

Re-typed November 2012

Comments on Errors in the Cadastral Records:
Saidad Village – Aynak – Shamalan Valley

April 18, 1972

One of the basic elements in the Shamalan Project is the land records upon which depend arrangements for canal right-of-way, irrigation ditch and drain placement, as well as advanced planning and design for land leveling and consolidation. In earlier stages of the project, BuRec technicians found relatively high levels of error in the cadastral records in the areas where they were working. The Cadastral Office was consulted and, in theory, efforts were to be made to rectify the errors. While my work in the Shamalan is not of a technical nature, it does require the use of the cadastral records as a basic interview list, and in the analysis of the relation between the land and the people in a given area. My recent work in the village of Saidad in the Aynak has resulted in the conclusion that the cadastral records have such high levels error, of various sorts, as to make them unusable for the design section of the project without major amounts of time first being spent in the field verifying plots and ownership -- the work the cadastral survey should have already done.

Some of the errors recorded are because the land records quickly become out-of-date. The processes of sale, death and inheritance, division of property and fields between brothers are continuous. Project records must be up-to-date as well as accurate. Some of the errors are on the maps used to plot the parcels, while others are in the mis-recording of owner's names and other relevant data. With a few exceptions, I am not able to document errors in the recording of location and size of the plots. There is no reason to assume, however, that this aspect of records should be any more accurate than the others. The records and maps I worked with are the copies on file with HAVA.

The information listed for any piece of land includes: Name(s) of owner(s); name(s) of father(s); Taskera Number(s) (identity card), parcel number, size in jeribs and land use.

I have frequently heard statements made in government offices (both U.S. and Afghan) that inaccuracies in the cadastral records were the result of villagers lying about land ownership; that they record land in the names of non-owners to escape taxes or possible land reform. I got the impression that just about anyone at hand might be used for this purpose, including share-croppers. If true, this would surely confuse the land records. To date, in the Shamalan I have found no hint that such a haphazard pattern of recording by villagers is taking place, not in this Aynak area nor in the Bolan area, previously studied. What has been found is land recorded in a man's son's name while the father is still alive and the active household head controlling the household economy. In some cases the sons were still minor children. However, the names recorded were the future heirs to the property. In the areas studied, when tribe and sub-tribe or lineage affiliation are plotted on the cadastral maps, the patterns found tend to reflect what we should expect given the

Muslim system of inheritance; that is, the highly fragmented holdings being grouped by sub-tribe or lineage, reflecting the holdings of a common ancestor. In the areas studied, the owners appear quite anxious that land holdings should be recorded in the correct name. One man, for example, approached our survey team with a bill-of-sale of a parcel of land (No.693) which had been mis-recorded in his brother's name by the cadastral survey while he was on his yearly visit to the northern provinces to collect from his followers. The outcome of this dispute is unknown but the village malik was called in to mediate between these two brothers who still live in the same extended household with their still active father.

The Village: The Said village in Aynak is located about half way between the Nad-i-Ali Wasteway (to the south) and the tomb of Mir Salim (to the north) which sits on a kind of peninsula jutting out into the Shamalan valley at about N. 40 on cadastral maps. (Plot No. 505, see map Nos. I and II). Mir Salim was a Said (descendent of the Prophet Mohammad) who was settled in the area by the Barakzai tribe, given land, some 400 years ago, and was the local Pir or religious leader or guide with apparently a wide following. His tomb is a place of pilgrimage. His descendents presently live in the Said village and the highly fragmented nature of their land holdings reflects this heritage.

The land below the village belonging to the Suids is a very small area and probably represents most of Mir Salim's original holdings after four centuries of division of property among surviving sons. It is an area of about one-half kilometer wide and three-quarters of a kilometer long. It includes some 109 parcels of land ranging from 16.33 jeribs (the village) to .13 jeribs, averaging 1.64 jeribs per parcel. It is one of the most highly fragmented areas I have seen in the Shamalan. The larger plots, seen mostly on the outer edges of the village lands, are the results of more recent purchases.

