction. The area enclosed by this wall was covered with large stones including pillars, columns, and fragments of cornices, many of which are finely worked, and must have belonged to substantial buildings. These remains attest a certain luxury and comfort among at least a part of the inhabitants of the city.<sup>3</sup>

Inside the first enclosure (fig.16,1), near the east rampart, Mme. Vincent excavated a Christian basilica which she dates to the late 3rd, early 4th centuries. In the north-east corner of the second enclosure (fig.16,2), was a bath-house, but she could find no trace of the canal, indicated by Gsell, which led water from nearby springs to the Roman city. Two Christian basilicas situated inside the third enclosure (fig.16,3) were excavated. In the course of the excavation of the first basilica, which measures 17.50 m x 11 m, numerous fragments of fine pottery were discovered together with three lamps - one pagan and the other two Christian - and a dolium which was intact and in place. Many of the pillars, capitals, and columns of the second basilica, which measures 18.80 m x 11 m, were of coarse manufacture but were mixed with one or two much finer pieces. These appear to have been taken from earlier buildings. Madame Vincent concludes that the two basilicas are of a late date, perhaps as late as the 6th century.

There are three vast cemeteries to the north, east, and south-east of the city, (fig.16). Pagan tombstones

have been discovered in the south-eastern cemetery, which is probably the oldest. The northern cemetery appears to be the most recent, as it contains tombstones of a late period, as well as re-used 3rd century inscriptions.<sup>4</sup>

#### The Inscriptions from Aquae Sirenses.

Eight inscriptions from Aquae Sirenses are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (9745 - 46, 21575 - 80), together with three milestones discovered near Ain Tizi, 7½ kms. to the north-east of the ruins (22594 - 96). In 1927 Mme. Vincent published the texts of 4 new inscriptions which had been used in the construction of a memoria in one of the cemeteries outside the Roman city. They are all undated tombstones and one records a soldier serving with the ala miliaria.<sup>5</sup> Mme. Vincent published a further five inscriptions in 1937.<sup>6</sup> Three of these inscriptions were discovered in the northern cemetery; the first is a fragment of the base of a tombstone set up in AD 244; the second is an undated civilian tombstone with a double inscription;<sup>7</sup> and the third is an undated Christian inscription which appears to be of a very late period. The other two inscriptions were found incorporated in the north-east rampart of the city, and are both undated but pagan tombstones, probably 3rd century in date. Déjardins published an undated dedication from Aquae Sirenses in 1945 - 46. The text is as follows: Deo sancto aeterno Iulius Botrius votum solvit libens anime.<sup>8</sup> To this list must be added the inscription which Gsell discovered during his excavations at Ala Miliaria in 1899.<sup>9</sup> It is a tombstone set up in memory of Robba, who died at Ala Miliaria in AD 434, and who was the sister of Honoratus, a bishop of Aquae Sirenses.

This is not the first reference to bishop Honoratus of Aquae Sirenses. His name appears in the lists of bishops who attended the Council of Carthage between the Catholics and Donatists in AD 411. Honoratus belonged to the latter group.

We do not have a very clear picture of the history of Aquae Sirenses.

1. The origins of the Roman city are obscure. The inscription C.I.L. 9745, recording the presence of a numerus at Aquae Sirenses suggests that there may have been a fort there. Mme. Vincent has suggested that a fort was built at Aquae Sirenses in the 2nd century as a southern outpost of the military line established by Trajan and Hadrian, and that enclosure 1 represents the military camp.<sup>10</sup> This is an interesting theory. Although the earliest reference to Aquae Sirenses is during the reign of Severus Alexander<sup>11</sup> this does not exclude earlier occupation. However, enclosure 1 looks more like a late citadel than a military camp. There is another possibility. Aquae Sirenses was situated on the road which linked Castra Nova on the 2nd century military line to Lucu on the Severan limes. This road was constructed in the early 3rd century<sup>12</sup> and a fort may have been established at Aquae Sirenses at this time to protect the route.

Unfortunately there is no evidence to support either of these theories, and only a series of excavations, paying close attention to stratigraphy, or further epigraphic discoveries, will throw new light on this problem.

2. In the early 3rd century, after the organisation of the Severan limes, Aquae Sirenses was an important focus of Roman roads. We have already noted that the city was situated on the road from Castra Nova to Lucu.<sup>13</sup>

It was also linked by road to Mina,<sup>14</sup> Tenira, Kaputtasaccura, Regiae and Ala Miliaria. The road from Ala Miliaria - where a cavalry unit 1000 strong was stationed in the first half of the 3rd century - to Aquae Sirenses must have been of the greatest importance strategically, providing the most direct route from Ala Miliaria to the more northerly military line, and to the coast. Although no milestones have been discovered along this road, it must have been constructed early in the 3rd century.

The fact that Aquae Sirenses became a focus of Roman roads in the early 3rd century suggests that at the time of the Severan re-organisation there may already have been either a fort or a civilian settlement of some importance there.

3. Although the origins of Aquae Sirenses remain obscure we know that there was a civilian population living there in the first half of the 3rd century. The settlement grew to a considerable size (22 hectares), and Mme. Vincent has suggested that enclosures 2 and 3 (fig.16) represent two stages in the development of a civil settlement, outside the fort (enclosure 1).<sup>15</sup> Against this interpretation it may be argued that enclosure 1 looks like a late citadel, and it seems more probable that the settlement had reached its full extent before it was protected by a wall. Later, perhaps, during the disturbed conditions of the 4th and 5th centuries, the inhabitants may have found it impossible to defend the whole area of the city, so that one or more citadels were constructed to which the citizens could withdraw in time of danger or attack. On the other hand, it is possible that the settlement declined in size during the Later Empire, in which case enclosures

nos. 1 and 2 may represent successive attempts to protect those areas that had not been abandoned. The urban centre continued to be occupied at least until the late 6th century.<sup>16</sup>

Aquae Sirenses was the largest city in that part of western Mauretania Caesarienses which lay to the south of the 2nd century military line, and it must have surely achieved independent status. It is to be hoped that further epigraphic discoveries will give us some information about its municipal organisation.

4. There was a Christian community at Aquae Sirenses in the 5th and 6th centuries although Christianity probably reached this area at an earlier date. We know the name of one bishop of the church at Aquae Sirenses, and the sites of three basilicas where the community worshipped.

5. A section of the inhabitants of Aquae Sirenses were farmers, cultivating corn and olives in fields outside the city. In 1953 Mme. Camps-Fabrer published the plan of a small Olive Mill (huilerie) which she had discovered there.<sup>17</sup> It is composed of two separate parts (fig.17A) each containing two presses. There is only one tank for each press, and the absence of a 'pierre à encoche' in the walls of the mill prove that each press must have been attached to a vertical pillar fixed to the floor and roof of the building (fig.17B). The long stone which separates the pressing floor from the first tank in the southern part of the mill is a re-used tombstone. These details indicate that the mill was built at a relatively late date. It may have belonged



to a farmer who, having a larger holding, was able to produce a regular surplus of olives. The oil that had been extracted would no doubt have found a market at Aquae Sirenses itself, or in the surrounding area. On the other hand, the olive mill may have been built for the use of a number of families who only produced enough olives for their own needs. Evidence that corn was grown by the farmers is provided by the discovery of the lower part of a Roman corn-mill, now at the Oran Museum,<sup>18</sup> and a silo containing grains of carbonised wheat found during one of Mme. Vincent's excavations.<sup>19</sup>

- 
1. Gsell, S., *Fouilles de Benian (Ala Miliaria)*, publiées sous les auspices de l'Association Historique pour l'Etude de l'Afrique du Nord, Paris, Leroux, 1899, pp. 25-26.
  2. Vincent, M.M., 'Aquae Sirenses', Cinquième Congrès International d'Archéologie, Alger, 1930, (Published 1933), pp. 261-274 .
  3. The Roman name for the city was Aquae Sirenses (C.I.L. 9745, 22594, 22595, 22596).
  4. Vincent, M.M., 'Aquae Sirenses', B.d'O., Vol.58, 1937 pp. 113 - 124 .
  5. Vincent, M.M., 'Aquae Sirenses', B.d'O., Vol.47, 1927, pp. 261-262.
  6. Vincent, M.M., 1937, *idem.*, pp. 113-124.
  7. Both inscriptions had been re-used in a hypogeum of a late period.
  8. Déjardins, V., 'Deux Inscriptions Romaines d'Oranie', B.d'O., Vol. 66 - 67, 1945 - 46, pp. 31 - 34.
  9. Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, pp. 25 - 26.
  10. Vincent, M.M., 1930, *idem.*, pp. 264 - 265.
  11. C.I.L. 22594 is a milestone recording 4 miles from Aquae Sirenses. It was set up between AD 222 - 235.

12. C.I.L. 22593.
13. C.I.L. 22593 is a milestone set up in AD 239 to mark the 6th mile from Castra Nova to Aquae Sirenses. A milestone found at Oued el Hammam, 18 kilometres to the north of Aquae Sirenses, was set up between AD 333 and 337, which indicates that this road was maintained during the Later Empire (Salama, P., 'Occupation de la Maurétanie Césarienne occidentale sous le Bas-Empire romain', Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire offerts à André Piganiol, Paris, 1966, pp. 1301 - 1302, no.14).
14. Three milestones have been discovered along this road; two are dated to AD 222 - 235, (C.I.L. 22594, 22595) and the third to AD 244 (C.I.L. 22596).
15. Vincent, M.M., 1930, *idem.*, p. 264.
16. C.I.L. 9746.
17. Camps-Fabrer, H., L'Olivier et l'Huile dans l'Afrique Romaine, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie, Service des Antiquités, Missions Archéologiques - Alger, 1953, pp. 57 - 60.
18. Doumergue, M.F., 'Catalogue Raisonné des Objets Archéologiques du Musée Municipale Demaeght à Oran', B.d'O., Vol. 60, 1939, p. 210.
19. Vincent, M.M., 1930, *idem.*, p. 271.

FIG. 16

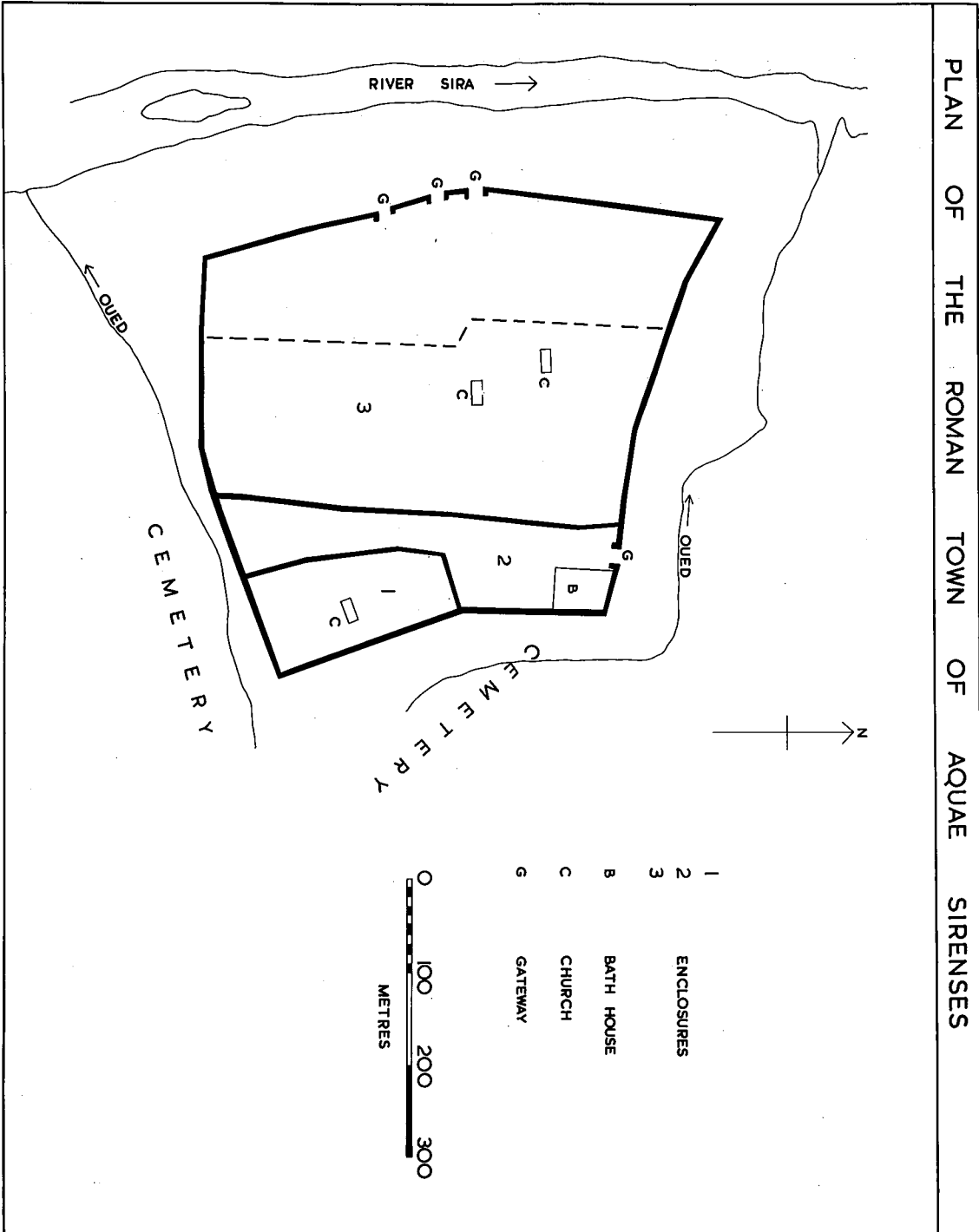
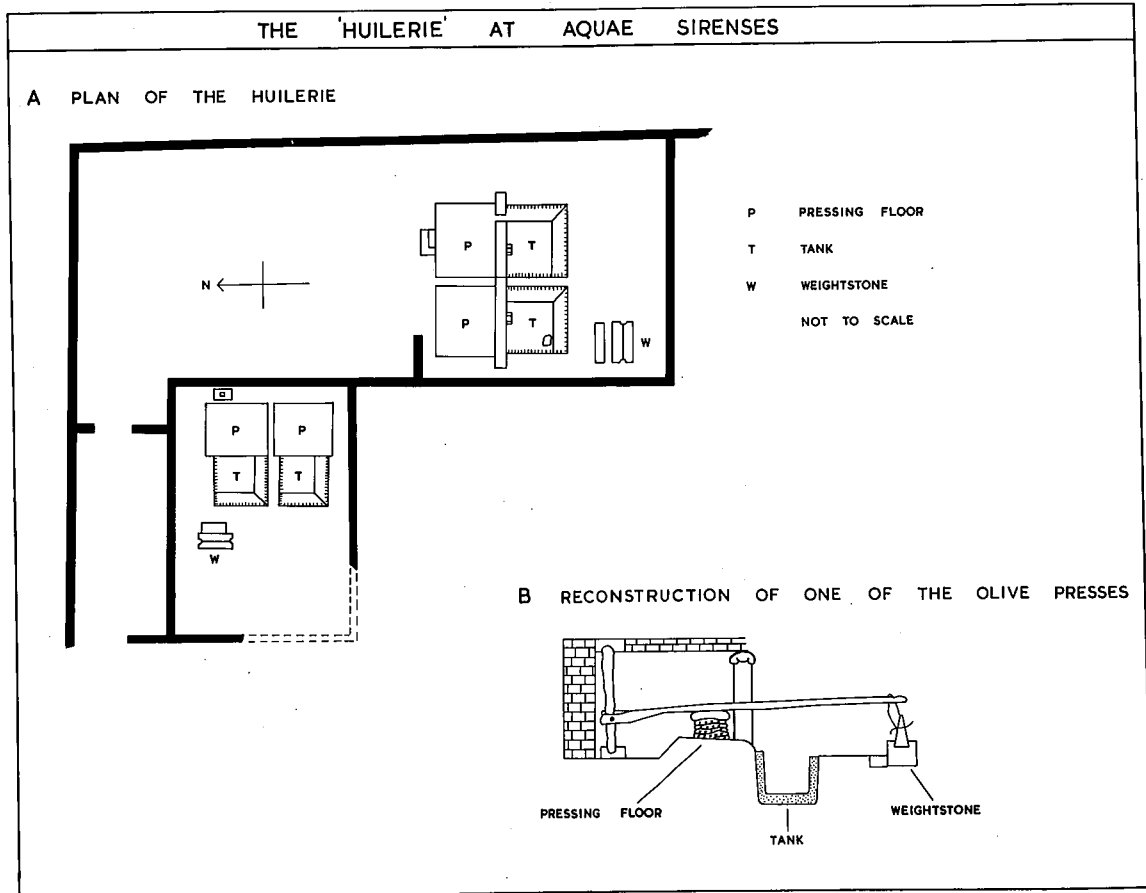


FIG.17



33. LUCU.

The Roman ruins at Timziouine are situated on a low hill which rises to a height of approximately 600 metres. The land slopes gently to the north, and more steeply to the east, down to the Oued Berbour. Some five kilometres to the north of Timziouine this river joins the Oued Sefioun to form the Oued Hounet. Both rivers rise in the Monts de Daya to the south; the Oued Sefioun to the south-west beyond Berthelot, and the Oued Berbour to the south-east near Saïda.

The Monts de Daya form part of the Atlas Tabulaire. They are lower than the Monts de Tlemçen and their highest summits - which overlook the High Plains to the south - only rise to between 1000 and 1300 metres. Relief is characterised by plateau formations separated by wide valleys, so that the area as a whole is much more accessible than the Monts de Tlemçen further west. French colonists established a number of villages in these mountains which are crossed by a network of secondary roads. From the north the Monts de Daya present a less formidable aspect than the Monts de Tlemçen, and do not form a real barrier to movement. From Timziouine there are easy routes south and east along the valley of the Oued Berbour through the Monts de Daya and to the Saïda region; and towards Le Telagh and Bossuet in the south-west along the Oueds Sefioun and Mezoua.

To the north of Timziouine the Oued Hounet crosses the eastern part of the Plain of Sidi bel Abbès, and west of Ain Fekan it joins with the Oueds Melrir and Sahouat to form the Oued el Hammam. The valley of <sup>the</sup> Oued el Hammam was an important routeway through the Monts des

Beni Chougran during the Roman period. Three small hills, the Djebels Kersout (845 m.), Mellet (757 m.), and el Assa (845 m.), rise above the general level of the plain of Sidi Bel Abbès some eight kilometres to the north of Timziouine.

In the second half of the 19th century Captain Graulle, the head of the 'Bureau arabe' of Saïda, visited the Roman ruins at Timziouine and made several trial excavations there. He discovered a low-relief representing the god Mithras, which can now be seen in the Oran Museum.<sup>1</sup>

De la Blanchère published a plan (fig.18) and a short description of the ruins in 1883.<sup>2</sup> At that time traces of a defensive wall could be seen, and within the enclosed area there were traces of buildings, most of which were no longer standing above ground level, and numerous scattered stones. The walls of one building, which was situated in the north-eastern part of the ruins, was, however, still standing to a height of 5 or 6 metres (fig.18 A).

According to de la Blanchère's plan the perimeter wall encloses an area of approximately  $13\frac{1}{2}$  hectares.

In 1885 and 1886 Lapaine visited Timziouine and made a plan of the Roman ruins (fig.19).<sup>3</sup> This reveals two enclosures; the larger enclosure covers an area of approximately 6 hectares, and the smaller enclosure an area of approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hectares. Lapaine described four 'block-houses' situated to the south of the Roman site, and an important building, which he believed to be either a temple or a citadel, in the north-eastern corner of the larger enclosure (figs. 19 A, 20). In this

building there were a large number of brick pillars between 1 m. and 1.40 m. in height. During his investigations there Lapaine discovered a number of glass phials, a ring, a buckle, a hook or fastener, and forty Roman coins of the reigns of Commodus, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Severus Alexander, Maximian Gordian and Philip. Demaeght, in a note published in 1892, suggested that the 'citadel' described by Lapaine represented in fact a bath-house of the Roman settlement. He points out that "Les piliers dont il parle soutenaient probablement le parquet du caldarium et les débris de poterie que l'on y remarque en très grande quantité sont ceux des tuyaux qui garnissaient les murs et fournissaient l'air chaud à cette étuve. Ce qui semble confirmer mon hypothèse, c'est que l'on voit encore dans cette ruine les restes de fourneaux, ceux sans doute sur lesquels reposaient les chaudières qui contenaient l'eau pour les bains." <sup>4</sup>

The plan produced by Lapaine bears little resemblance to that of de la Blanchère, although <sup>the</sup> 'citadel' which he describes corresponds to a building A on de la Blanchère's plan. The plans of this building produced by de la Blanchère and Lapaine are almost identical, but the dimensions recorded for the buildings are very different. According to de la Blanchère it is 26 m. long and 22 m. wide, while Lapaine's measurements are 38.60 m. x 29 m.

A short description of the Roman ruins at Timziouine is included in the catalogue of the Oran Museum. Demaeght wrote, "Les ruines de Lucu couvraient une superficie d'au moins quinze hectares. On y voit les substructions d'une

enceinte fortifié, qui mesurait trois cents mètres de côté environ, des pans de mur qui se dressent encore à plus de dix-huit pieds au-dessus du sol, des restes d'édifices en pierres de taille de grand appareil et des débris, en grande quantité, de briques, de tuyaux, et de poteries grossières." <sup>5</sup>

Since the late 19th century no further investigations have taken place here. The Roman ruins are situated some distance from the French centres of Charrier and Berthelot, and do not appear to have attracted the interest of archaeologists during the period of French rule. The ruins at Timziouine have not been entirely destroyed, and some of the walls can still be seen at the present time, (1968).

#### The Inscriptions from Lucu.

The small-scale excavations carried out at Timziouine during the second half of the 19th century produced no inscriptions, but 25 milestones have been found between Timziouine and the Roman centre of Kaputtasaccura to the west. Only 17 still bear an inscription and they are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (22601 - 22618). In 1912 de Pachtere and Bouyssou published two milestones found nine kilometres to the north of Timziouine at Ain el Mathèse. <sup>6</sup> Both record 6 miles from Lucu; the first is dated to the reign of Severus Alexander (AD 222 - 235); the second to AD 238. De Pachtere and Bouyssou discovered two more milestones five kilometres to the north-east of Charrier between the ruins at Timziouine and the Roman centre of Ala Miliaria. Both record 10 miles from Tigit; the first is dated to the reign of Caracalla (AD 214 - 215); and the second to AD 238 - 244.



The lack of inscriptions from Timziouine itself and the conflicting reports of the extent and character of the Roman ruins make it very difficult to reconstruct the history of the Roman settlement.

1. We know, first of all, that the Roman name for Timziouine was Lucu. This name appears on the milestones C.I.L. 22602 - 4, 22607, 22609 - 14, and on the two milestones discovered by de Pachtere and Bouyssou at Ain el Mathèse.
2. The earliest milestones discovered between Lucu and Kaputtasaccura (C.I.L. 22602 - 4, and 22611) were set up during the reign of Septimius Severus and his sons (AD 198 - 209). C.I.L. 22602 - 4 records that the emperor ordered milestones to be placed along a new frontier line, the nova praetentura. It seems certain, therefore, that Lucu began as a fort on this nova praetentura and was built as part of the reorganisation of the defences of the province by Septimius Severus at the beginning of the 3rd century.
3. The unit stationed at Lucu at the beginning of the 3rd century was the Cohors 1 Pannoniorum (C.I.L. 22602 - 4, 22611).
4. Lucu was linked to Kaputtasaccura in the west and to Ala Miliaria in the east by the nova praetentura. A road along the valley of the Oued Sefioun led to Aquae Sirenses, and from this centre there were roads to Regiae, Castra Nova, and Mina on the more northerly military line. There is evidence that this road system was maintained throughout the 3rd century (C.I.L. 22615).
5. On the plan produced by Lapaine (fig.19), the Roman centre at Lucu covers an area of 6 hectares. The small

enclosure, with an area of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hectares, may represent a late citadel. De la Blanchère's plan (fig.18) reveals a wall enclosing an area of  $13\frac{1}{2}$  hectares. Demaeght states that the ruins at Timziouine cover at least 15 hectares. Faced with these conflicting reports one can only conclude that the ruins at Timziouine appear to represent more than the original military camp, and that it is probable that a civil settlement grew up around the fort.

6. The Roman ruins have not been entirely destroyed, and a preliminary survey to record accurately the remains that are still visible would be of the utmost value. A plan for a series of excavations at this site should be high on the list of priorities of the Department of Antiquities.

- 
1. Demaeght, Catalogue Raisonné des Objets Archéologiques du Musée d'Oran - 2nd edition by Doumergue, M.F., Oran, 1932, p. 25, no. 32.
  2. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'Etude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne - Extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol. 10, 1883, Paris, p.68.
  3. Lapaine, J., 'Fouilles de Timziouine', B.d'O., Vol.6, 1886, pp. 298 - 300.
  4. Demaeght, 'Inscriptions inédites de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.d'O., Vol. 12, 1892, pp. 275- 276.
  5. Demaeght, 1932, idem., p. 95.
  6. de Pachtere and Bouyssou, 'Bornes milliaires de la Région de Charrier', B.d'O., 1912, Vol. 32, pp. 245 - 253.

