

## **Map 78 Porphyrites et Claudianus Montes**

Compiled by S.E. Sidebotham, 1997

### **Introduction**

The area between the Nile and the Red Sea, commonly referred to as the Eastern Desert, is a desert of stone and dirt rather than of sand. Its two major roles in antiquity reached their culmination in the Roman period. The northern zone, which occupies most of the map, contained quarries and mines, including in particular gold mines and quarries for fine building stone. The southern zone is dominated by the routes linking the Nile valley with the Red Sea ports, from which merchant ships sailed to East Africa and India (see Map 80).

The area of the map has been explored by scholars since the nineteenth century, but much of what we know today has only been discovered in the last twenty years. In part, this knowledge comes from surveys of roads and sites. Most of the latter have not been excavated, and we often have only approximate dates for them from surface ceramic finds or the style of building. That said, the last two decades have also seen several important excavations in the region, notably at the two quarries that give the map its title, Mons Claudianus and Mons Porphyrites (Peacock 1997). There have been recent excavations, too, at several of the smaller road stations. At Mons Claudianus in particular, this activity has unearthed large numbers of ostraca with a wealth of information about the exploitation of the desert (Bingen 1992; 1997). Only a small fraction of them has been published to date, but they have already led to some significant gains to our knowledge of the geography of the region. Progress here in the near future is sure to be rapid as the new finds are published.

The ancient itineraries have long provided the backbone of our knowledge of the desert routes, and many of the identifications of the toponyms in these sources were made long ago. Others remained unknown or controversial until recent exploration. Aside from the routes, relatively few ancient names were known either; and it is still the case that only modern names are known for most of the sites identified by survey. Two additional problems are that many sites have several modern names, and that some seem to defy identification with any known ancient name. The placement of the majority of the sites marked, as well as some of the roads, derives from coordinates obtained using the Global Positioning System.

Because the map so extensively reflects recent survey work, it marks several sites not previously recorded by western scholars. These include the gabbro quarries at Maghrabiya. Although the stone from them had been recognized in Roman flooring elsewhere in the Mediterranean, and dated by the pavements in which it appeared, its source had never been located. There are also newly located tonalite gneiss quarries at Umm Huyut. Other sites marked for the first time include two on the Abu Sha'ar-Nile road, at Bir Salah and Atrash Northeast. Bir Salah takes its name, as Ma'aza Bedouin custom dictates, from the name of the guide who showed me the ancient site there; it had no known name prior to that visit.

Undoubtedly the greatest difference between this map and previous ones of the region is the proliferation of ancient roads and tracks. Many miles of previously unrecorded routes appear here for the first time. Very few are paved, and even those for extremely short distances; most are merely the natural desert surface cleared of stones and lined with cairns to show the route. No milestones mark their courses.

The map marks no roads (other than the Via Hadriana), and almost no sites, north or north-west of the Porphyrites Mons-Abu Sha'ar area. This signifies, not the absence of remains here, but instead an inadequate level of exploration to date.