There are 12 – 15 households of Suids in the village, about 200 persons, and possibly an equal number of share-cropper (but much smaller) households. At least two households maintain houses and live most of the year in Lashkar Gah. Several households have permanently moved to Hashrut where they have land.

The village sits half on the desert escarpment and half on the land just below the escarpment. The move up off the fields began 6 – 10 years ago, apparently in an attempt to reclaim productive land holdings.

The present Aynak ditch runs between the two sections of the village and there are a series of narrow gardens and alfalfa plots also between the two sections of housing. The tentative line for the canal runs roughly through the center of the village which is likely to miss most of the housing. This village is very much to be affected by the Shamalan Project.

Several of the Suids also own land in the Saidabad district of the Shamalan. Most also work land in the desert behind the village, which is not officially registered land but watered from the present Aynak ditch in any case. This would be classed as "out of project land farmed". One such plot of about 25 jeribs is cooperatively or collectively

Desert

Land Area Belonging to
Saidad Village

Map No. I



farmed by about 23 “owners” who have 2 buzgars to do the work. Because of lack of water they get only one crop, and only wheat, per season. Hopefully, the opportunity will allow time for a more detailed study of this indigenous cooperative effort which is the first I have come across in my studies in the area.

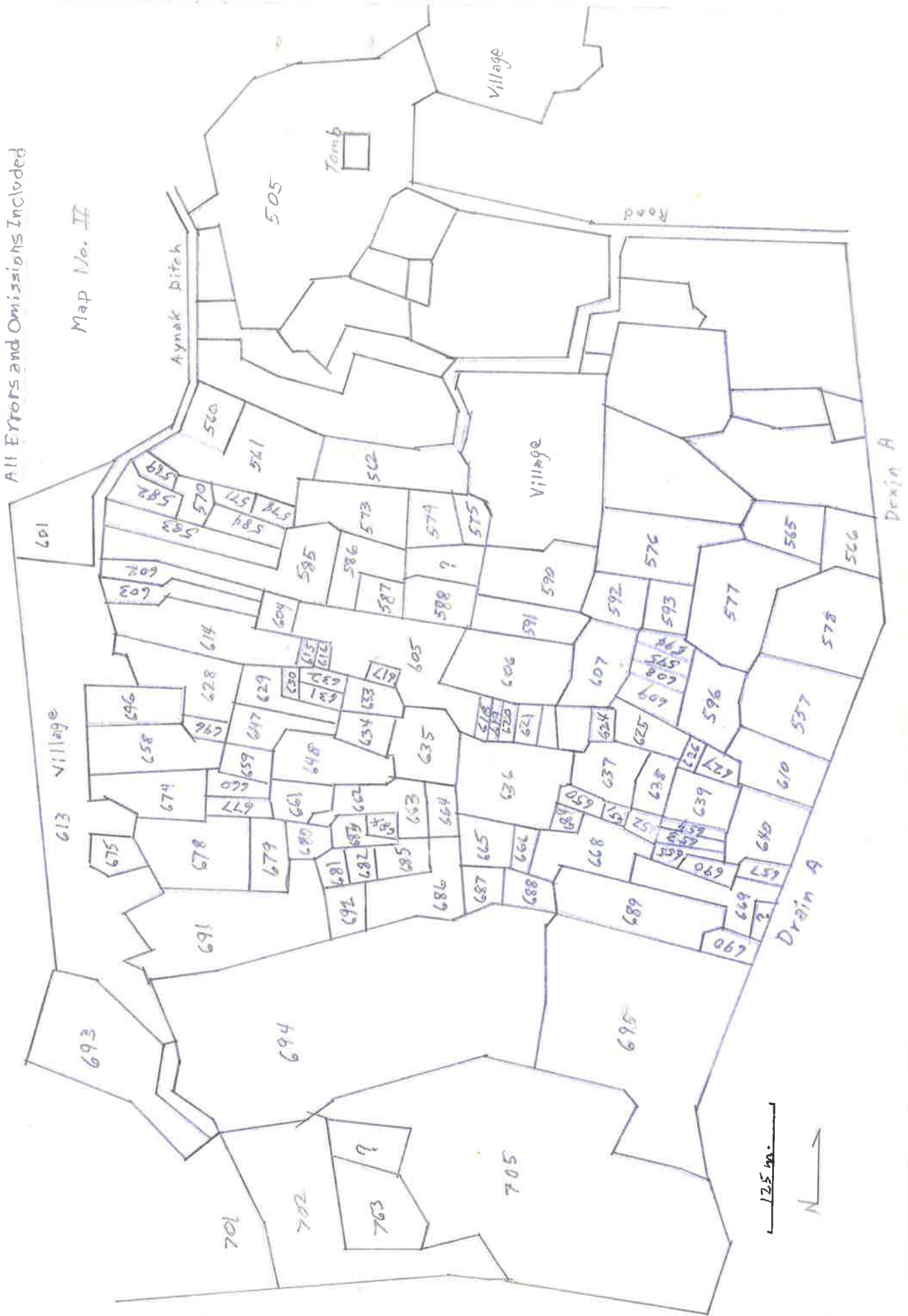
Map Errors: On the consolidated cadastral map to be used by the project which is also a combined topographic map, there are 26 parcels which were either missing, left unnumbered, given numbers out of sequence and repeated on other parcels on the same map, or do not match the records by size. One is recorded in the wrong name following a sale of unknown date. Given the limited time in the field the following errors were found, there are likely more:

