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ROCK-DRAWINGS FROM SAUDI ARABIA

by

HENRY FIELD

Occasional Paper No. 11

Published by:

FIELD RESEARCH PROJECTS

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GIFT OF AUTHOR

ROCK-DRAWINGS FROM SAUDI ARABIA

The Philby-Ryckmans-Lippens Expedition to Arabia, 1951–52, recorded engravings upon 27 rocks, the great majority (23) being concentrated in the Qahra region along a strip about 15 miles in length between the 18th–20th parallels near Muraighan Wells, Alam Hills and Aiduma Wells. Four rocks are scattered widely between Umm Ruqaiba and Kaukab. All 27 rocks lie in a rough quadrangle north of Najran.

Instead of publishing these rock-drawings as isolated examples from southwestern Saudi Arabia, a detailed analysis was made by my friend, Dr. Emanuel Anati, distinguished specialist on prehistoric art at the University of Tel-Aviv, who published two sections¹ of study and analysis on these rock-drawings. Special attention was paid to the superimposition of carvings, the patinas, the variation in techniques, the figures and their surface relationships. This study was entirely based on 232 photographs. As a result several thousand rock-engravings attributed to several styles and periods throw light on ancient, often pre-literate, dwellers in Arabia about whom nothing was known except that Stone Age hunters² roamed this area between Asir and the northwestern limits of the Rub' al-Khali. The reader is referred to these two volumes by Anati, the photographs, the drawings, the text, statistical tables, analysis and Bibliography.

During my visit to Jidda-Riyadh-Dhahran-Rub' al-Khali (22° 10' 10" N. and 54° 20' 35' E.) in March, 1969, I requested photographs of rock-engravings from the Faculty of the University of Riyadh, the Staff of Aramco, and the U. S. Geological Survey through Dr. Glen F. Brown, Italconsult through Dr. Aurelio Peccei, and the Ben Ladin engineers. As a result I have received photographs of rock-drawings (Pls. 4–18) from the following new localities by Mr. John J. McCue of Aramco.

1. Wadi el-Faw (45° 9' E. and 19° 51' N.).
2. Jilh al-Ishar, about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh (23° 32' 25" N., and 46° 05' 30" E.).

In addition, Mr. Folke C. Johansson sent three photographs of rock-drawings (Pls. 1–3) from the small Jebel in Wadi el-Faw. These were taken during February, 1965.

On March 24, 1968, Mr. Leon Ramirez and Mr. Darwin Hemer found a large rock covered with drawings of animals (2"–4" tall) and inscriptions (Pl. 19). Some figures appear to be relatively recent. This rock is on Jebel Armahiya about 7 miles northeast of Jauf.

I am most grateful to these recorders of pictographs in Saudi Arabia and hope that new localities will be found to contribute to the distribution map³ of rock-drawing from Southwestern Asia.

1. Rock-Art in Central Arabia, Bibliothèque du Muséon, Vol. 50, Louvain, 1968.

2. See my articles in *Man*, No. 52, 1952; No. 145, 1955; Nos. 68 and 1217, 1958; No. 30, 1960; No. 9, 1961; and No. 144, 1962. See also, Rock-Drawings from Saudi Arabia, No. 6 of MAO: LVIII on ADIM No. 8170; and Drawings of Camels in Wadi Rum near Aqaba, Jordan, No. F of MAO: LX on ADIM No. 8534. See also, Ancient and Modern Man in Southwestern Asia: I-II, University of Miami Press, 1956 and 1961; Body-Marking in Southwestern Asia, Peabody Museum Papers, Vol. 45, no. 1, Cambridge, 1956; and Camel Brands and Graffiti from Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Iran and Saudi Arabia, Supplement No. 15, Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 72, no. 4, 1952. Attention is called to "The lost elephants of Arabia [Al Ula near Medain Salih]" by John Dayton, *Antiquity*, pp. 42–45, 1968.

3. The most important recent finds are from Anatolia. To the east in the Armenian SSR Lavr Barseghian has located many new sites; publication is eagerly awaited. See also Peabody Museum Russian Translation Series, Vol. III, no. 3, pp. 213–18, Cambridge, 1968. Notes. ADIM = American Documentation Institute Microfilm, c/o Photoduplication Service, Library of Congress. MAO = *Miscellanea Asiatica Occidentalis*, a series of volumes in ADI. The enlargements were made by Arsen Charles, Peabody Museum.