FIG. 18

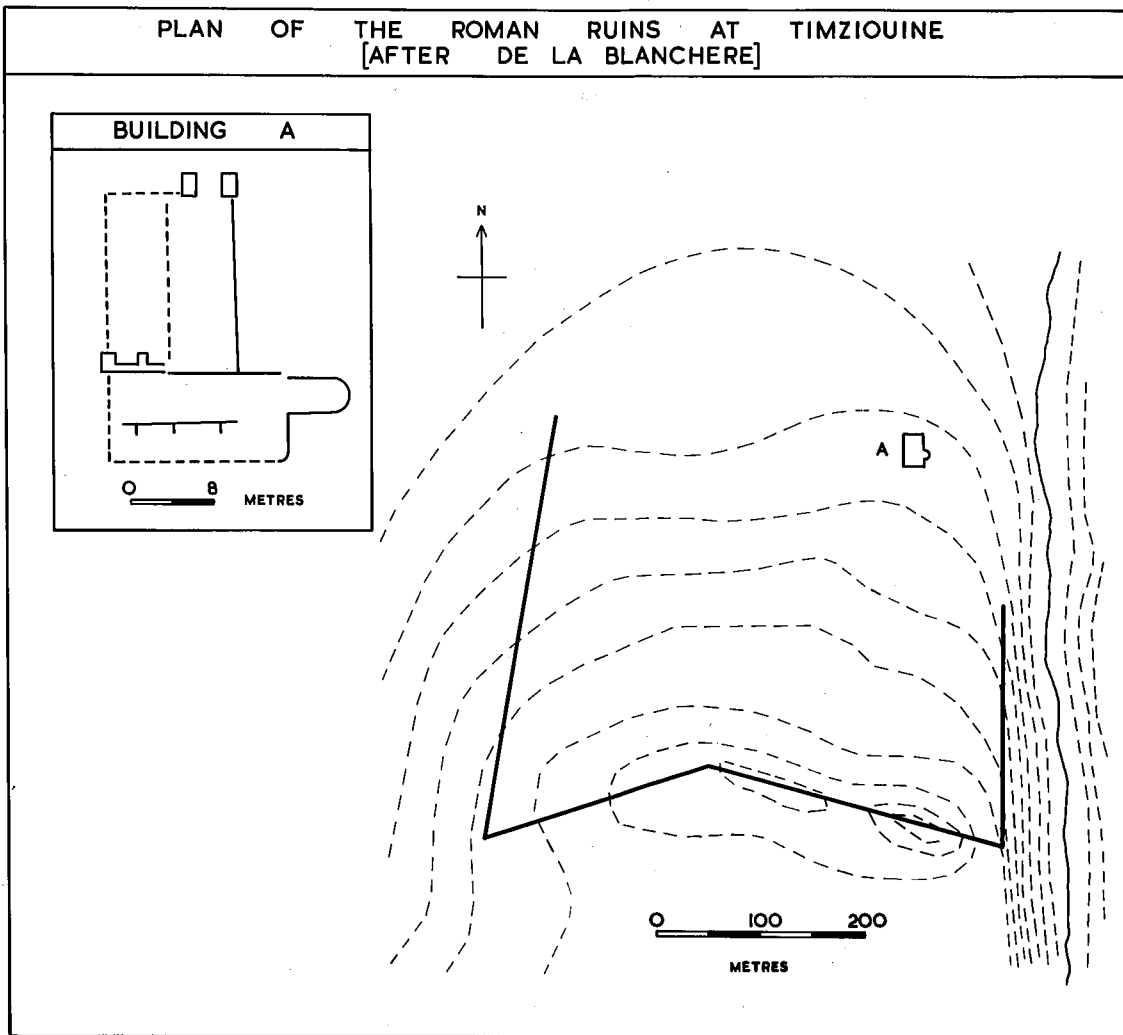


FIG. 19

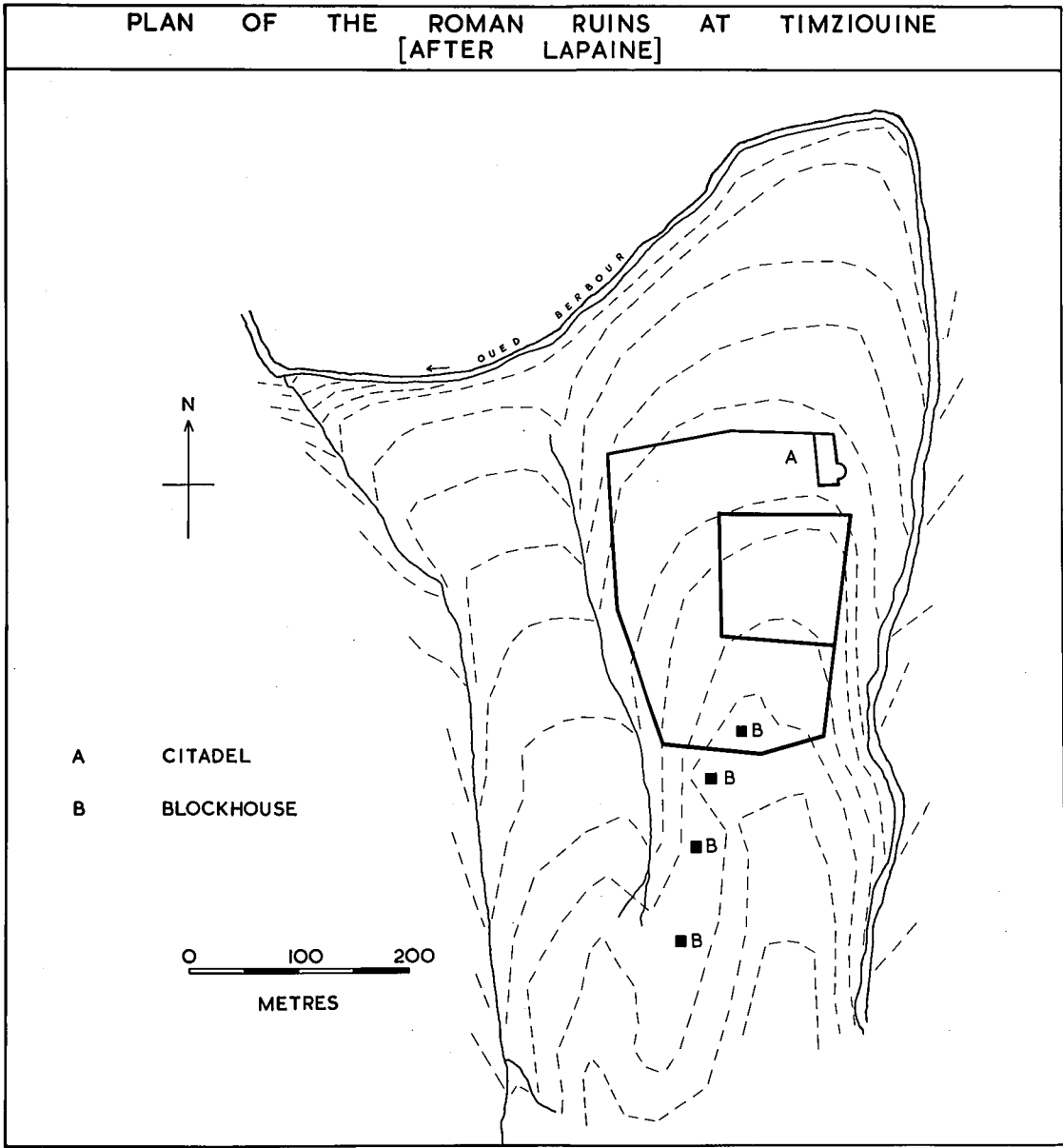


FIG.20

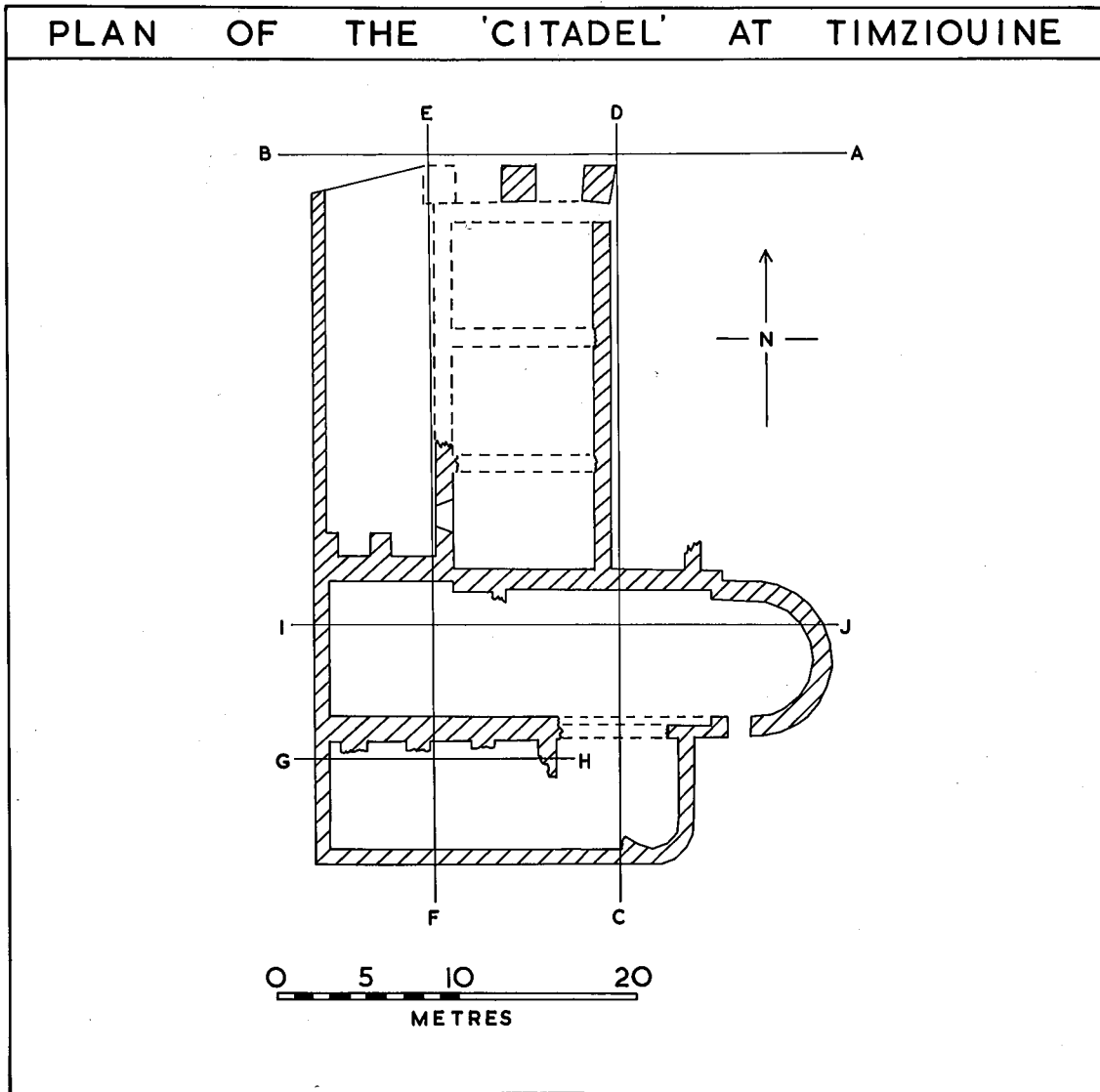
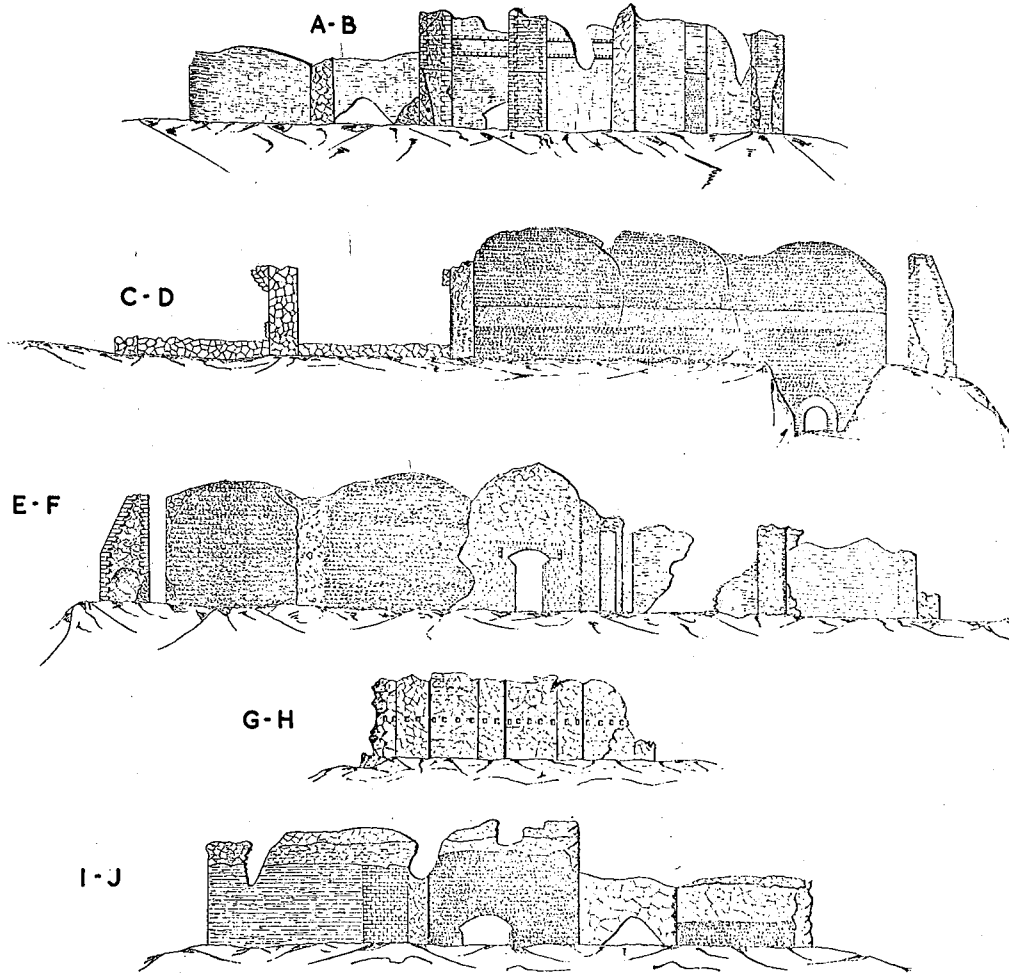


FIG. 20



34. ALA MILIARIA.

The Roman ruins at Beniane were situated on a small plateau (560 metres) enclosed on three sides by a meander of the Oued Benian. This river is joined by the Oued Hasna three kilometres to the west of the Roman site, and together they form the Oued Taria. The Djebels Kouk and Olad Aouf rise abruptly to between 900 and 1000 metres to the north of Beniane while to the south the Djebels Kodjel (1079 metres) and Bel Hadj (1008 metres) present more gentle slopes. These hills form the western part of the Monts de Saïda which are lower than the Monts de Tlemçen further west, and do not constitute a real barrier to communications. There are easy routes to the west of Beniane along the valley of the Oued Taria; to the Saïda region in the south along the valley of the Oued Hasna; and eastwards through the main part of the Monts de Saïda along the valleys of the Oueds el Kebir and Mechira.

De la Blanchère visited the Roman ruins at Beniane in 1883.<sup>1</sup> The walls of an enclosure 220 metres in length could still be seen at that time (fig.21.) There were gateways in the middle of the west and south walls and each gateway was protected by two towers built of good Roman masonry and measuring 5.10 m. in diameter. Inside the enclosure, de la Blanchère indicated traces of walls and alignments, and the ruins of an important building near the east wall, (fig.21 A). Beyond the enclosure there were remains of several isolated buildings. Outside the west gateway was a cemetery of the late Roman period and beyond it an avenue bordered on either side by

mausoleums. One mausoleum was still standing to a height of almost six metres (fig.22).

In 1899 Rouziès carried out excavations at Beniane. He was assisted by Gsell who published the results in the same year.<sup>2</sup> Gsell begins his account of the excavations with a brief description of the Roman ruins which only differs from that of de la Blanchère in one respect; according to Gsell the enclosure was 240 metres square (fig.23).<sup>3</sup>

The area excavated was situated in the eastern part of the ruins and proved to be the site of a Christian basilica 26.80 m. in length and 16 metres wide (fig.24). The wall of the apse rested on top of the foundations of the east wall of the main enclosure indicating that the latter had been demolished either some time before the basilica was built or at the start of the building operations.

Seven tombs were discovered and excavated to the east of the church, and a number of inscriptions were found.<sup>4</sup> This appears to have been a small cemetery reserved for members of the clergy.

Both the church and the tombs were situated inside a small fortified enclosure, 34 m. long and 35.10 m. wide (fig.24). The main entrance to this enclosure was in the middle of the west wall, and was only one metre wide. Gsell found traces of two semi-circular bastions on either side of the main gateway. Early tombstones and sculptured stones had been used in the construction of the enclosure walls, indicating that they were built at a relatively late date.



Gsell worked out a rough chronology for these constructions. He suggested that the basilica was built in the first half of the 5th century and that the small fortified enclosure was constructed after the main ramparts but before the basilica.

Leschi, the Director of Antiquities for Algeria, visited Beniane in 1935.<sup>5</sup> By that date the Roman ruins had been almost entirely destroyed and the area was being cultivated by colonists from the neighbouring village. A few traces of the basilica excavated by Rouziès and Gsell were still visible, but Leschi predicted that they too would soon be destroyed. At the present time (1968) the area is still being cultivated and the last traces of the Roman centre have disappeared.

#### The Inscriptions from Beniane.

Thirteen inscriptions from Beniane are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, (9740,- 9743, 21568 - 21574, 22597). The inscriptions C.I.L. 21570 - 21574 were first published by Gsell in 1899.<sup>6</sup> C.I.L. 21570, 21571, 21573 - 74 were discovered in the small cemetery to the east of the basilica, and C.I.L. 21572 near the porch of the basilica. Six inscriptions discovered by Rouziès and Gsell during their excavations at Beniane are not included in the Corpus.

- i. An undated tombstone set up by a trooper of the ala miliaria in memory of his wife and two of their children. This inscription had been used in the construction of the basilica.<sup>7</sup>
- ii. An undated tombstone set up by a trooper of the ala miliaria in memory of his mother-in-law.<sup>8</sup>
- iii. The undated tombstone of a retired soldier who died at the age of 61 years. This inscription had been used in the construction of the basilica.<sup>9</sup>

- iv. The tombstone of Robba, the sister of the Bishop of Aquae Sirenses, who died in AD 434. This was discovered in the cemetery to the east of the basilica.<sup>10</sup>
- v. The tombstone of a priest, Donatus, who died in AD 446. This was discovered in the cemetery to the east of the basilica.<sup>11</sup>
- vi. The tombstone of a deacon, Maurus, who died in AD 439. This inscription was found near the porch of the basilica.<sup>12</sup>

A dedication made to Aelius Peregrinus by the centurion of a cohort was discovered at Beniane and published in 1902.<sup>13</sup> The inscription can be dated to between AD 198 - 201.

In 1912 de Pachtere and Bouyssou published two milestones found five kilometres to the north-east of Charrier, between Beniane and Lucu.<sup>14</sup> Both milestones record 10 miles from Tigit; the first is dated to AD 214 - 215 and the second to AD 238 - 244.

A milestone discovered between Beniane and Cohors Breucorum was published in 1919.<sup>15</sup> It records 7 miles from Cohors Breucorum to Ala Miliaria and is dated to AD 201.

In 1924 Varnier published three milestones discovered at Aouzalel to the east of Beniane.<sup>16</sup> All three inscriptions record 7 miles from Ala Miliaria and are dated to AD 222, AD 238 - 244, and AD 243 - 252 respectively.

Leschi discovered three new inscriptions at Beniane in 1935. The first is an undated tombstone set up by a trooper of the ala miliaria in memory of his mother;<sup>17</sup> the second is a dedication by the duumvir of the city of Ala Miliaria and is dated to AD 286 - 305;<sup>18</sup> and the third is a milestone first discovered two or three kilometres to the east of Beniane. It records 2 miles from Tigit to Caput

Urbe and is dated to AD 235 - 238.<sup>19</sup>

The earliest inscription from Beniane is dated to AD 198 - 201, and the most recent to AD 446.

As there are no visible remains at Beniane an attempt to reconstruct the history of the Roman centre must be based on the work carried out by de la Blanchère, Rouziès, and Gsell at the end of the 19th century, and on epigraphic evidence.

1. During the Roman period the centre at Beniane was known as Ala Miliaria<sup>20</sup> and also as Tigit.<sup>21</sup> Tigit appears to have been the Berber name for this locality, and after the Roman military occupation it continued to be used. The centre at Beniane was also known by the name of the military unit stationed there in the early 3rd century - the ala miliaria.
2. The earliest inscription from Ala Miliaria is a dedication to Aelius Peregrinus, the governor of Mauretania Caesariensis, made by the centurion of a cohort. It can be dated to between AD 198 - 201.<sup>22</sup> We know that in AD 201 Aelius Peregrinus was responsible for the construction of a large section of the new limes in Mauretania Caesariensis, including the fort at Aras, the hiberna of the Ala Gemina Sebastena, the camp of the cohors Breucorum, the forts of Lucu and Kaputtasaccura and the roads linking these forts.<sup>23</sup> A milestone, discovered in 1919, records 7 miles from Cohors Breucorum to Ala Miliaria and is dated to AD 201.<sup>24</sup> These two pieces of evidence suggest that a fort was built at Beniane in AD 201 or perhaps a little earlier.
3. We do not know whether the ala miliaria was the first unit to be stationed at Beniane. The dedication to

Aelius Peregrinus was made by the centurion of a cohort, and it is possible that this cohort, although we do not know its full name, was the first unit to occupy the site. But the fact that the ala miliaria gave its name to the fort and civil settlement at Beniane<sup>25</sup> suggests that the unit was stationed there early in the 3rd century.

4. The enclosure described by de la Blanchère and Gsell (figs. 21 & 23) covers an area of between five and six hectares, and appears to represent the fort built to house the ala miliaria which was a cavalry force 1000 strong, and the largest unit stationed in Mauretania Caesariensis. But this may not be the first fort constructed at Beniane particularly if the site was first occupied by a cohort.

On the basis of his reading of A.E. 1936, 63, Leschi has suggested that only a part of the ala miliaria was stationed at Beniane, and the remainder was split up into small detachments stationed in other parts of the province. He wrote, "La tombe de la défunte, qui a vécu 45 ans, 10 mois et 6 jours a été faite par son fils, Caecilius Victor. Celui-ci était sans doute en garnison à Ala Miliaria. Il est porte-étendard du détachement puisqu'il est dit Vex(illarius). Le vexillum, en effet, est l'étendard d'une unité détachée d'un corps de troupe. La présence d'un vexillaire à Ala Miliaria prouve bien que, comme l'avait supposé Gsell, une partie seulement de l'aile était casernée à Beniane. Le reste était dispersé dans d'autres garnisons!"<sup>26</sup> But the letters VEX have been misinterpreted by Leschi.

A number of inscriptions recording troopers of the ala miliaria have been discovered at Portus Magnus,<sup>27</sup> Tasaccura,<sup>28</sup> and Aquae Sirenses.<sup>29</sup> This evidence cannot be used in support of Leschi's theory. The ala miliaria was no doubt responsible for patrolling the road from its camp at Beniane to Portus Magnus on the coast and, therefore, it is not surprising to find several troopers of the unit buried at centres along this route.

5. Ala Miliaria was linked to Lucu in the west and Cohors Breucorum in the east by the nova praetentura. A milestone recording the 7th mile from Cohors Breucorum to Ala Miliaria and dated to AD 201<sup>30</sup> suggests that the forts and roads are contemporary. This section of the nova praetentura appears to have been maintained throughout the first half of the 3rd century.<sup>31</sup> Another road linked Ala Miliaria to Aquae Sirenses in the north-west. From Aquae Sirenses a number of roads led to centres on the 2nd century military line, and to the coast. No milestones have been discovered along the road from Ala Miliaria to Aquae Sirenses.

6. Evidence from inscriptions proves that a civilian population settled at Ala Miliaria soon after the fort was built. Troopers serving in the ala miliaria married and established families, who no doubt lived near the fort;<sup>32</sup> soldiers who had completed their period of service in the ala often preferred to settle down outside the fort where they had been stationed;<sup>33</sup> the presence of 1000 men, all receiving regular pay, must have attracted some of the local Berber population to settle down outside the fort and to provide various services for the garrison. By the end

of the 3rd century we know that the civil settlement at Ala Miliaria had achieved the rank of a chartered town governed by its own council.<sup>34</sup>

There is no evidence on the ground of a civil settlement outside the fort. Early descriptions of the ruins at Beniane only refer to several isolated buildings to the north of the main enclosure.<sup>35</sup> This suggests that the ala miliaria was withdrawn some time during the second half of the 3rd century, when large field armies were being created, leaving the fort vacant for civilian occupation. The city of Ala Miliaria does not appear to have grown beyond the walls of the original military establishment, and was one of the smaller urban centres in this part of Mauretania Caesariensis.

7. The Roman settlement continued to be occupied at least until the end of the 5th century. There was a Christian community there at the beginning of the 5th century, although we do not know when Christianity first spread to Ala Miliaria. Gsell excavated a Christian basilica in the eastern part of the city, built between AD 434 and 439, and nearby he found a small cemetery reserved for members of the clergy. Two bishops of Ala Miliaria, the sister of Bishop Honoratus of Aquae Sirenses, and three priests, were buried in this cemetery.<sup>36</sup> The undated tombstone of another bishop of the church of Ala Miliaria and the tombstone of a deacon, who died in AD 439, were found near the porch of the basilica.<sup>37</sup> Bishop Honoratus and his sister were members of the Donatist Church, and it is probable that the other members of the clergy buried in this cemetery were also donatists.<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand the bishop of Ala Miliaria buried near the porch of the basilica was a Catholic and Mensius, a Catholic bishop of Ala Miliaria, attended the Council of AD 484.

The small fortified enclosure surrounding the basilica and cemetery appears to represent a citadel to which the citizens of Ala Miliaria could withdraw in time of danger. It was built at a late date <sup>39</sup> either at a time when the main ramparts had already been destroyed or fallen in to disrepair, or at a time when the townspeople found that they could no longer defend the whole of the settlement.

8. Rouziès and Gsell discovered parts of several olive presses during their excavations at Beniane. This suggests that at least a section of the population of Ala Miliaria were farmers.

- 
1. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'Etude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne - extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, pp. 66-68.
  2. Gsell, S., Fouilles de Benian (Ala Miliaria), publiées sous les auspices de l'Association Historique pour l'Etude de L'Afrique du Nord, Paris, 1899.
  3. Gsell, S., 1899, idem., p.8.
  4. Details of these inscriptions are given in the following section.
  5. Leschi, L., 'Inscriptions d'Ala Miliaria', B.d'O., 1936, pp. 107 - 111.
  6. Gsell, S., 1899, idem.
  7. Gsell, S., 1899, idem., p.11.

8. Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p.11.
9. Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p.12.
10. Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p. 25.
11. Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p. 27.
12. Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p. 44.
13. A.E. 1902, 4.
14. de Pachtere and Bouyssou, 'Bornes milliaires de la Region de Charrier', B.d'O., Vol.32, 1912, pp. 250 - 252.
15. B.A.C., 1919, p. CCXIV no. 1.
16. Varnier, A., 'Découverte de Ruines Romaines et de trois bornes milliaires à Aouzalel', B.d'O., Vol. 44, 1924, pp. 280 - 283.
17. A.E. 1936, 63.
18. A.E. 1936, 64.
19. A.E. 1935, 42.
20. Varnier, A., 1924, *idem.*, pp. 280 - 283 (the first two inscriptions). C.I.L. 21572  
A.E. 1936, 64.
21. de Pachtere and Bouyssou, 1912, *idem.*, pp. 250 - 252.  
A.E. 1935, 42.
22. A.E. 1902, 4.
23. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Severes dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', 2nd part L.A.E., Vol3., 1955, p. 358.
24. B.A.C., 1919, p. CCXIV no. 1.
25. A milestone set up in AD 222 records 7 miles from Ala Miliaria. (Varnier, A., 1924, *idem.*, p.281).
26. Leschi, L., 1936, *idem.*, p. 110.
27. C.I.L. 21617, 21618.
28. C.I.L. 9750.
29. Vincent, M.M., 'Aquae Sirenses', B.d'O., Vol47, 1927, p.262.
30. B.A.C., 1919, p. CCXIV No.I.



31. One of the milestones discovered by Varnier between Ala Miliaria and Cohors Breucorum is dated to AD 243 - 253 (Varnier, A., 1924, *idem.*, p.283).
32. Gsell, inscriptions i and ii, A.E. 1936, 63.
33. Gsell inscription iii. Gsell also records that Rouziès discovered the tombstone of a soldier of the ala who, after 27 years of service, died at Ala Miliaria aged 70 years. He does not give the text of the inscription (Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p.12.)
34. A.E. 1936, 64.
35. de la Blanchère, R., 1833, *idem.*, p.67.  
Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p.8.
36. C.I.L. 21570 - 74, Gsell inscriptions iv and v.
37. C.I.L. 21572, Gsell inscription vi.
38. Courtois, C., *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*, Paris, 1955, p. 285, note 5.
39. Gsell, S., 1899, *idem.*, p.46.

FIG. 21

PLAN OF THE ROMAN RUINS AT BENIANE  
[AFTER DE LA BLANCHERE 1883]

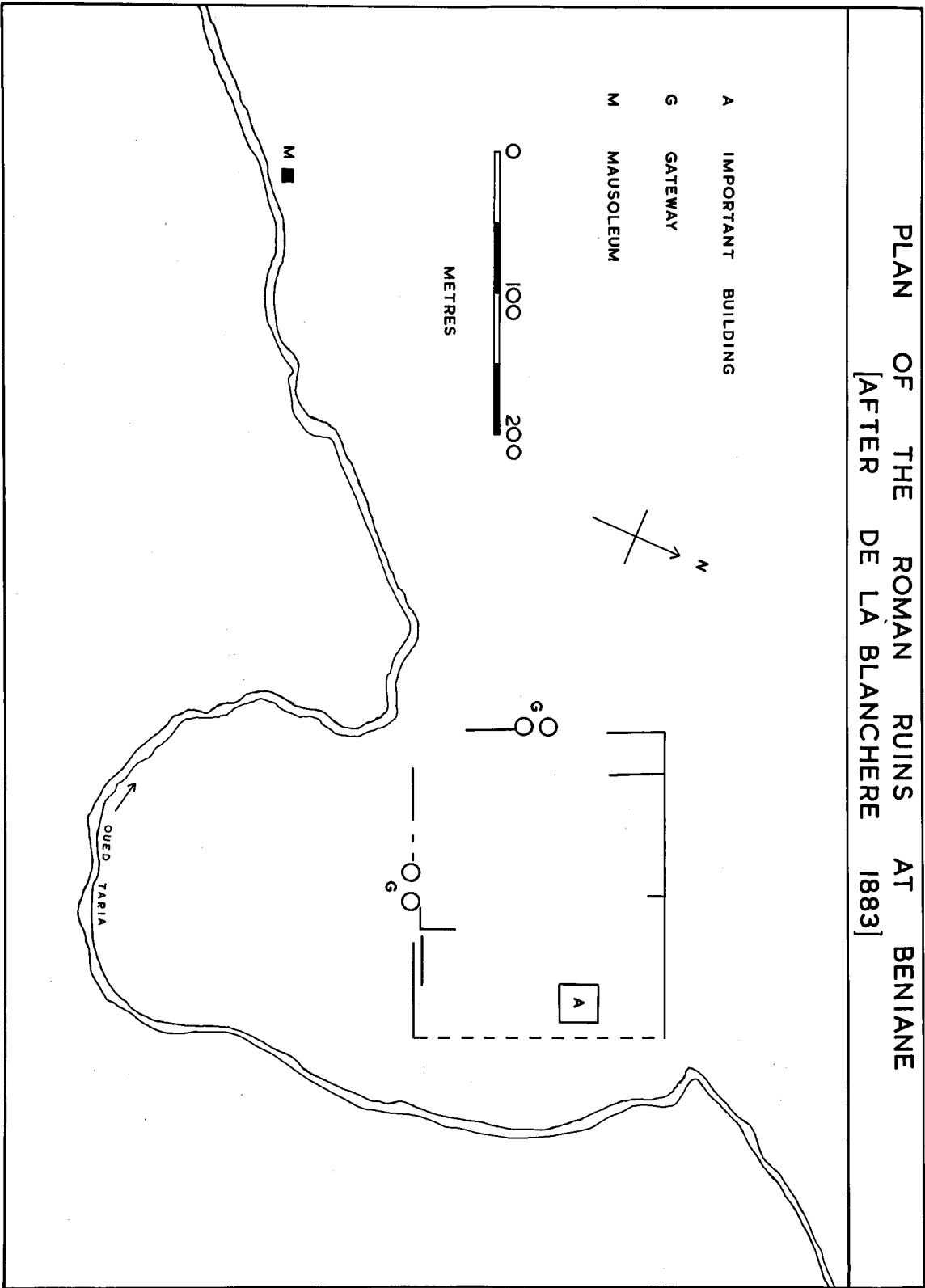


FIG. 22

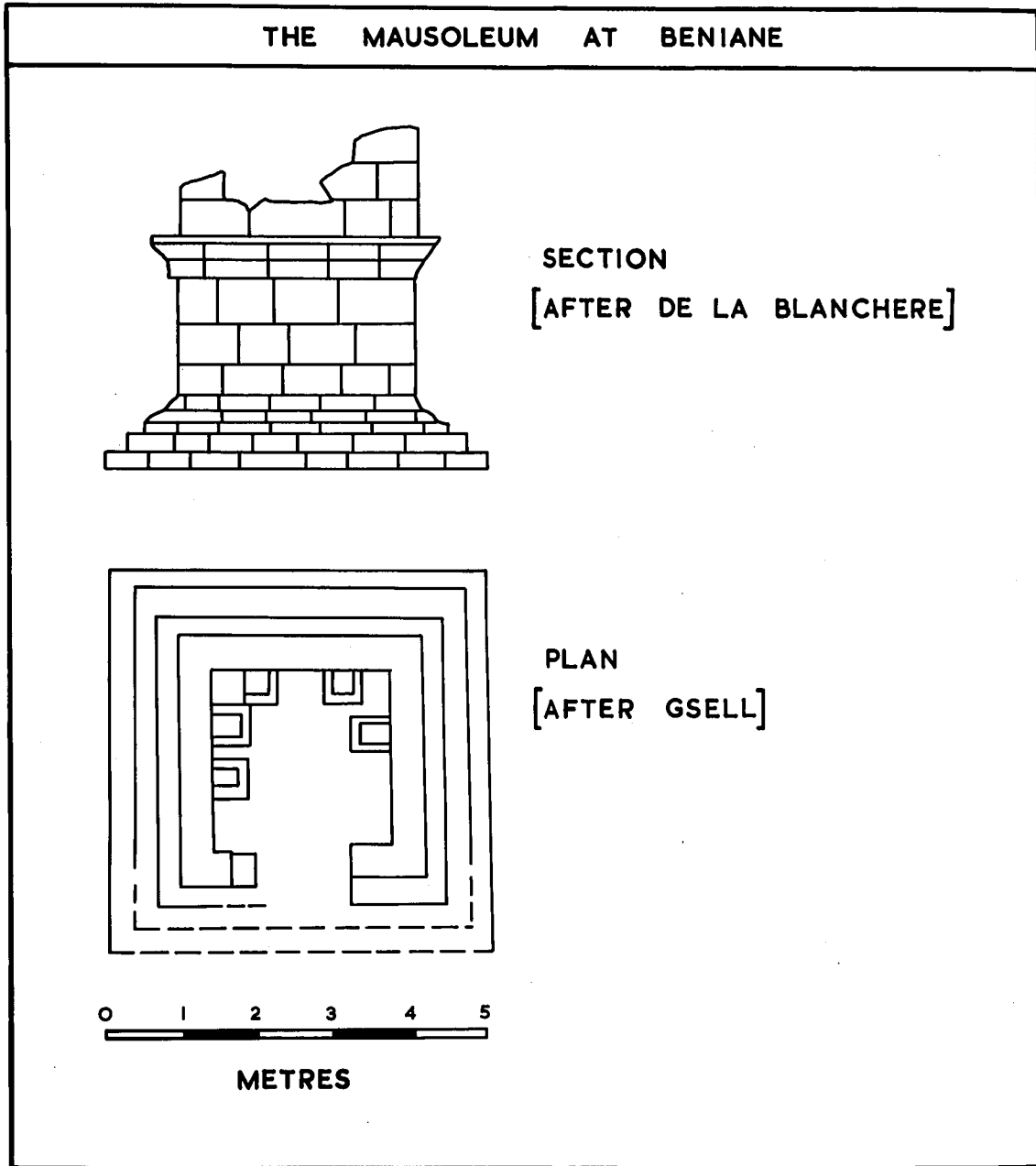


FIG. 23

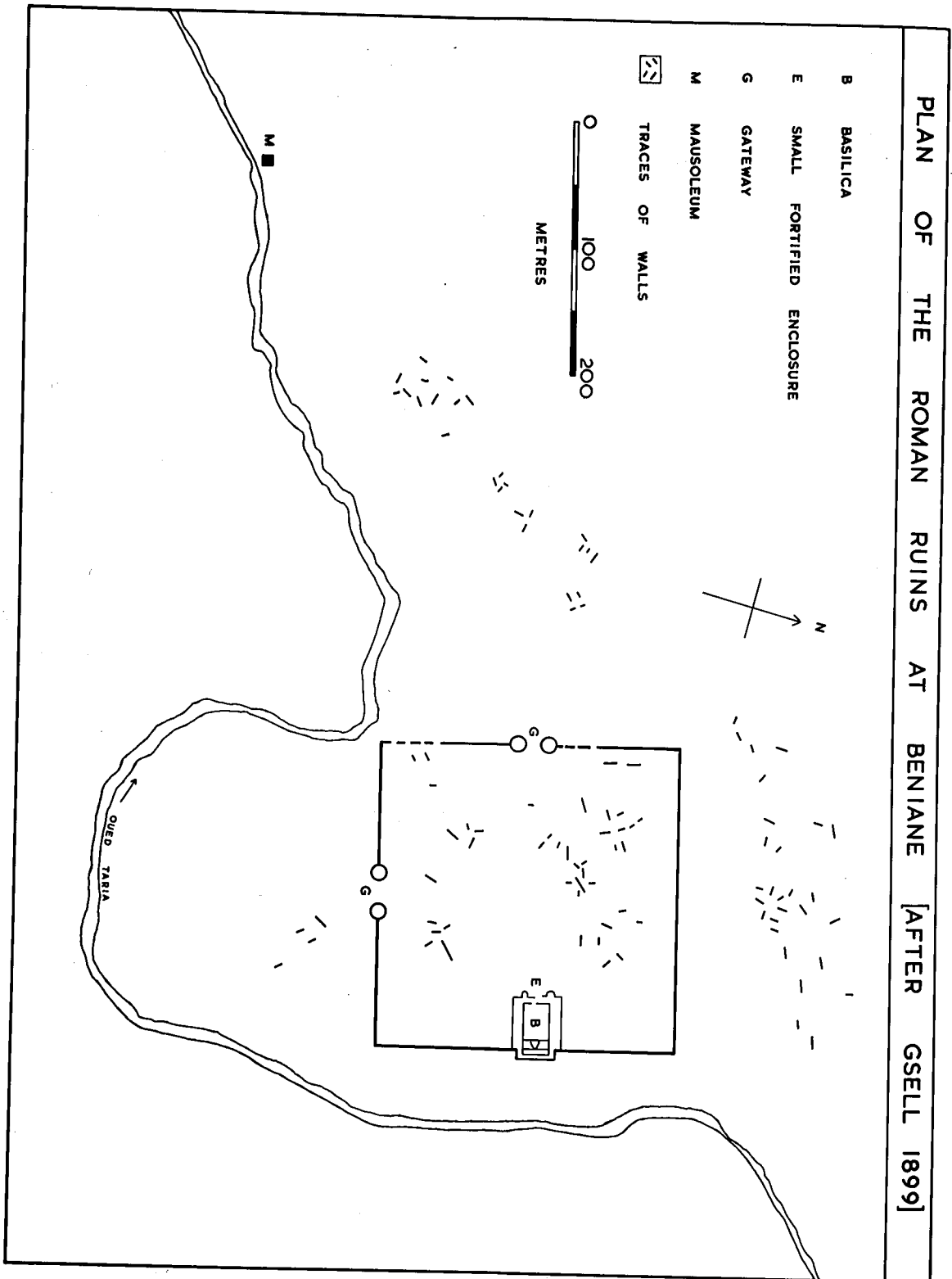
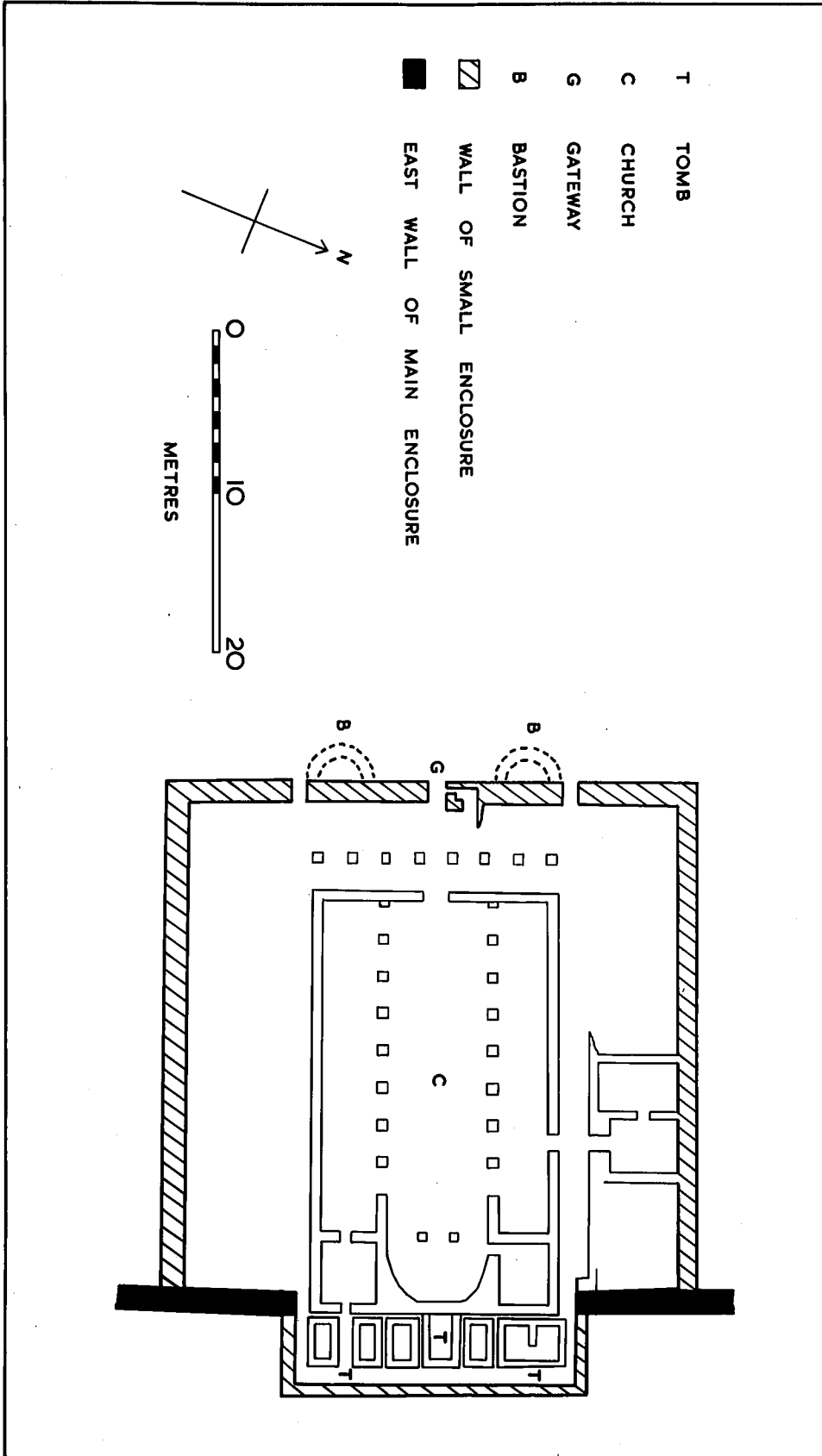


FIG. 24

PLAN OF THE SMALL FORTIFIED ENCLOSURE AT BENIANE



35 - 43. The Fortified Villas of the western Ouarsenis.

