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### Northern 'Ajlun

Gottlieb Schumacher (1857–1925) was an American-born German civil engineer, architect and archaeologist who was influential in the early archaeological explorations of Palestine. His parents were members of the Temple Association, a Protestant group who emigrated to Haifa in 1869. After studying engineering in Stuttgart between 1876 and 1881, Schumacher returned to Haifa and soon assumed a leading role in surveying and construction in the region. First published in 1890 for the Palestine Exploration Fund, this volume contains the results of Schumacher's survey of Northern 'Aljūn in present-day Jordan. This region contains the ancient Decapolis, a group of ten Hellenistic cities which were centres of Greek and Roman culture. Schumacher describes the contemporary villages and ancient ruins in this area, and includes the results of the first surveys of the Decapolis cities of Gadara and Arbela, and the disputed site of Capitolias.

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# Northern 'Ajlûn

*'Within the Decapolis'*

GOTTLIEB SCHUMACHER



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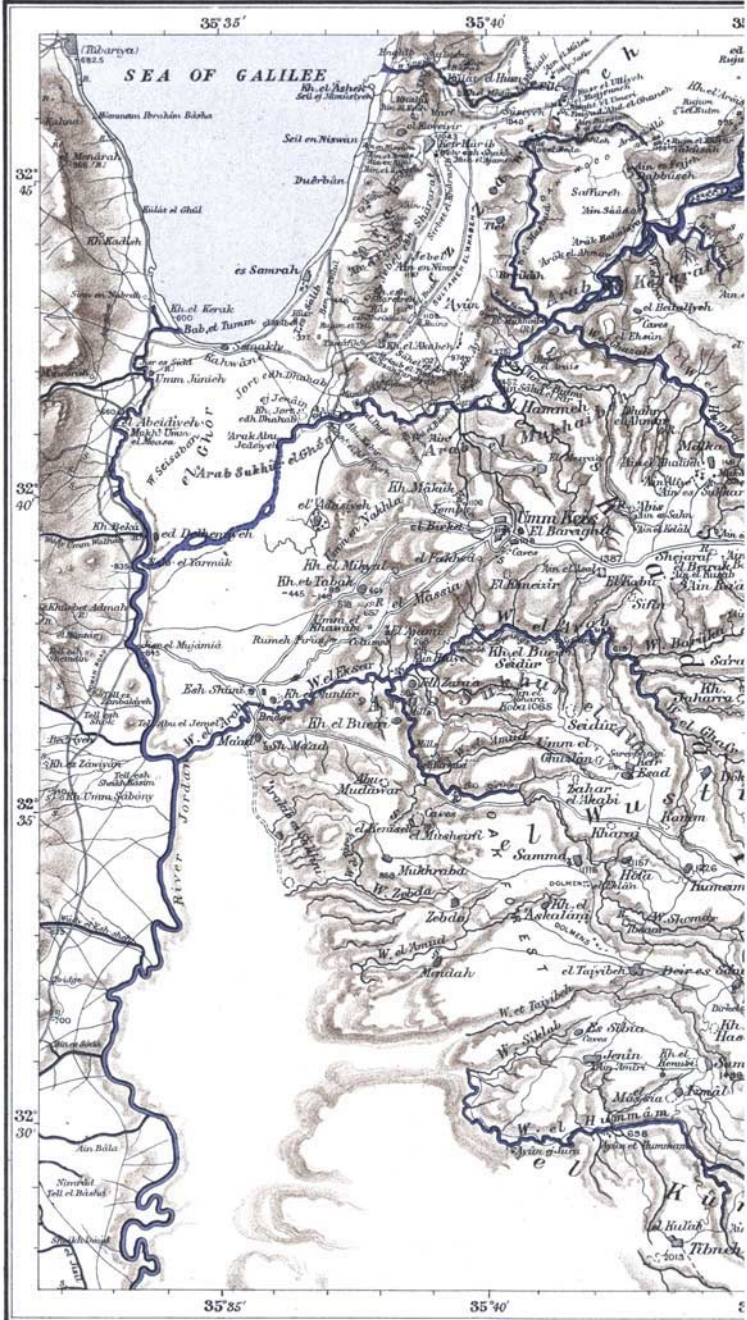
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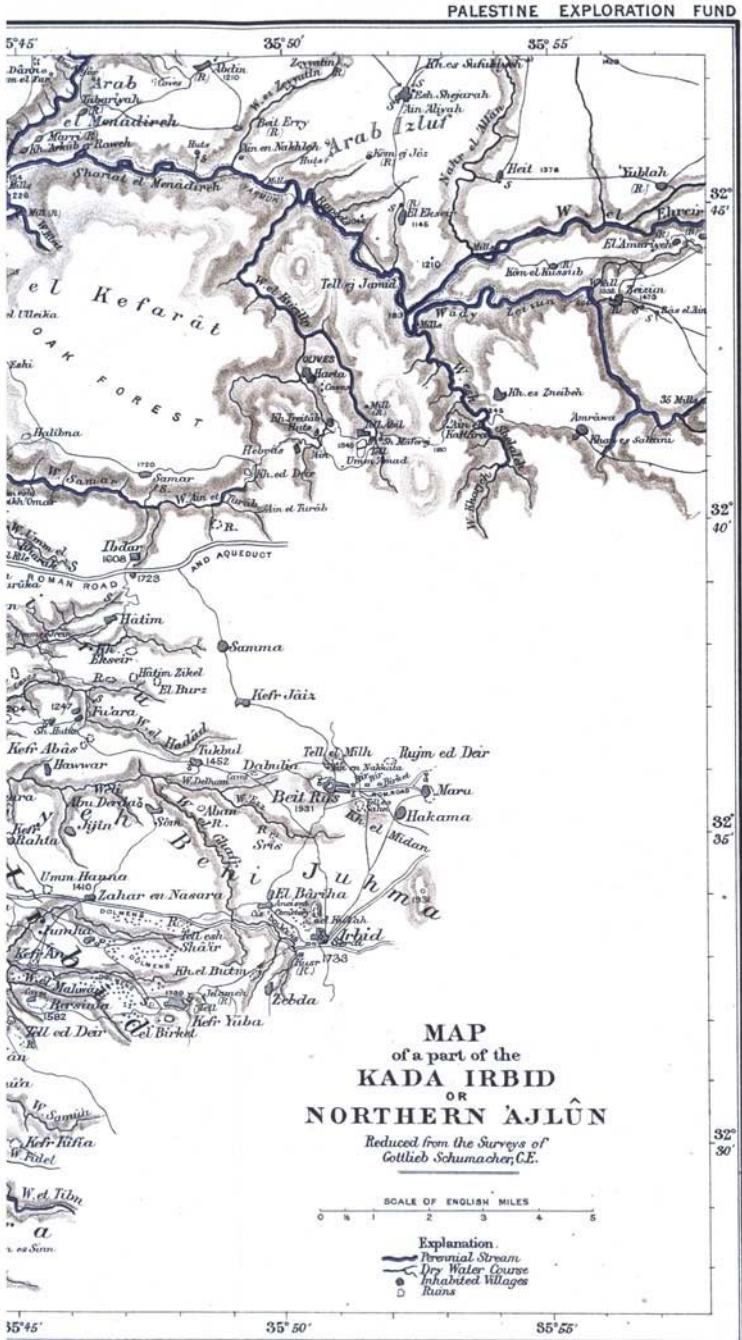
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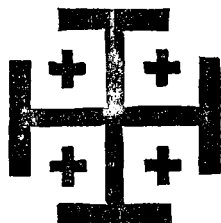
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NORTHERN 'AJLÛN,