## Directory

All place names are in Egypt unless otherwise noted

### Abbreviation

TIR Coptos

Tabula Imperii Romani NG 36, *Coptos*, Oxford, 1958

### Names

Grid	Name	Period	Modern Name / Location	Reference
D4	<i>Abu Diyeiba</i>	H	settlement and mine	Meredith 1957; Lucas 1962, 389
D5	<i>Abu Garahish</i>	H	settlement and mine	S.E. Sidebotham
D4	<i>Abu Gariya</i>	R?		Murray 1925, 149; Sidebotham 1997, 224-28, 235 (fig. 9)
C5	<i>Abu Gerida</i>	H	fort, mine and quarry	Meredith 1952, 106; S.E. Sidebotham
C5	<i>Abu Greiya</i>	RL?		Murray 1925, 148; Meredith 1952, 102-103 (fig. 4); Klein 1988, 20; S.E. Sidebotham
D3	<i>Abu Sha'ar</i>	L	fort and well at Deir Umm Deheis	Sidebotham 1994; 1994a
C2	<i>Abu Sha'ar al-Bahri</i>	R		Sidebotham 1997, 224, 228-29; 1998, 355
C4	<i>Abu Zawal</i>	R	road station and mine	Meredith 1949, 115-26; Klein 1988, 20
E2	Aelaniticus Sinus			See Map 76
E4	Arabicus Sinus			See Map 4
B5	<i>el-'Aras</i>	RL		Sidebotham 1991, 595
C4	<i>Atrash Northeast</i>	R		Sidebotham 1996, 183-84
C4	<i>Bab el-Mukhenig</i>	RL		Sidebotham 1991, 587
C3	<i>Badia'</i>	RL	road station and granite quarry	Sidebotham 1991, 578-80; Brown 1995, 222-26; D.P.S. Peacock
B4	<i>Bir Salah</i>	RL		Sidebotham 1996, 181-83
C5	<i>Bir Sirbakis</i>	H	settlement and mine, perhaps identified as Garahish?	Meredith 1952, 107, 110; Klemm 1994, 219; Sidebotham 1996, 190
C4	<i>Bir Umm Disi</i>	R	settlement and well	Meredith 1953, 102
D4	<i>Bir Wasif</i>	A?H	settlement and well	Ball 1913, 7; Meredith 1953, 102
D5	<i>Bukhalug</i>	HR	settlement and mine	Meredith 1952, 110; S.E. Sidebotham
C4	Claudianus M.	RL	Deir Wadi Umm Hussein	Bingen 1992, 10-16; Peacock 1997; 1999
D3	<i>Deir Abu Sha'ar el-Qibli</i>	RL		Sidebotham 1994; 1994a
C4	<i>Deir el-Atrash</i>	RL		Sidebotham 1991, 584-87
C3	<i>Deir Kebir Wadi Ma'amal</i>	RL		Sidebotham 1991, 575-76; D.P.S. Peacock
D5	<i>Deir Semna</i>	R	fort and quarry at Wadi Umm Wikala	Tregenza 1951; 1958, 155-74; Meredith 1952, 106; S.E. Sidebotham
C3	<i>Deir Sugheir Wadi Ma'amal</i>	RL?		D.P.S. Peacock
C4	<i>Deir Umm Diqal</i>	RL		Bingen 1992, 10; Peacock 1997, 151-62
D2	Drepanum Pr.		Ras Gebel Zeit	RE Drepanon 5
D5	<i>Eridiya</i>	RL	settlement and mine	Meredith 1953, 95; Klemm 1994, 220; S.E. Sidebotham
E3	Erythr(ae)um/ Rubrum Mare			See Map 4
C4	<i>Fatira el-Beida</i>	R?	road station and quarry	Klein 1988, 16; Brown 1995, 225-29 (fig. 6), 230; S.E. Sidebotham
C4	<i>Fatira el-Beida el-Qibli</i>	R		Meredith 1949, 124-26; S.E. Sidebotham
C3	<i>Footpath Station</i>	R		Meredith 1954, 84-99; D.P.S. Peacock
D2	<i>Gebel Zeit</i>	R?L?		Harrell 1998

Grid	Name	Period	Modern Name / Location	Reference
C4	<i>Ghuzza</i>	HR	fort with settlement and mine	de la Roque 1922, 119-22; Meredith 1952, 98; Klemm 1994, 219; S.E. Sidebotham
C5	<i>Gidami</i>	R?		de la Roque 1922, 136-37; Murray 1925, 146; Meredith 1952, 106
B4 D1	<i>el-Heita</i> Heroopoliticus Sinus	RL		Sidebotham 1991, 591-94 See Map 76
D4	Ichthyophagi	CHR		KIPauly Ichthyophagen
B5	Kaine/ Maximianopolis			See Map 80
C4	Klaudianon	RL	fort and quarry at Deir Wadi Umm Hussein	Bingen 1992; 1997; Peacock 1997, 19-138
C4	Klaudianon	R	fort and quarry; "Hydreuma below Skopelos"	Peacock 1997, 141-48
G1	Leuke Kome?/ Onne?		SAU	See Map 83
C3	<i>Lycabettos</i>	R	settlement and quarry	Sidebotham 1991, 575-76; Brown 1995, 222 (fig. 2); D.P.S. Peacock
C5	<i>Maghrabiya</i>	R	settlement and quarry	Gnoli 1988, 158-59; Borghini 1992, 210; Brown 1995, 225-27; Sidebotham 1996, 189-90
C2 G2	Maximianopolis = Kaine <i>Milaha al-Nakhl</i> <i>al-Muwalihl</i> Modiana?	RL	SAU	Sidebotham 1997, 224, 229; 1998, 354-55 See Map 83
B5 C3	Nilus fl. <i>Northwest Village</i>	R	settlement and quarry	See Map 74 Sidebotham 1991, 575-76; D.P.S. Peacock
	Onne? = Leuke Kome?			
C3	Porphyrites M.	RL?	Gebel Abu Dukhan	Sidebotham 1991, 575-76; Brown 1995, 222-26; D.P.S. Peacock
E2	Poseidion Pr.		Ras Mohammed	RE 2
E5	<i>Qasr Hadie</i>	R?		Zitterkopf 1989, 159, 174; Sidebotham 1998, 353
C3	<i>Qattar</i>	RL	road station and granite quarry	Sidebotham 1991, 582-83; Brown 1995, 223-26, 229-30
E5	<i>Quei</i>	R?		Murray 1925, 149-50; Sidebotham 1997, 227, 229
	Rubrum Mare = Erythr(ae)um Mare			
D5	<i>Saqia</i>	A?	settlement and mine	Meredith 1952, 111; Tregenza 1958, 146, 176-77
B4 D5	<i>el-Saqqia</i> <i>Semna</i>	R HR	settlement and gold mine	Sidebotham 1991, 588-91 Tregenza 1950; Meredith 1952, 107; Cuvigny 1996; S.E. Sidebotham
D5	<i>Semna</i>	R		Meredith 1952, 106; Tregenza 1958, 155-74; S.E. Sidebotham
D1	Sinai			See Map 76
B5 B2/C5	Tentyra Thebais			See Map 80 See Map 80