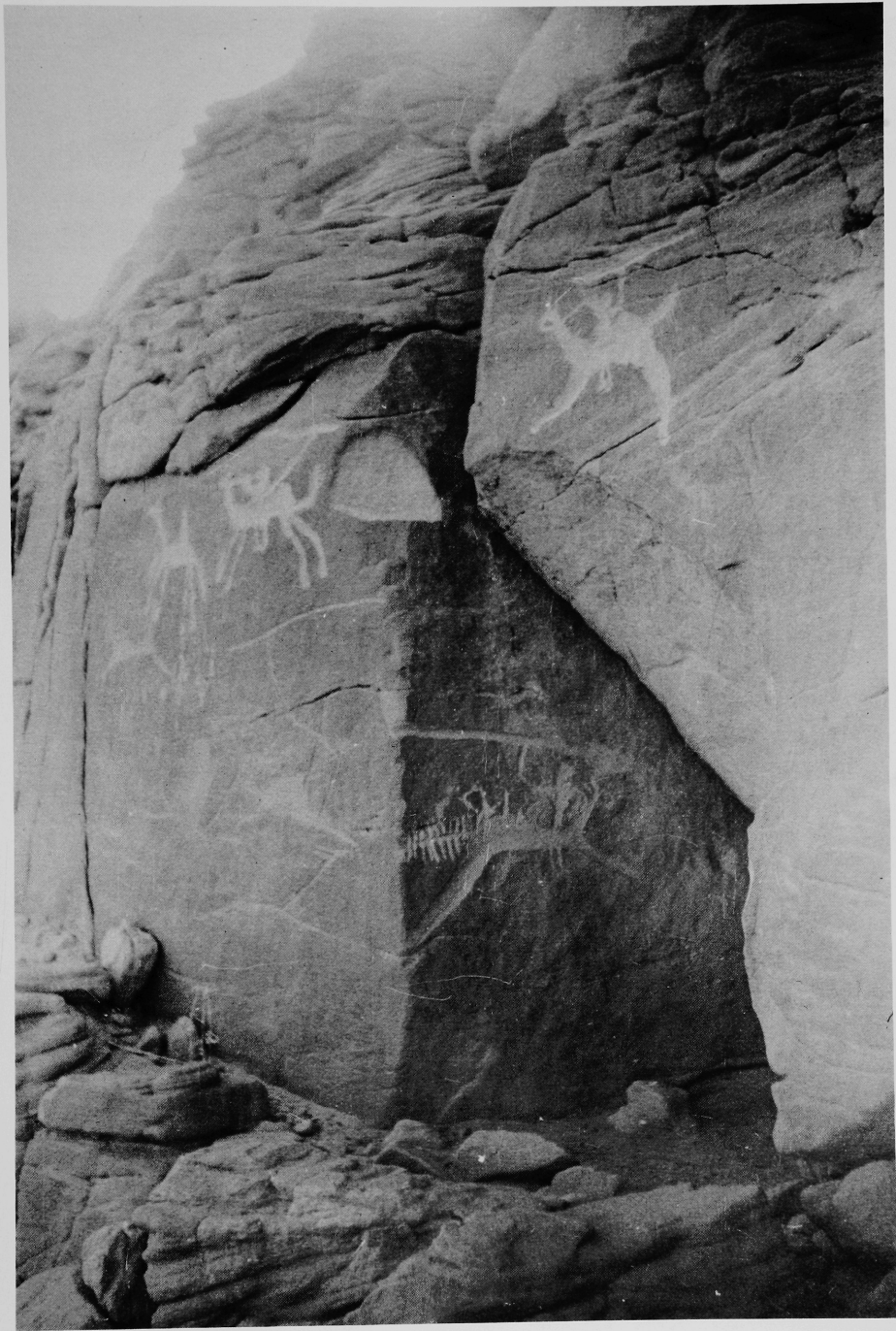


Plate 1. Small Jebel in Wadi el-Faw ($45^{\circ} 9' E.$, $19^{\circ} 5' N.$).
Photograph by Folke C. Johansson, February, 1965.

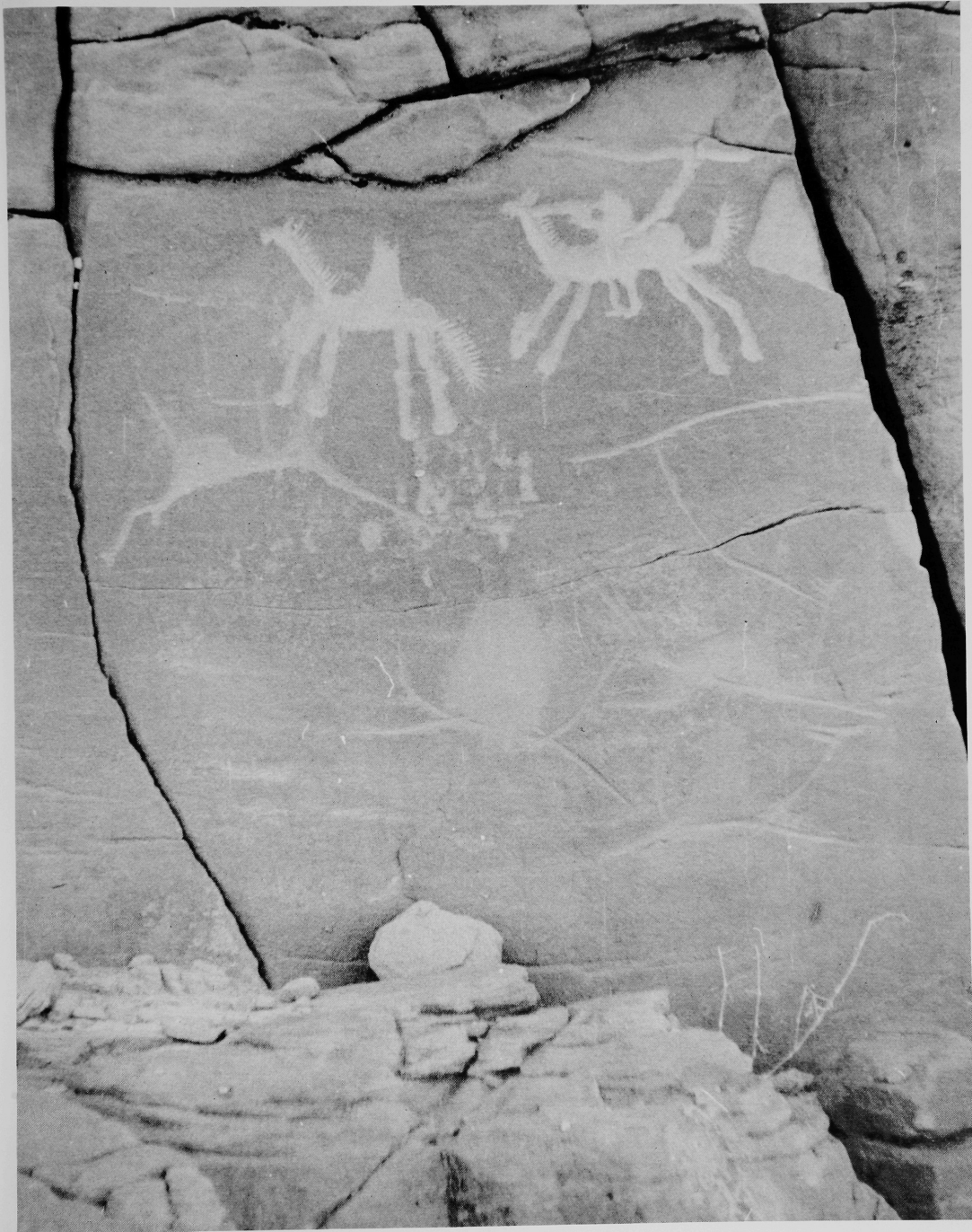


Plate 2.

Small Jebel in Wadi el-Faw ($45^{\circ} 9' E.$, $19^{\circ} 51' N.$).
Photograph by Folke C. Johansson, February, 1965.