35. The Fortified Villa at Kaoua.

A number of writers have described the Roman ruins at Kaoua<sup>1</sup> situated 14 kilometres to the east of Ammi Moussa and commanding the valley of the Oued Sensig, a tributary of the Oued Riou (fig.25, 1). They represent the remains of a large country residence 40 metres square protected by three enclosures (fig.26). The villa consisted of four ranges of rooms built around a central courtyard and colonnade. In the middle of the open courtyard there were two cisterns 6.10 m x 7.30 m and 4 m in height. The main doorway of the building was flanked by projecting towers. There was a semicircular arch above the doorway decorated with Christian and Berber motifs, and on the keystone of the arch was the inscription Spes in Deo Ferini Amen. Ferinus was no doubt the proprietor of the villa. The only access through the outer defences to the house was along a long, narrow corridor which led from a gateway in the outer enclosure to the main doorway of the villa.

Although the villa was built of excellent Roman ashlar, there are a number of irregularities and a certain lack of precision in its construction. The vault of one of the cisterns was built of re-used column shafts which suggests that some of the stones may have come from another building.

The irregularities in the construction of the villa, the Christian and Berber decoration on the arch above the doorway, and the style of the capitals, columns, and bases

of the colonnade, all suggest that the villa was constructed during the Later Empire. We do not know how long the villa continued to be occupied, but at a date unknown it appears to have been destroyed by fire.

36. Ksar Kebbaba (or Kbaba).

The ruins of the fortified villa known as Ksar Kebbaba were situated on the right bank of the Chabet Mahalla, a tributary of the Oued Sensig,<sup>2</sup> (fig.25,2). The villa was 30 metres square, and there were projecting bastions on all four sides (fig.27). In the middle of the central courtyard were two vaulted cisterns. There was no evidence on the ground of a system of outer defences.

37. Sedadja.

Marchand has described the ruins of a fortified villa at Sedadja on a spur, to the north of Kef el Zeboudj<sup>3</sup> (fig.25,3). It had the same form as the villas at Kaoua and Kebbaba and its dimensions were 20 m. x 30 m. (fig.27). The ruins of a house constructed of worked stone were situated a short distance to the west of Sedadja, at the foot of the spur.<sup>4</sup> There were traces of a large open courtyard with rooms on two sides (fig.28).

38. Ksar Djerane.

Marchand visited the ruins of another fortified villa known as Ksar Djerane, situated on a spur of the Djebel Menkoura<sup>5</sup> (fig.25,4). In plan the villa is similar to Kaoua, Kebbaba, and Sedadja, consisting of a rectangular enclosure protected on all four sides by projecting bastions. There were a number of isolated

buildings to the east of the villa<sup>6</sup> (fig.29).

39. Kherba bou Zoula.

There were ruins of a fortified villa (36 m. x 27 m.) at Kherba bou Zoula (fig. 25,5). When Marchand visited the ruins in 1895 the semi-circular arch above the main doorway was still standing.<sup>7</sup>

40. Ben Afifs.

The Roman ruins at Ben Afifs appear to represent a small fortified villa<sup>8</sup> (fig. 25,6).

No inscriptions have been discovered at these sites but like Kaoua the villas were probably constructed during the Later Empire.

Evidence from inscriptions indicates that fortified villas were constructed at Ammi Moussa and Ain Sidi el Hadj (fig.25, 7 & 8).

41. Ammi Moussa.

An inscription (C.I.L. 21531) records that a fortified villa was constructed there in AD 339 by M. Aurelius Vasefanus vir p(erfectissimus).<sup>9</sup> When Lacave - Laplagne visited Ammi Moussa in 1911 the ruins of the villa had been almost completely destroyed, and only a mosaic, which had been incorporated in one of the buildings of the military hospital, survived.<sup>10</sup>

42. Ain Sidi el Hadj.

In 1954 Salama published an inscription discovered among the Roman ruins at Ain Sidi el Hadj, five kilometres to the north of Columnata. The text is as follows:



...A]ureli(i) / [Inno]centis / [...]cis  
 fili / [qui p]ost obi[tum p]atris a fu /  
 [n]damenta / [dedi]cavit cum / [fili(i)s]  
 suis a(nno) p(rovinciae) CCC / [...]t  
 Secundo

He suggests that the inscription refers to the construction of a fortified villa by Aurelius Innocens and his sons in AD 339.<sup>11</sup>

#### 43. Trumelet.

In 1954 Salama also published the text of an inscription found a short distance to the east of the village of Trumelet.<sup>12</sup> It records that a fundus was constructed there by the incolae, the decurion Saturninus and Maximus, the son of Maximinus. Although the inscription is undated, it is of the Christian period. According to Salama the inscription may refer to the construction of a fortified villa, the residence of a local notable. But there is another interpretation - the fundus was constructed by the incolae and the decurion Saturninus, which suggests that the work was carried out on behalf of a municipal authority, and the inscription may therefore refer to the construction of a villa on territory belonging to a city.<sup>13</sup>

#### What conclusions can we draw about the fortified villas of the western Ouarsenis?

1. It is possible that all the villas are contemporary and were constructed during the first half of the 4th century. It is unfortunate that there is no evidence to indicate the length of time these sites were occupied.

2. Salama has suggested that the villas were built by local families who had benefited from imperial favour. After his African war, the Emperor Maximian needed to secure the area of the western Massif de l'Ouarsenis, and may have made alliances with local families either by consolidating rights which they had already acquired, or by actually establishing their fortunes. <sup>14</sup>
3. The need for defence in this area during the period of the Later Empire did not exclude a certain luxury in the style of life of the local landowners. In plan the villas are typical of the country-houses of Roman Africa, but they were also strongly built, stood more than one storey high, and at least one was protected by a series of outer defences.
4. The economic function of the fortified villas cannot be ignored. They were farms and, being strongly built, provided a measure of security during the Later Empire which allowed the peaceful exploitation of some of the most fertile valleys of the western Ouarsenis.
5. Finally one cannot disregard the similarity between these sites and the 'fortified farms' found widely in the Gebel and pre-desert of Tripolitania. Although the fortified farms were smaller - on the whole under 30 metres square - and not so pretentious as the fortified villas, they too were strongly built, consisting of a series of rooms built around an open courtyard containing one or more cisterns (fig.30). They stood more than one storey high, and were usually surrounded by a broad ditch. There is no evidence that the fortified villas were surrounded by a ditch, but the villa at Kaoua is protected

by a series of enclosures. Many of the fortified farms are 4th century in date but the only one that can be rigidly dated belongs to the years AD 244 - 9, and there are a number that are clearly Islamic in date. <sup>15</sup>

---

The mausoleums (Gsell's Atlas, Map 22, Nos. 68, 71, 73, 74, 75 - 81, 106) were probably built by the families who occupied the fortified villas at Ksar Kebbaba, Sedadja, Kherba bou Zoula, Ksar el Kaoua, and Ben Afifs (fig. 25).

---

1. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'Etude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne - extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, pp. 116 - 123.

Marchand, 'Occupation romaine dans le cercle d'Ammi Moussa', B.d'O., Vol.15, 1895, pp. 209 - 210.

Gsell, S., Les Monuments Antiques de l'Algérie, Vol.1, Paris, 1901, pp. 102 - 106.

Lacave-Laplagne, 'Notes sur quelques ruines romaines relevées dans la commune mixte d'Ammi Moussa', B.d'O., Vol.31, 1911, pp. 38 - 43.

2. Derrien, 'Notes sur les ruines romaines et berbères du bassin de l'Oued Riou', B.d'O., Vol.15, 1895, pp. 281 - 282.

Marchand, 1895, *idem.*, pp. 210 - 211.

Lacave-Laplagne, 1911, *idem.*, p. 43.

3. Marchand, 1895, *idem.*, p. 211.

4. Lacave-Laplagne, 1911, *idem.*, pp. 47 - 48.

5. Marchand, 1895, *idem.*, pp. 216 - 217.

6. Lacave-Laplagne, 1911, *idem.*, pp. 51 - 54.
7. Marchand, 1895, *idem.*, p. 210.
8. Marchand, 1895, *idem.*, p. 216.
9. We do not know whether this was an honorary title or whether it had been obtained by actual service. However, what it does indicate is that Aurelius Vasefanus was an extremely wealthy man and without doubt a local notable.
10. Lacave-Laplagne, 1911, *idem.*, p. 38.
11. Salama, P., 'A propos d'une inscription mauretaniennne de 346 apres J.-C', L.A.E., Vol.2, 1954, pp. 219-222.
12. Salama, P., 1954, *idem.*, pp. 217 - 219.
13. The city may be either Tiaret, situated 15 kilometres to the southwest, or Columnata 7½ kilometres to the north-east, or Kherba des Aouissat 6½ kilometres to the north-west. One of the persons who ordered the construction of the fundus near Trumelet was Maximus, the son of Maximinus or Maximianus, and it is interesting to note that a certain Maximianus is recorded on an inscription from Kherba des Aouissat (Salama, P., 1954, *idem.*, pp. 206 - 219.)
14. Salama, P., 1954, *idem.*, p. 225.
15. Goodchild, R.G., 'The Limes Tripolitanus II', J.R.S., Vol.40, 1950, pp. 34 - 37.

FIG.25

THE FORTIFIED-VILLAS OF THE WESTERN OUARSENIS

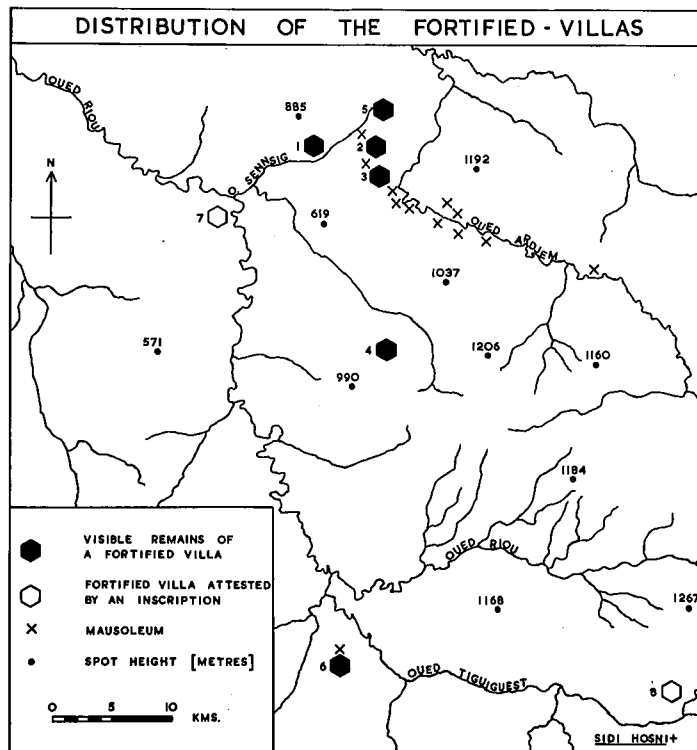
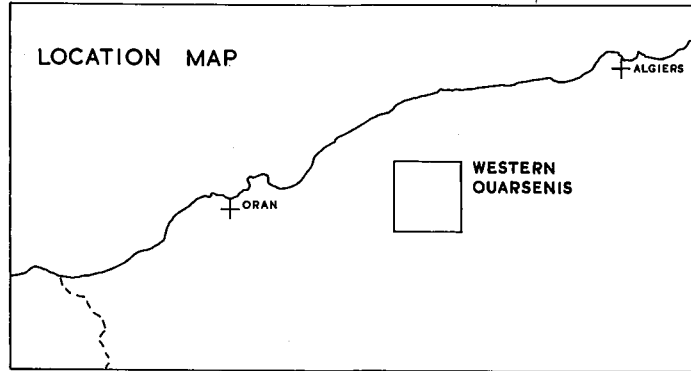


FIG. 26

THE FORTIFIED VILLA AT KAOUA

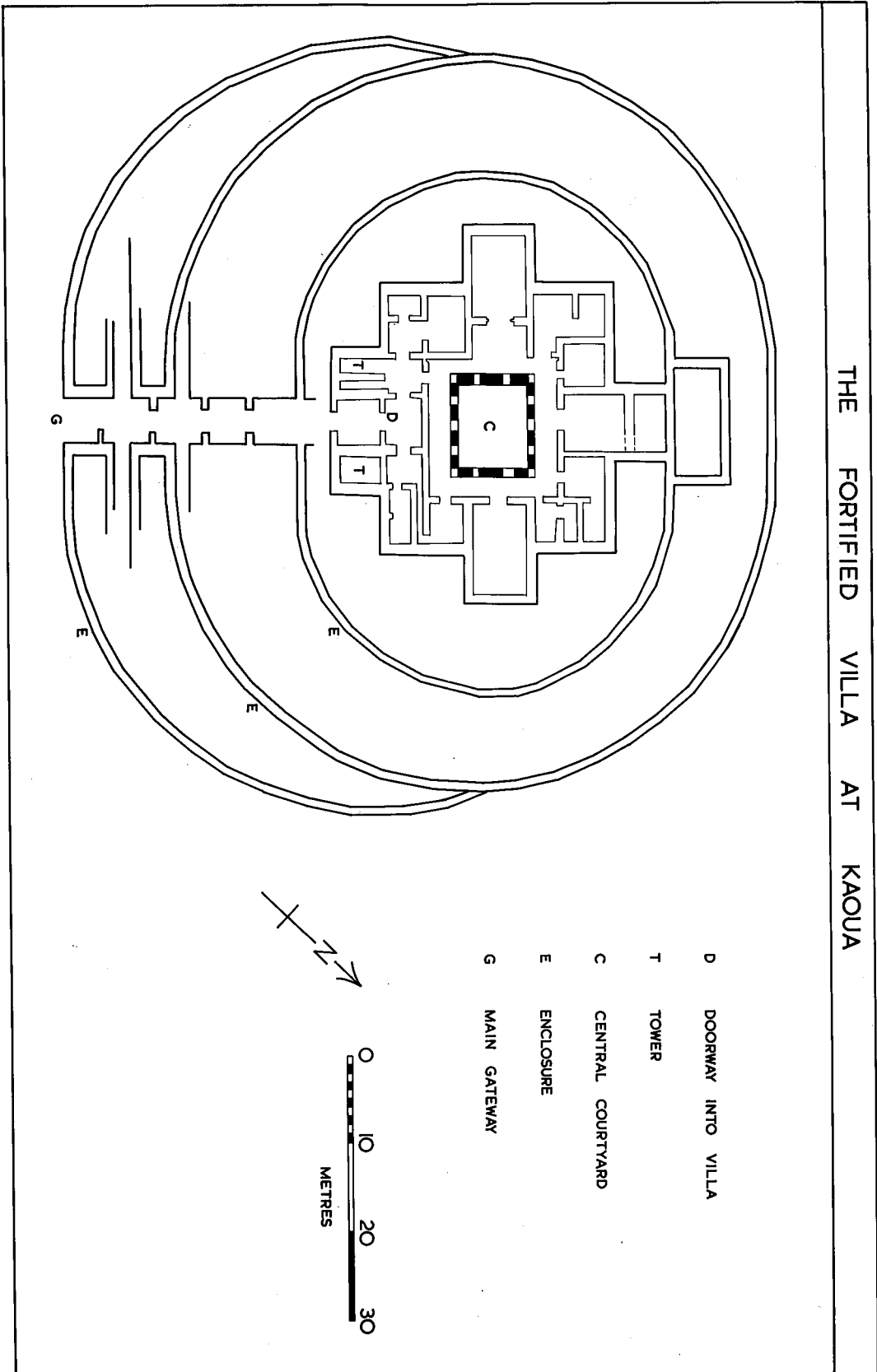


FIG. 27

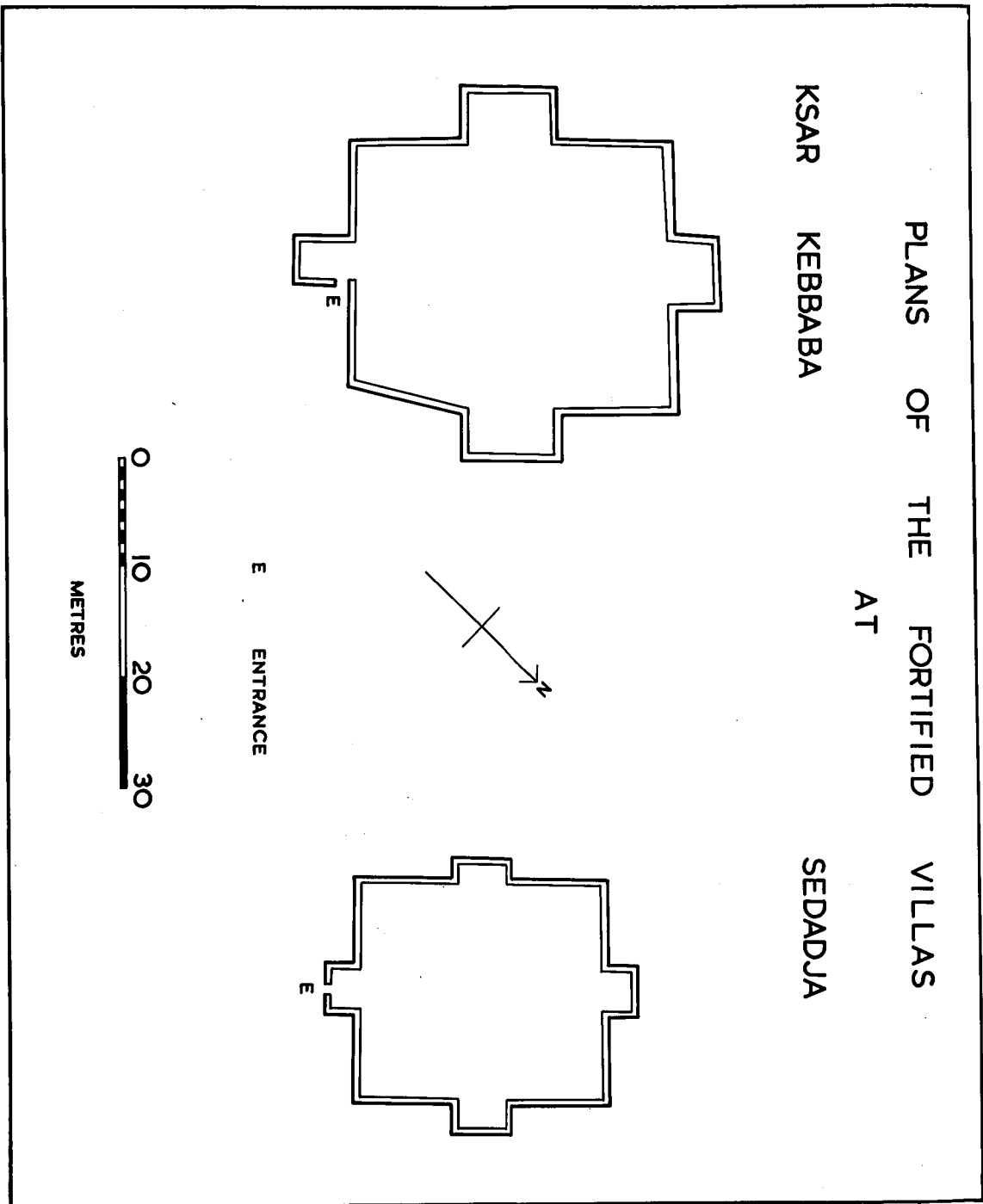


FIG. 28

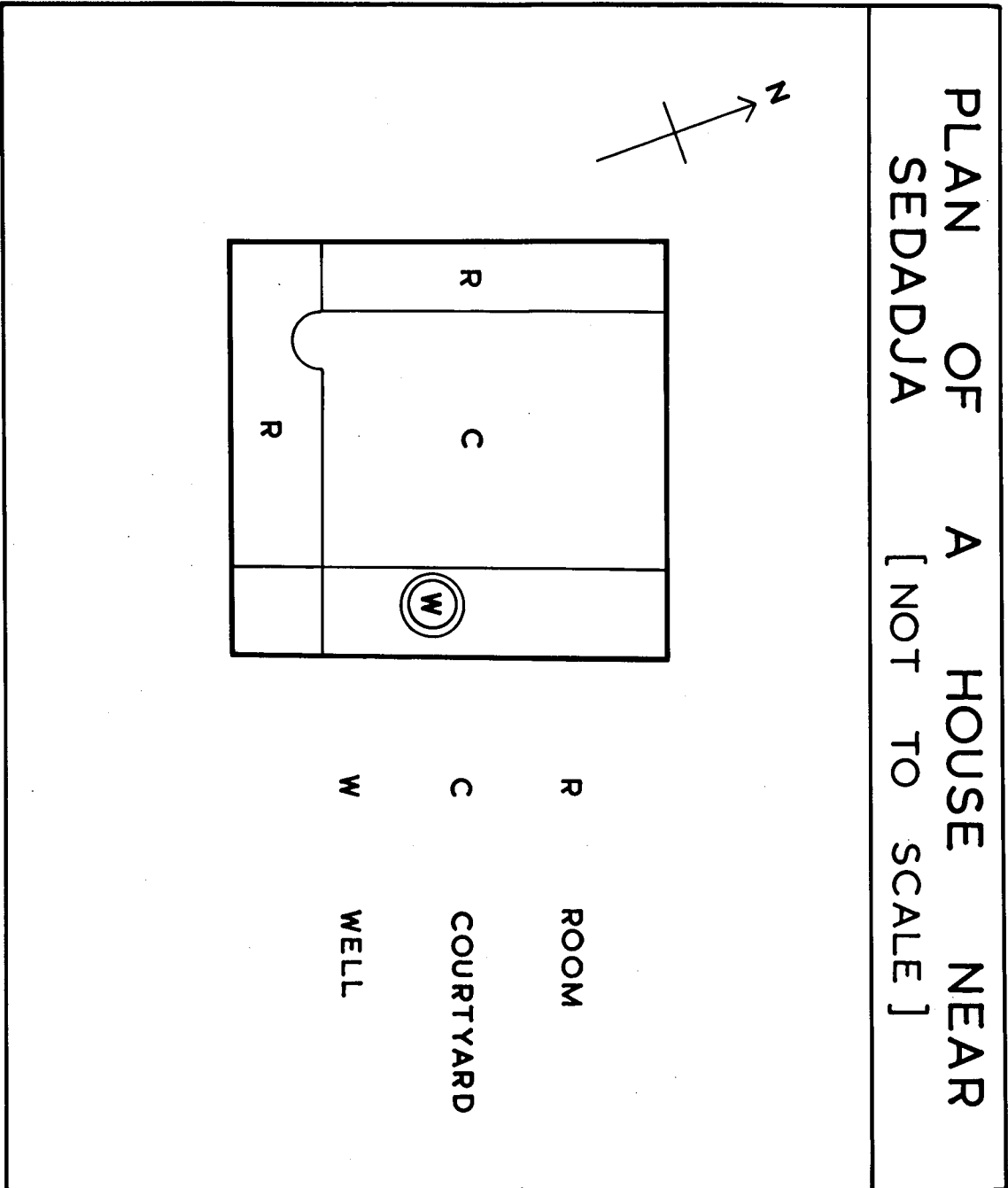




FIG. 29

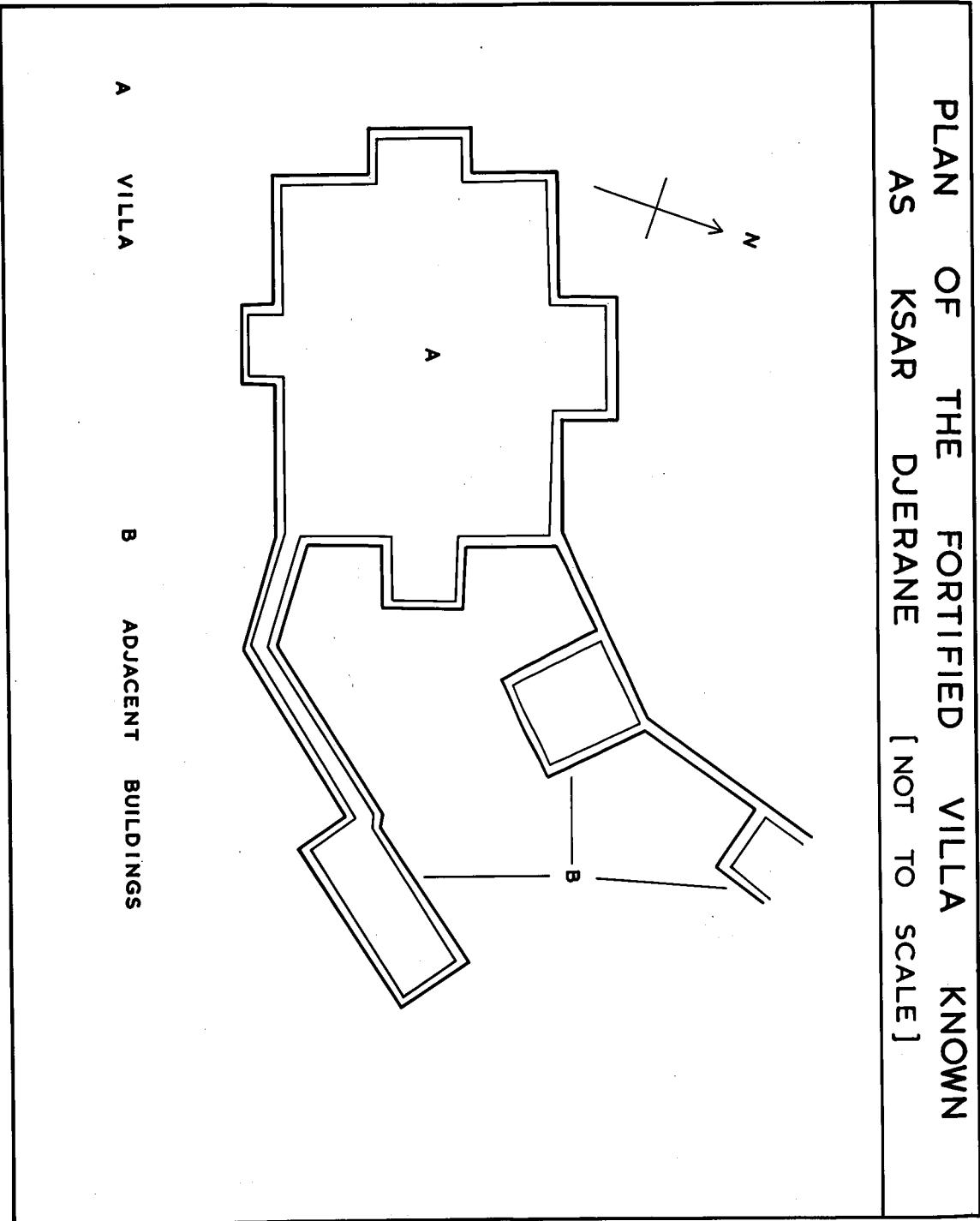
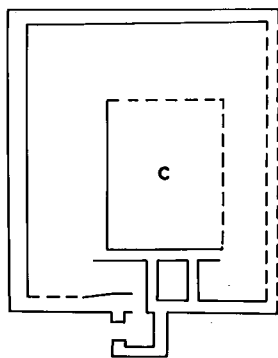


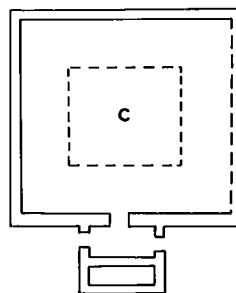
FIG. 30

PLANS OF THREE FORTIFIED FARM-HOUSES OF THE ROMAN PERIOD IN TRIPOLITANIA

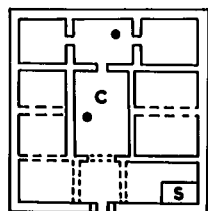
GASR MIGRAUA [EAST]



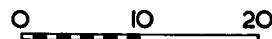
GASR SUQ EL-OTI [NO 1]



HENSIR SALAMAT



- c OPEN COURTYARD
- CISTERN
- s BASE OF STAIRCASE



METRES

44. Kherba Achlef.

The Roman ruins known as Kherba Achlef are situated at a height of 801 metres on the southern slope of the Djebel Sidi Mahrouf, and close to the Oued Hachlef which flows south to join the Oued Tiguiguest. The ruins are near an abundant spring, and cover an area of 13 hectares. Marchand visited the site in 1895 and indicated a large number of worked stones. <sup>1</sup> Cadenat discovered a capital decorated with Christian motifs among the ruins at Kherba Achlef in 1957. <sup>2</sup>

Only two inscriptions have been found there; the first is a tombstone set up in AD 372 <sup>3</sup> and the second is an undated but Christian tombstone. <sup>4</sup>

We know nothing of the origins of the Roman town. It was situated a short distance to the north of the Severan frontier, and there was a civilian population at Kherba Achlef in the late 4th century.

- 
1. Marchand, 'Occupation romaine dans le cercle d'Ammi Moussa', B.d'O., Vol.15, 1895, pp. 115 - 116.
  2. Cadenat, P., 'Vestiges paléo-chrétiens dans la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.5, 1957, p. 98.
  3. Doumergue, F., Catalogue raisonné des objets archéologiques du Musée de la Ville d'Oran, Part 2, Oran, 1938, p. 140.
  4. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la Région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, p. 172.