- a) There are two Nos. 557. By sequence on the map one should be No. 597, which is missing.
- b) There are two Nos. 578. By sequence on the map one should be No. 572, which is missing.
- c) An unnumbered parcel near Nos. 588 and 590 should probably be No. 589, which is missing.
- d) There are two Nos. 695. By sequence on the map one should be No. 595, which is missing.
- e) Two unnumbered parcels between Nos. 621 and 624 should probably be Nos. 622 and 623 which are missing.
- f) No. 646 is much too small on the map when compared to the size of parcel listed on the records (2.36 jeribs). Probably related to mis-numbered parcel No. 696 just above it on the map. There are two Nos. 696. This section of the map will be discussed more fully below.
- g) No. 648 is too large on the map when compared to the size of parcel listed in the records (1.29 jeribs). There is not, however, a No. 649. On the ground, the fields I have numbered 648 – 649 were planted in melons and wheat respectively and were verified by farmers to correspond to the records.
- h) There is no No. 656 but two Nos. 690, one of which by sequence on the map is logically No. 656, lying between Nos. 655 and 657.
- i) There is no border drawn between Nos. 662 and 663.
- j) There is no No. 667 but two Nos. 687, one of which by sequence on the map is logically No. 667, lying between Nos. 666 and 668.
- k) The parcel by size and location which logically should be No. 670 is unnumbered, just below No. 669 on the map.
- l) There is not No. 676 on the map but a land-use study indicates that it probably lies between Nos. 675 and 678.
- m) There are two Nos. 683 but no 685. The lower 683 should probably be numbered 685.
- n) There is no No. 700 on the map. Perhaps it is the small passage or plot through which the Aynak ditch runs, between Nos. 693 and 694.
- o) There is no western border drawn for No. 791.
- p) There are two Nos. 702, one being below the drain.

Desert

From Consolidated Cadastral Map
All Errors and Omissions Included

Map No. II



Desert

From The Consolidated Cadastral Map

After Corrections (not official)

Map No. III



12.5 mi

N

MAD: A11

- q) While it is outside our study area, No. 763 was mis-numbered; there is another in the proper sequence on the map below the drain. It should probably be No. 703. And what should probably be No. 704 is not numbered.
- r) No. 596 is registered in the wrong name (not a Said but a Barakzai) following a sale.
- s) Maps Nos. IV and V are self-explanatory. They reflect the difference between plots said to be orchard-vineyard on the cadastral records and what we found in a visual survey of the fields. A complete record of land-use 15 March 1972 was made in the Said holdings. The differences reflect changes that have occurred since the cadastral survey or errors in recording or both.