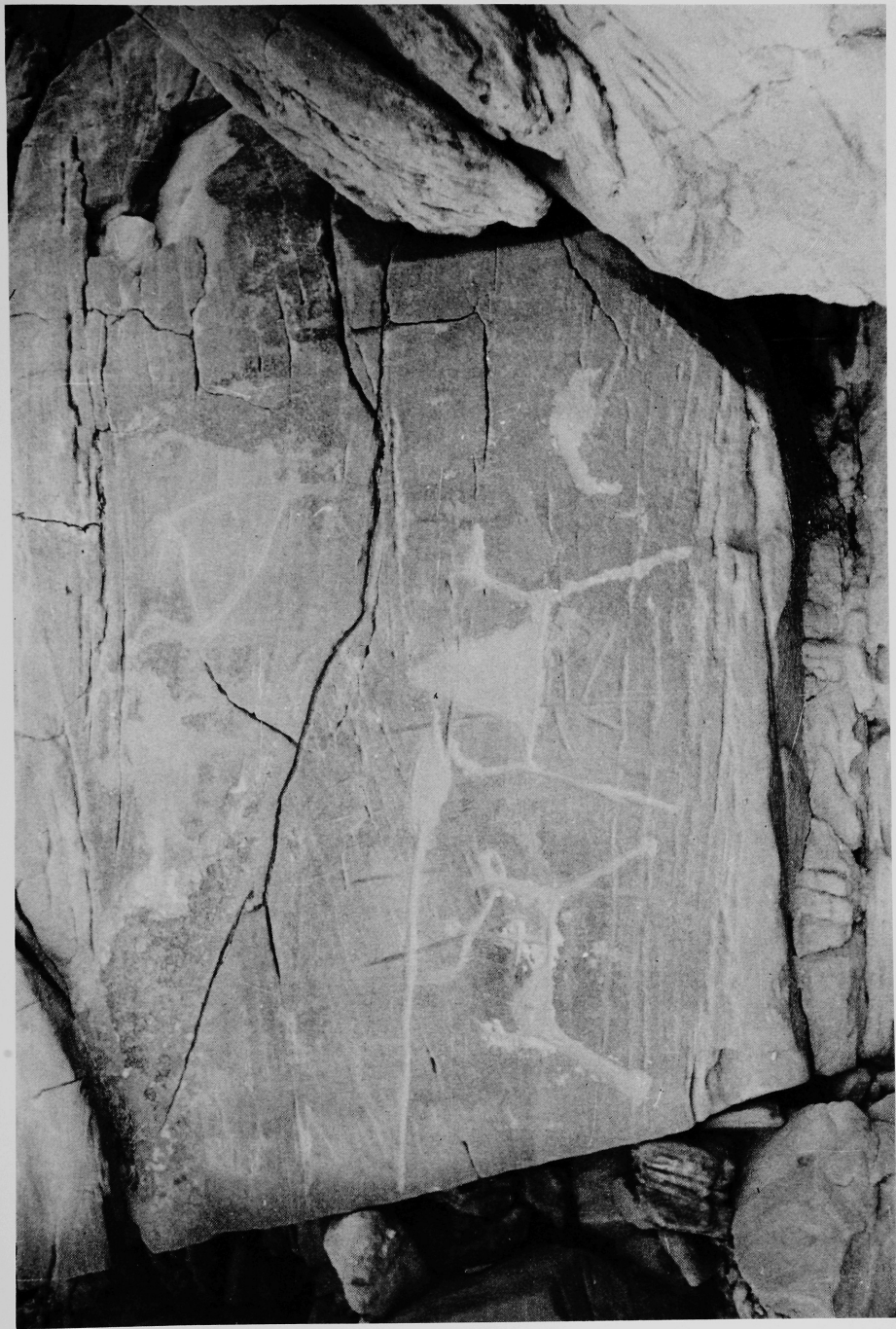


Plate 3. Small Jebel in Wadi el-Faw ($45^{\circ} 9' \text{ E.}, 19^{\circ} 51' \text{ N.}$).
Photograph by Folke C. Johansson, February, 1965.

Plate 4.

Wadi el-Faw ($45^{\circ} 9' E.$, $19^{\circ} 51' N.$),
Photograph by John C. McCue.

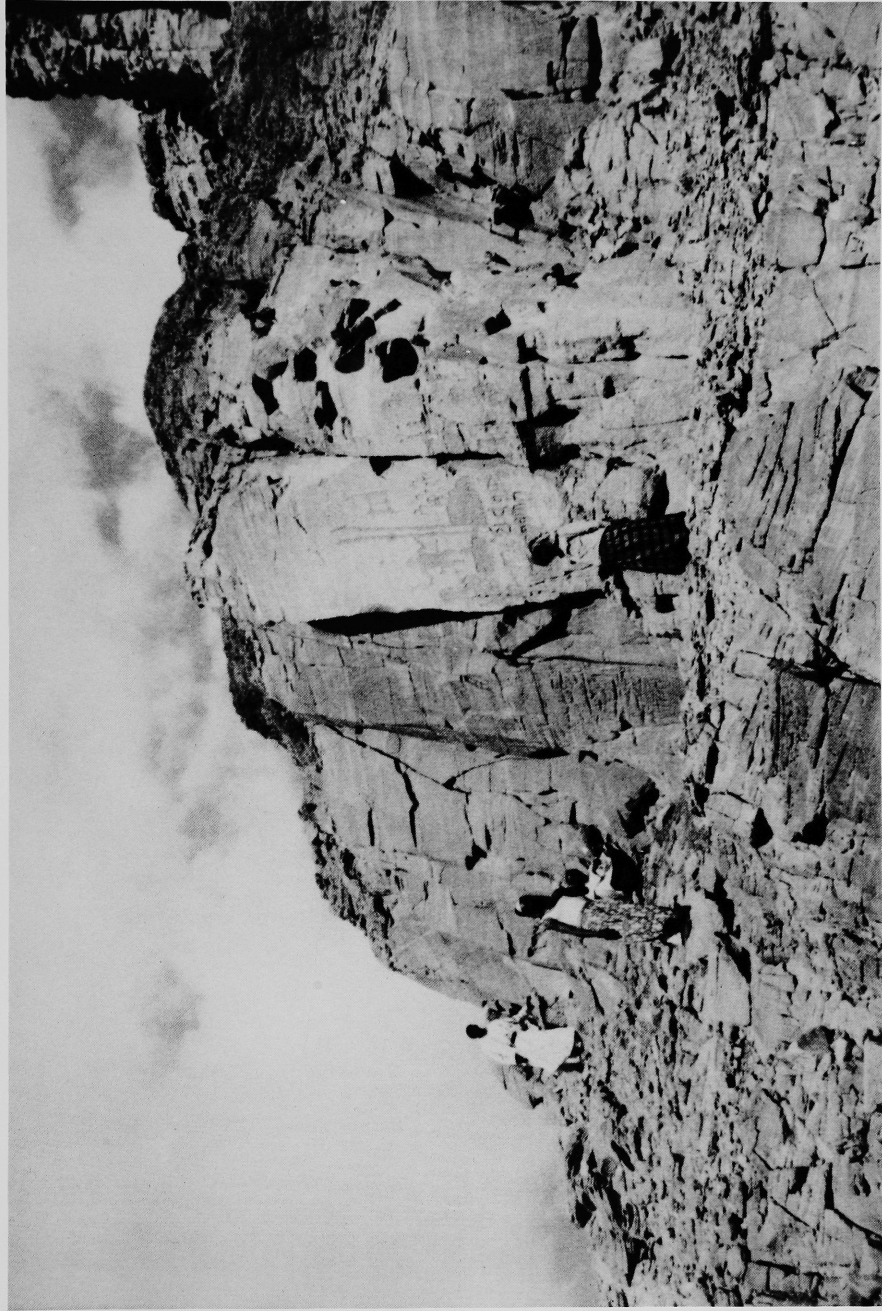




Plate 5.

Wadi el-Faw ($45^{\circ} 9' E.$, $19^{\circ} 51' N.$),
Photograph by John C. McCue.

Plate 6.

Wadi el-Faw (45° 9' E., 19° 51' N.),
Photograph by John C. McCue.