45. Ouekki.

There were Roman ruins at Ouekki, situated a short distance to the north of the Djebel Lesba, which rises to over 1100 metres, and forms part of the watershed between streams flowing north to the Oued Riou and south to the Oued Tiguiguest. Since Gsell visited Ouekki the ruins have been used as a quarry for stone to build a farm<sup>1</sup> belonging to the Ghlamallah family. In 1953 Cadenat<sup>1</sup> discovered an inscription built into the wall of one of the farm buildings. It is a civilian tombstone set up in AD 344. In the course of the same visit he discovered two capitals of a late period decorated with Christian and Berber motifs. In 1959 Lassus<sup>2</sup> indicated the discovery of a sculptured capital, an octagonal pillar without decoration and a worked stone decorated with Christian and Berber motifs at Ouekki.

We know nothing about the origins of the small Roman settlement at Ouekki. There was a civilian population there in the middle of the 4th century, and the discovery of a number of decorated capitals and other sculptured stones shows that this small centre possessed some fine buildings.

- 
1. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la Région de Tiaret,' L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, p. 168.
  2. Lassus, J., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1959', L.A.E., Vol.8., 1960, p.8.

46. Douar Commune Ouled - Lakred.

In 1956 Cadenat discovered an inscription 6 kilometres to the north-west of Columnata, in the Douar Commune Ouled Lakred.<sup>1</sup> The stone is very heavy and can hardly have been displaced. The inscription is undated, but of the Christian period,<sup>2</sup> and probably marks the site of a small Roman settlement.

---

1. Gsell, S., Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie, Paris, 1911, Map 22, near site no. 125.

2. Cadenat, P., 'Vestiges paléo-chrétiens dans la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.5, 1957, p. 97.

47. COLUMNATA.

There were extensive Roman ruins approximately one kilometre to the south of the village of Sidi Hosni. The Roman centre was situated at a height of 846 metres on the northern slope of the Kefs Bourchafa and Smaar, overlooking the wide valley of the Oued Mechra el Khil. The Kefs Bourchafa and Smaar, which rise to almost 1000 metres, form an important watershed between the streams flowing south across the northern Sersou to join the Nahar Ouassel, and those flowing north to the Oued Tiguiguest which drains part of the south-western Ouarsenis.

Until the early 20th century, the ruins were still standing above ground level, but as no description of the Roman site was published we know nothing of their extent or character. When the village of Sidi Hosni was established, the nearby ruins were used as a quarry by the European colonists who took the stone to build their houses. The ruins were rapidly destroyed, and all visible traces finally disappeared when the area was cleared for cultivation.

Five stones decorated with Christian and Berber motifs can still be seen built into the wall of a house at Sidi Hosni.<sup>1</sup> In 1911 three large stone troughs were discovered in the village; one of the stones was decorated with a 'chrisme' on either side of which were the outlines of a bird, and a small column in relief; the other two stones were decorated with Christian and Berber motifs.<sup>2</sup> Cadenat discovered three stone coffins at Sidi Hosni; the first was decorated with Berber and Christian motifs;<sup>3</sup>

the second with a 'chrisme' and the outlines of two birds in relief;<sup>4</sup> and the third was almost identical with the second, and part of a decorated cover was still in place.<sup>5</sup>

Deep ploughing over the area of the Roman site has led to a number of interesting discoveries. Charles and Aimé Martin discovered a complete fenestella confessionis,<sup>6</sup> together with a long, flat stone, decorated with a 'chrisme';<sup>7</sup> and a pillar,<sup>8</sup> 1500 metres to the south of Sidi Hosni. Cadenat believes that these discoveries may mark the site of a Christian church. In 1956, in another part of the ruins, the plough revealed a number of crudely worked capitals, including one on which the letters QVINTASI had been engraved.<sup>9</sup>

Towards the end of 1956 deep ploughing in the south-eastern part of the ruins revealed traces of walls constructed of excellent dressed stone. Cadenat began a series of excavations there in December 1956.<sup>10</sup> They revealed a room, 5.20 m. square, enclosed on three sides by walls 0.95 m. - 1 m. in thickness, while on the fourth side there was a wide entrance with a number of steps leading down into the room (fig.31). Two of the steps were well preserved, and were found to be constructed of two rows of bricks, separated by a small rubble and mortar core. This room, which appears to be a Roman bath, was situated at the north angle of a building complex. Immediately to the south-east, Cadenat found traces of a large paved courtyard surrounded by walls which were also constructed of good Roman masonry (fig.31) - and there were traces of a second room to the west (fig.31). The

building probably represents the bath-house of the Roman centre, but its full extent is unknown.

During the course of the excavations Cadenat found the following objects:

- i. a number of tiles.
- ii. fragments of dolia and amphorae.
- iii. sherds of coarse pottery of local manufacture with simple decoration - one of the fragments is engraved with the letters VRINI.
- iv. a small quantity of fine red imported pottery.
- v. fragments of a number of lamps.
- vi. small pieces of Roman glass.

In 1959 Cadenat investigated the area to the southwest of the Roman bath which was excavated in 1956.<sup>11</sup> Here he found the hot rooms of the bath-house. During the course of the excavation fragments of a number of lamps, and seven Roman coins were discovered.

#### The Inscriptions from Sidi Hosni.

No inscriptions from Sidi Hosni are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum. In 1912 two inscriptions were discovered among the Roman ruins. The first is an inscription set up between AD 290 - 292 by the procurator, Aurelius Litua, to commemorate a victory over a famous Berber tribe;<sup>12</sup> and the second is a milestone recording rebuilding and road repairs in AD 212.<sup>13</sup> In 1953 Cadenat discovered a decorated archway on which an undated but Christian inscription naming a magister had been engraved.<sup>14</sup> Two inscriptions were found at Sidi Hosni in



1956. One is a Christian tombstone set up in AD 463; and the other is part of an inscription engraved on a dolium.<sup>15</sup>

What do we know of the origins and evolution of the Roman settlement?

1. A milestone discovered between Sidi Hosni and Tissemilt is included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (22587). It was set up to mark the 15th mile from Columnata.<sup>16</sup> In 1911 Gsell identified Columnata with the Roman ruins near Bourbaki.<sup>17</sup> However, from Bourbaki to the point where the milestone was discovered is at least 16 Roman miles. Later, in 1928, Gsell<sup>18</sup> and Albertini<sup>19</sup> suggested that Columnata was to be found to the west of the milestone near the village of Sidi Hosni. The Roman ruins there are exactly 15 Roman miles from the point where the milestone was discovered. Although it is still not absolutely certain, this theory has been accepted by most archaeologists and historians.<sup>20</sup>
  
2. Fabre discovered a milestone at Columnata recording rebuilding and road repairs in AD 212.<sup>21</sup> This suggests that a fort was built there before AD 212 and probably at the beginning of the 3rd century as part of the re-organisation of the defences of Mauretania Caesariensis by Septimius Severus. It is possible that the fort was occupied throughout the 3rd century<sup>22</sup> but we do not know the name of the military unit stationed there. The Notitia Dignitatum records a praepositus limitis Columnatensis; during the 4th century Columnata must have been the command post of one of the frontier districts of the province.

The fort of Columnata had a commanding view north across the valley of the Oued Mechra el Khil, but was cut off from the High Plain of Sersou to the south by the Kefs Bourchafa and Smaar which rise to almost 1000 metres. This contrasts with the location of the Hiberna Alae Sebastenae and the forts of Bourbaki and Boghar, all of which were situated at the southern foot of the Ouarsenis mountains.

3. The Roman ruins at Sidi Hosni covered many hectares and must have represented not only the military camp but also the civil settlement that grew up around it. An undated but Christian inscription from this site records a magister and Courtois believes that this was the title of the chief official of the Roman settlement during the period of the Later Empire.<sup>23</sup> The settlement continued to be occupied at least until the late 5th century.<sup>24</sup>

4. There is evidence of a Christian community at Columnata in the 5th century,<sup>25</sup> although Christianity probably reached the town at a much earlier date. A bishop of Columnata attended the Council of Carthage in AD 484.

5. Part of an olive press has been discovered among the ruins of Columnata.<sup>26</sup>

---

1. Personal observation.

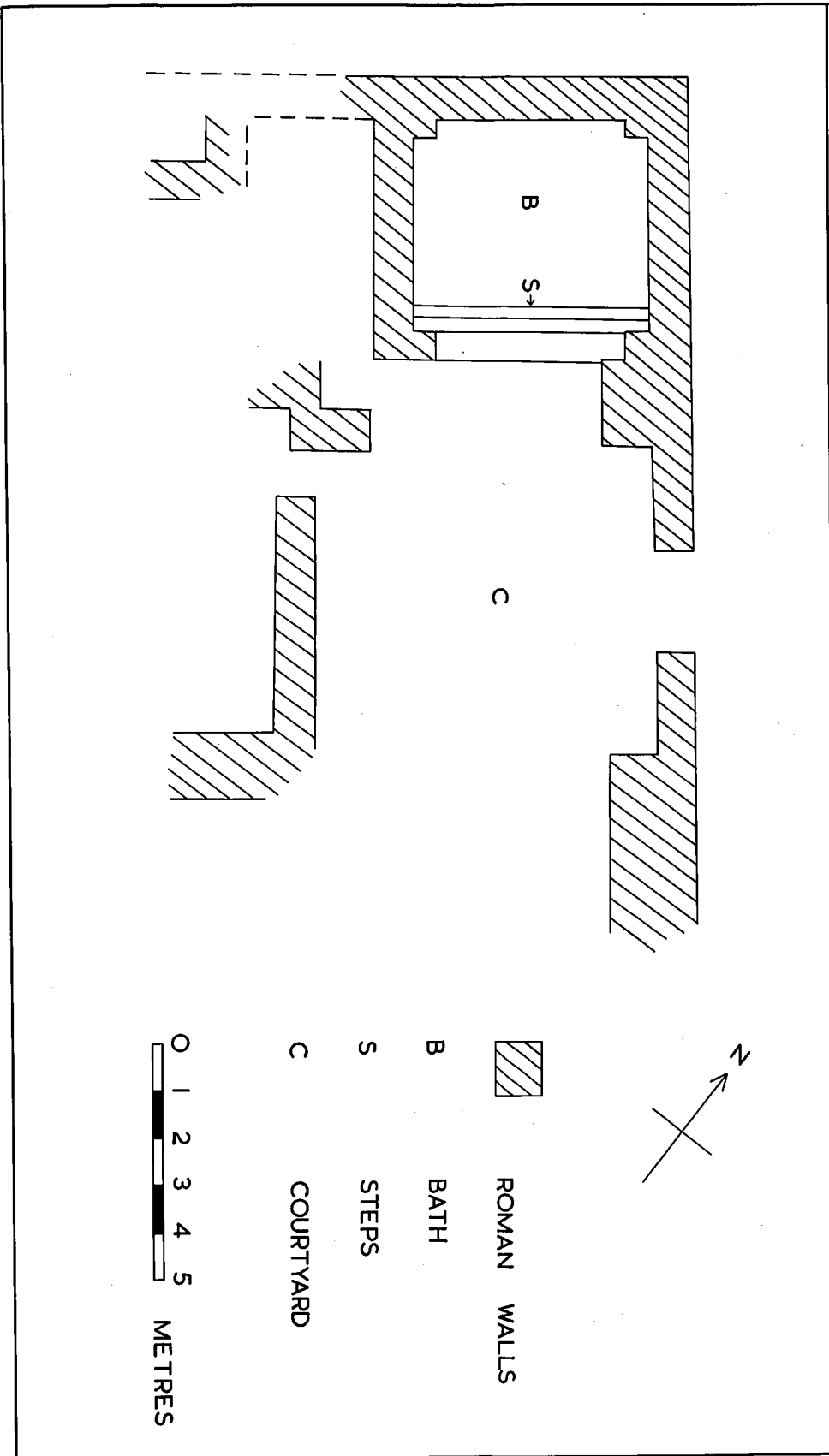
2. Fabre, S., 'Découverte d'une inscription romaine à Waldeck-Rousseau', B.d'O., Vol. 31, 1911, pp. 561 - 562.

3. Cadenat, P., 'Vestiges paléo-chrétiens dans la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.5, 1957, p. 92.
4. Cadenat, P., 1957, *idem.*, p.92.
5. Lassus, J., 'L'Archéologie algérienne en 1959', L.A.E., Vol.8, 1960, pp. 4 - 5.
6. Cadenat, P., 'Waldeck-Rousseau - Fenestella Confessionis', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, pp 286 - 7.
7. Cadenat, P., 1957, *idem.*, p. 94.
8. Cadenat, p., 1957, *idem.*, p. 97.
9. Lassus, J., 'L'Archéologie algérienne en 1956', L.A.E., Vol.5, 1957, p. 126.
10. Cadenat, P., 'Fouilles à Columnata 1956 - 1957', L.A.E., Vol.6, 1958, pp. 89 - 98.
11. Lassus, J., 1960, *idem.*, pp 2 - 4.
12. A.E. 1912, 24.
13. Fabre, S., 'Une nouvelle inscription à Waldeck-Rousseau', B.d'O., 1912, p. 127.
14. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la Région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, pp. 167 - 168.
15. Cadenat, P., 1957, *idem.*, pp. 95 - 97.
16. According to Gsell and Albertini the milestone was set up between AD 198-211 (Gsell, S., Atlas Archéologie de l'Algérie, Paris, 1911; and Albertini, E., 'La route-frontière de la Maurétanie Césarienne entre Boghar et Lalla-Maghnia' B.d'O., 1928, p. 34). Salama on the other hand dates the inscription to between AD 217 - 218 (Salama, P., Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, p. 358 note 123).
17. Gsell, S. 1911, *idem.* Map 23, site 27.
18. Gsell, S., 'Le Christianisme en Oranie avant la conquête arabe', B.d'O., 1928, p. 25, note 1.
19. Albertini, E., 1928, *idem.*, pp. 34 - 35.
20. Notably Courtois, C., Les Vandales et l'Afrique, Paris, 1955, p. 85, notes 1 - 3, and pp. 87, 88, and 177.

21. Fabre, S., 1912, *idem.*, p. 127.
22. A.E. 1912, 24.
23. Courtois, C., 1955, *idem.*, p. 89 and note 3.
24. Inscription dated to AD 463 discovered among the ruins (Cadenat, P., 1957, *idem.*, pp. 96 - 97).  
A bishop of Columnata attended the Council at Carthage in AD 484.
25. Cadenat, P., 1957, *idem.*, pp. 96 - 97.
26. Lassus, J., 1957, *idem.*, p. 126.

FIG. 31

PLAN OF THE NORTHERN ANGLE OF THE BATH-HOUSE AT COLUMNATA



48. Kherba des Aouissat, (Kherba des Ouled Bouziane).

There were Roman ruins at Kherba des Aouissat, a short distance to the west of Columnata. They covered an area of six hectares, and Gsell recorded numerous worked stones, including capitals and column shafts, together with stones decorated with Christian and Berber motifs. Since the early 20th century the ruins have been destroyed, and a small native village now occupies the site of the Roman settlement. In 1959 a capital and the fragment of an octagonal column decorated with Berber and Christian motifs were discovered at Kherba des Aouissat.<sup>1</sup>

The Inscriptions from Kherba des Aouissat.

No inscriptions from Kherba des Aouissat are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum. In 1899 a Christian tombstone set up in AD 459 was discovered there.<sup>2</sup> An inscription from Kherba des Aouissat was published in 1900 and a second in 1908. They are both Christian tombstones; the first was set up in AD 462 - 467<sup>3</sup> and the second in AD 400.<sup>4</sup> In 1953, Cadenat published four inscriptions from Kherba des Aouissat; the first records the construction of gates and ramparts by order of a certain Maximianus in AD 346; the second is an undated but Christian tombstone; and the third and fourth are also Christian tombstones set up in AD 429 and AD 407 - 446 respectively.<sup>5</sup>

There is very little evidence with which to reconstruct the history of the Roman centre at Kherba des Aouissat. It was situated either on, or close to, the Severan frontier, but we know nothing about the origins of the settlement.

In the 4th century there must have been a considerable civilian population there, and an inscription records that in AD 346 the town was protected by ramparts, by order of Maximianus. In the text of the inscription the letters P.P. follow the name Maximianus and appear to be the abbreviation for a title. Salama<sup>6</sup> has suggested that Maximianus was the p(rae) p(ositus), i.e. the chief official of the town or a local worthy.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, the letters P.P. may be an abbreviation for p(rae) p(ositi) [limitis] in which case Maximianus would have been the officer in charge of one of the frontier sectors of the province.

There was a Christian community at Kherba des Aouissat in the early 5th century although Christianity no doubt reached the area at a much earlier date. The town continued to be occupied at least until the late 5th century.

- 
1. Lassus., J., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1959', L.A.E. Vol.8., 1960, p. 6.
  2. Derrien, 'Inscriptions inédites de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.d'O., 1899, p. 497.
  3. Derrien, 'Inscriptions inédites de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.d'O., 1900, p. 172.
  4. B.A.C., 1908, - p. 201.
  5. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la Région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, pp. 169 - 172.
  6. Salama, P., 'A propos d'une inscription maurétanienne de 346 après J-C', L.A.E., Vol2, 1954, pp. 213 - 217.
  7. An inscription from Volubilis in Mauretania Tingitana, dated to AD 655, records that Julius vice-praepositus was second-in-command of the defences of the town (Carcopino, J., Le Maroc Antique, 7th edition, Paris, Gallimard, 1948,

49. Djebel Guedale (or Guedal).

In 1960 Lassus reported that two inscriptions had been found near a French army outpost in the Djebel Guedale.<sup>1</sup> The first inscription is a tombstone of Aurelius Tesilasen and from the style of the letters it appears to be 6th century in date. The second is an undated tombstone, somewhat defaced, although the name Iulia Venusia is still visible. She may be either the deceased or the person setting up the inscription.

The two inscriptions do not appear to have been displaced, and probably mark the site of either a farm or a small settlement which was certainly occupied at a late date (probably as late as the 6th century.)

---

1. Lassus, J., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1959',  
L.A.E., Vol. 8, 1960, pp. 9 - 10.



50. Les Souama de Mecherasfa.

The ruins known as Les Souama de Mecherasfa are situated some  $4\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres to the west of the village of Mecherasfa, on a spur above the Oued Mina. The site is naturally protected to the north and east by the steep slope of the land down to the Oued Mina, which encloses the spur on three sides.

According to de la Blanchère who visited Les Souama in 1883, "Les ruines couvrent un grand espace. <sup>1</sup> Toute la pente du promontoire et le plateau qui le surmonte sont enfermées dans l'enceinte extérieure et couverts des débris des maisons. Celles-ci, comme partout dans la contrée, étaient faites de moëllons; aucune trace de briques, ni de tuiles, ni de matériaux précieux, ni d'objets d'art. Le seul reste d'ornementation qui apparaisse est une rosace, de style des bas-temps, sur une pierre qui paraît venir d'un tombeau. Les fragments de vases ne sont pas rares; c'est de la poterie romaine et berbère de qualité commune, sans rien de particulier. Les maisons, petites et serrées, comme dans les autres villes du pays, étaient groupées en quartiers séparés par des murs; c'est une disposition ordinaire . . . Les pierres des murs, superposées à sec n'ont été renversées par personne depuis l'abandon de ces lieux. D'ailleurs, pas une pierre de taille, sauf l'exception qu'on verra plus loin." <sup>2</sup>

The southern slopes of the spur were included within the main enclosure, but separated from the rest of the settlement by a wall. De la Blanchère described in some detail the constructions which covered the whole of this

area. He wrote: "Elles sont formées de deux murs et d'un toit. Le fond de la chambre ainsi obtenue est la paroi même du rocher, taillée verticalement par la nature. Très souvent celle-ci a eu besoin d'être aidée: on l'a fait en cassant simplement les saillies des couches de pierre. Presque sans aucune exception, le monument est en demi-sous-sol, une partie des murs latéraux étant formée par la roche même et l'emplacement de la pièce creusé pour supprimer la pente et obtenir un plan horizontal. A peu près toutes les constructions sont dépourvues de façade et semblent n'en avoir jamais eu. Leurs dimensions n'excèdent guère 5 ou 6 mètres, en aucun sens; il est rare qu'on y tienne debout; l'aspect général est celui d'autant de grottes artificielles." <sup>3</sup> There were at least a hundred of these constructions which de la Blanchère believed to be tombs. The largest was constructed of excellent dressed stones, and on two stones built into the facade he recognised the outlines of a lamp, a dove, and a fish in relief. The discovery of these essentially Christian symbols suggested to de la Blanchère that this area was a Christian cemetery.

Another much larger cemetery containing small Berber dolmens was situated on the right bank of the Oued Mina, opposite Les Souama.

#### The Inscriptions from Les Souama.

Six inscriptions discovered among the ruins are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum ( 21551 - 21556). The inscriptions C.I.L. 21551 records that in AD 408 a chapel was constructed at Les Souama by Umbius Felix, who has the title of magister; C.I.L. 21552,

21553 and 21555 are Christian tombstones dated to AD 397, 434, and 408 respectively; C.I.L. 21554 is an undated but Christian tombstone; and C.I.L. 21556 is only a fragment. In 1953 Cadenat published three inscriptions found at Les Souama.<sup>4</sup> The first is an undated tombstone which he dates to the early 5th century; the second appears to be the fragment of a tombstone; and the third is a Christian inscription but only a few letters can be identified. The last two inscriptions were discovered in the cemetery to the south of the settlement. Two tombstones without inscriptions but decorated with Christian symbols have also been discovered there.<sup>5</sup>

What do the ruins at Les Souama represent? According to de la Blanchère they are the ruins of an important town occupied from pre-Roman times - when this area was part of the Kingdom of Mauretania - to the Christian period. The two cemeteries, Berber and Christian, correspond to the two periods of its history. Since de la Blanchère put forward his theory the inscriptions discovered at Les Souama confirm that the settlement was occupied by a Romanised and Christian population in the 4th and 5th centuries. On the inscription C.I.L. 21551 Umbius Felix has the title of magister. According to Courtois this title implies that Umbius Felix was the chief official of the settlement which may even have had a Roman form of municipal government.<sup>6</sup>

Recent discoveries cast no new light on the earlier occupation of Les Souama. However, the siting of the settlement on a spur protected on three sides by steep slopes and the Oued Mina, and the enclosure wall and houses built of unworked stone without the use of mortar, are reminiscent of the ruins of Berber habitations found throughout the Atlas Tabulaire. A number of Berber settlements in the Atlas Tabulaire were influenced by Rome. Roman pottery has been discovered at some sites, and Roman influences on building techniques are apparent at others. But only one site has produced fragments of a Roman inscription. It is unfortunate that de la Blanchère did not make a plan of the ruins, as this would have been of considerable value for comparison.

The ruins at Les Souama should be high on the list of priorities for further investigation, and the aim should be to determine whether or not the site does represent a Berber settlement profoundly influenced by Roman civilisation.

- 
1. Seven hectares according to Demaeght, (Demaeght, 'Notes - Géographiques, Archéologiques et Historiques concernant la partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne correspondant à la Province d'Oran', B.d'O., Vol.7, 1887, p. 274).
  2. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'Etude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne, extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, 1883, p. 112.
  3. de la Blanchère, R., 1883, idem., pp. 112 - 113.

4. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la Région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, p. 179.
5. Cadenat, P., 'Vestiges paléo-chrétiens dans la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.5, 1957, p. 86.
6. Courtois, C., Les Vandales et l'Afrique, Paris, 1955, p.89, note 3.

51. Ain Sarb.

In 1903 Derrien discovered an inscription at Sidi Ali ben Amar<sup>1</sup>, on the road from Tiaret to Mecherasfa, near Ain Sarb. The text is given below:

CL  
 S DEABVSQUE P  
 RO SALVTE ATQ  
 VE I COLVMIT  
 aTEC / C / ///SANC  
 TISS IM / // MM  
 IULI PHIII P PII FELI  
 CIS INVICTI AVG ET  
 M. IULI PI // ILIPPINOBI  
 lissIMI CAES AVG ETM  
 CAE OTACILIAE SE  
 verae AVG CONIVGIS  
 I /////  
 /// FEC

The inscription is incomplete but it appears to be a dedication made between the years AD 244 - 249.

In 1954 Cadenat, the director of the 16th archaeological division (Tiaret), reported that Domeck, a farmer, had discovered the ruins of a small villa of the late Roman period some distance to the west of Sidi Ali ben Amar.<sup>2</sup> The villa was built on a small hillock and it had a commanding view of the surrounding countryside. The outline of an interior courtyard could be seen marked by lines of large stone blocks which were the foundations of a colonnade. Seven column bases were still in place, and Domeck has discovered the shaft of a

column, a capital, the fragments of a cornice, and a small amount of painted plaster. Rainwater draining into the courtyard was able to escape through a hole in the centre, into a small underground canal. Four rooms to the west of this courtyard or peristyle were excavated by Cadenat in 1955.<sup>3</sup> No details of the excavation have been published. In 1959 Cadenat reported that the walls excavated in 1955 had been destroyed although the blocks<sup>4</sup> of the peristyle and the column bases were still in place. This was still the situation when the site was visited in 1968.

In 1953 Cadenat discovered a capital (49 - 50 cms. high and 42 cms. wide) near Sidi Ali ben Amar.<sup>5</sup> The capital was decorated with a 'chrisme' and the letters 'D\*N\*S' had been engraved on it. At least three more capitals decorated with Christian motifs were found in the same place. Cadenat believes that these stones belong to a Christian building.<sup>6</sup>

The discoveries made near Ain Sarb are interesting but difficult to interpret and there appears to be little or no connection between them.

1. The name of the person or persons making the dedication set up between AD 244 - 249 has been defaced; it could have been made either by a military unit or by an individual.
2. We do not know when the villa was built or how long it was occupied. Cadenat believes that it was constructed during the late Roman period. On the other hand, the villa appears to have been unprotected, and is very different from the large fortified villas further north, which were built in the early 4th century. It is there-

fore possible that the villa at Ain Sarb was built at an earlier date.

3. The capitals decorated with Christian motifs discovered by Cadenat in 1953 must have formed part of a building of the Christian period, and it is possible that this building and the villa were contemporary. But as Cadenat can find no trace of the building we do not know whether it stood alone or in a settlement.

Further investigations in this area might cast new light on these problems.

- 
1. Derrien, 'Inscription de Sidi Ali', B.d'O., 1903, pp.138 - 139.
  2. Leglay, M., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1954', L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, p. 187.
  3. Lassus, J., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1955', R.A., 1957, p. 188.
  4. Lassus, J., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1959', L.A.E., 1960, p. 10.
  5. The exact location is not given.
  6. Cadenat, P., 'Vestiges paléo-chrétiens dans la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.5, 1957, p. 87.



52. Tiaret.

The ruins of a Roman settlement were still visible when the French army arrived at Tiaret in the early 19th century. The Roman ruins occupied a plateau (1050 - 1100 metres), situated at the southern edge of the Djebel Guezoul. The site is naturally protected to the west and south-east by the steep slope of the land, but there is little natural protection to the north, north-east and south, where the land slopes more gently. From this site there is a commanding view south across the High Plain of Bersou as far as the Djebel Nador. The col de Guertoufa to the north provides an easy route-way through the Djebel Guezoul, which rises to over 1200 metres, and forms an important watershed between the streams flowing north to the Oued Tiguiguest and south to the Oueds Mina and Nahr Ouassel.

The military authorities made a plan of the ruins which was published by Fabre in 1900.<sup>1</sup> This reveals the existence of three enclosures (fig. 32). The smallest enclosure (D) was rectangular in shape (95 x 45 metres) and covered an area of under half a hectare. It was protected by square bastions at the angles and the gateways. The second enclosure (C) was more irregular in shape and covered an area of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hectares. They were both surrounded by the third and largest enclosure (B) which formed an irregular rectangle 430 metres from north to south, and 225 metres from east to west. A number of isolated buildings were indicated to the south of the third enclosure.

This plan is our only record of the ruins. In 1842 the French army constructed a fort at Tiaret completely destroying the northern half of the ruins (fig. 32). The French colonists, who came to Tiaret soon after the fort was built, used dressed stones from the remaining ruins to build their houses. In a short time, all trace of the Roman ruins had disappeared, and the modern town of Tiaret now extends over the site of the Roman settlement.

In 1929 workmen, laying the foundations of a house at Tiaret, discovered three stone corbels decorated with Christian and Berber motifs, two undecorated pilasters, and a stone seat of simple design, without decoration. The discovery was made outside, but close to, the rampart of the second enclosure (C). Gadenat suggests that this was the site of a Christian church.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Inscriptions from Tiaret.

Eleven inscriptions from Tiaret are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (9727 - 9735, 21543 - 44). In 1904 Derrien published an inscription discovered at Tiaret; it is a dedication made by [----] Verus, procurator of the two Augusti.<sup>3</sup> Fabre and de Pachtere published an inscription from Tiaret in 1912;<sup>4</sup> it is an undated dedication made by an aedile.

#### What do we know about the history of the Roman settlement at Tiaret?

1. In 1904 Derrien published a dedication made by [----] Verus, procurator of the two Augusti, discovered

at Tiaret.<sup>5</sup> On the basis of this inscription, which he dates to AD 211, Salama maintains that a fort was established at Tiaret, at the beginning of the 3rd century, as one of the permanent camps on the Severan frontier.<sup>6</sup> But this inscription is insufficient evidence on which to base such a theory, and, although it is possible, it is by no means certain that the two emperors referred to are Caracalla and Geta. The Romans may have recognised the strategic value of this site, from which there is a commanding view south across the vast High Plain of Sersou, but at the moment there is no evidence of a military camp at Tiaret.

2. Although the origins of the Roman settlement at Tiaret<sup>7</sup> remain obscure, there was a civilian population living there in the late 2nd century.<sup>8</sup> No dated civilian inscriptions of the 3rd century and only one inscription of the 4th century<sup>9</sup> have been discovered, but there must have been a considerable civilian population at Tiaret during this period. The inscription A.E. 1912,156 proves that the settlement achieved the rank of a chartered town; it is undated but looks early rather than late. The town grew to cover an area of over 10 hectares, and was protected by a wall. The main ramparts have projecting bastions which suggest that these defences were constructed after AD 300.

3. The town continued to be occupied throughout the 5th century,<sup>10</sup> but we know very little about its later history. The two smaller enclosures ( C and D ) look like late

citadels. At some time during the Later Empire it may have become impossible to defend the whole settlement against attack, so that a citadel was built to which the townspeople could withdraw in time of danger. On the other hand, the small enclosures may represent two stages in the decline of the town, and an attempt to protect those areas that had not been abandoned.

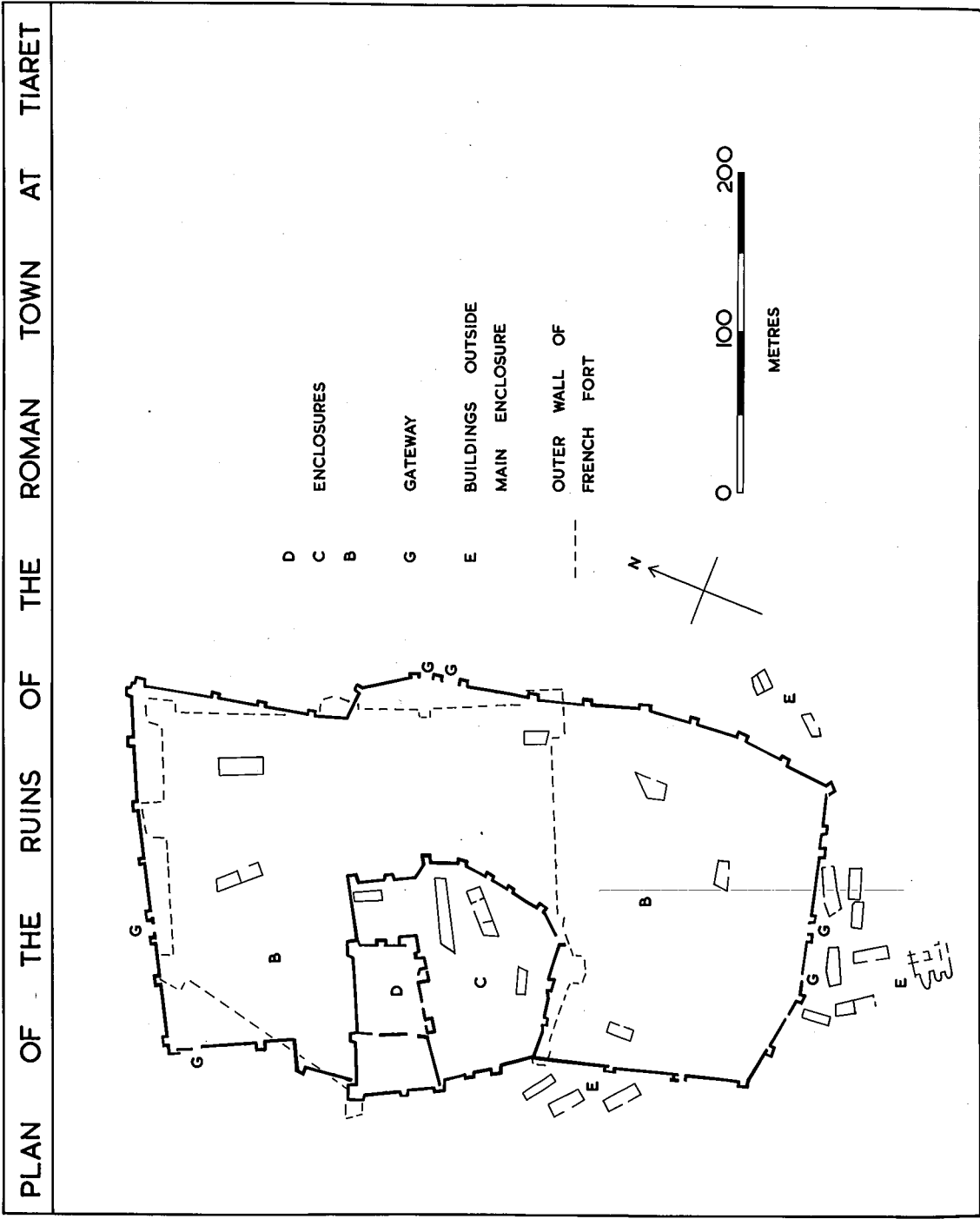
4. There was a Christian community at Tiaret in the 4th and 5th centuries. C.I.L. 9728 is a Christian inscription of the 4th century; C.I.L. 9731 is the tombstone of a priest, Bonifatius, who died in AD 461; and C.I.L. 9733 and 21543 are Christian tombstones set up in AD 471 and 476 respectively. The stones decorated with Christian symbols discovered at Tiaret in 1929 may mark the site of a Christian church.<sup>11</sup>

5. The inscription C.I.L. 21544 was discovered three kilometres to the north of Tiaret, built into the wall of a farmhouse.<sup>12</sup> It is a Christian tombstone set up in AD 509, and may have been transported from the Roman ruins at Tiaret. However, if it was found close to the house, it may mark the site of a Roman farm or hamlet.

