

MILITARY FINDS FROM THE MAGEN AVRAHAM COMPOUND, YAFO (JAFFA)

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INTRODUCTION

Three cannon balls, two fragments and one complete, and three cases of light ammunition were retrieved from Strata II–I, dated to the late Ottoman–British Mandate period, at the Magen Avraham Compound in Yafo (see Arbel and Rauchberger, this volume). The cannon balls date from the first half of the nineteenth century CE, and the three rifle ammunition cases, from World War I.

THE FINDS

Cannon Balls

Numbers 1 and 2 were found in soil accumulations below the late Ottoman-period footpath in Area B. The military finds from the period before and during the Napoleonic wars at Yafo do not include mortars capable of firing cannon ball No. 1 and therefore, the most likely event to which it belonged is the siege of Yafo in the Peasants Uprising of 1834 (Glik 2017:95). Guns capable of firing cannon ball No. 2 were present in Yafo no earlier than its conquest by Napoleon, at the end of the eighteenth century CE. It is probable that both items date to the first half of the nineteenth century CE. The identification of cannon ball No. 3 is not as secure as that of Nos. 1 and 2; it may also date to the same period as it was found in an accumulation of the late Ottoman–British Mandate period in Area G.

1. L208, B2041. Fragment of cannon ball of the common shell type. Shell containing explosives under the metal case. Probably a French 10-pouce mortar (Dowson, Dowson and Summerfield 2007:178). Poor preservation, likely due to the use of low-quality metal. Diam. 27 cm; casing thickness c. 6 cm.

2. L207, B2033. Fragment of cannon ball of the common shell type, probably of a French 6-pouce howitzer (“6.8”), postdating 1795 (Dowson, Dowson and Summerfield 2007:62). Diam. 16.3 cm; casing thickness 2.7 cm.

3. L808, B8013. Complete, poorly preserved cannon ball of the solid round shot type, possibly of a French 4-pound gun. Diam. c. 8 cm.

Rifle Ammunition Cases

Number 1 was found in a late Ottoman–British Mandate context in Area F; No. 2 was found below the Ottoman-period footpath in Area B; and No. 3 was recovered from the surface.

1. L650, B6526. A type 7.92 × 57 mm Mauser, the primer punctured by the firing pin, consisting of 67% copper, 33% zinc. Possibly produced by Munitinionsfabrik, Cassel, on November 1915, or Cleebrohn Patronenfabrik (White and Munhall 1963:555), both German producers.

2. L201, B2001. Probably a type 7.92 or 7.65 mm Mauser. Primer intact but bullet missing. The case is crushed and its rim severely damaged; it is almost unrecognizable. Possibly manufactured by Königliches Munitionsfabrik, Spandau, Germany in 1917 (White and Munhall 1963:1616).

3. B1007. A type .303 British 7.7 × 56 mmR Mark VII (universal), the primer punctured by the firing pin. Produced by Remington Arms Co., Inc., Bridgeport, Conn, USA for the British Commonwealth during the First World War (White and Munhall 1963:1504), it may have been shot during or after the war, either near Yafo or at another battlefield from which it was later looted by local residents.

REFERENCES

- Arbel Y. and Rauchberger L. This volume. Remains from the Hellenistic through the Late Ottoman–British Mandate Periods at the Magen Avraham Compound, Yafo (Jaffa).
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