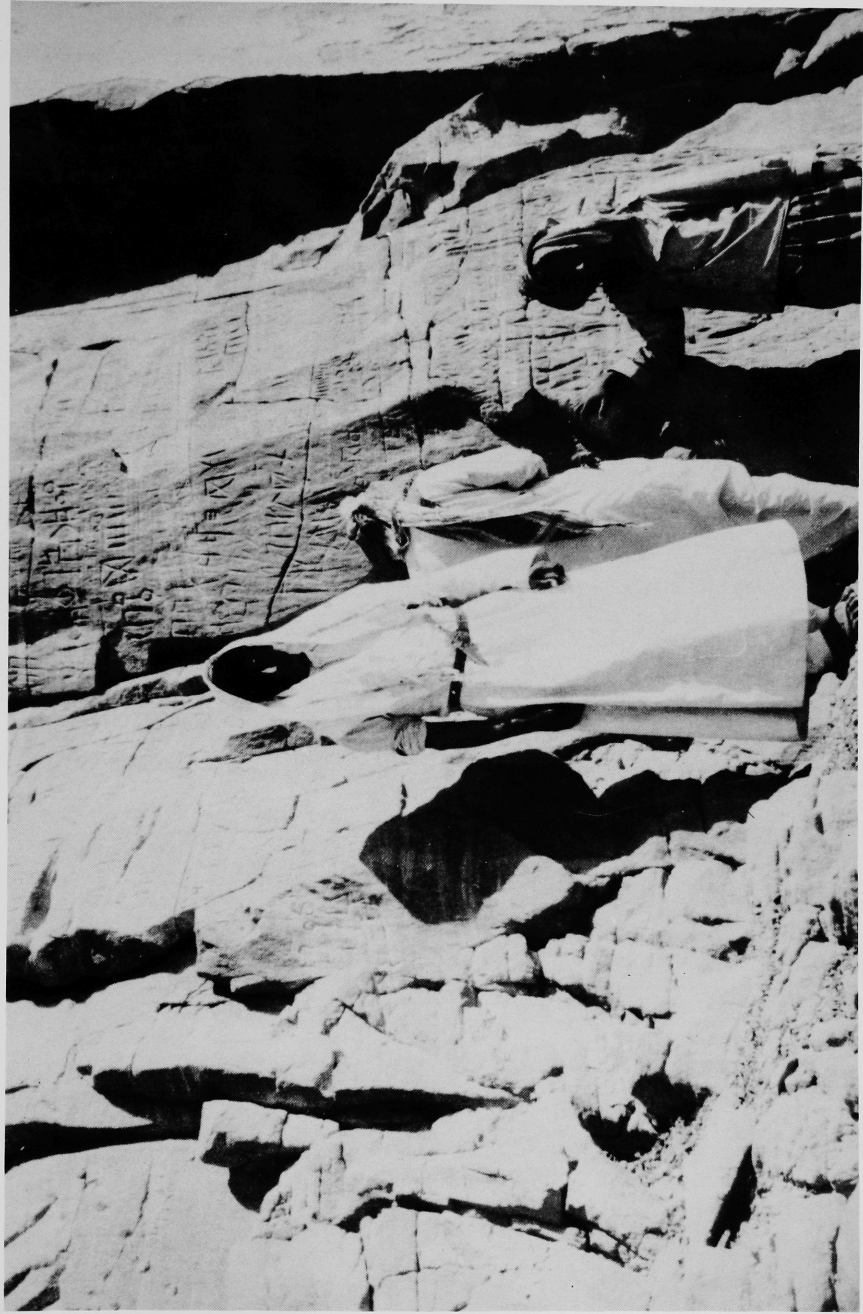
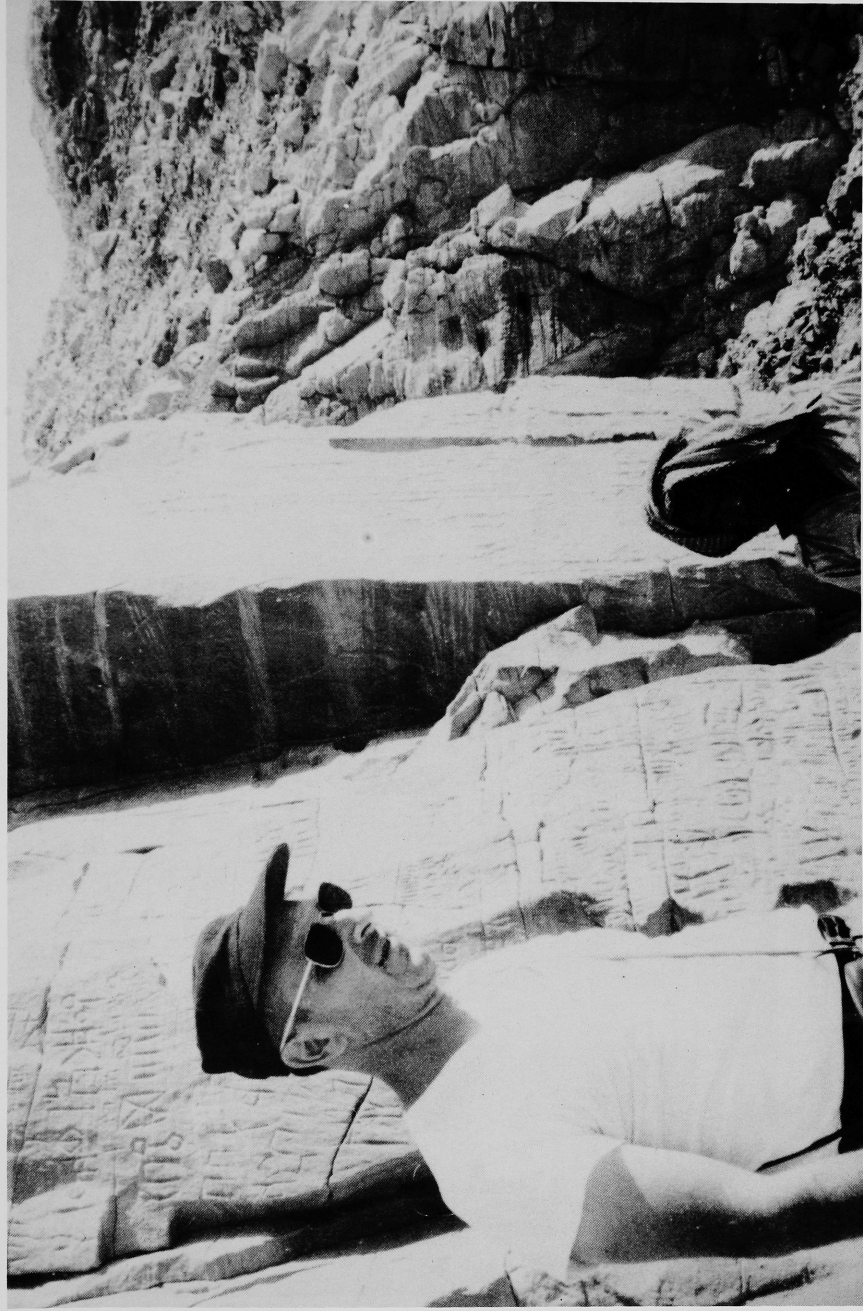


Plate 7.

Wadi el-Faw ($45^{\circ} 9' E.$, $19^{\circ} 51' N.$).
Folke C. Johansson with Arab guide.
Photograph by John C. McCue.