- 
1. Fabre, S., 'Note sur la ville romaine de Tiaret', B.d'O., 1900, p. 47.
  2. Cadenat, P., 'Vestiges paléo-chrétiens dans la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol. 5, 1957, pp. 87 - 90.
  3. Derrien, 'Découverte Epigraphique à Tiaret', B.d'O., Vol. 24, 1904, p. 15.
  4. Fabre, S., and de Pachtere, F-G., 'Nouvelle inscription de Tiaret', B.d'O., 1912, pp. 547 - 8. = A.E. 1912, 156.

5. Derrien, 1904, *idem.*, p. 15.
6. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, p. 359 note 124.
7. We do not know the Roman name for the settlement at Tiaret.
8. The inscription C.I.L. 9727 is a tombstone set up by a husband and wife in memory of their infant daughter and, although undated, it appears to be of the late 2nd rather than the 3rd century.
9. C.I.L. 9728.
10. C.I.L. 9731, 9732, 9734, 9735, 21543.
11. Cadenat, P., 1957, *idem.*, p. 89.
12. Canal, J., 'Tiaret - Monographie Ancienne et Moderne,' B.d'O., Vol.20, 1900, p.4.

FIG. 32



53. COHORS BREUCORUM.

The Roman ruins at Henchir Souik are situated on the left bank of the Oued el Abd, a short distance to the south of Tagremaret. The Oued el Abd emerges from the Djebel Touskiret (800 metres) two kilometres to the south of Henchir Souik, flows north across the small plain of Tagremaret, and then crosses the northern part of the Monts de Saïda before joining the Oued Mina near Uzès-le-Duc. To the east of Henchir Souik a broad corridor between the Monts de Frenda and the Djebels Touskiret and El Gada leads to Tiaret, and the western Sersou. The valleys of the Oued Mechria and the Oued el Kebir provide an easy route-way through the western Monts de Saïda to the High Plains of Mascara and Sidi bel Abbès.

When de la Blanchère visited Henchir Souik in 1883 the Roman ruins had already been used as a quarry by a French colonist from Tagremaret, and no part of the ruins was standing above ground level. He was able to identify the outlines of a rectangular enclosure (145 metres from east to west, and 90 metres from north to south) with a round tower 4.80 m. in diameter at each angle (fig.33). There were two gateways 6 metres wide in the east wall. The walls of the enclosure, which were between 1.95 m. and 2 m. in thickness, were constructed of large quarry stones and mortar, and faced with good Roman ashlar. Several tombstones had been used in the facing of the rampart. To the west of the enclosure de la Blanchère recognised traces of a number of buildings. There was a cemetery near the north-west angle of the enclosure.<sup>1</sup>

The Inscriptions from Henchir Souik.

Eleven inscriptions discovered at Henchir Souik are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (21559 - 21566, 22598 - 22600). In 1908 Fort recorded the discovery of a milestone of the reign of Caracalla near Martimprey, between Henchir Souik and Aïoun Sbiba.<sup>2</sup> Cagnat in 1919 published the texts of three milestones found between Henchir Souik and Ala Miliaria;<sup>3</sup> the precise place of discovery was not given. The three milestones were set up to mark the 7th mile from Henchir Souik to Ala Miliaria and are dated to AD 201, 212 and 222 - 235 respectively. Albertini<sup>4</sup>, who was convinced that the Roman road from Henchir Souik to Ala Miliaria passed by Ain Balloul and the valley of the Oued Mimoun, suggested that the milestones were probably found a little to the east of Atlas<sup>5</sup> map 32, site 130, between Henchir Souik and Ain Balloul. This theory was disproved when Gauthier rediscovered the three milestones 8 kilometres to the north-west of the site suggested by Albertini, and two kilometres to the south-east of the Zaouia de Sidi Boudali, in the narrow valley which separates the Makrnez from the northern spur of the Djebel Touta.<sup>6</sup> The distance from the ruins at Henchir Souik was exactly seven Roman miles. Gauthier also discovered two new milestones which originally came from the same place. The first was completely defaced and only two lines of the second inscription were visible:

SPR

A KAPUT[URBE]

This appears to represent a fourth milestone set up to mark the 7th mile from Henchir Souik.<sup>7</sup>



1. The Roman name for the centre at Henchir Souik was Cohors Breucorum<sup>8</sup> but it was also known as Kaputurbe.<sup>9</sup> The latter may represent the Berber name for this locality before the Roman military occupation. When the area came under Roman rule the name continued to be used although the Roman centre also became known by the name of the military unit stationed there - the cohors Breucorum.
2. One of the milestones discovered in 1919 and set up to mark the 7th mile from Cohors Breucorum to Ala Miliaria is dated to AD 201.<sup>10</sup> This suggests that a fort was established at Cohors Breucorum, as part of the reorganisation of the defences of the province by Septimius Severus at the beginning of the 3rd century. The fort was linked by the nova praetentura to Ala Miliaria<sup>11</sup> in the west and Aïoun Sbiba<sup>12</sup> in the east. This road appears to have been maintained throughout the 3rd century.<sup>13</sup>
3. The first military unit stationed at Henchir Souik was the cohors Breucorum<sup>14</sup> and it continued to occupy the fort throughout the first half of the 3rd century.<sup>15</sup>
4. The enclosure described by de la Blanchère (fig.33) must represent the fort built to house the cohors Breucorum. The dimensions of the fort are 145 x 90 metres, an area of 1.3 hectares.
5. C.I.L. 21564 is the only civilian inscription from Cohors Breucorum, and it is undated. There is no evidence on the ground that a civil settlement grew up outside the fort. De la Blanchère found traces of only a few isolated

buildings beyond the west wall of the fort. Despite this negative evidence, the presence of 500 troops receiving regular pay must have attracted some civilians to Cohors Breucorum, but we do not know whether the civilian population remained when the unit was withdrawn.

6. No inscription later than the 3rd century has been discovered at Cohors Breucorum, and the later history of the site is unknown.

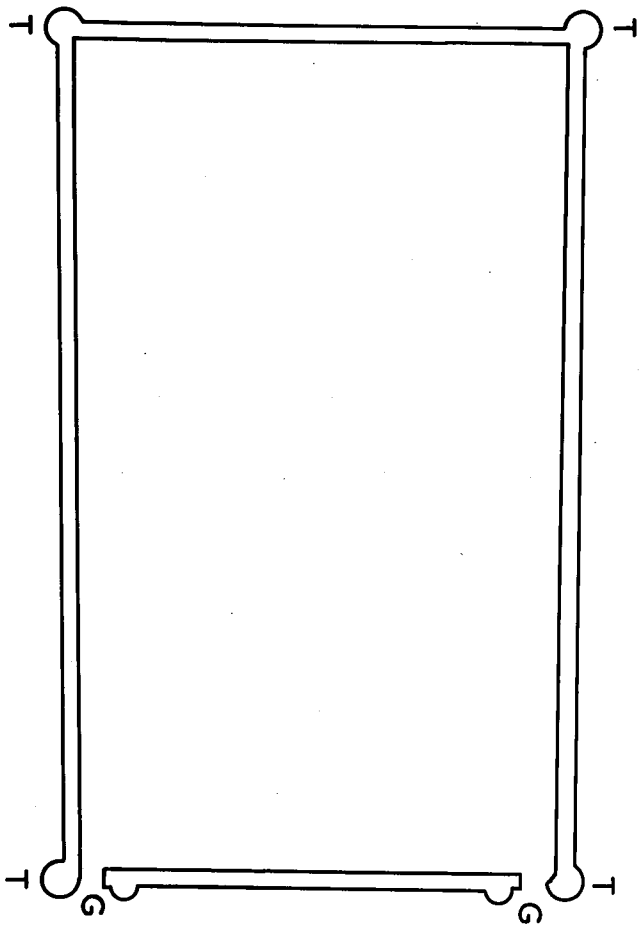
7. The ruins of a large number of isolated farms are indicated by de la Blanchère in the area around Cohors Breucorum and particularly along the valley of the Oued el Abd.<sup>16</sup> Alibert, the first French colonist to settle in the valley, counted more than a hundred farms but their exact position was not calculated, and it is impossible to mark them on a map. Each farm possessed a large cistern and a round tower 6 - 7 metres in diameter, which was probably used as a granary. The cisterns and towers were built of dressed stone which suggests that the farms were occupied during the Roman period. However, we do not know when they were first established or how long they were occupied.

- 
1. de la Blanchère, R., Voyage d'Etude dans une partie de la Maurétanie Césarienne - extrait des Archives des Missions Scientifiques et Littéraires, Troisième Série, Vol.10, Paris, 1883, pp. 69-70.
  2. Fort, 'Notes pour servir à la restitution de la frontière romaine au sud de la Maurétanie Césarienne, B.A.C., 1908, p. 268.

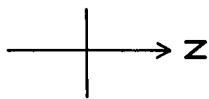
3. Cagnat, R., B.A.C., 1919, pp. CCXIV - CCXV.
4. Albertini, E., 'La route-frontière de la Maurétanie Césarienne entre Boghar et Lalla Maghnia', B.d'O., 1928, p.38.
5. Gsell, S., Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie, Paris, 1911.
6. Gauthier, R., 'Contribution à l'étude tracé de la route frontière de la Maurétanie Césarienne', R.A., 1933, p. 453.
7. Gauthier, R., 1933, *idem.*, p.455.
8. C.I.L. 21560, 21561, 22598, 22599, B.A.C., 1919 pp. CCXIV - V nos. 1 - 3.
9. C.I.L. 22600 and Gauthier, R., 1933, *idem.*, p.455.
10. Cagnat, R., 1919, *idem.*, p. CCXIV no I.
11. Cagnat, R., 1919, *idem.*, pp. CCXIV - V, nos. 1 - 3.  
Gauthier, R., 1933, *idem.*, p. 455.
12. C.I.L. 22598, 22599, 22600.
13. C.I.L. 22599 records 5 miles from Cohors Breucorum to Aïoun Sbiba, and is dated to AD 283 - 284.
14. C.I.L. 21560 and C.I.L. 21561.
15. C.I.L. 21560 is the tombstone of a decurion of the cohors Breucorum who died in AD 243.
16. de la Blanchère, R., 1883, *idem.*, p.69.

FIG. 33

PLAN OF THE ROMAN FORT OF COHORS BREUCORUM



T TOWER  
G GATEWAY



0 50  
METRES

A scale bar consisting of a horizontal line with a small circle at the left end and the number '50' at the right end. The word 'METRES' is written below the bar.

54. Martimprey.

In 1955 Salama published the text of an inscription discovered three kilometres from Martimprey,<sup>1</sup> between the Roman centres of Aïoun Sbiba and Cohors Breucorum. It records building work carried out during the reign of Caracalla, in either AD 212 or 213. It is possible that the inscription refers to the reconstruction of a fort or perhaps a watch-tower.

---

1. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, p. 329.

55. Aïoun Sbiba.57. Aïn Grega.56. Taugazouth.

Aïoun Sbiba is situated seven kilometres to the south-east of Frenda, at the eastern end of a broad corridor between the Monts de Frenda and the Djebels Touskiret and El Gada, and at the entrance to the vast High Plain of Sersou. The ruins occupy a broad plateau which rises to a height of 1,200 metres. The site is naturally protected to the south by the steep slope of the plateau down to the Oued Draham but there is little natural protection to the north and west where the land slopes gently to the Oued Sbiba. The plateau becomes wider towards the east and there is a very gentle slope to the Oued el Rhezlia.

Fort visited the ruins in 1908. He described an irregular enclosure 3400 metres from east to west, and 1400 metres from north to south (fig. 34 D). The ramparts had a double revetment cut at intervals by large worked stones. Inside the vast enclosed area he found traces of a second enclosure (fig. 34 E) which formed a rectangle 500 x 340 metres. There was a square or forum at the centre of the smaller enclosure, and from this point roads led west towards Taugazouth, south towards the edge of the plateau, and south-east towards Aïn Draham.<sup>1</sup>

A number of springs, which rise along the northern edge of the plateau, were included within the enclosed area at Aïoun Sbiba (fig. 35), and at least four were captured to provide a regular water-supply for the settlement. Three cisterns, constructed outside the

main enclosure, supplied a bath-house where Fort carried out a series of excavations (fig. 36). He was able to produce a detailed plan of this building, (fig. 37).<sup>2</sup>

Fort identified several small forts around the settlement at Aïoun Sbiba (fig. 38), and described two of them in detail. The 'fortress' of Taugazouth (56), a short distance to the west of Aïoun Sbiba, was built on a spur above the Oued el That, at a height of 1200 metres (fig. 39). The main enclosure, 90 metres square, was constructed of large worked stones fixed together with iron cramps. Within the enclosed area there was a courtyard (40 metres square). Fort found traces of a range of rooms and a narrow gateway on the east side of the courtyard, and the remains of a rectangular tower at the north-west angle. There were traces of a second enclosure between the main rampart and the central courtyard. The fort at Ain Grega, (57) to the south, was situated on a plateau above the left bank of the Oued Draham, at a height of 1218 metres. The ramparts, built of excellent dressed stone, formed a square (15 m. x 15 m. ) flanked by a round tower at each angle (fig. 40).<sup>3</sup>

In the course of his investigations at Aïoun Sbiba and Taugazouth, Fort discovered the following objects:

From Ain Sbiba:

- i. An inscribed stone, unfortunately defaced, on which only the letters AVGVSTA are visible.
- ii. A lamp marked with the letters PVLLAENI.
- iii. Roman pottery
- iv. Coloured glass
- v. Two large amphorae

- vi. Three capitals and a column base.
- vii. Two silver coins of Juba II, King of Mauretania.
- viii. Two bronze coins.
- ix. A copper coin of Gordian III
- x. Several coins of the Arab period.

From Taugazouth.

- i. A number of Roman corn mills (mola manuaris).
- ii. Part of an earthenware jar bearing the inscription  
J LER
- iii. Fragment of fine Roman pottery.
- iv. Two column shafts and two crudely worked column bases. 4

Since Fort carried out his researches at Aioun Sbiba, this extensive site has been neglected by the archaeologists. The ruins have been used as a quarry and colonists from a nearby farm cleared part of the site for cultivation. At the present time (1968) there are few remains of the settlement still visible.

The Inscriptions from Aioun Sbiba.

Only two inscriptions from Aioun Sbiba are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, (21557 - 8). Three inscriptions were discovered at Taugazouth in 1908:<sup>5</sup> two are undated tombstones set up by a decurion and the third inscription is the tombstone of a trooper who had served for 13 years, and who died at the age of 35 years. In the same year, Fort recorded the discovery of a milestone of the reign of Caracalla near Martimprey, between Aioun Sbiba and Cohors Breucorum to the west.<sup>6</sup> In 1953 Cadenat published two inscriptions from Aioun Sbiba.<sup>7</sup> The first is only a fragment, recording the name of Septimius Severus and his sons (AD 198 - 209); the second



inscription is also incomplete and records the career of an officer in the Roman army who may have been a native of Aïoun Sbiba. The inscription can be dated to between AD 260 - 268. Salama published three inscriptions from Aïoun Sbiba in 1955; two are milestones, recording one mile from CEN., and set up in AD 239 and AD 244 - 249<sup>8</sup> respectively; and the third is an inscription in honour of Caracalla dated to between AD 213 and 217<sup>9</sup>. In the same year (1955) Leglay reported that two more inscriptions had been discovered at Aïoun Sbiba<sup>10</sup>. The first is only a fragment but records the name of the procurator P. Sallustius Sempronius Victor and can therefore be dated to AD 235+/-; the second is an undated Christian inscription which may be donatist.

What do we know of the history of the settlement?

1. There is some evidence to suggest that a military unit was stationed at Aïoun Sbiba during the 3rd century. Salama has published an inscription recording reconstructions carried out at Aïoun Sbiba between AD 213 and 217 for the ala Parthorum.<sup>11</sup> Three inscriptions, unfortunately undated but probably of the 3rd century, name a duplicarius, a decurion, and an egues.<sup>12</sup> These men may have been members of the ala Parthorum but it is possible that this was not the only unit stationed at Aïoun Sbiba during the 3rd century.
2. A military unit may have been stationed at Aïoun Sbiba as part of the reorganisation of the defences of Mauretania Caesariensis by Septimius Severus at the beginning of the 3rd century. Although the exact trace of the

Severan limes between Columnata and Cohors Breucorum is uncertain, it certainly passed through or close by Aïoun Sbiba. Furthermore, an inscription set up in honour of Septimius Severus and his sons (AD 198 - 209) has been discovered among the ruins.<sup>13</sup>

3. A Roman road, which must represent a section of the nova praetentura, linked Aïoun Sbiba to Cohors Breucorum in the west.<sup>14</sup> The two milestones discovered by Salama were set up to mark the first mile along a road which ran from Aïoun Sbiba in an easterly direction.<sup>15</sup> It is uncertain whether this road ran along the valley of the Mina via Kherbet - bent - Sarah to Tiaret, or whether it followed a more southerly route and linked Aïoun Sbiba to the fort at Temordjanet.

4. The exact site of the fort which was built to house the military unit is unknown. The fort at Ain Grega is too small and the projecting bastions at each angle indicate that it was constructed at a relatively late date. The ruins at Taugazouth do not appear to represent a military establishment. This implies that the camp was constructed at Aïoun Sbiba itself, although there were no visible remains of it among the extensive ruins there when Fort visited the site at the beginning of the 20th century.

5. The ruins at Aïoun Sbiba cover an area of at least 476 hectares, and are too extensive to represent the civil settlement that grew up around the fort. It seems more probable that the ramparts described by Fort (fig. 34 D) were built to protect a pre-Roman settlement. There is

some evidence to support this theory. The walls of the main ramparts do not have projecting bastions which suggests that they were constructed at an early date; coins of one of the Kings of Mauretania have been discovered among the ruins; and at Iol-Caesarea, which became the capital of the Roman province of Mauretania Caesariensis, the city walls enclosed an area of 370 hectares<sup>16</sup> and were erected during the reign of Juba II. Considering its size, the settlement at Aïoun Sbiba may have been a centre of some importance in the independent Kingdom of Mauretania, but when the kingdom was annexed by Rome it evidently did not attain the political importance of Iol-Caesarea.

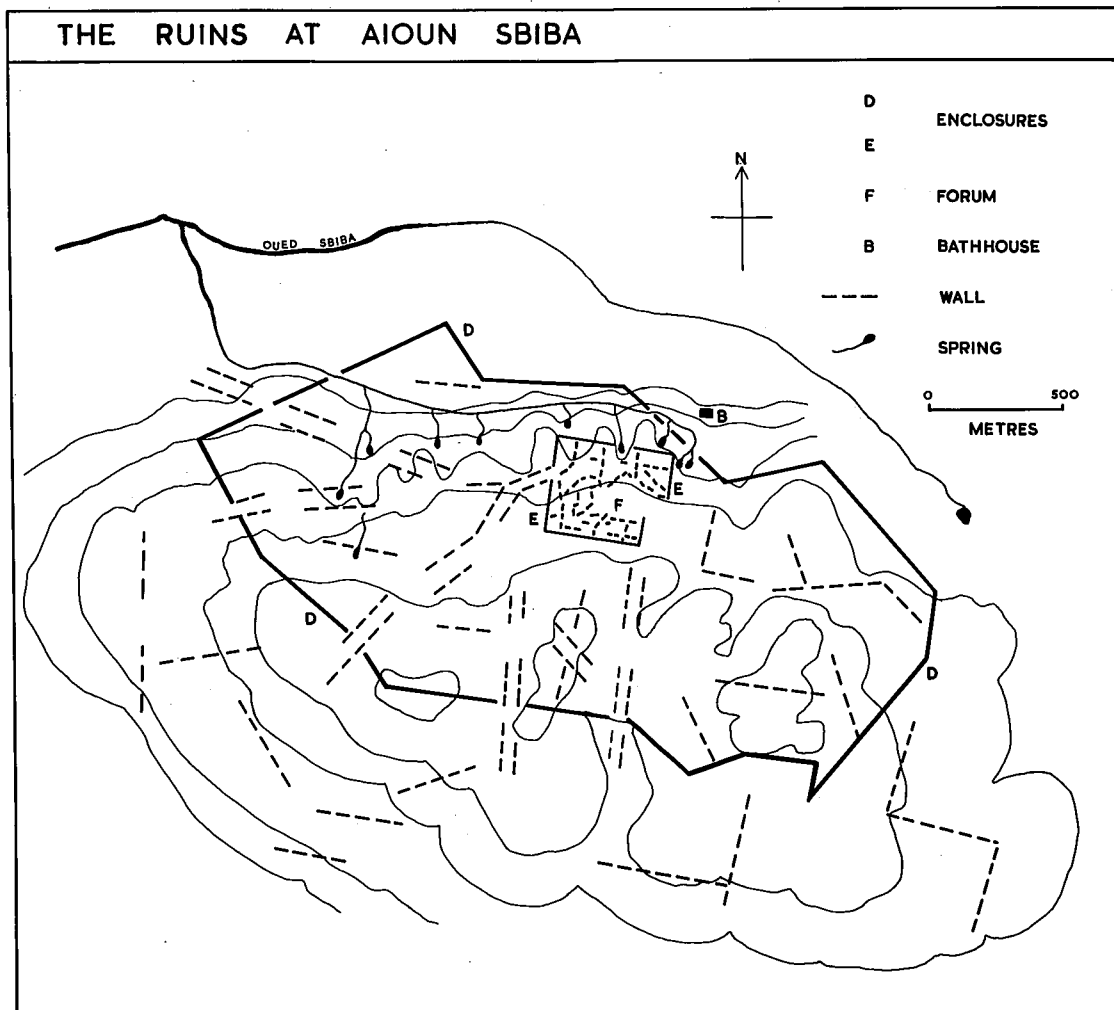
6. If the settlement was still occupied at the beginning of the 3rd century AD the inhabitants may have been expelled by the Roman army when Aïoun Sbiba was chosen as the site for a permanent camp on the new frontier. No doubt some of the original inhabitants returned and settled around the fort, together with the families of soldiers serving in the garrison. It is possible that enclosure E (fig. 34), covering an area of 17 hectares, represents the civil settlement that grew up around the military camp, and was itself protected by a wall.

7. A Christian inscription discovered at Aïoun Sbiba<sup>17</sup> proves that the Roman settlement continued to be occupied during the Later Empire.

8. During the Roman period, Aïoun Sbiba was known as Cen.<sup>18</sup> This may not necessarily be the complete form of the name, but an abbreviation.

1. Fort, 'Les Ruines Romaines d'Ain Sbiba', B.d'O., 1908, pp. 22 - 23.
2. Fort, 1908, idem., pp. 23 - 24.
3. Fort, 1908, idem., pp. 26 - 27.
4. Fort, 1908, idem., pp. 31 - 32.
5. Fort, 1908, idem., pp. 30 - 31.
6. Fort, 'Notes pour servir à la restitution de la frontière romaine au Sud de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.A.C., 1908, p. 268.
7. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, pp. 176 - 177.
8. Salama, P., 'Aioun Sbiba: Identification de la ville romaine', L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, pp. 173 - 175.
9. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Severes dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, pp. 343 - 351.
10. Leglay, M., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1954', L.A.E., Vol.3., 1955, p. 187.
11. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Severes dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, pp. 350 - 351.
12. Fort, 'Les Ruines Romaines d'Ain Sbiba', B.d'O., 1908, pp. 30 - 31.  
C.I.L. 21558.
13. Cadenat, P., 1953, idem., p. 176.
14. Fort, 'Notes pour servir à la restitution de la frontière romaine au Sud de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.A.C., 1908, p. 268.  
C.I.L. 22598, 22599, 22600.
15. Salama, P., 'Aioun Sbiba: Identification de la ville romaine', L.A.E., Vol.3., 1955, pp. 173 - 175.
16. The built-up area covered only 100 hectares (Courtois, C, Les Vandales et l'Afrique, Paris, 1955, p. 108 note 1.)
17. Leglay, M., 1955, idem., p. 187.
18. Salama, P., 'Aioun Sbiba: Identification de la ville romaine', L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, pp. 173 - 175.

FIG. 34



THE ORGANISATION OF THE WATER SUPPLY AT AIOUN SBIBA

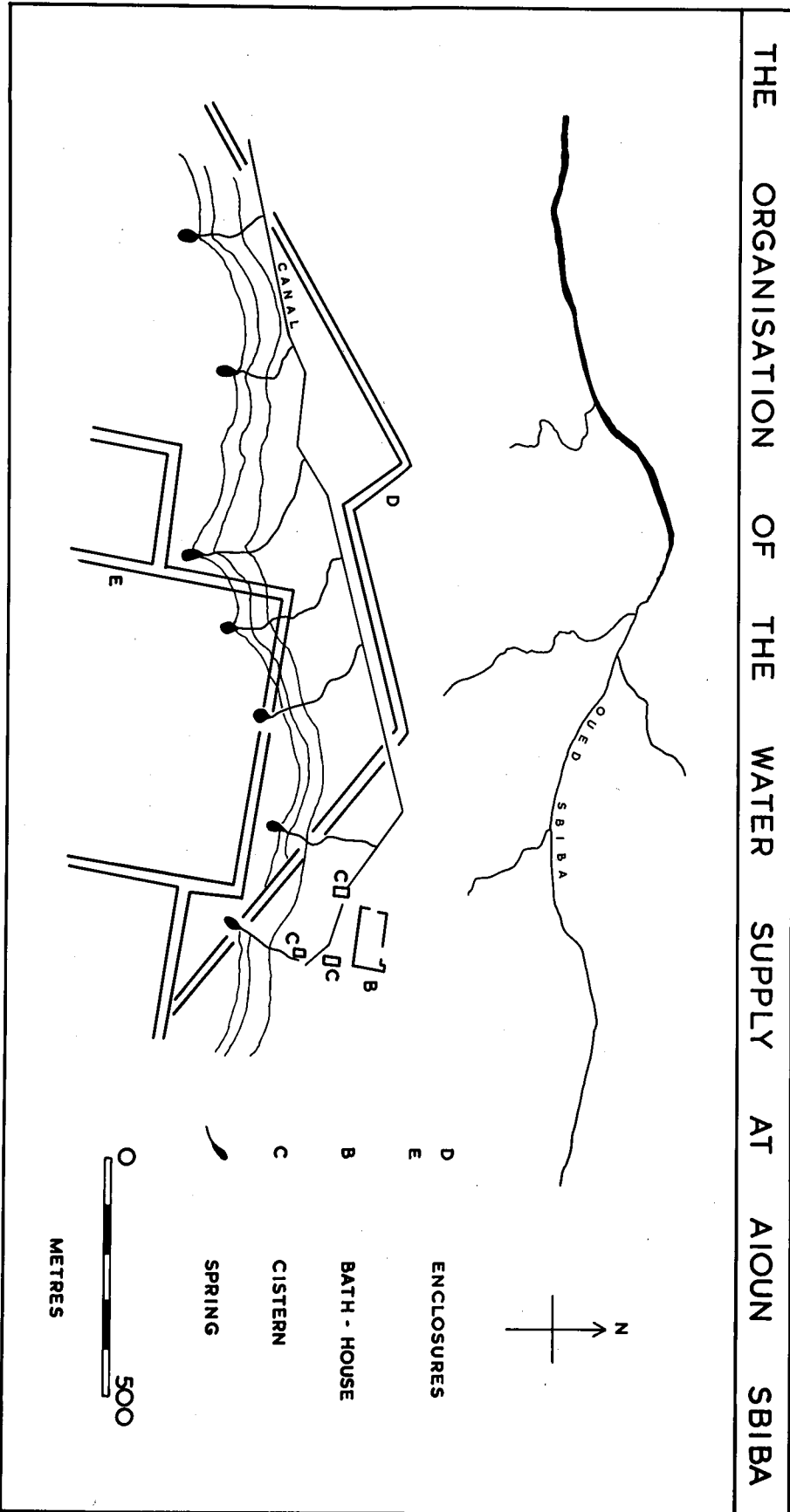


FIG. 36

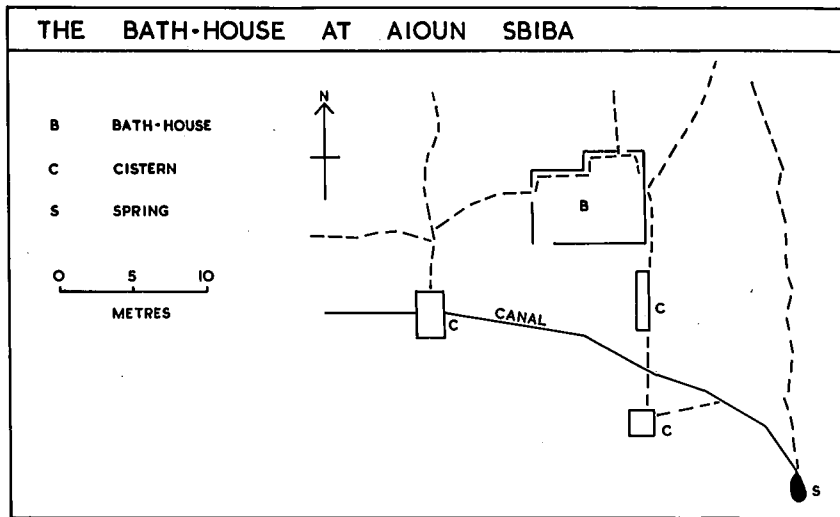


FIG. 37

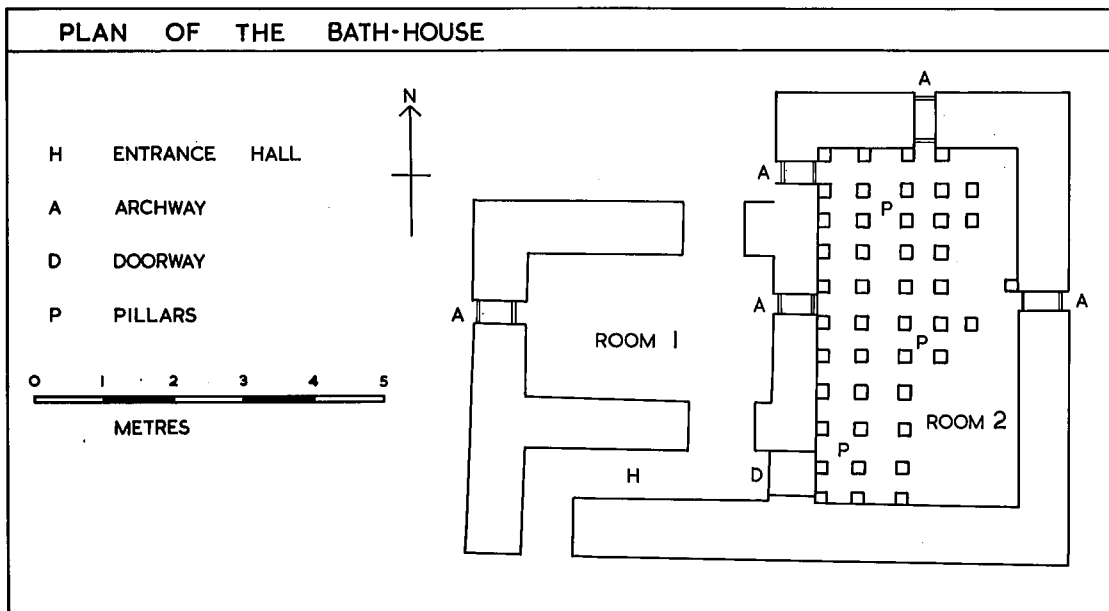
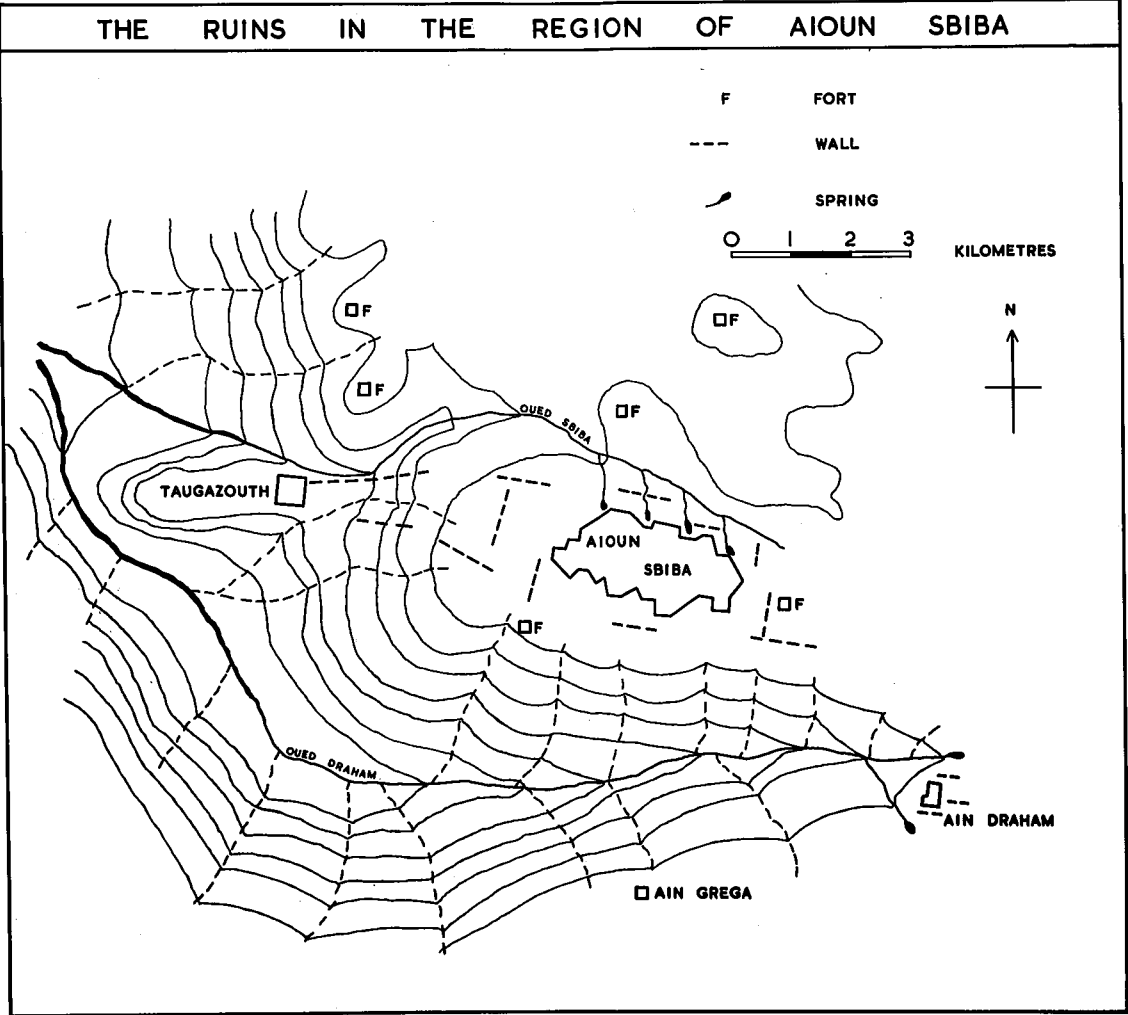