“WITHIN THE DECAPOLIS.”

BY

GOTTLIEB SCHUMACHER, C.E.



*Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund.*

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## PREFATORY NOTE.



AT the request of the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund I have undertaken to prepare Herr Schumacher's present Memoir for the press, and effect such alterations in the English as were needful to make his descriptions comprehensible. The present Map and Memoir deal with a most important tract of country—namely, the ancient Decapolis of Peræa—and besides very numerous sites, still showing ancient remains, the Greek or Roman names of which have been utterly lost, plans and drawings have now been made of the important ruins of Gadara (Umm Keis), Capitolias (Beit Râs), and Arbela (Irbid), none of which had ever before been surveyed. Herr Schumacher also met with two new fields of Dolmens, both covering a considerable extent of ground, and consisting of many hundreds of these monuments. The greater number of specimens, in one of the fields,

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lay still undisturbed, and the examination of their contents proved that in some instances at least Dolmens in Palestine were used as places of sepulture.

It is to be regretted that no inscriptions were found among the ruins examined during the present survey ; the explanation is probably to be sought in the friable nature of the material (crumbling lime-stone) of which the buildings in northern 'Ajlun are constructed, and the weathered condition of most of the stones.

The Arabic text of the names is given in the Index, and in this I have copied the list, with the "significations" sent in by Herr Schumacher. These are written in the modern Arab dialect of Palestine, which differs both in orthography and etymology from the classical language of the Arabic dictionaries.

GUY LE STRANGE.

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## INTRODUCTION.



DURING the course of a railway survey, carried over the high plateaus of Haurân and Jaulân, I found occasion to extend my researches into the neighbouring Kada of Irbid, the country sometimes called 'Ajlûn, which includes part of the Biblical district of the Decapolis or Ten Cities. This district lies on the south or left bank of the Yarmûk, which river formed the southern limits of the Map which accompanied the Memoir published in 1886 under the title of "Across the Jordan."\* During my journeys through 'Ajlûn, special attention was directed to the Wâd el-'Arab and its tributaries, for it was originally my intention to have extended the surveys eastwards as far as the Wâd esh-Shelâleh. I found, however, that this

\* "Across the Jordan" being an exploration and survey of a part of Haurân and Jaulân, by G. Schumacher, published by the Fund, 1886.



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country was so intersected with ravines and wâdies, covered by a thick growth of oak forest, as to render its survey extremely laborious, and the time at my disposal being limited, I was forced to abandon my task, after having mapped and examined only a portion of this interesting country. The sites of Umm Keis, the ancient Gadara, and Beit Râs, the supposed representative of Capitolias, had not hitherto been as thoroughly explored as their importance seemed to merit, and I therefore spent nearly two weeks of my time amidst their ruins, in order to make the detailed plans and sketches which will be found in the following Memoir.

The Map, drawn on the same scale as those already published of Haurân and Jaulân, is based on a trigonometrical survey, made with a theodolite. I adopted as base lines the distance between Tabor and Kaukab el-Hawa (fixed by the Palestine Survey), and that between Tabor and Kefr Hâreb (measured during my late surveys). The chief heights, as those of Umm Keis, Beit Râs, Kefr Esad, Irbid and others, were determined by measuring the angles with the theodolite, and subordinate points were

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fixed by barometric observations. In regard to archaeological researches, I must repeat what I have already written in "Across the Jordan" (pages 241, 292). The real object of my survey, which was to become acquainted with the physical aspect of the country, its people and its products, did not leave me sufficient time to explore the numerous ancient sites with all the care and thoroughness that I should have wished, and in this matter I must throw myself on the indulgence of the reader, hoping that another opportunity may occur for re-visiting the country, which will enable me to continue my explorations and add what may have escaped my notice in the survey which is now laid before the subscribers of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

G. SCHUMACHER.