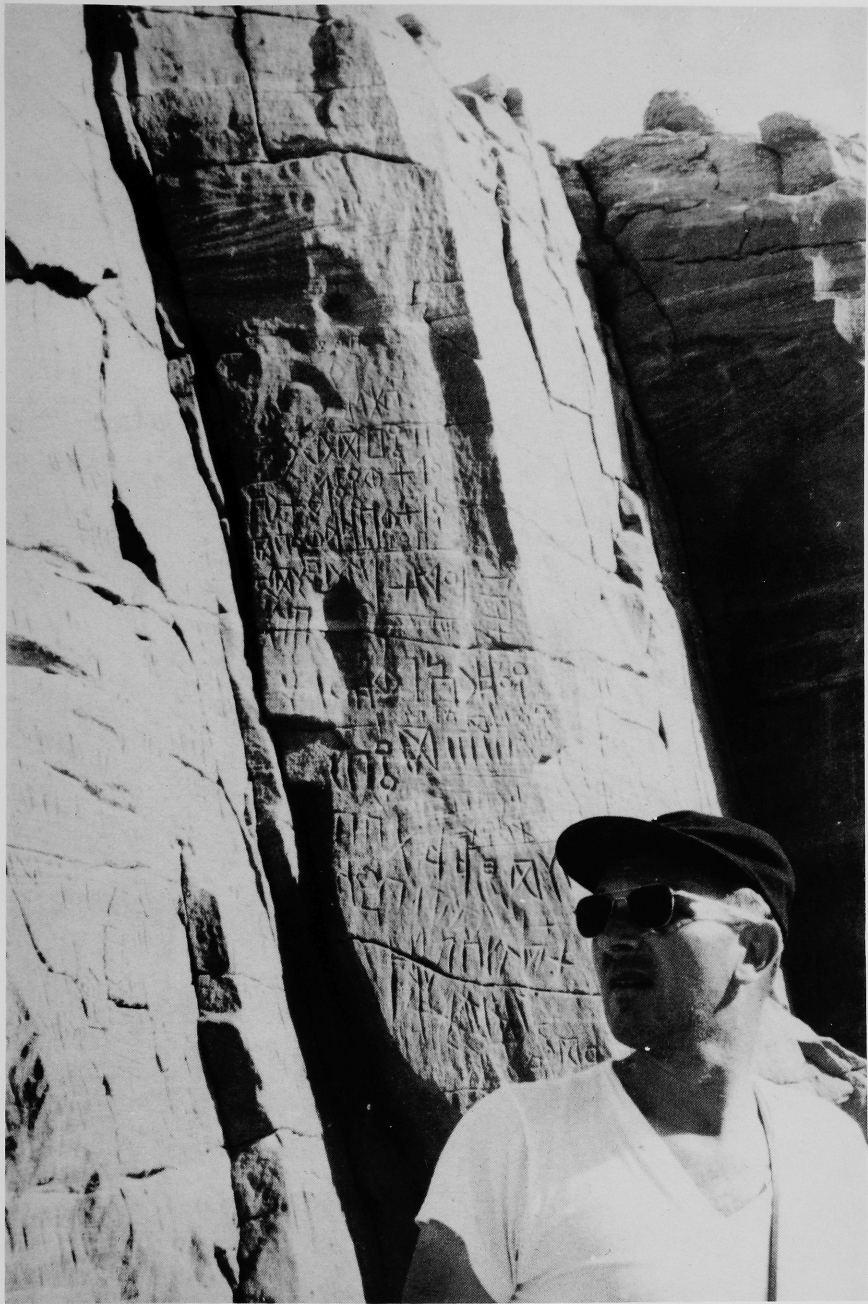


Plate 8.
Wadi el-Faw ($19^{\circ} 51' N.$, $45^{\circ} 9' E.$).
Folke C. Johansson in foreground.
Photograph by John C. McCue.

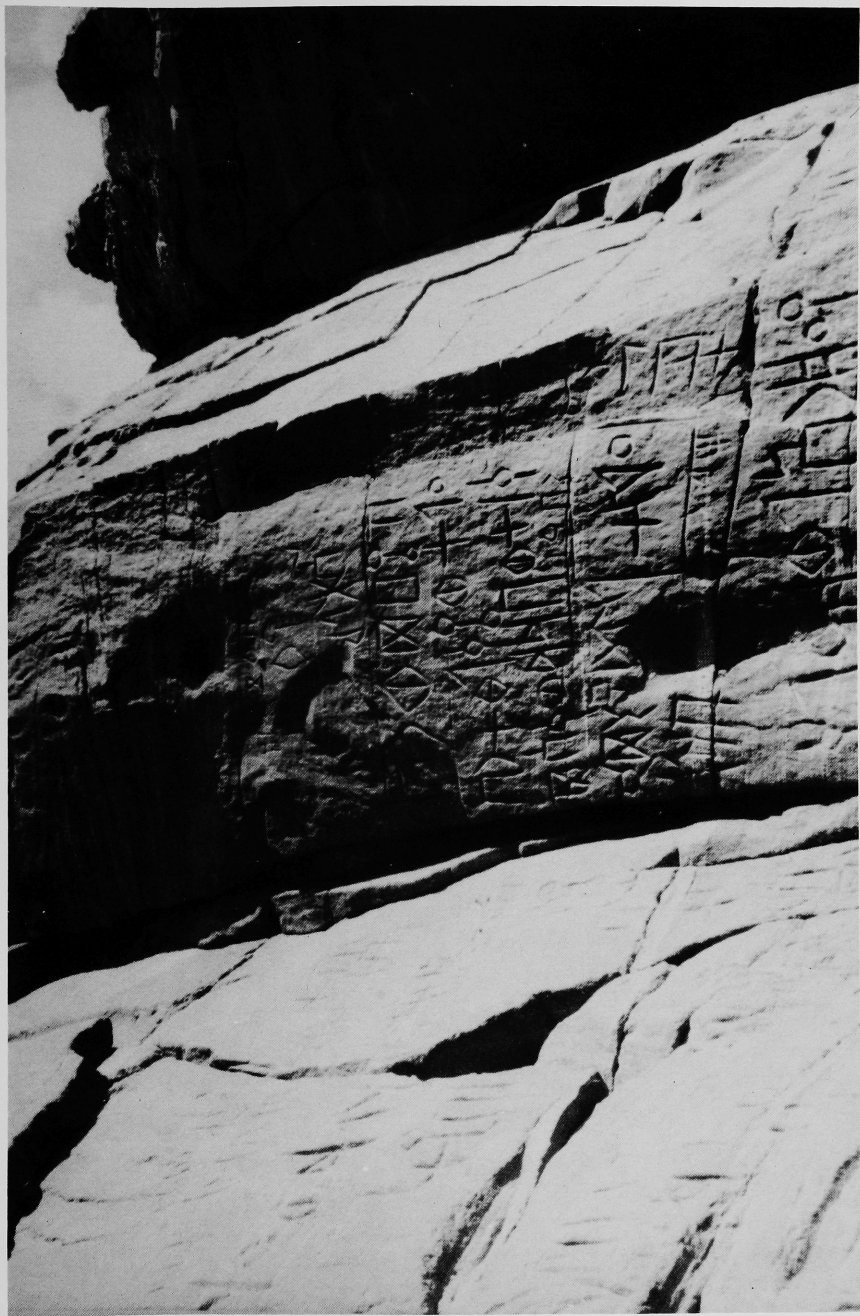


Plate 9.
Wadi el-Faw ($19^{\circ} 51' N.$, $45^{\circ} 9' E.$).
Photograph by John C. McCue.



Lat. $23^{\circ}32'25''$ N
Long. $46^{\circ}05'30''$ E

Plate 10. Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
($23^{\circ}32'25''$ N., $46^{\circ}05'30''$ E.).
Photograph by John J. McCue.