FIG. 38





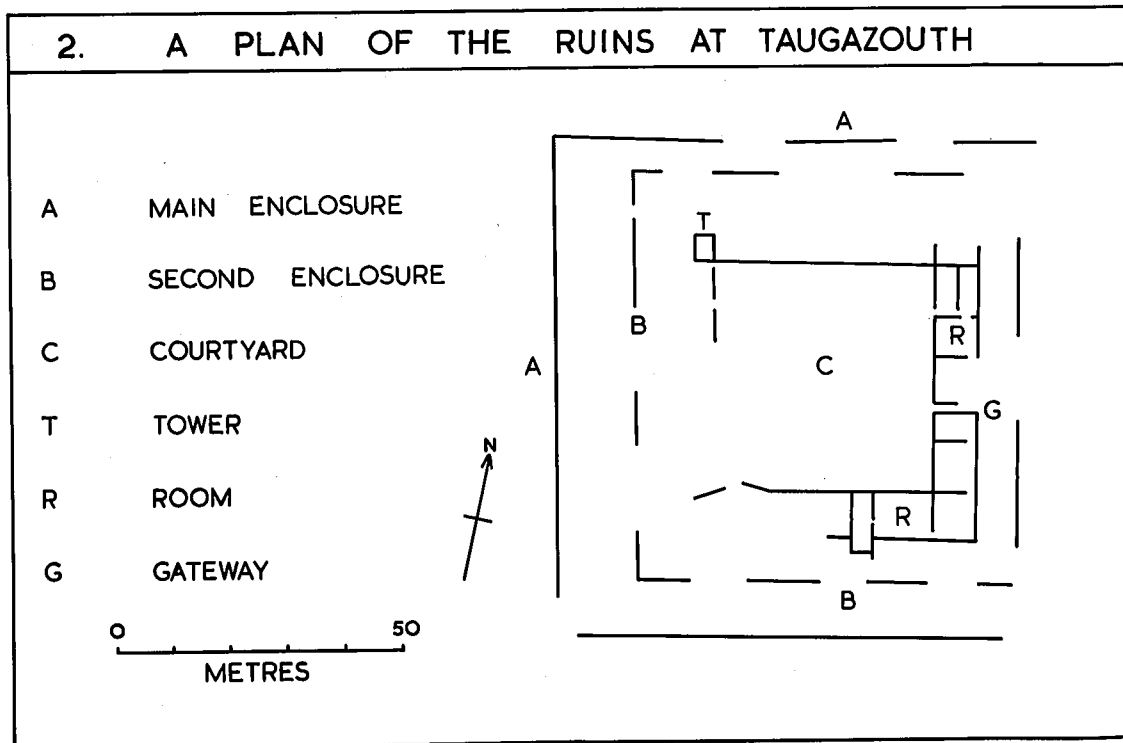
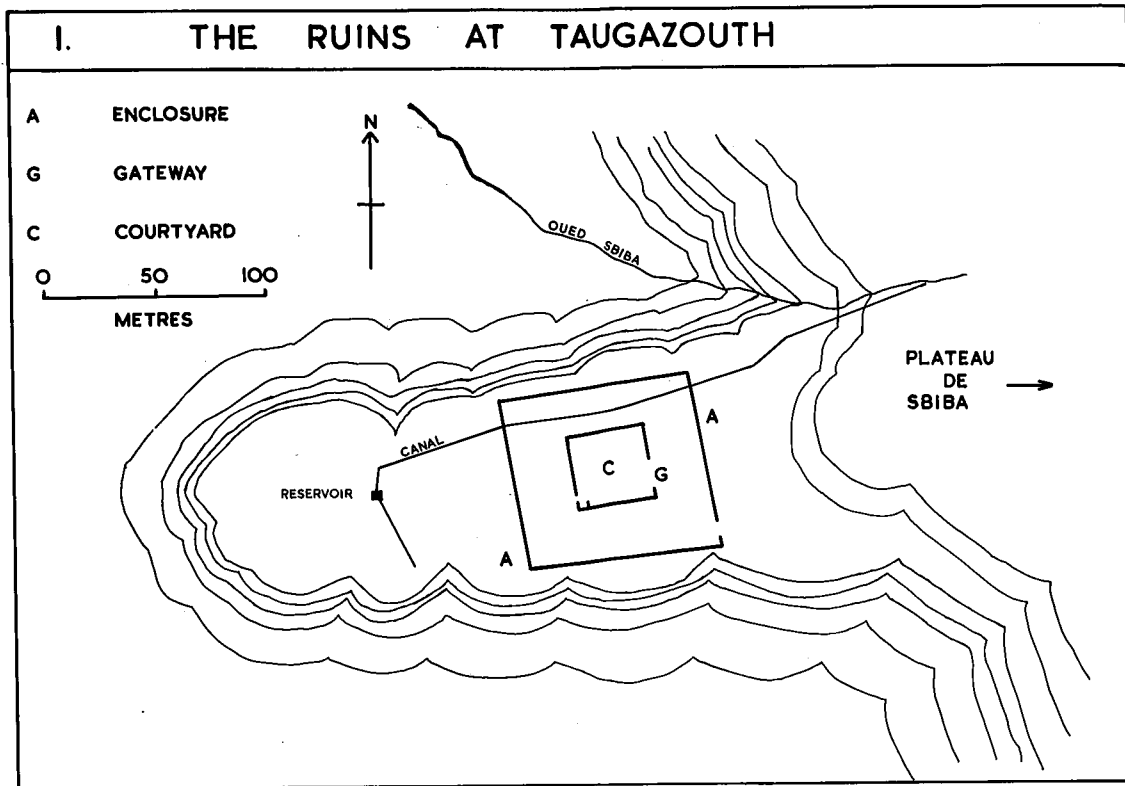
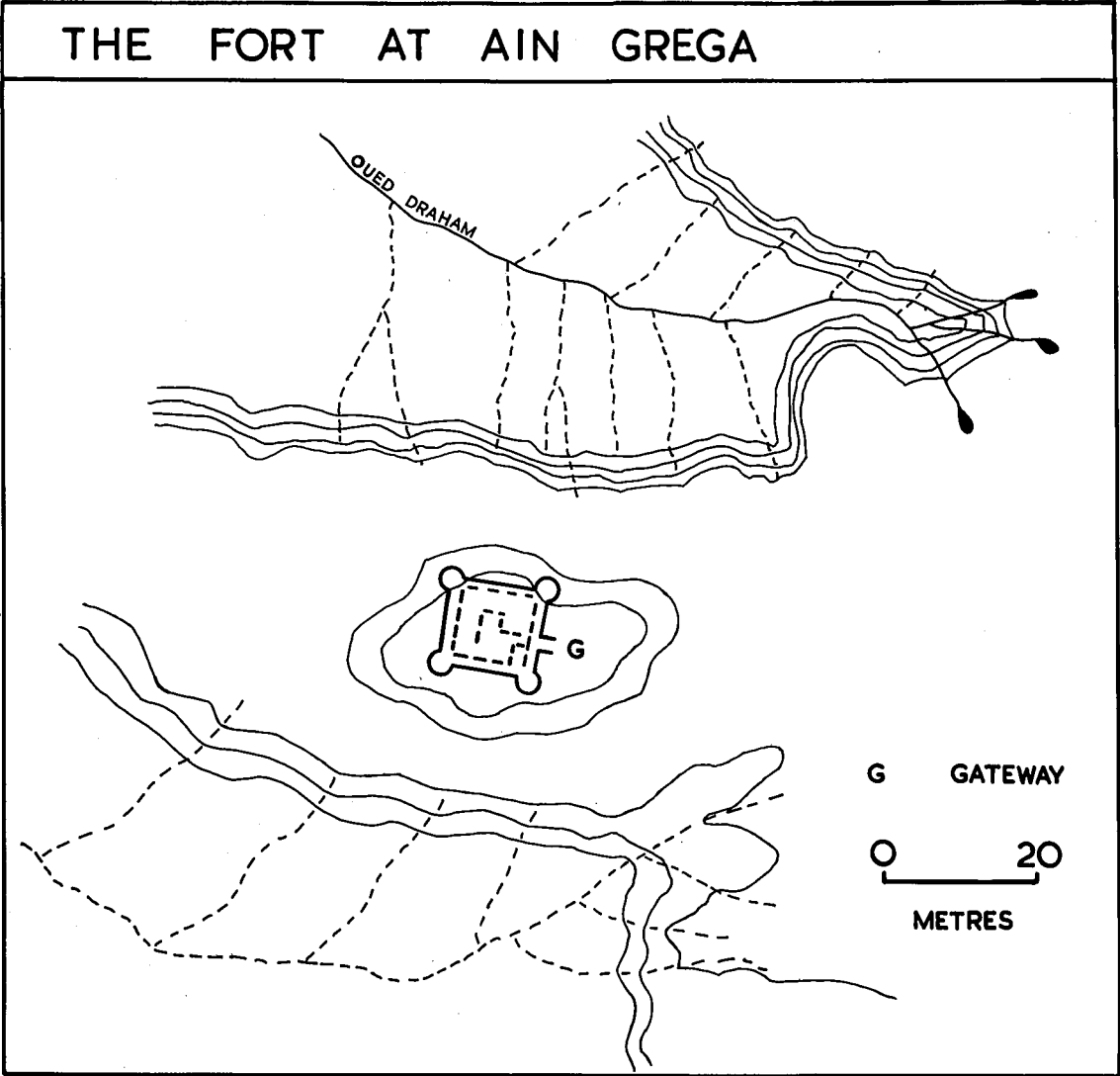


FIG. 40



58. Ain Draham.

Fort made a plan of the Roman ruins at Ain Draham, (fig.41). Situated at a height of 1220 metres, the ruins occupy a plateau above the left bank of the Oued Draham. Near the northern edge of the plateau Fort found traces of an irregular enclosure (250 x 450 metres) and the ruins of an unfortified 'settlement', covering an area of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hectares, a short distance to the south.<sup>1</sup>

With so little evidence it is impossible to determine what the ruins at Ain Draham represent.

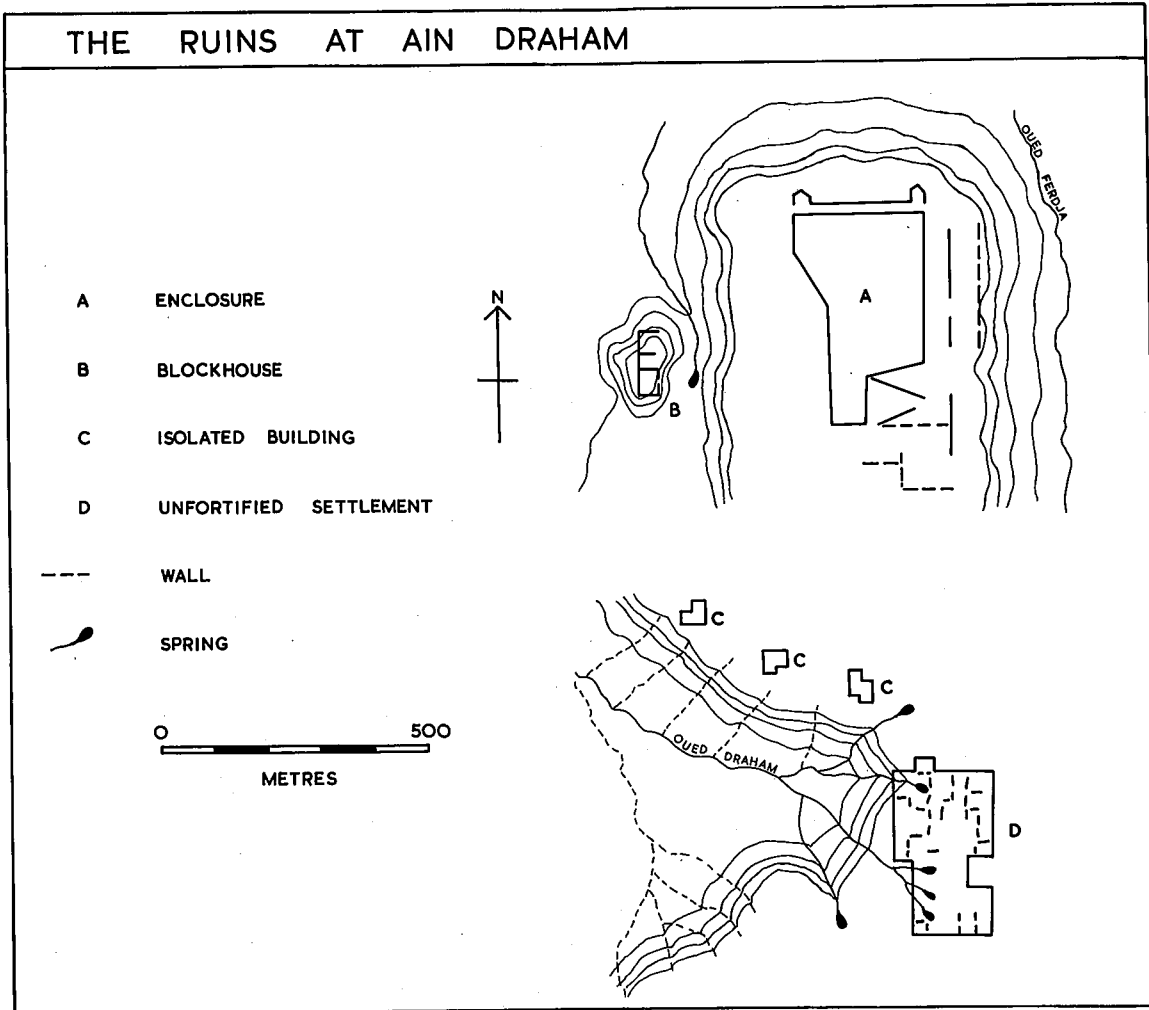
There are traces of three isolated buildings between Ain Draham and Aïoun Sbiba. One of these sites has produced two sculptured capitals.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Fort, 'Les Ruines Romaines d'Ain Sbiba' B.d'O., 1908, pp. 33 - 34.

2. Fort, 1908, *idem.*, p. 34.

FIG.41



59. Sidi Bou Zid.

There are Roman ruins at Sidi bou Zid, six kilometres to the north-east of Aïoun Sbiba. Fort found traces of a number of rectangular buildings, covering an area of over a hectare, and surrounded by an irregular enclosure, 300 metres from east to west and 260 metres from north to south - a total area of almost 8 hectares. There was a narrow gateway in the east wall, and the remains of a rectangular tower at the north-west angle of this enclosure<sup>1</sup> (fig. 42). The text of an inscription discovered among the ruins was published by Fort:<sup>2</sup>

D. M. S.  
TITINIUS FVSCVS. VET. VIXIT.

.....

It is the tombstone of a veteran and, although undated, is probably of the 3rd century.<sup>3</sup>

It has been suggested that the ruins at Sidi bou Zid which are situated near the Severan frontier, represent a large village occupied at least in part by veterans.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, there is no evidence to indicate when it was established, or how long it continued to be occupied.

---

1. Fort, 'Les Ruines Romaines d'Ain Sbiba', B.d'O., 1908, pp. 34 - 35.

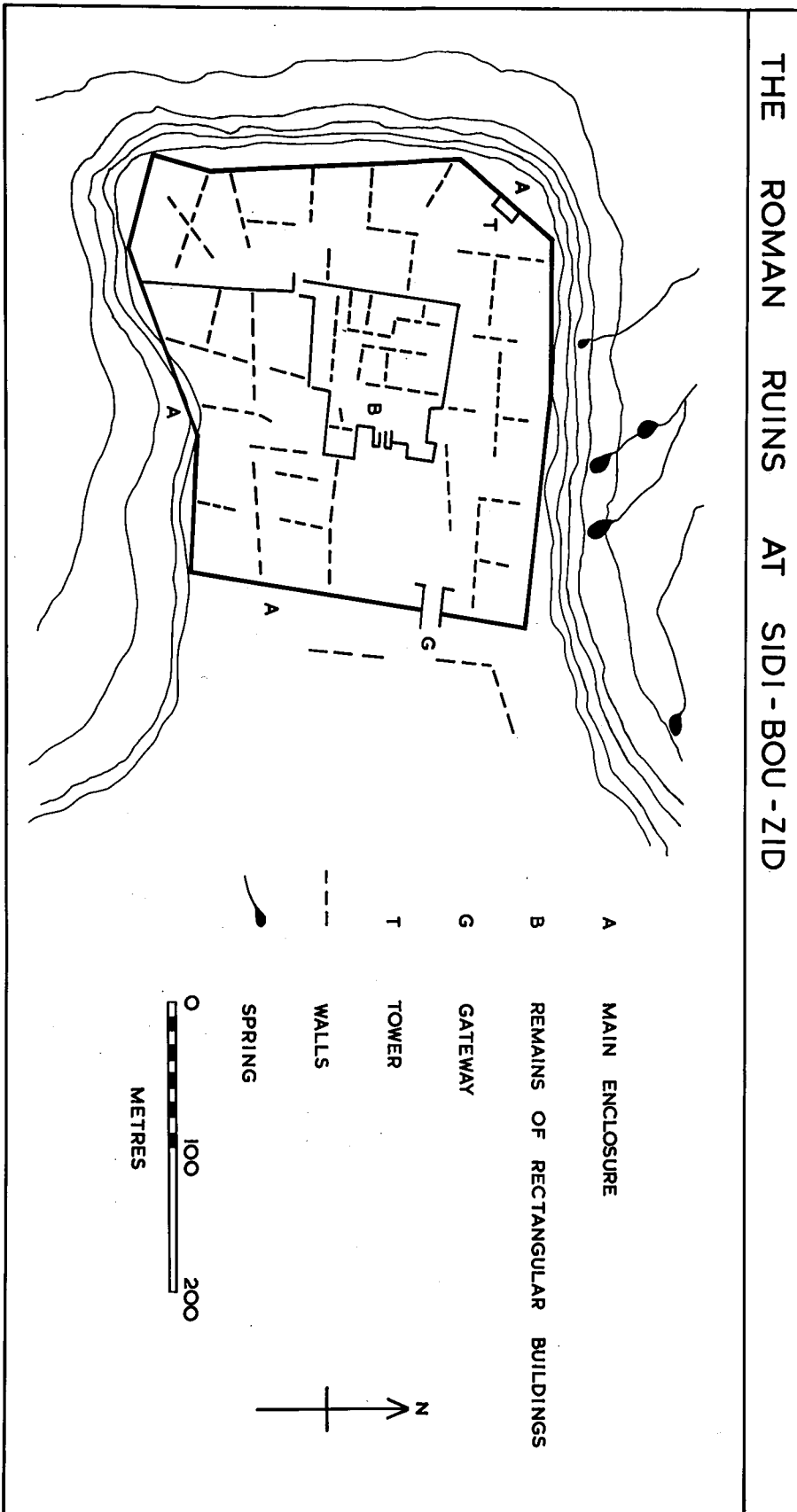
2. Fort, 1908, *idem.*, p. 35

3. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol. 3, 1955, p. 339.

4. Fort, 1908, *idem.*, p. 35.

FIG. 42

THE ROMAN RUINS AT SIDI - BOU - ZID



60. Kherbet - bent - Sarah.

In the early 20th century there were still extensive Roman ruins at Kherbet - bent - Sarah, situated on the left bank of the Oued Tóusnina near its confluence with the Oued Mina.<sup>1</sup> No description of the site has been published, and all visible remains of the Roman centre have now disappeared. Only one inscription has been discovered there. It had been used in the construction of a building of a late period, and it is very badly defaced. The text was made up of at least three lines but only five letters of the second line have survived:

INI AV.

The letters, which are carefully cut, are 5 - 6 cms. wide and 8 - 9 cms. high. Lassus suggests that this is an imperial inscription, set up in the 3rd century.<sup>2</sup>

Several worked stones have been found at Kherbet - bent - Sarah and on one stone there is the outline of a javelin or spear in relief.<sup>3</sup>

The Roman settlement at Kherbet - bent - Sarah was situated either on or close to the Severan frontier, and as Salama has suggested,<sup>4</sup> it was probably both a military and a civilian establishment.

1. Fort, 'Notes pour servir a la restitution de la frontiere romaine au Sud de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.A.C., 1908, pp. 283 - 284.
2. Lassus, J., 'L'Archeologie Algerienne en 1959', LA.E. 1960, pp. 10 - 11.
3. Lassus, J., 1960, *idem.*, p. 11.
4. Salama, P., 'Aïoun Sbiba: Identification de la ville romaine', L.A.E., Vol. 3, 1955, p. 175.

61. Ben Beha.

In 1908 Fort visited the Roman ruins at Koudiat Sidi ben Beha, situated on the right bank of the Oued Mina, a short distance to the south-east of Kherbet - bent - Sarah. The ruins covered a considerable area and, at the centre of the Roman site, there were traces of a large building (55 x 30 metres).<sup>1</sup>

In the absence of a more detailed description, it is difficult to determine what the ruins represent. Like Kherbet - bent - Sarah the Roman centre at Ben Beha must have been situated on or close to the Severan frontier. Salama believes that this is the site of an important fortress<sup>2</sup> but there appears to be little evidence to support this theory.

---

1. Fort, 'Notes pour servir à la restitution de la frontière romaine au Sud de la Maurétanie Césarienne', B.A.C., 1908, pp. 280 - 281.
2. Salama, P., 'Aïoun Sbiba; Identification de la ville romaine', L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, p. 175.



62. Temordjanet.

Roman ruins are recorded at Temordjanet, five kilometres to the south-east of Trezel, not far from the head of the Oued Soussellem.<sup>1</sup> Only one inscription has been discovered among the ruins.<sup>2</sup> It is a dedication made by the Italian commanding officer of an auxiliary unit for the health of himself and his fellow soldiers. Though the inscription is undated, it can confidently be assigned to the first half of the 3rd century.

It seems reasonable to assume that there was a military camp at Temordjanet which was garrisoned during the early 3rd century. Temordjanet, which is situated to the east of Aïoun Sbiba, may have been an outpost of the Severan frontier, or actually on this frontier line.

- 
1. Gsell, S., Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie, Paris, 1911, Map 33, site no. 130.
  2. Delattre, A-L., 'Une inscription de Tiaret', B.d'O., Vol.24, 1904, p. 22.

63. Farm Jean Cuzange.

In 1953 Cadenat published an inscription discovered during agricultural work near Farm Jean Cuzange, at a place called Redjem ben Rahel.<sup>1</sup> The stone, which had been broken into five pieces, was inscribed with the words maximus instructor. It is certainly of a late period, either the 4th or the 5th centuries.

If the stone was found in situ it may mark the site of a small Roman settlement.

---

1. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la Région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, p. 178.

64. Ain Djabcha.

In 1953 Cadenat<sup>1</sup> published the text of an undated tombstone which he discovered built into the wall of a stable at Farm Lleu, near Ain Djabcha. The text of the inscription is as follows:

D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum) Mesis puella an ...  
desponsa  
Mitrati ... / ... llis concupiscentie ... /  
Gratie  
consecuta ... / it exinde arcessita ... /

No Roman ruins are indicated at Ain Djabcha, and it is possible that the inscription has been transported from one of the Roman sites in this area.

---

1. Cadenat, P., 'Inscriptions latines de la région de Tiaret', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, p. 174.

65. Tissemsilt.

There were Roman ruins, covering an area of two hectares, a short distance to the south-west of Tissemsilt. They were situated in the southern part of the Vialar basin which is enclosed on three sides by sandstone hills. The hills to the north form the first spurs of the Ouarsenis mountains while those to the south, rising to a height of 1000 metres, separate the Vialar basin from the High Plain of Sersou.

Only one inscription has been discovered among the ruins (C.I.L. 21529). It is the tombstone of a veteran, Ti. Claudius Aquilus, set up by Claudia Fortunata his freed woman and heir. The inscription is undated, but is manifestly 1st century in date. This suggests that there was a civilian population living at Tissemsilt as early as the 1st century, even though military occupation of this part of Mauretania Caesariensis dates only from the beginning of the 3rd century.

No unit is named on the inscription, but Ti. Claudius Aquilus was clearly an auxiliary. During the 1st century only former legionaries were settled in large colonies, e.g. Oppidum Novum, and even then they were not compelled to continue living there; former auxiliaries, on the other hand, were free to settle anywhere. The settlement at Tissemsilt was probably a village<sup>1</sup> and one cannot neglect the possibility that this veteran was returning to the place where he had been born, and from which he had first been recruited into the Roman army.

We know nothing about the later history of the Roman settlement. It must have been situated on the line of the Severan frontier, on the road linking the military camps at Bourbaki and Columnata, and no doubt continued to be occupied. Salama<sup>2</sup> has suggested that a military camp was established at Tissemsilt, as part of the reorganisation of the defences of the province by Septimius Severus, but there is no evidence to support this theory.

- 
1. The ruins cover approximately 2 hectares.
  2. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol.3, 1955, p. 359, note 124.

66. Ain el Aneb.

There are ruins of a Roman hamlet, surrounded by a defensive wall, at Ain el Aneb. Gsell indicated that silos had been found there.<sup>1</sup> Only one inscription has been discovered among the ruins (C.I.L. 21530). It is a Christian tombstone set up in AD 468.

This site was clearly occupied in the late 5th century, but we know nothing of its origins or how long occupation continued there.

---

1. Gsell, S., Atlas Archéologique de l'Algérie, Paris, 1911, Map 23, site no. 17.

67. Bourbaki.

There were extensive Roman ruins at the foot of the Kef es Sedjra (1000 metres), a short distance to the west of the village of Bourbaki. The numerous remains indicated by Gavault in 1883<sup>1</sup> - ramparts, a bath-house, and fragments of columns and capitals - have now almost all disappeared.<sup>2</sup> When Leschi visited Bourbaki in 1950 he discovered several capitals of the Christian period.<sup>3</sup> Six inscriptions from Bourbaki are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (21523 - 21528 ).

Our knowledge of the history of the Roman settlement at Bourbaki<sup>4</sup> is very fragmentary.

1. The inscription C.I.L. 21523 implies that there was a fort at Bourbaki and that the Cohors 11 Sardorum<sup>5</sup> was the unit stationed there between AD 238 and 244. As this Roman centre was situated on the line of the Severan frontier, between Hiberna Alae Sebastenae and Columnata, it is possible that a camp was established there as part of the reorganisation of the defences of the province by Septimius Severus at the beginning of the 3rd century.

2. Bourbaki was linked by road to the forts at Columnata to the west and Hiberna Alae Sebastenae to the east. The roads appear to have been constructed early in the 3rd century<sup>6</sup> and they were certainly maintained until the late 4th century. Salama found four milestones of the Later Empire near Bourbaki.<sup>7</sup> The milestone discovered one kilometre to the south-west of Annseur el Abiod, and

dated to AD 298 - 299 is one of a series set up to commemorate a vast programme of road repairs and reconstructions carried out in Mauretania Cassariensis after the Berber insurrections of AD 289 - 298. The milestone set up during the reign of the Emperor Julian proves that imperial authority was still effective in this area as late as the second half of the 4th century.

3. The Roman ruins at Bourbaki covered a considerable area and must represent not only the fort but also the civil settlement that grew up around it. We know of one veteran who settled down with his family at Bourbaki.<sup>8</sup> The man's unit is not named but it is most probable that he served in one of the units stationed at Bourbaki. There were no doubt other soldiers stationed at Bourbaki who went to live in the vicus when their period of service in the Roman army had been completed. The town continued to be occupied during the period of the Later Empire.<sup>9</sup>

4. On all the hill slopes around Bourbaki, Gavault noted parallel lines of rough, unworked stones; some of these lines were continuous, others were made up of a series of small heaps of stones.<sup>10</sup> They all followed the direction of slope, extending from the summits to the lowlands. These remains resemble the 'technique des meskats' which has survived in parts of southern Tunisia to the present day, but which has its origins in the early historical period. Southern Tunisia is a semi-arid region where there is insufficient rainfall for the cultivation of cereals and tree crops. Parallel lines of stones are therefore arranged down the bare slopes of the



low hills so that rain water has little chance to infiltrate but is channelled from the higher parts of the hills and concentrated in a part of the lowland, thus providing adequate water for cereals and tree crops. This technique appears to have been widespread in the semi-arid parts of the eastern Maghreb during the early historical period, and traces have also survived in Cyrenaica. It is therefore particularly interesting to find what appears to be an example of this technique further west, in the southern Massif de l'Ouarsenis. Although the Ouarsenis mountains are generally regarded as part of the Tell, the southern slopes of the last spurs which overlook the interior High Plains, only receive an average annual rainfall of 400 mm. As this technique was known before the Roman period and may have continued to be practised during the early Islamic period, it is impossible to date the remains around Bourbaki accurately. However, there is a strong possibility that this technique was employed there during the Roman period. The existence of these remains also indicates that, at an early date, the open forest vegetation of these hill slopes had already disappeared.