Errors in Owners' Names: The cadastral list of owners was used in a broader survey of land-use and attitudes toward the Shamalan Project as the interview list. To begin we went through the cadastral list with knowledgeable villagers to identify and locate village residents. As much as possible, we attempted to correct our lists where names were given incorrectly. Brief and superficial kinship charts were then drawn in an attempt to understand more clearly the relations between land owners and the process of fragmentation. In a number of cases, the listed owners were unidentifiable with the information at hand, and time did not allow us to pursue the problems at greater length into the fields. During future visits, hopefully, final and complete records may be established. The cadastral records, as the stand, are not accurate enough to stand alone in clearly understanding land holding patterns.

Some of the most obvious errors found in recorded names are as follows. It should be noted that the correct names are as the men are known or were known in the village. Basically, there was no confusion among the villagers as to any particular individual's name.

No. 560 - Father's name Ghulam should be Ghulam Jan.

No. 561 - Owner Sherza should be Reza and father's name Sher Mohammad should be Shah.

No. 566 - Father's name Amin Shah should be Din Mohammad.

No. 572 - Owner Abbas should be Ayas.

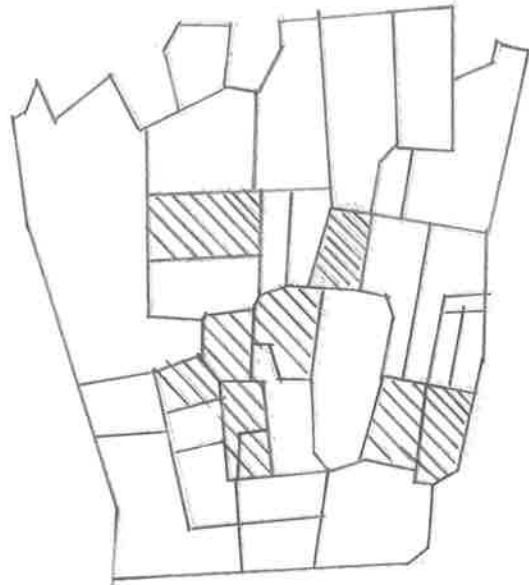
No. 573 - Owner Khan Aga is dead.

No. 574 - Owner Abbas should be Ayas.

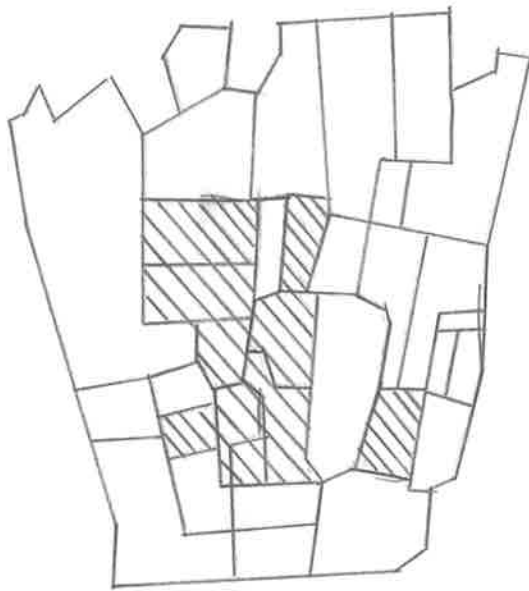
No. 578 - Owner's father, Ghulam, should be Ghulam Jan. Ali Azgar's father, Azgar, should be Ghulam Jan.

No. 582 - Same as 560.