Pictographs at Jilh al 'Ishar

Lat. $23^{\circ}-32'-25''$
Long $46^{\circ}-05'-30''$ E

Plate 11.

Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
($23^{\circ} 32' 25''$ N., $46^{\circ} 05' 30''$ E.).

Photograph by John J. McCue.



Plate 12. Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
($23^{\circ} 32' 25''$ N., $46^{\circ} 05' 30''$ E.).
Photograph by John J. McCue.

Lat. $23^{\circ} 32' - 25''$
Long. $46^{\circ} 05' - 30''$ E

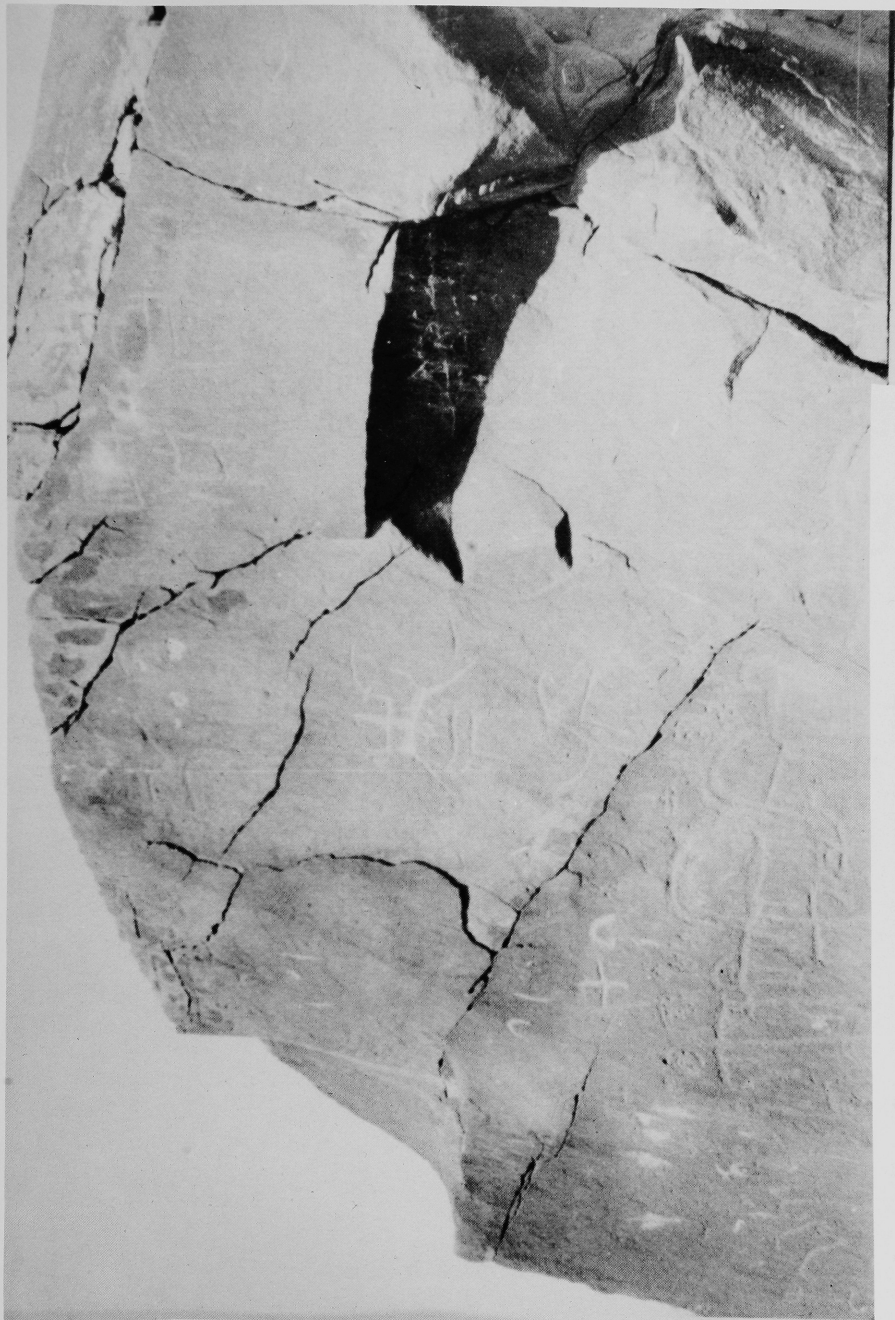
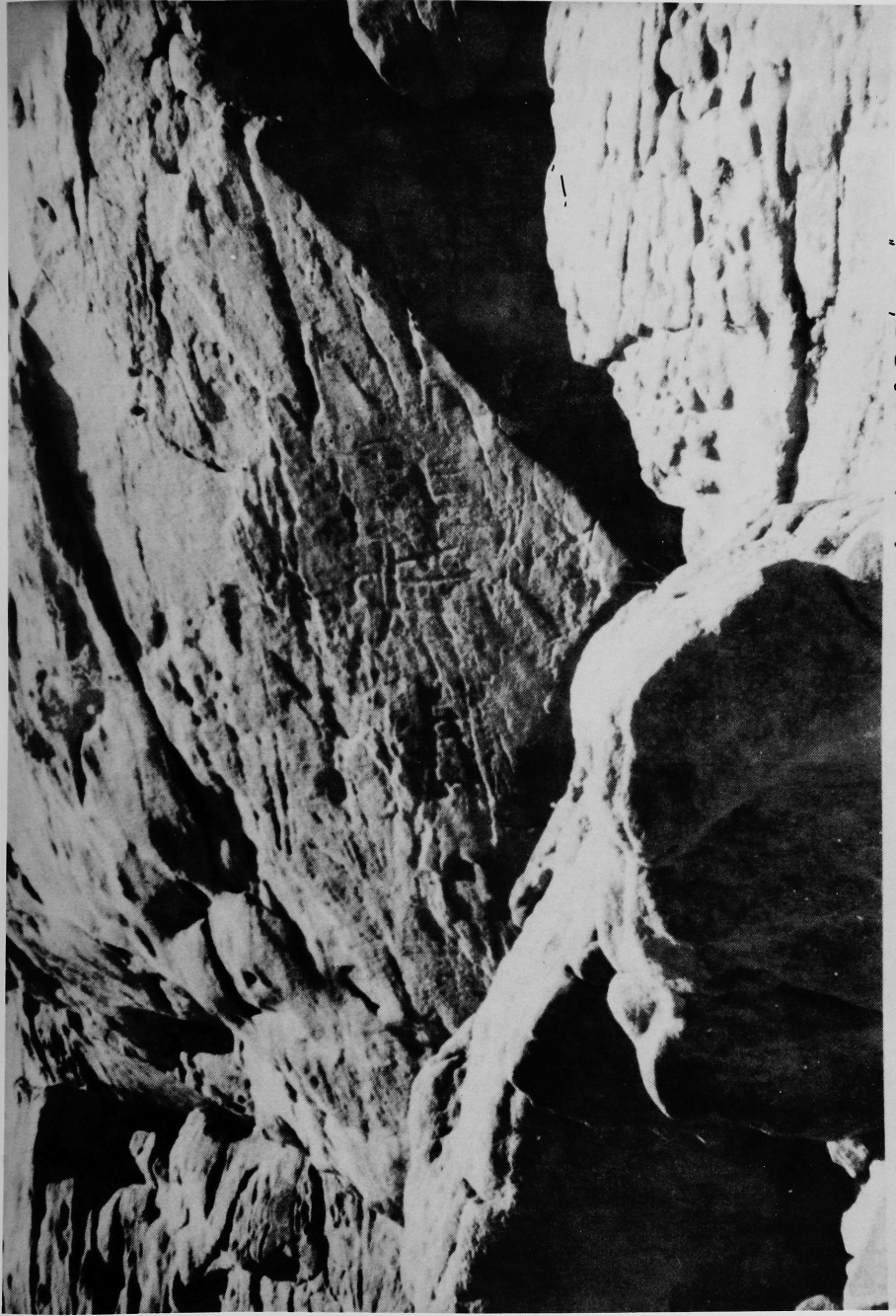