- 
1. Gavault, P., 'Note sur les ruines antiques de Toukria', R.A., 1883, pp. 231 - 240.
  2. Leschi, L., 'Un autel votif de Bourbaki', L.A.E., Vol.1., 1953, p. 87.
  3. Leschi, L., 1953, *idem.*, p. 87.

4. We do not know the Roman name for Bourbaki.
5. This unit was moved from Rapidum to Altava, one of the permanent camps at the western end of the Severan frontier, at the beginning of the 3rd century. We know that the unit remained there until the reign of Severus Alexander, but it was moved again, perhaps at some time between AD 222 and 235, to Bourbaki.
6. The military camps at Columnata and Hiberna Alae Sebastenae were constructed at the beginning of the 3rd century (A.E. 1912, 173; A.E. 1954, 143 b). A milestone (C.I.L. 22587), discovered between Bourbaki and Columnata, was set up between AD 198 and 211. Salama, however, believes that the text given in the Corpus is incorrect and he dates the inscription to AD 217 - 218, (Salama, P., *Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne*, (Part 2) L.A.E., Vol. 3, 1955, p. 358 note 123)
7. The first milestone which was set up in AD 298 - 299 was found one kilometre to the south-west of Ann-seur el Abiod; the second, set up between AD 333 and 337, was found  $2\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres to the south-west of Bourbaki; the third, set up between AD 333 - 337, was found  $4\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres to the south-west of Bourbaki; and the fourth, set up between AD 360 and 363, was found  $2\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres to the south-west of Ain Kebaba (Salama, P., *Occupation de la Maurétanie Césarienne occidentale sous le Bas Empire romain*, Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire offerts à André Piganiol, Paris, 1966, pp. 1300 - 1301, nos. 10,11,12,13).
8. C.I.L. 21524 and 21526.
9. Capitals of the Christian period - i.e. 4th century onwards - have been discovered at Bourbaki (Leschi, L., 1953, *idem.*, p. 87). The Roman roads linking Bourbaki to Columnata and Hiberna Alae Sebastenae were maintained until the late 4th century (Salama, P., 1966, *idem.*, pp. 1300 - 1301, nos. 10,11,12, and 13).
10. Gavault, P., 1883, *idem.*, pp. 235 - 236.

68 - 72.

68. Farm Hordelalay

A small altar was discovered in 1950 near Farm Hordelalay,<sup>1</sup> which is situated 12 kilometres to the north-east of Bourbaki, at the foot of the Kef Mahmoud. This hill rises to 1400 metres and forms one of the southern slopes of the Ouarsenis mountains. The altar measures 0.21 m. in length and 0.17 m. in height, and carries the following inscription: Tellus terra mater bonas segetes bonas vindemias. It is a prayer to Mother Earth for good cereal crops and vine harvests. Leschi dates the inscription to the late 3rd century.

This discovery is particularly important because it is definite proof that both cereals and the vine were cultivated in this area during the Roman period.

More recently the ruins of several agricultural settlements of the Roman period have been discovered in the southern foothills of the Ouarsenis mountains, within a radius of 3 - 15 kilometres of Farm Hordelalay; at Ain Feradja, Kef el Keskas, Sidi Rhanem and Ain Sidi Mansour.

69. Ain Feradja

There are Roman ruins occupying a narrow ridge, (975 metres), which overlooks the valley of the Oued S. Aied near Ain Feradja. When Salama visited the site, there were still a large number of worked stones there, and he discovered two Roman corn-mills and seventy-one Roman coins of Constantine I among the ruins.<sup>2</sup> Only one

inscription (C.I.L. 21522) has been discovered at Ain Feradja; it is the fragment of a tombstone and, although undated, is not earlier than the 4th century.

The Roman ruins at Ain Feradja represent a small Roman settlement, probably a village, which was certainly occupied during the Later Empire.

70. Kef el Keskas.

Salama has indicated that there are Roman ruins on the southern slopes of a hill known as Kef el Keskas (1056 metres), which overlooks the valley of the Oued el Djenane.<sup>3</sup> The ruins have been used as a quarry by colonists from the nearby village of Liebert but one can still see numerous worked stones and fragments of Roman corn-mills and dolia. The lower half of a Roman corn-mill and a complete dolium, discovered among the ruins, have been transported to Liebert. Salama found two fragments of Roman lamps of the 4th and 5th centuries at Kef el Keskas:

- a. [emi]te luc[ernas colatas ab asse]  
(type C.I.L. VIII 22642/4)
- b. [emite lucernas cola]tas ic[ones]  
(type C.I.L. VIII 22642/7)

This site appears to be a Roman village which was occupied at least during the 4th and 5th centuries.

71. Sidi Rhanem.

During the construction of a military road in 1957, the soldiers discovered the remains of a house of the Roman period on a ridge (850 metres), overlooking the valley of the Oued el Mell, at the point where it is joined by the Oueds bou el Akbbaz, el Roualem, and Tazleft. They found several square pillars, numerous fragments of dolia, and the lower half of a Roman corn-mill which was taken to Liebert. Salama believes that the ruins were destroyed to construct the nearby marabout at Sidi Rhanem.<sup>4</sup>

This dwelling may have stood alone or formed part of a village or hamlet. There is no evidence to indicate when it was built or how long it was occupied.

72. Ain Sidi Mansour.

Roman ruins occupy a plateau (922 metres) between the headwaters of the Oueds Tazelafet and el Melah, a short distance to the north of Ain Sidi Mansour. In 1954 Leglay indicated that a number of columns, the keystone of an arch, decorated with a 'chrisme', and numerous worked stones had been discovered there. Only one inscription has been found among the ruins. It is an undated dedication to a god or spirit conservator aquae.<sup>5</sup>

The ruins probably represent a Roman farm or hamlet which was certainly occupied during the Christian period (4th century onwards), and which was situated only a short distance to the south of the frontier road, linking the military camps at Bourbaki and Columnata.

It is possible that a farmer from one of these settlements (probably from Ain Feradja), or the community as a whole, set up the altar to Mother Earth found near Farm Hordelalay.

- 
1. Leschi, L., 'Un autel votif de Bourbaki', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, pp. 87 - 94.
  2. Lassus, J., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1959', L.A.E., Vol.8, 1960., pp. 14 - 17.
  3. Lassus, J., 1960, idem., pp. 14 - 16.
  4. Lassus, J., 1960, idem., p. 14.
  5. Leglay, M., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1953', R.A., 1954, p. 217.

73. Letourneux.

Important Roman ruins occupied the site of the French colonisation village of Letourneux. Only one of the inscriptions discovered there is included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (21520); it is badly defaced, but was set up during the reign of Septimius Severus and his sons (AD 198 - 211) - and ends with the letters TENAI. Salama<sup>1</sup> believes that this is a dedication set up by the [EQUITES ALAE SEBAS] TENAE and that a detachment of this unit was stationed at Letourneux during the reign of Septimius Severus. A number of other inscriptions have been discovered there, including the tombstone of a deacon.

The ruins may represent either a small fort on the road linking the military camps at Hiberna Alae Sebastenae and Bourbaki and the civil settlement that grew up around it; or a small Roman town which received a detachment of the Ala Sebastena at the beginning of the 3rd century. The Roman centre was occupied at least during the 3rd and 4th centuries.

---

1. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', L.A.E., Vol.1, 1953, p. 252.

74. HIBERNA ALAE SEBASTENAE.

The ruins of Hiberna Alae Sebastenae are situated at Kherba des Ouled Hellal, ten kilometres to the north-east of the village of Letourneux. They occupy a wide plateau with a steep slope down to a deep ravine on the north side, and a more gentle slope towards the south. From this point there is an excellent view north across the main range of the Ouarsenis mountains towards Miliana and Médéa, and south towards the High Plains. The ruins cover an area of 25 hectares, and one can still see a large number of worked stones, including several columns, and the gateways of the Roman settlement.

Only one inscription has been discovered among the ruins.<sup>1</sup> It records that a fort was constructed there for the ala Pia Gemina Sebastena in AD 201. Air - photographs of the site reveal a rectangular enclosure (160 x 210 metres) at the centre of the ruins which must represent the original military camp. The fort, which covered an area of 3.36 hectares, was one of the permanent camps on the Severan frontier, and was linked by road to the military camps at Bourbaki<sup>2</sup> in the west, and Boghar<sup>3</sup> in the east, and to the Roman centres of Sufasar, Zucchabar, and Malliana, on the 2nd century military line. The Roman road between Hiberna Alae Sebastenae and Bourbaki was repaired after the Berber insurrections at the end of the 3rd century.<sup>4</sup>



A considerable civil settlement (covering 25 hectares) grew up around the camp and was protected by ramparts. We do not know how long the town continued to be occupied but the milestone of AD 298 - 299<sup>5</sup>, discovered near Annseur el Abiod to the west of Hiberna Alae Sebastenae suggests that the settlement was still occupied at the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th centuries.

---

1. Salama, P., 'Nouveaux témoignages de l'oeuvre des Sévères dans la Maurétanie Césarienne', (Part 1) L.A.E., Vol. 1, 1953, pp. 237 - 253.
2. A milestone, set up in AD 298 - 299, was discovered 1 kilometre to the south-west of Annseur el Abiod, between Hiberna Alae Sebastenae and Bourbaki (Salama, P., 'Occupation de la Maurétanie Césarienne occidentale sous le Bas-Empire romain', Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire offerts à André Piganiol, Paris, 1966, p. 1300, no.10).
3. A milestone (C.I.L. 22586), set up in AD 238, was discovered three kilometres to the south-east of Ain ed Dalia, between Hiberna Alae Sebastenae and Boghar.
4. Salama, P., 1966, *idem.*, p. 1300, no.10.
5. Salama, P., 1966, *idem.*, p. 1300, no.10.



76. near Ain Sidi Mansour.

The ruins of a small Roman fort (25 x 20 m.) constructed of dressed stone were discovered near Ain Sidi Mansour<sup>1</sup>. The fort must have surveyed a section of the frontier road which linked the military camps at Bourbaki and Columnata.

---

1. Leglay, M., 'L'Archéologie Algérienne en 1954',  
R.A., 1955, p. 217.

77. Boghar.

Although there are no detailed descriptions of the Roman ruins at Boghar, several inscriptions from the site are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (9229, 9230, 9231, 9232 and 20847). They tell us something of the history of the Roman centre.

A fort was established at Boghar in AD 198<sup>1</sup> as part of the reorganisation of the defences of the province by Septimius Severus. However, we do not know the name of the unit stationed there or how long the fort was occupied. A civilian population settled outside the fort at an early date<sup>2</sup> and a capital, decorated with a Christian motif, which was discovered among the ruins, implies that the vicus continued to be occupied during the Later Empire.

- 
1. C.I.L. 20847.
  2. C.I.L. 9232 is a civilian tombstone of AD 242;  
C.I.L. 9231 is also a civilian tombstone but it is undated.

78. RAPIDUM.

There are extensive Roman ruins known as Sour Djouab, 300 metres to the west of the French colonisation village of Masqueray.<sup>1</sup> They cover an area of 15 hectares, and are situated at a height of 878 metres between the Oueds Messouagui and Sour Djouab, which join to form the Oued Safi a short distance to the west. Sour Djouab is cut off from the Plaine des Beni Slimane to the north by the Djebels Belgroun (1055 metres), and Dar en Naga (1225 metres) while to the south are the Djebels Merdjia (1009 metres), bou Tchicha (1024 metres), and the Ft. Oum en Nassis (1180 metres) which form the northern foothills of the Titteri range.

Gsell described the site in 1901.<sup>2</sup> At that time one could see the remains of a large irregular enclosure (fig.43) which was very well preserved, and in places stood several courses high. The ramparts were 0.50 m. to 0.70 m. in thickness, and were constructed of excellent Roman ashlar together with a number of carved stones, and fragments of olive presses. The two main gateways into the enclosure - the east (fig. 44B) and west (fig. 44A) gateways - were also well built and were not flanked by towers. Square bastions protected the north-east walls and perhaps the south-west wall of the enclosure. Inside the main enclosure, walls of mediocre construction divided the town into three separate quarters. The wall which separated the north and south quarters was protected by square bastions. There was a gateway leading from the north to the south quarters (fig. 44C) and another which led from the south to the south-east quarters (fig. 44D); both these gateways were

flanked by towers. The lines of former streets could be seen in the north and south quarters of the town while in the east quarter a number of large columns marked the site of a temple. Two statues, one of Jupiter and the other of Minerva, were discovered nearby. Gsell indicated that a number of drinking troughs had been found in the north quarter, and several olive presses and corn-mills in the east quarter. The settlement was supplied with water by means of two conduits; one led water from a spring situated to the east, and entered the town by the north-east angle; the other led water from the south.

There was a large cemetery to the west of the Roman centre, containing mausoleums, stone coffins, and many decorated tombstones. A number of tombstones were also found to the north of the settlement.

To the north-east of the main enclosure were the remains of numerous buildings which appeared to represent an important suburb.

In the early 20th century a large number of trial trenches were cut at Sour Djouab but they added nothing to our knowledge of the history of the Roman town. In 1926, however, Allara cut a number of trenches to the north-east of the main enclosure in the area formerly known as the 'faubourg'. He discovered a small rectangular enclosure (covering an area of 3 hectares), with four gateways. Seston's excavations in 1927 proved that this enclosure was in fact a military camp,<sup>3</sup> (fig. 45). The ramparts of the camp, constructed of heavy stones, were 1.60 m. in thickness. The angles

were rounded and reinforced; the north-west angle, which was completely excavated, consisted of an inner and an outer wall, each 1.10 m. in thickness, with a central core of earth and rubble. On the north side of the camp, nearer to the north-east than to the north-west angle, Seston found a gateway, or rather a long corridor, 8.10 m. in length and 4.85 m. wide, flanked by rectangular towers which projected on either side of the rampart. The towers were constructed of excellent Roman ashlar.

Inside the camp, to the west of the north gateway, the excavations revealed traces of a street running parallel to the north rampart, and leading to two buildings (fig. 46). The first building consisted of three rooms which one entered from a corridor two metres wide on the south side. Each room was divided into two parts by a wall, and in one of the rooms there were the remains of a concrete floor supported by pillars which led Seston to conclude that this was the Horreum of the camp. The walls of this building were 0.60 m. in thickness. Almost all the north-west angle of the camp was occupied by two bath-houses which were separated from the granaries by a street paved with small cobbles (fig. 46). One entered the frigidarium of the northern bath-house, which measured 5.60 m. x 11.70 m. from this street. The floor of the room was made of concrete and in places of flags, and was raised 3.80 m. above ground level supported by large pillars. A door near the north-west corner of the cold-room led to the tepidarium and the caldaria. The furnace chamber was situated to the west of the caldaria. Between the main building and

the rampart there was a large courtyard and against the rampart, near the angle of the camp, were the latrines. The second bath-house was situated to the south, and formed a complete unit, quite independent of the first. A doorway, two metres wide, on the south side of this building, led into the frigidarium, a large room 12 m. x 6.60 m. One entered the three hot rooms through a narrow doorway in the north wall of the frigidarium. The furnace chamber, flanked by two small store rooms, was situated to the west of the tepidarium and caldaria. The water for the two bath-houses came from a spring, the Ain er Sahnoun, along a stone built conduit. Seston was able to trace almost all its length except for the point where it entered the bath-houses. The two establishments were not contemporary. The northern bath-house was carefully constructed and Seston concluded that it had been built when the fort was first established. The second bath-house was added at a later date, perhaps in response to the needs of a more important garrison.

No further work took place at Sour Djouab until 1947. In that year Leglay excavated the east and west gateways of the camp. In the following two years - 1948 - 1949 - he carried out investigations in the town, excavating a number of buildings including a potter's workshop, and two houses which revealed evidence of a certain luxury and comfort in the style of life of the occupants.<sup>4</sup> Between 1950 and 1953 Leglay concentrated on the military camp.<sup>5</sup> He excavated the south gateway which was identical in plan to the three other gateways, consisting of a central passage flanked by rectangular towers. This suggests that all four gateways are contemporary, and were constructed when



the fort was first established. Later, perhaps towards the end of the 3rd century when the camp was abandoned, the east and south gateways had been completely blocked with enormous stones.

At the centre of the camp Leglay excavated the headquarters building which was unfortunately in a poor state of preservation. The building, (28 m. x 24.50 m.) consisted of three parts (fig. 47); an entrance opening onto the via praetoria to the east; a central courtyard (14.50 m. x 12.50 m.) with three square rooms to north and south of it; and on the west side of the courtyard a long, narrow room (23.40 m. x 5.75 m.) to the north of which was a small raised platform; and to the west, five small rooms including the chapel (sacellum). Several metres to the south of this structure there were traces of a large building which may have been a stable block. Next to it was another large building (27 m. x 19.50 m.) with a central courtyard surrounded by seven rooms including a small private bath-house. This was without doubt the house of the commanding officer. But this structure covered an earlier building of an entirely different construction. It had thick walls (1 m. - 1.50 m.) and a coin of Vespasian (AD 69 - 79) was discovered at the level of the foundations.

During the same period (1950 - 53) Leglay dug a number of trenches in the main settlement area which revealed the existence of a number of olive presses.<sup>6</sup>

When the site was visited in March 1968<sup>7</sup> part of the main ramparts and the west gateway of the town were still standing several courses above ground level, and there were clear traces of the walls which divided the town

into three separate quarters. But there has been no attempt to conserve these remains or the structures revealed during the excavations carried out by Seston and Legay. Professor Birley made the following observations about the ruins at Sour Djouab, "La situation des ruines est aujourd'hui assez triste; il y a besoin de beaucoup de conservation, particulièrement dans les structures que l'on a fouillées récemment. Les inscriptions d'Hadrien et du règne de Marc-Aurèle tombent et sont abandonnées sur place, et il est très difficile pour le visiteur de distinguer ce qui était la séquence des fortifications du site; il faut espérer que de nouvelles possibilités naîtront pour une série de sondages très précis qui pourraient révéler l'histoire structur-elle d'un site que les inscriptions indiquent comme d'un intérêt exceptionnel." 8

#### The Inscriptions from Sour Djouab.

Forty-three inscriptions from Sour Djouab are included in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (9195 - 9226a, 20833 - 20842), together with five milestones found along the Roman roads linking Sour Djouab to Auzia and Thanaramusa Castra (10439, 10441, 10442, 22548, 22549).

In 1908 Charrier discovered a milestone near the east gate of the camp. It was set up in AD 124 on the Roman road linking Thanaramusa Castra and Auzia at a point which was 33 Roman miles from the first centre, and 17 Roman miles from the second.<sup>9</sup> Seston published nine inscriptions from Sour Djouab in 1928: <sup>10</sup>

- i. A dedication in honour of the procurator T. Flavius Priscus Gallarius Fronto Marcius Tycho, which can be dated to between AD 158 and 160. Found thirty kilometres from the porta decumana.<sup>11</sup>
- ii. An inscription recording the restoration of a bath-house by the Cohors 11 Sardorum between AD 184 and 190. This inscription had been built into one of the walls of the northern bath-house.<sup>12</sup>
- iii. A dedication to Fortune (AD 184 - 190) found in situ in the wall of the frigidarium of the northern bath-house.<sup>13</sup>
- iv. An undated dedication to the home god by a decurion or acting commander of the ala Thracum. Found in the wall of the frigidarium of the northern bath-house.<sup>14</sup>
- v. A dedication to the Emperor Geta by the decurions set up in AD 209. This inscription was found near the gateway between the east and west quarters of the town.<sup>15</sup>
- vi. The tombstone of Claudia Luciosa and her four children who died in AD 235.<sup>16</sup>
- vii. Three undated civilian tombstones.<sup>17</sup>

Two milestones were discovered by Seston at Souagui, 15 kilometres to the west of Sour Djouab. The first was set up to mark the tenth mile from Rapidum to Thanaramusa Castra and is dated to AD 213;<sup>18</sup> and the second also marks the tenth mile from Rapidum and was set up during the reign of Severus Alexander.<sup>19</sup> In 1925 Albertini discovered a third milestone at Souagui, which was published by Seston in 1928. It was set up during the reign of Aurelian (AD 270 - 275) and looks like an older milestone on which the name of the emperor has been erased and that of Aurelian put on.<sup>20</sup> A milestone set up in

AD 155 was discovered 20 kilometres to the west of Auzia and published by Leschi in 1936.<sup>21</sup> In 1951 Leglay published twenty new inscriptions found during his excavations at Sour Djouab. The first is only a fragment but the name recorded on the inscription could be D. Veturius Macrinus who was apparently procurator of the two Mauretaniae in AD 180. The inscription was found in the ruins of a pottery workshop, and had, no doubt, been re-used.<sup>22</sup> The second is an inscription set up for the health, safety, and victory of Trajan Decius (AD 249 - 251). The stone was found 1.50 m. from the north wall of the south-east quarter of the town, and appears to have been incorporated in this late rampart.<sup>23</sup> All the other inscriptions are tombstones found in the western and north-western cemeteries. They are all undated, but appear to be of the 3rd century, and only two are of any significance. One is the tombstone of a veteran,<sup>24</sup> and the other the tombstone of a soldier of the Cohors 11 Sardorum.<sup>25</sup> Leglay discovered nine tombstones without inscriptions in the western and north-western cemeteries at Sour Djouab.<sup>26</sup>

From the abundant epigraphic evidence and the results of excavations carried out at Sour Djouab, a clear picture of the history of the Roman centre is beginning to emerge.

1. There was certainly a Berber population living in the area around Sour Djouab before the Roman occupation. Libyan inscriptions of the pre-Roman period have been discovered at Ain Tamda, thirteen kilometres to the west, at Auzia, and at Hakenti near Ain Bessem; in 1913 a relief representing a number of native gods, perhaps the famous dii Mauri, was found on the plateau of Trab-Amara

near Sour Djouab; and Charrier discovered coins of Micipsa, Juba II, and Ptolemy I during his investigations among the ruins at Sour Djouab.<sup>27</sup>

Leglay's excavations inside the military camp at Sour Djouab revealed that the commanding officer's house was built on top of an earlier building of a very different construction, and near the foundations of the earlier structure he found a coin of Vespasian (AD 69 - 79).<sup>28</sup> This led Leglay to suggest that the site was occupied before the Roman military occupation at the beginning of the 2nd century.<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately, although early occupation at Sour Djouab is quite possible, the evidence on which Leglay's theory is based is inadequate. The earlier building may simply represent the first of two structural periods of the headquarters building and the discovery of a coin of Vespasian does not necessarily date the earlier structure<sup>30</sup> to between AD 69 and 79; coins of this emperor continued in circulation for many years after the end of his reign.

2. A fort was established at Sour Djouab<sup>31</sup> in AD 122<sup>32</sup> as part of the organisation of a military line which stretched across the province from Auzia to Praesidium Sufative and which was the work of several emperors from Trajan to Commodus. Seston's excavations revealed the exact site and dimensions of the military camp (fig. 45). It was rectangular in shape and covered an area of approximately three hectares. A complete picture of the internal lay-out and structural sequence of the fort is yet to emerge, but in 1927 Seston excavated the two bath-houses, which occupied the north-western part of the camp, the north gateway and the granaries; and between 1947 and 1953 Leglay excavated the other three gateways, the

principia, the commanding officer's house, and a stable block. It is unfortunate that Leglay has not yet published a plan to show the exact location of the buildings which he excavated inside the camp.

The unit stationed at Rapidum during the 2nd century was the Cohors 11 Sardorum<sup>33</sup> and it seems probable that this unit was joined by a detachment of the ala Thracum soon after the fort was established.<sup>34</sup> As the Cohors 11 Sardorum was an infantry battalion, a detachment of cavalry may have been sent to Rapidum to assist in campaigns against terrorists in the surrounding hills.<sup>35</sup> When Septimius Severus established a new military line further south, the Cohors 11 Sardorum was transferred to Altava<sup>36</sup>, one of the permanent camps on the new lines, and the fort at Rapidum no doubt became available for civilian occupation.

3. The Roman roads which linked Rapidum and Thanaramusa Castra in the west and Auzia in the east appear to have been constructed in the early 2nd century<sup>37</sup> and they were maintained throughout that century.<sup>38</sup> Between AD 180 and 192 the whole military line was fortified after disturbed conditions throughout the province; an inscription from Praesidium Sufative<sup>39</sup> records that Commodus ordered new posts to be established in the province, and milestones to be re-established along the roads; and an inscription found between Rapidum and Auzia records that he ordered the restoration or construction of watch-towers along the road which linked the two camps.<sup>40</sup> After Septimius Severus re-organised the defences of Mauretania Caesariensis at the beginning of the 3rd century, the roads linking Auzia, Rapidum, and Thanaramusa Castra were kept in regular repair<sup>41</sup> and new roads were built to link Rapidum to Ced

ed Djir and perhaps also to Usinaza on the new military line further south. The Berber revolts at the end of the third century caused widespread destruction but when peaceful conditions returned the roads linking Auzia, Rapidum, and Thanaramusa Castra were repaired.<sup>42</sup>

4. A large civil settlement grew up around the military camp at Rapidum. Soldiers who had completed their period of service in the Roman army settled down outside the fort where they had been stationed, and where many had already established families.<sup>43</sup> The presence of a military unit of 500 men, each receiving regular pay, attracted some of the local Berber population to come and live outside the fort. By the second half of the 2nd century there was a vicus of considerable size at Rapidum and, although it had not yet achieved the rank of a chartered town, in AD 167 the community of veterani et pagani living there was sufficiently wealthy to construct - at their own expense - ramparts to protect the settlement.<sup>44</sup>

Seston has suggested on the basis of his reading of C.I.L. 9196 = 20832 that during the second half of the 2nd century the vicus at Rapidum achieved the rank of a pagus (rural district).<sup>45</sup> By the beginning of the third century the civil settlement had become a municipium<sup>46</sup> and it was during the first half of this century that, with more secure conditions as a result of the organisation of the new frontier further south, the city attained its greatest development.<sup>47</sup> We know very little about the history of Rapidum during the last thirty years of the 3rd century, but this period must have been characterised by serious troubles. In 1914

Charrier discovered a small hoard of forty-five Roman coins ranging from the reign of Gallienus (AD 253 - 260) to Claudius (AD 268 - 270) which had been buried under a flagstone in a house near the Forum at Rapidum, eloquent testimony of the insecure conditions during the latter part of the century. There is a complete series of Roman coins from the reign of Trajan to that of Gallienus, but no coins of Aurelian, Probus, or Diocletian have been discovered at Rapidum. During the Berber insurrections which lasted from AD 289 - 298 the city was captured and destroyed by the rebels, but it was rebuilt between AD 293 - 305.<sup>48</sup>

The later history of Rapidum is rather obscure. The city continued to be occupied during the first half of the 4th century. The most recent inscription from the site is that set up to commemorate the rebuilding of the city between AD 293 - 305<sup>49</sup> but numerous coins of Maximianus (AD 286 - 305), Constantius (AD 305 - 306), Maxentius (AD 307 - 312) and Constantine (AD 306 - 337) have been discovered among the ruins. The settlement may have continued to be occupied until the end of the 5th century. An episcopus Lapidensis is named in the proceedings of the Council at Carthage in AD 484 and one should perhaps restore Rapidensis.

5. The walls which divide the city into three separate quarters were constructed during the Later Empire.<sup>50</sup> Osell suggested that they made it easier to defend the city; if one quarter was captured the inhabitants could take refuge in a neighbouring quarter.<sup>51</sup> But it seems more probable that these late walls point to a decline in the size of the Roman settlement, and the need to protect



those areas still occupied. Seston has pointed out that Walls 1 and 2 (fig.48) appear to be contemporary. They are both constructed of stones taken from the fort and are in bond.<sup>52</sup> Wall 3 (fig. 48) was the next to be constructed and it incorporated many sculptured stones from the temples of quarter C which was the second area to be abandoned. But Walls 1 - 3 are more carefully constructed than Wall 4 (fig. 48). An inscription,<sup>53</sup> stones from the main ramparts, and the weightstone from an olive press were used in the construction of this wall, which separates quarters A and B, and the towers are more irregular in plan than those which protect walls 1 and 2. As the projecting bastions which protect Wall 4 are on the south side it may be assumed that quarter A was the last area to be occupied at Rapidum.

6. A section of the inhabitants of Rapidum were farmers growing cereals and olives in fields outside the town. Osell indicated that numerous Roman corn-mills and parts of olive presses had been found among the ruins, and Leglay's excavations in the city in 1950 revealed numerous 'huilleries'.<sup>54</sup> As early as the second half of the 2nd century the community living at Rapidum was wealthy enough to construct, at their own expense, ramparts to protect the settlement; Leglay excavated a number of houses which revealed evidence of a certain luxury and comfort. This wealth must have been based on agriculture. During the 2nd century the farmers living in the civil settlement no doubt found a ready market for their produce at the fort where a unit of 500 men was stationed.

---

1. Since independence this has been renamed Sour Djouab.
2. Gsell, S., *Les Monuments Antiques de l'Algérie*, Vol.1, Paris, 1901, pp. 91 - 95.
3. Seston, W., 'Le secteur de Rapidum sur le limes de Maurétanie Césarienne après les fouilles de 1927', *M.E.F.R.*, Vol.45, 1928, pp. 150 - 183.
4. *B.A.C.*, 1950, p. 43.
5. *B.A.C.*, 1954, pp. 152 - 154.
6. A full report on Leglay's excavations at Sour Djouab between 1947 and 1953 is still to be published.
7. I would like to thank Professor E. Birley and Monsieur P-A. Février, the Inspector of Antiquities for Algeria, for allowing me to accompany them on a visit to Sour Djouab which is difficult to reach by public transport.
8. *Rapport sur la Mission Archeologique en Algérie du Professor Birley - Rapidum, Mars, 1968 (unpublished.)*
9. Dessau 9372.
10. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, pp. 150 - 183.
11. Seston, W., <sup>1928</sup>/*idem.*, p. 158 = A.E. 1911, 108.
12. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 165, = A.E. 1929, 133.
13. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 166 = A.E. 1929, 134.
14. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 169 = A.E. 1929, 135.
15. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, pp. 176 - 177.
16. Seston, W., *B.A.C.*, 1928 - 1929, pp. 407 and 408.
17. Seston, W., 1928 - 1929, *idem.*, pp. 405 - 408.
18. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 178 = A.E. 1929, 136.  
Salama, P., 'Note sur un milliaire de Stéphane - Gsell', *B.A.C.*, 1952, pp. 223 - 225.
19. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 179.
20. A.E. 1929, 137.
21. Leschi, L., 'Inscriptions du limes du 11<sup>e</sup> siècle - Route d'Auzia (Aumale) à Rapidum (Masqueray)', *B.A.C.*, 1936 - 37, pp. 299 - 302.

22. Leglay, M., 'Reliefs, Inscriptions et Stèles de Rapidum', M.E.F.R., Vol. 63, 1951, pp.55 = A.E. 1951, 141.
23. Leglay, M., 1951, *idem.*, p. 56 = A.E. 1951, 142.
24. Leglay, M., 1951, *idem.*, pp. 74 - 75 no 24 = A.E. 1951, 144.
25. Leglay, M., 1951, *idem.*, pp. 75 - 76, nos. 15. A.E. 1951, 145.
26. Leglay, M., 1951, *idem.*, pp. 78 - 81, nos. 29 - 37.
27. Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, pp. 172 - 173.
28. B.A.C., 1954, pp. 152 - 154.
29. B.A.C., 1954, p. 154.
30. If we had a more detailed description of this building it might be possible to decide whether it represents an earlier headquarters building or a building which pre-dates the fort. It is to be hoped that the final report on Leglay's excavations inside the military camp at Sour Djouab will be published in the near future.
31. The Roman name for Sour Djouab was Rapidum, (C.I.L. 20834, 20835, 20836, 22548, A.E. 1929, 136).
32. C.I.L. 20833.
33. The inscription A.E. 1929, 133 records that between AD 184 and 190 the Cohors 11 Sardorum rebuilt the bath-house at Rapidum. The tombstones of five soldiers serving in the Cohors 11 Sardorum have been discovered at Rapidum (C.I.L. 9198, 9200, 9202, 9207 and A.E. 1951, 145).
34. The inscription C. I. L. 9203 is the tombstone of a trooper of the ala Thracum and, although undated, it appears to belong to the early rather than to the late 2nd century.
35. The ala Thracum, which may have had its permanent camp at Auzia, appears to have been the main cavalry unit in this sector of the 2nd century military line. The inscription A.E. 1929, 135 is an undated dedication by a decurion of the ala Thracum who was probably the temporary commanding officer of the garrison at Rapidum.
36. Three inscriptions from Altava (C.I.L. 9833, 10949 B.d'O., 1931, p. 370) attest the presence of the Cohors 11 Sardorum there at the beginning of the third century.