Orchards-Vineyards on the Cadastral Records - Map IV



Orchards-Vineyards on the Ground - Map V



- No. 584 – Owner Mohammad, father Aga, not identified.
- No. 585 – Owner Abbas should be Ayas.
- No. 586 – Owner Abbas should be Ayas.
- No. 587 – Owner’s father, Shah Mohammad should be Fur Mohammad.
- No. 589 – Owner Mir Ahmet Shah should be Mir Ahmet; father, Ghulam, should be Ghulam Jan.
- No. 595 – Owner Gul Aga’s father Mohd. Ghaus should be Mohd. Yar.
- Owner Lal Khan should be Lal Jan, and father, Khan Awaliya, should be Mir Awaliya.
- No. 597 – Reza’s father, Shah Mohammad, should be Shah.
- No. 601 – Owner Mohammad Hasan should be Mohd. Huseyin, and father, Mohd. Yar should be Abdullah.
- No. 603 – Father Mohd. Yar should be Allah Yar.
- No. 604 – Same as 601.
- No. 607 – Owner Hasan should be Huseyin.
- No. 608 – Same as 603.
- No. 609 – Same as 597.
- No. 610 – Owner Lal Khan should be Lal Jan; father Awaliya, should be Mir Awaliya.
- No. 616 – Should be as 604.
- No. 623 – Same as 597.
- No. 626 – Same as 584.
- No. 630 – Same as 584.
- No. 632 – Same as 572, and Ahmet, father Mirdad, unidentified.
- No. 636 – Same as 574.
- No. 646 – Same as 574.

No. 648 – Nur Mohd. Should be Nur Ahmed and father, Ahmed Yar, should be Allah Yar.

No. 651 – Lal Mohd. should be Lal Jan.

No. 654 – Same as 584.

No. 666 – Riza Khan should be Reza.

No. 669 – Ghulam Jan should be Ghulam.

No. 670 – Father, Mabob Yar, should be Mohammad Yar.

No. 677 – Mir Ahmet should be Nur Ahmet.

No. 680 – Same as 584.

No. 681 – Same as 651.

No. 689 – Mosin should be Huseyin.

No. 690 – Haydar's father should be Daud.

In going through the last half of the records only the most obvious errors have been recorded. The point is the level of error in recording names. While many of the errors seem minor, e.g., a Mohammad added to a name or not, Allah Yar rather than Abdullah Yar, Ahmet rather than Mohammad, they make the records unusable for someone attempting to consolidate one individual's holdings. If minor errors of name are recorded, they must be consistent. There are as many errors in the recording of the Taskera numbers (identity card) but there was no way at the time of this writing to know which number is correct.

A Specific Case: While completing the land-use survey for the village it became apparent that not all the fields shown on the cadastral map were repeated in reality on the ground. One of the most obvious differences occurred in fields Nos. 658, 696 646 and 628 on the uncorrected map (see sketch below). The series of sketch maps and diagrams presented below are fairly self-explanatory. They illustrate the differences between the cadastral records and the fields in use. Some of the differences are simple errors in recording; others reflect the process of division and fragmentation through inheritance. While this process of fragmentation may not be considered as in error, it does directly relate to problems in land development and consolidation. The records the project has to work with are not only inaccurate, they are also out-of-date.

The information listed below comes from the cadastral records (errors indicated) and is shown in map form also below. The plots by use and ownership are also illustrated.

No.	Size	Owner(s)	Owner's Father(s)
628	2.79 jeribs	Akbar Shah	Lalo (error)
		Riza	Shah Mohd. (error)
646	2.36 jeribs	Abbas (error)	Mohd. Emin

The owner of this plot should be Ayas. Comparing the size of this plot on the map with those around it, it could not possibly be 2.36 jeribs, and probably should be combined with mis-numbered plot No. 696. (See kinship map below.)

658	3.02 jeribs	Abbas	Jafer
696	No information	Nos. 696 and 646 should probably be one parcel.	