Grid	Name	Period	Modern Name / Location	Reference
D4	Tiberiane	R	fort and granite quarries at Barud	Klein 1988, 16-17, 118; Brown 1995, 224, 227-28 (fig. 5); Bingen 1997, 297; Peacock 1997, 275-83
D4	<i>Umm 'Anab</i>	R		Tregenza 1949a; Klein 1988, 20
C3	<i>Umm Balad</i>	RL	fort and quarry	Sidebotham 1991, 580-82; Brown 1995, 223-26
D4	<i>Umm Dalfa</i>	R		Tregenza 1949a; Klein 1988, 20
D5	<i>Umm Esh</i>	R?	settlement, mine and quarry	Klemm 1994, 220; Brown 1995, 225-29 (fig. 8)
D4	<i>Umm Hayatat</i>	L		Sidebotham 1997, 223-25; 1998, 354-56, 362 (fig. 7)
	§ <i>Umm Howeitat</i>	L		
C4	<i>Umm Huyut</i>	R	settlement and quarry	Brown 1995, 225, 227; Sidebotham 1996, 186-89
C4	<i>Umm Shegilat</i>	R	settlement and quarry	Klein 1988, 16; Brown 1995, 223-26; S.E. Sidebotham
C3	<i>Umm Sidra</i>	RL	fort and granite quarry	Kraus 1967, 199-200; Brown 1995, 222-26; D.P.S. Peacock
C3	<i>Umm Towat</i>	R	settlement and quarry	Meredith 1952, 98; Klein 1988, 15; Brown 1995, 223-26; S.E. Sidebotham
	Via Hadriana			See Roads
C4	<i>Wadi Abu Shuwehat</i>	R	falsely identified as Tal'et el-Zerqa	Tregenza 1949, 130-32; Meredith 1952, 102; Klein 1988, 20
B2	<i>Wadi Am Missara</i>	C?H	settlement and mine	S.E. Sidebotham
C3	<i>Wadi Belih</i>	R		Sidebotham 1991, 576-78
D5	<i>Wadi Markh</i>	H?	settlement and mine	Meredith 1952, 107; S.E. Sidebotham
C3	<i>Wadi Nagat</i>	L		Sidebotham 1991, 583-84
C4	<i>Wadi Qalt el-Naga</i>	H	settlement and mine	Sidebotham 1996, 185
D4	<i>Wadi Safaga</i>	R?		Murray 1925, 149-50; Sidebotham 1997, 228, 236-37 (figs. 11-12)
D5	<i>Wadi Saqia</i>	R	settlement and mine	J.A. Harrell
B1	<i>Wadi Umm Dhaya</i>	H	settlement and mine	S.E. Sidebotham

## Roads

Grid	Name / Itinerary	Period	Reference
C2	Via Hadriana	RL	Sidebotham 1994, 266-67; 1997; 1998
	Abu Greiya → Claudianus M.	RL	Meredith 1949
	el-'Aras → Abu Sha'ar	RL	Sidebotham 1991
	el-Saqqia → Abu Zawal	RL	Meredith 1949, 99-100, 112-15

## Unlocated Toponyms

Name	Period	Probable Location	Reference
Aeas M. Aenum	H?	Gebel Hamrawein?	Murray 1925, 140 Meredith 1953, 103; Tregenza 1958, 176-77, 181-82
Akanthion	R		Bingen 1992, 72-73 (no. 77), 74 (no. 81)
Dia Ins.		Geziret Sinafir?	Burstein 1989, 153
Isidis Ins.		Geziret Sinafir?	Burstein 1989, 153

Name	Period	Probable Location	Reference
Kampe	R		Bingen 1992, 126-27 (no. 138), 142-43 (no. 155); 1997, 59-60 (no. 237)
Miltodes M.			RE
Ophites M.		Wadi Umm Wikala?	Gnoli 1988, 154, 156
Philoteris Phocarum Ins.	HR	Geziret Shadwan?	RE 1; Meredith 1952, 105 Murray 1925, 141
Raima	R		Bingen 1992, 187; 1997, 297
Salydo Ins.		Geziret Barakan?	Burstein 1989, 153
Sapirene Ins.		Geziret Tawila?, Shadwan?	Burstein 1989, 136 (n. 3)
Scytala Ins.		Geziret Shadwan?	RE; Burstein 1989, 136 (n. 3)
Soukabya Ins.		Geziret Shusha?	Burstein 1989, 136

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