37. In 1908 Charrier discovered a milestone set up in AD 124 along the Roman road which linked Auzia and Thanaramusa Castra at a point which was 17 Roman miles from the first centre and 33 Roman miles from the second (Dessau 9372).
38. C.I.L. 10439 is a milestone set up in AD 155 to mark the 3rd mile from Auzia to Rapidum. In 1936 Leschi published a milestone discovered 20 kilometres to the west of Auzia. It was also set up in AD 155. (Leschi, L., 1936 - 37, *idem.*, pp. 299 - 302.)
39. C.I.L. 22629.
40. C.I.L. 20816.
41. Milestones set up during the reign of Caracalla (A.E. 1929, 136,) Severus Alexander, (Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 179) and Aurelian (A.E. 1929, 137) have been discovered at Souagul between Rapidum and Thanaramusa Castra; and a milestone of Trajan Decius (C.I.L. 22549) between Rapidum and Auzia.
42. A milestone set up during the reign of Diocletian has been discovered between Auzia and Rapidum (C.I.L. 22548).
43. The inscriptions (C.I.L. 9199, 9201, 9205, and Leglay, M., 1951, *idem.*, pp. 74 - 75, no 24) are all tombstones of veterans.
44. C.I.L. 20834, and 20835.  
In the same year (AD 167) a fort was constructed by a legionary vexillation at Tigava Castra, near the large Roman town of Tigava (A.E. 1948, 132). The presence of a legionary vexillation in Mauretania Caesariensis is unusual and indicates that there must have been trouble in the province at that time, although there is little evidence of this from historical sources.
45. He restores G(enio) P(agi) A(ugusto) S(acrum) (Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 175). The inscription C.I.L. 9196 = 20832, which was discovered in the wall of the west gateway of the town, was set up by Catellius Marinus who honoured the 'spirit of the pagus'.

46. In 1928 Seston published a dedication to the Emperor Geta set up in AD 209 by the decurions of Rapidum (Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, pp. 176 - 177).
47. The largest cemetery at Rapidum - the western cemetery - dates from the early 3rd century. C.I.L. 9208 - 9226 a and 20837 - 20842 are all civilian tombstones. Four civilian tombstones were published by Seston in 1928 - 29 (Seston, W., 1928 - 29, *idem.*, pp. 405 - 408). Sixteen civilian tombstones undated but of the third century were published by Leglay in 1951, (Leglay, M., 1951, *idem.*, pp. 65 - 78).
48. C.I.L. 20836.  
The ramparts described by Gsell in 1901 (fig. 43) were constructed of excellent Roman ashlar together with a large number of re-used stones. It is therefore possible that they were constructed during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (C.I.L. 20834 - 35), destroyed during the Berber insurrection at the end of the 3rd century, and rebuilt sometime between AD 293 and 305, (C.I.L. 20836).
49. C.I.L. 20836.
50. We do not know the exact date but it was certainly after the end of the 3rd century.
51. Gsell, S., 1901, *idem.*, p. 95.
52. These walls indicate that the area of the fort, which must have become available for civilian occupation during the Later Empire, and the area immediately to the west of it were the first to be abandoned. We do not know when these two areas were abandoned, but Seston found coins of Maximian Herculius and of Crispus, the son of Constantine, in the northern bath-house which prove that it was still in use in AD 325 (Seston, W., 1928, *idem.*, p. 172).
53. C.I.L. 9195.
54. Leglay does not indicate whether, by the use of the term 'huillerie', he means a substantial building containing a number of olive presses and storage rooms or simply one room containing an olive press.

FIG. 43

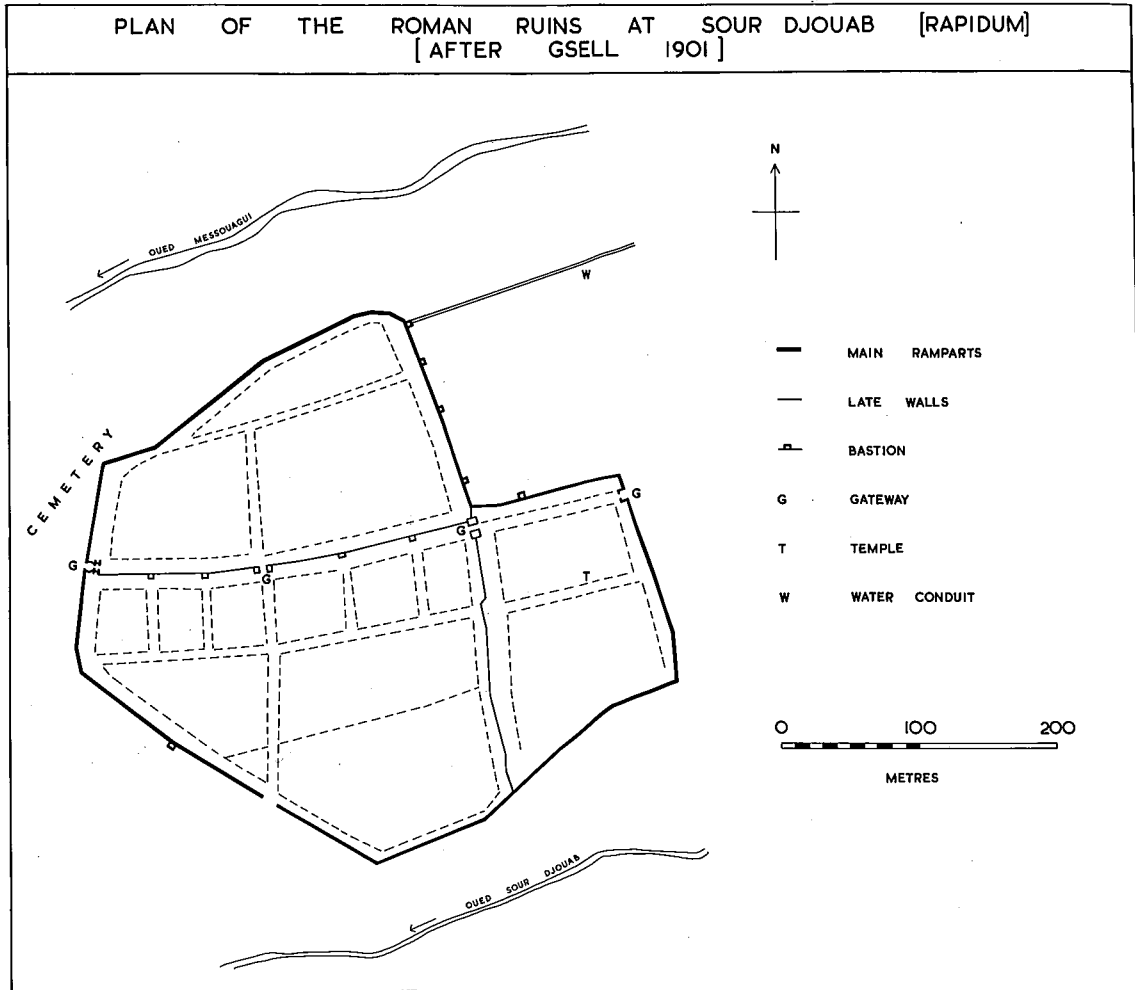


FIG. 44

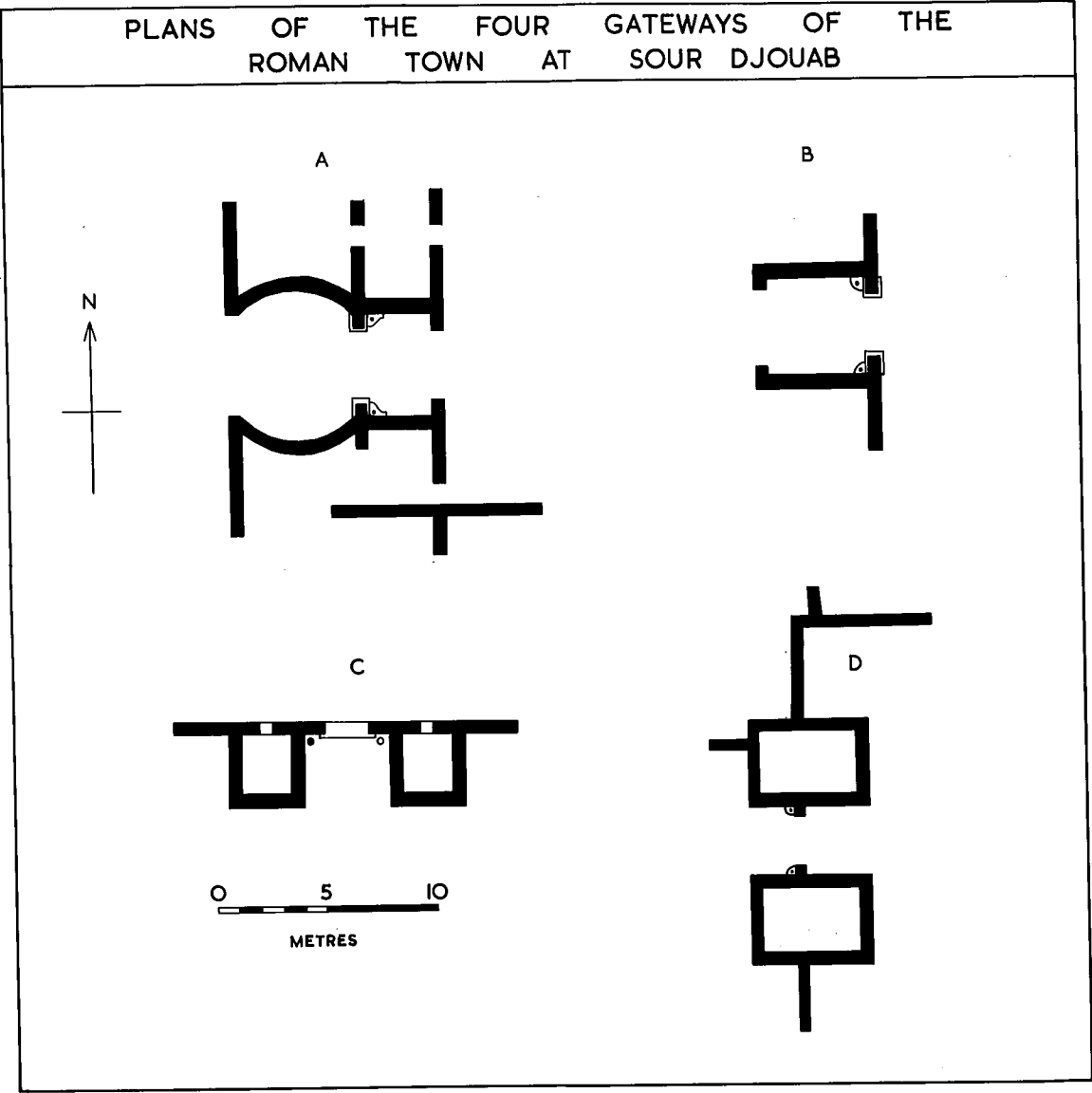


FIG. 45

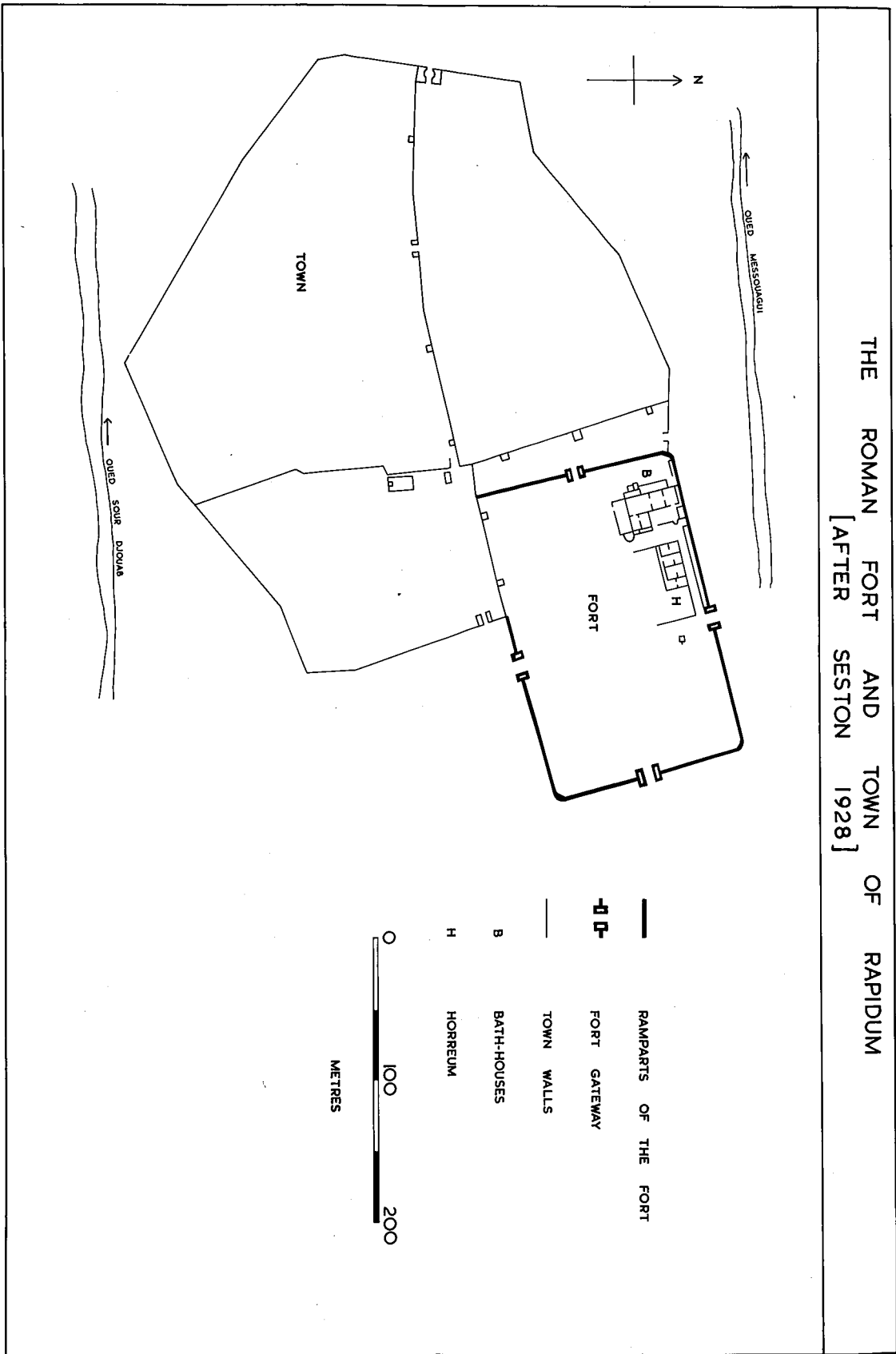




FIG. 46

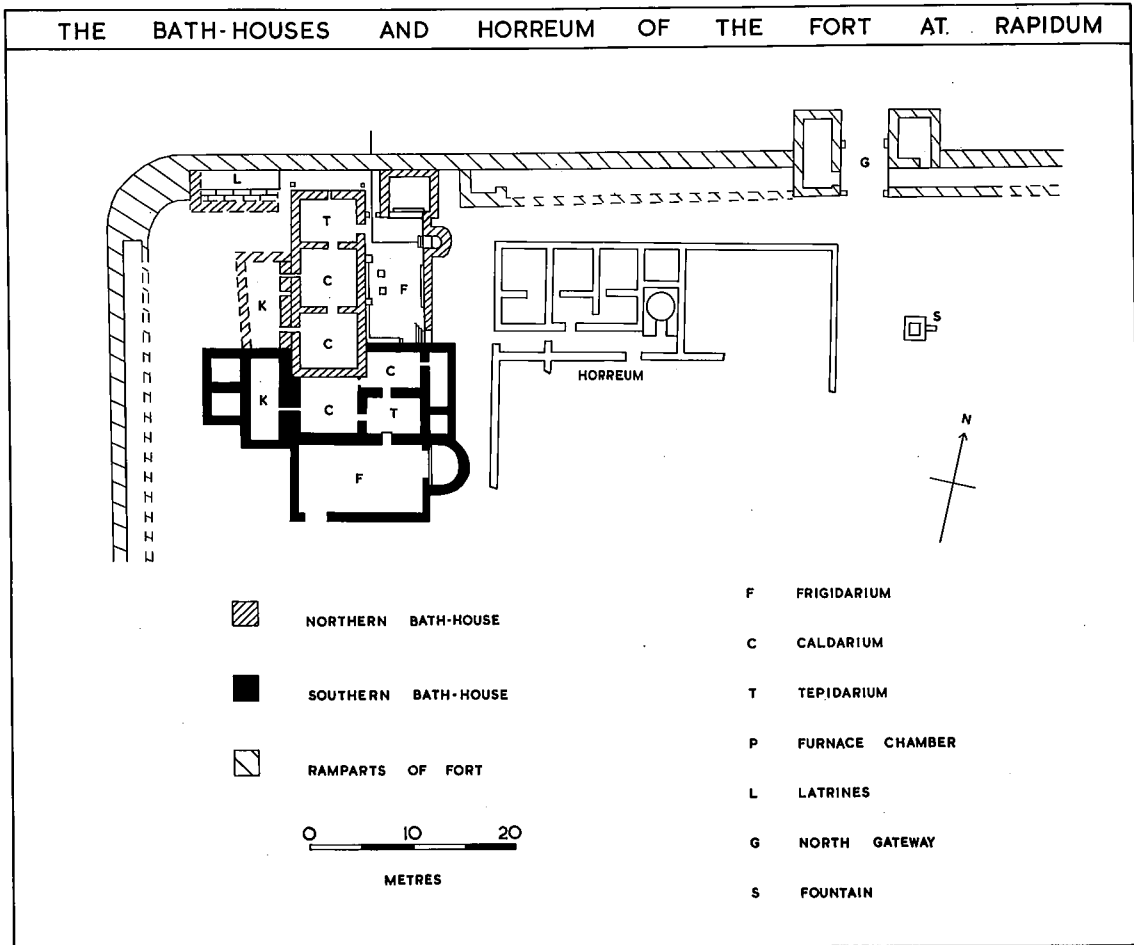
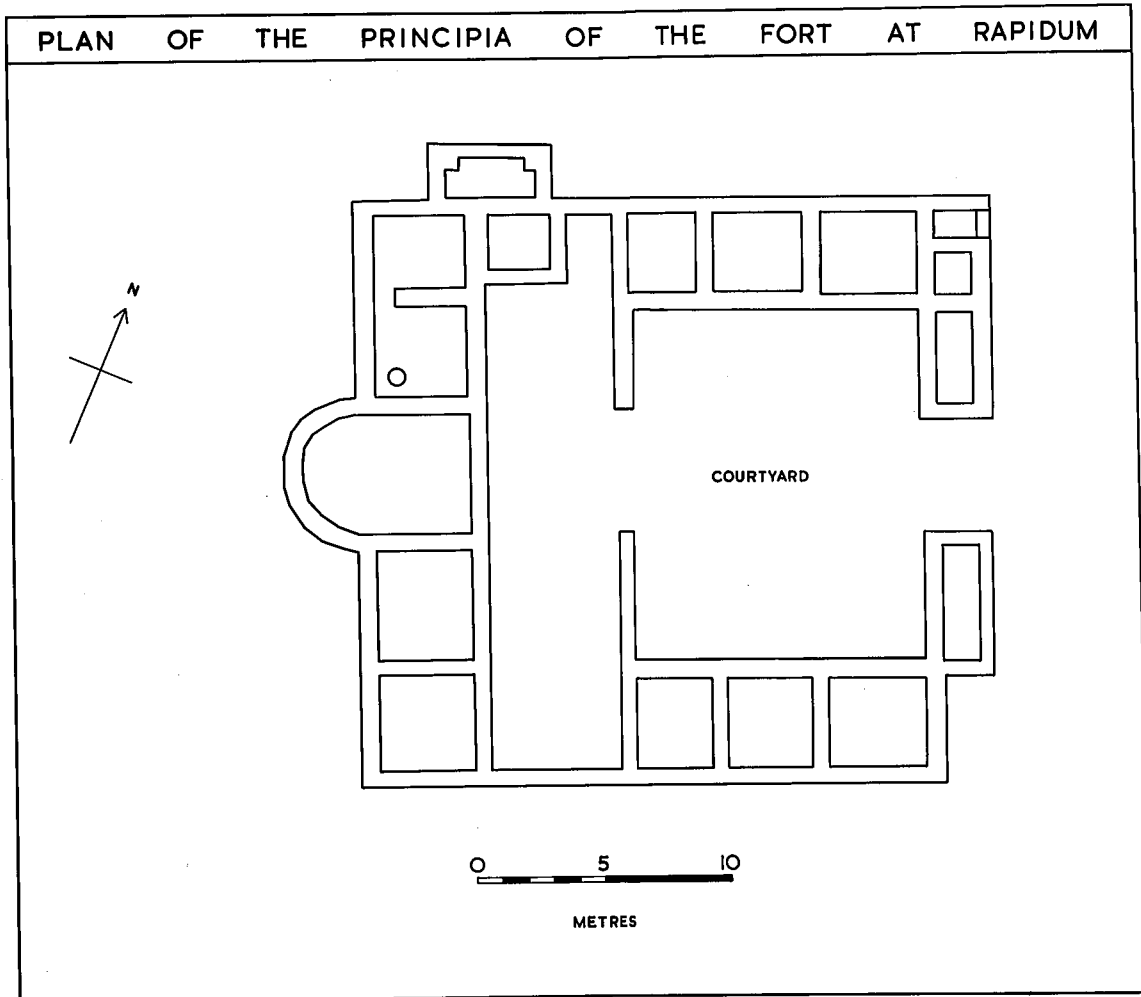
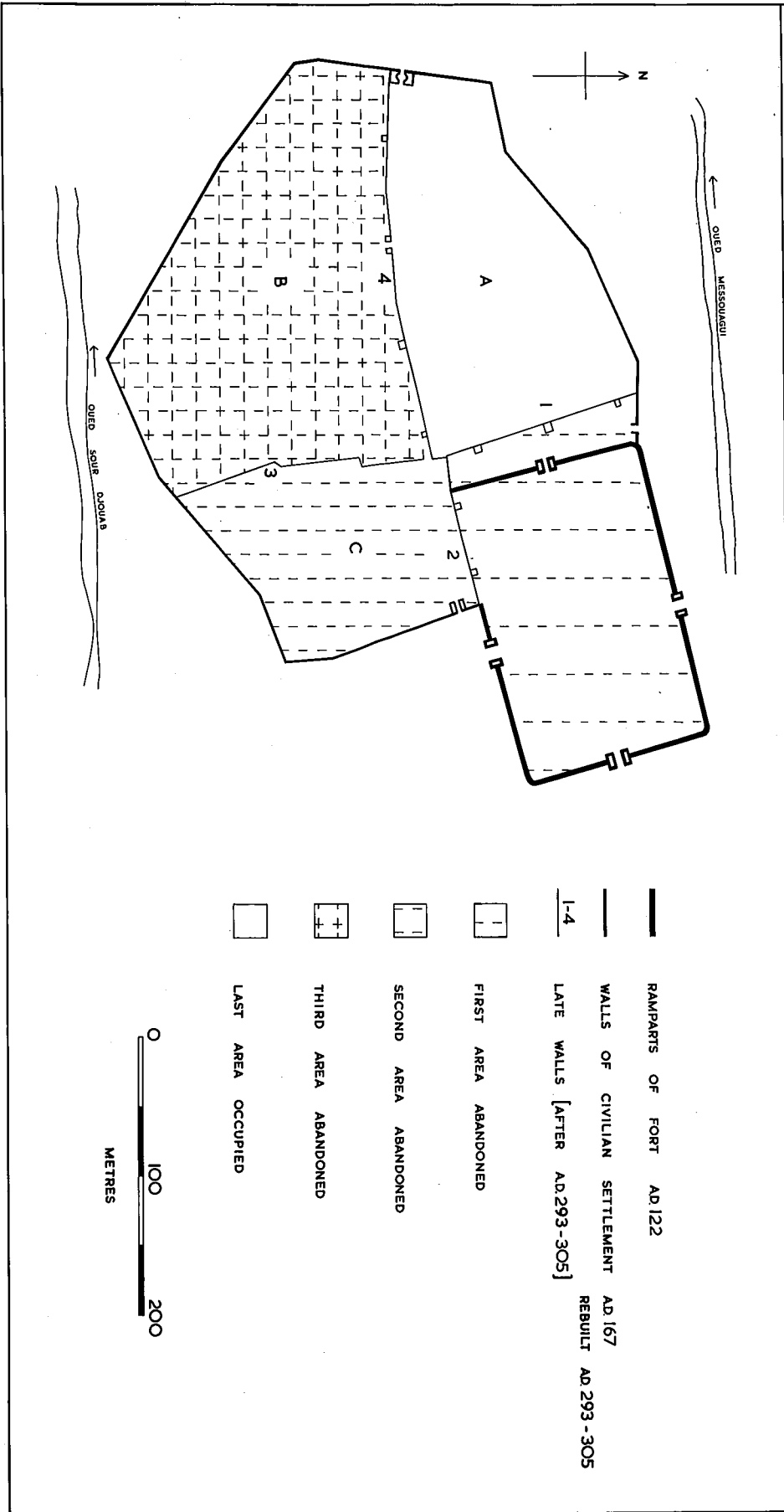


FIG.47



# THE SEQUENCE OF FORTIFICATIONS AT RAPIDUM



D 4 9 7

79 - 85.

In the countryside around Rapidum there are ruins of a number of villages and farms.<sup>1</sup>

79. Ksar bent el Solthan.

There are ruins of a Roman village at Ksar bent el Solthan. Gsell indicated traces of several buildings, including a Christian church where a number of column bases were still in place. There were also the remains of a water conduit. A number of olive presses were found among the ruins.

80. Plateau de Hamadia.

There are Roman ruins covering an area of two hectares on the Plateau de Hamadia. Roman corn-mills have been discovered there. This was no doubt the site of a Roman village.

81. Ain Chéira.

A number of columns and several olive presses have been found among the extensive Roman ruins near Ain Chéira. This was probably a large village or a small town.

82. Kherba de Sfisifa.

There were important Roman ruins at Kherba de Sfisifa, at the foot of the Djebel Sfisifa. Among the ruins were the remains of a large building which may have been a church. Only one inscription has been found

there; it is a tombstone set up in memory of a woman who died at the age of 60, and a man who died at the age of 30, and, although undated, the inscription is clearly of the 3rd century. This site must represent a village or small town, which was certainly occupied in the 3rd century, on the road linking Rapidum to the Roman centre at Chellala des Adaoura.

83. Ain ech Chema.

Gsell indicated that column bases and capitals had been found among the Roman ruins at Ain ech Chema. This was probably the site of a Roman village.

84. Ain Tamda.

There were ruins of a Christian basilica and several other buildings at Ain Tamda, ten kilometres to the west of Rapidum. Seston carried out excavations there in 1927<sup>2</sup> which revealed the detailed plan of a church. It was quite small, only 25 metres long and 14 metres wide, and its decoration appears to have been very poor. The capitals discovered there are similar in style to those found at Tipasa in the church of St. Salsa which Gsell dates to the early sixth century.

Further excavations revealed that the church occupied the western part of a large building, 58.25 m long, 29 m. wide at its eastern end, and 25.30 m. wide at its western end (fig.49). The eastern part of the building consisted of a number of rooms of different dimensions constructed around a large open courtyard. The only

entrance into the building was through a gateway in the east wall, and then along a narrow corridor which led into the courtyard. The outer wall of the building was 1.10 m. in thickness whereas the interior walls were only 0.70 m. in thickness.

Seston suggests that this building complex represents a monastery, the first African example of a type of religious architecture that originated in southern Syria. Frend, however, wonders whether the building was in fact a monastery. He thinks that it may represent a fortified enclosure or stronghold, containing communal store-houses and a church, like the one which he excavated at Kherbet Bahrarous<sup>3</sup> ( Numidia ) in 1939. This type of building is characteristic of many Romano-Berber villages in the High Plains of Numidia. The civilian tombstone of the 3rd century which was discovered built into one of the walls of the church at Ain Tamda, may be used to support Frend's theory. On the other hand, it is quite possible that the inscription was transported from another Roman site nearby when the church was being constructed. On available evidence it is difficult to choose between the two theories.

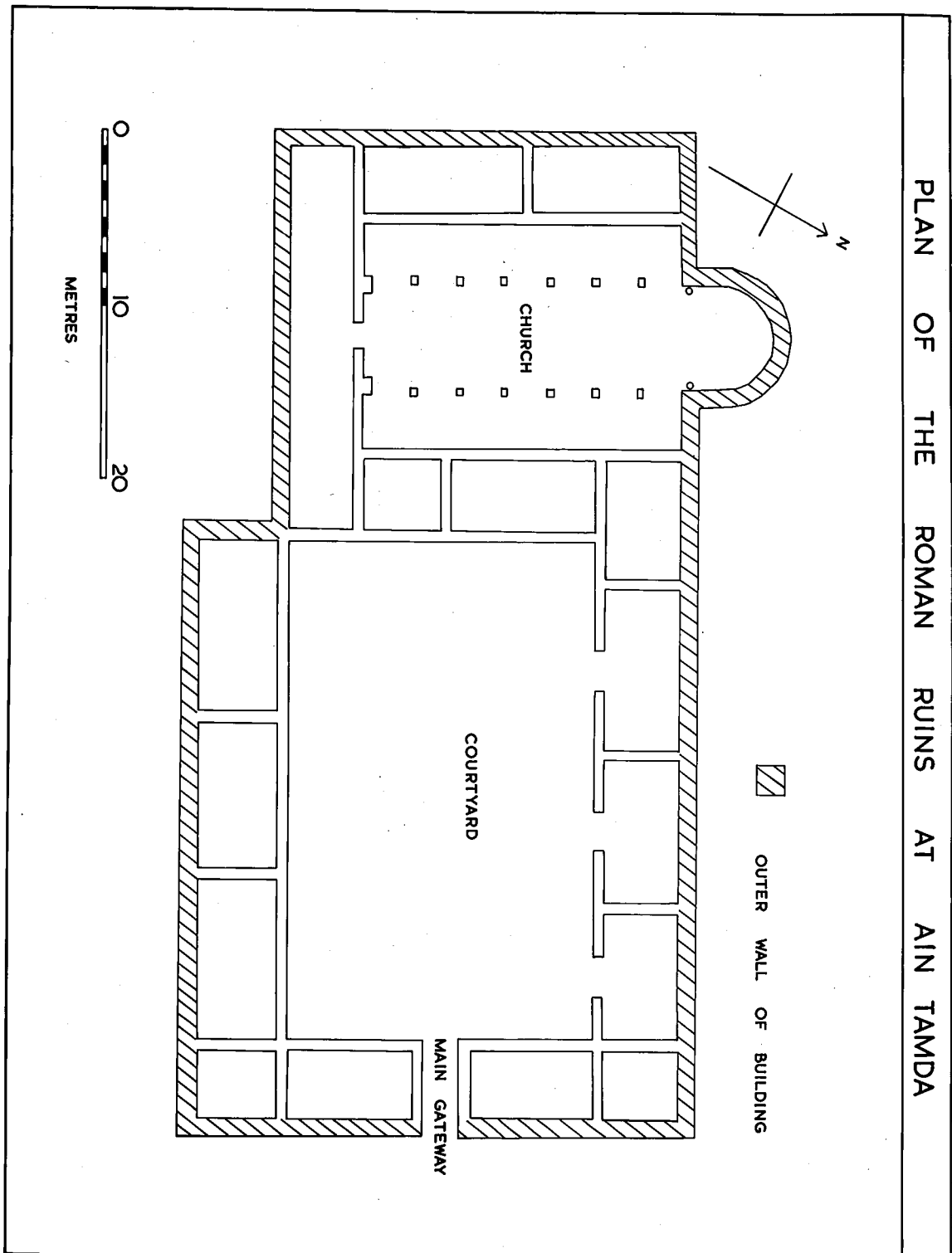
#### 85. Ain Aouina.

On a hillock at Ain Aouina, 400 metres to the west of Sidi Saad, there were ruins of a building (70 m. x 56 m.) constructed of excellent Roman ashlar. Osell suggests that this was a large fortified farm.

---

1. Seston discovered the ruins of a number of large Roman farms around Rapidum, but he does not give their exact location so that it is impossible to mark them on a map. (Seston, W., 'Le secteur de Rapidum sur le limes de Maurétanie Césarienne, après les fouilles de 1927', M.E.F.R., 1928, p. 150 and Seston, W., 'Le Monastère d'Ain Tamda', M.E.F.R., 1934, p. 96).
2. Seston, W., 1934, *idem.*, pp. 79 - 113.
3. Friend, W.H.C., *The Donatist Church - A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa*, Oxford, 1952, p. 45 note 3.

FIG. 49





86. Medjedel.

There are Roman ruins near Medjedel which is situated between the Zahrez Chergui and the northern slopes of the Djebel Sahari - one of the chains of the Monts des Ouled Nail - at the confluence of the Oueds ez Zelegh and Medjedel. An inscription discovered there by Monjanze was published by Leschi in 1938.<sup>1</sup> It records the presence of a cohort at Medjedel between AD 148 and 149 .

The ruins probably represent a Roman fort and, although the date of its foundation is uncertain, there is a strong possibility that it was constructed after the widespread insurrections in Mauretania Caesariensis between AD 145 - 147.

---

1. Leschi, L., 'Une inscription Romaine de Medjedel', Etudes d'Epigraphie, d'Archéologie et d'Histoire Africaines, Paris, 1957, pp. 45 - 46.