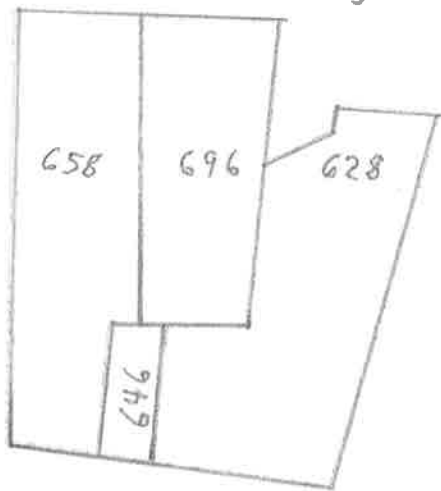
Conclusion: The above information is an attempt to document the level and type of errors to be found in the cadastral records. This section of the Shamalan was not chosen because of the known level of error in the records but because a special study of land use and attitudes toward the Shamalan Project was needed. Thus, in a sense the choice was random and may be considered not greatly unlike any other area chosen at random. This being the case, the records must be considered inadequately completed for project purposes. Their inaccurate nature comes from the mis-recording of names, errors in map making, and lack of recent follow-up by those doing the work. As the records and maps stand, they cannot be considered trustworthy for any land consolidation or development work. They are also out-of-date.

Many of these points have been made orally and in a note to the section in HAVA dealing with the cadastral records and maps, canal right-of-way, and the directory of ownership in the Shamalan. Attempts have been made by HAVA to have the records rechecked, changed or completed. The main complaint of this HAVA section is that they are not getting the necessary cooperation from the cadastral office which is a separate unit outside HAVA. Until HAVA and the cadastral office have a close relationship, and until the records and maps in any given area are completely re-checked on the ground, the design sections of the Shamalan Project will be hamstrung, possibly without knowing it, and consolidation efforts a waste of time.

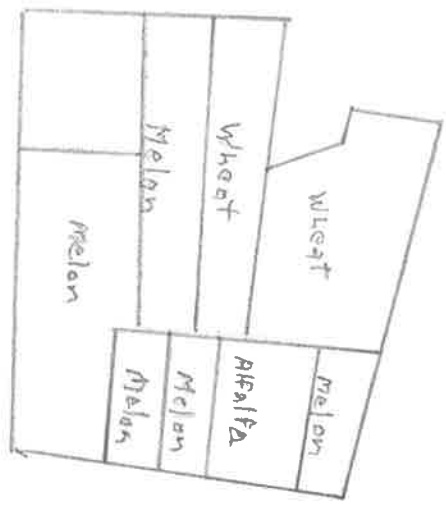
PREPARED BY:

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 April 18, 1972

Sketch Map of Fields
as Recorded by
Cadastral Survey

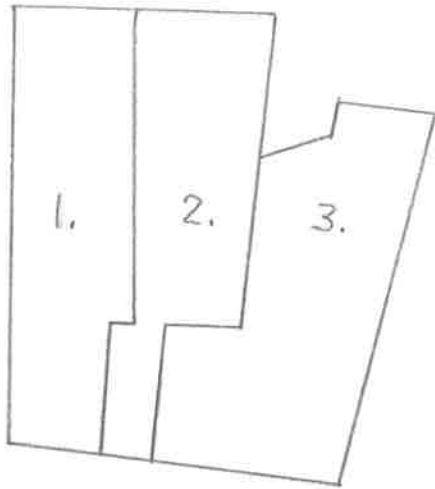


Sketch Map of Fields
and Crops Planted
15 March 1972



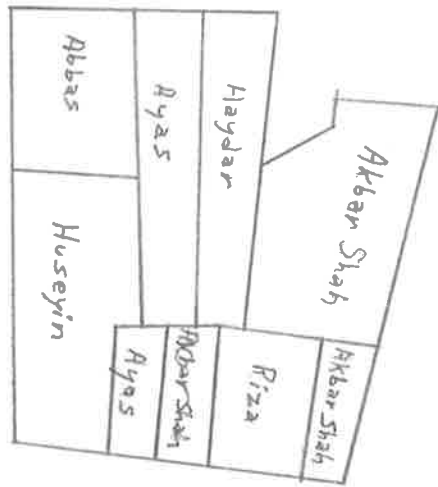
Sketch Map of Plots

by kingroup



Sketch Map of Present Plots

by owner



Kinship of Owners