Plate 13. Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
($23^{\circ} 32' 25''$ N., $46^{\circ} 05' 30''$ E.).

Photograph by John J. McCue.

Lat. $23^{\circ} 32' 25''$ N
Long. $46^{\circ} 05' 30''$ E



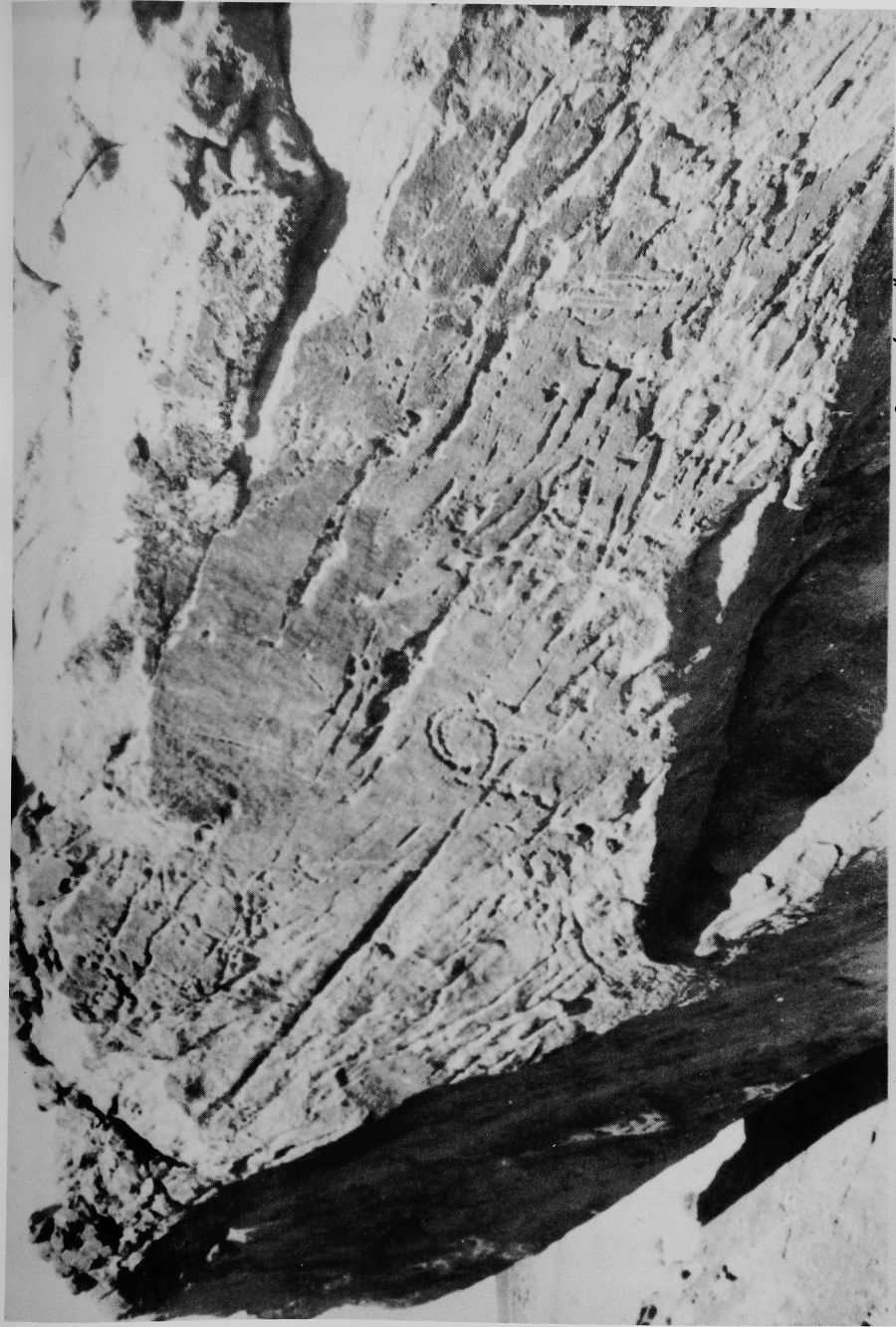
Pictographs at Jilh al 'Ishar

Lat. $23^{\circ}35'00''N$
Long. $46^{\circ}05'15''E$

Plate 14.

Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
($23^{\circ}32'25''N$, $46^{\circ}05'30''E$).

Photograph by John J. McCue.



Pictographs at Jilh al 'Ishar

Lat. 23°-35'-00"N
Long. 46°-05'-15"E

Plate 15. Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh (23° 32' 25" N., 46° 05' 30" E.).
Photograph by John J. McCue.



Pictographs at Jilh al 'Ishar

Lat. $23^{\circ}35'00''N$
Long. $46^{\circ}05'15''E$

Plate 16.

Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
($23^{\circ}32'25''N$, $46^{\circ}05'30''E$).

Photograph by John J. McCue.



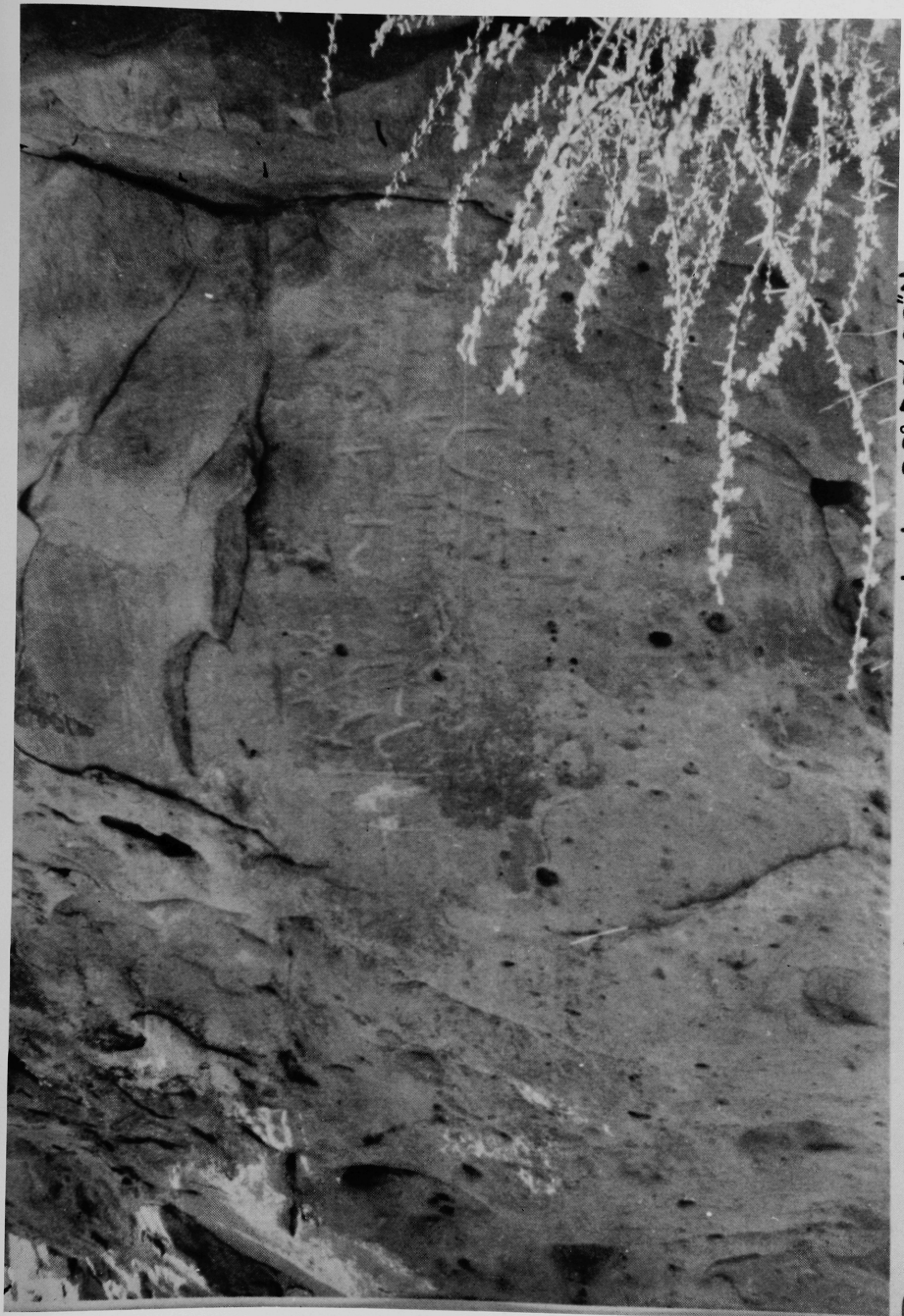
Pictographs at Jilh al-'Ishar

Lat. 23°-35'-00"N
Long. 46°-05'-15"E

Plate 17.

Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
(23° 32' 25" N., 46° 05' 30" E.).

Photograph by John J. McCue.



Pictographs at Jilh al 'Ishar Lat. $23^{\circ} 35' 00''$ N
Long. $46^{\circ} 05' 15''$ E

Plate 18.

Jilh al-Ishar about 100 miles south-southwest of Riyadh
($23^{\circ} 32' 25''$ N., $46^{\circ} 05' 30''$ E.).

Photograph by John J. McCue.

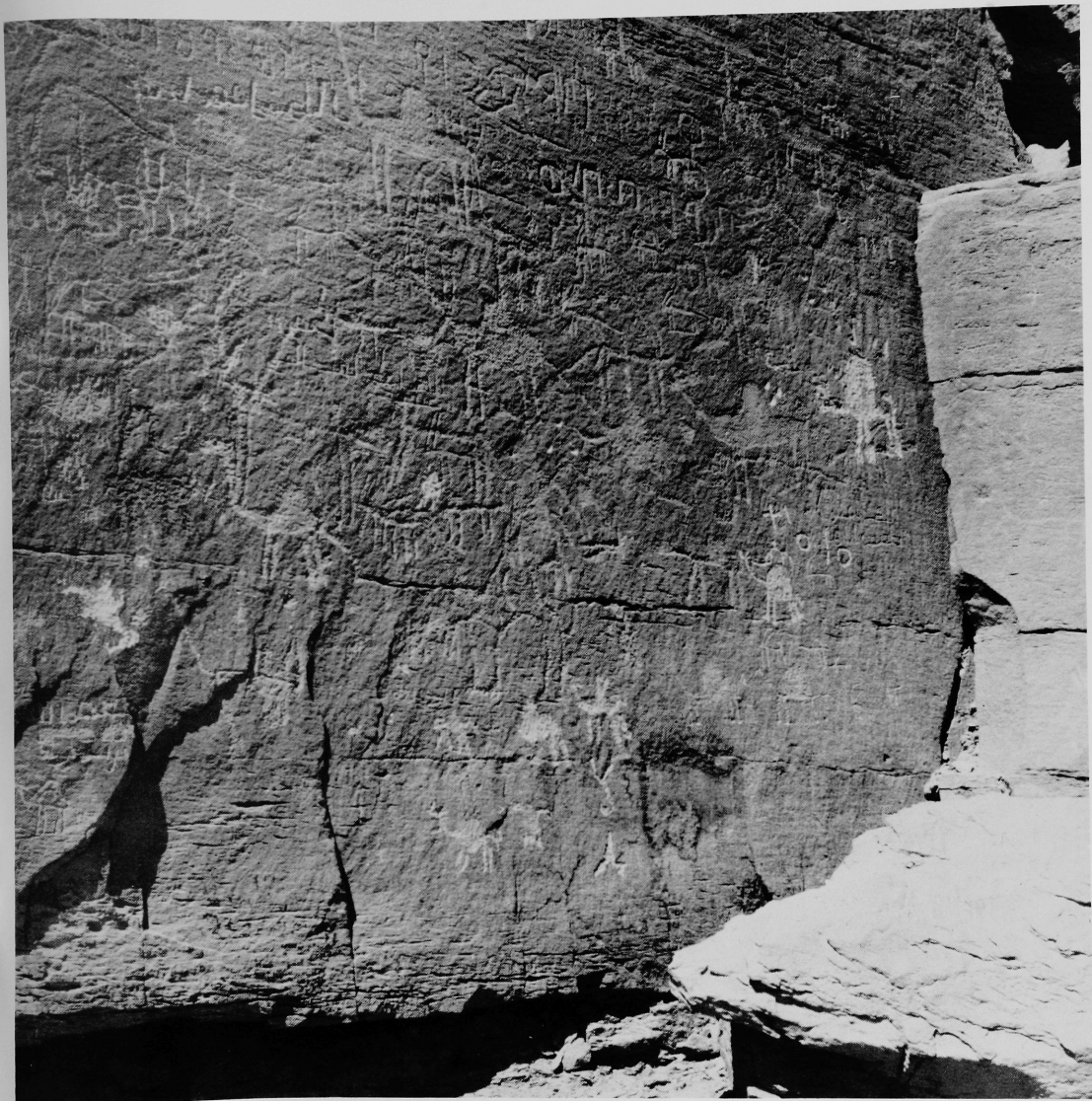


plate 19. Jebel Armahiya ($29^{\circ} 53' 5''$ N., $39^{\circ} 57' 3''$ E.)
12 km. northeast of Jauf.

