

Al-Hamidiyya



Al-Hamidiyya - A Depopulated Palestinian Village in the Baysan Subdistrict

Al-Hamidiyya was a Palestinian village in the Baysan Subdistrict, situated approximately 5 km north of the town of Baysan on a hill overlooking the Baysan

Valley to the east and Wadi Yubla to the north, at an average elevation of about 10 meters below sea level.

The village relied on Baysan for administrative and commercial services. A secondary road approximately two kilometers long linked it with the main road to Baysan, while other local roads connected it with neighboring villages.

The Palestinian inhabitants of al-Hamidiyya left on 12 May 1948 during the wider Golani campaign in the Baysan Valley associated with Operation Gideon. Khalidi states that the departure occurred under the influence of the exodus from Baysan and under “Haganah pressure,” although the nature of that pressure is not specified and his village account does not describe a detailed direct assault on al-Hamidiyya that day.

Item	Information
Subdistrict	Baysan
Distance from Baysan	Approximately 5 km north
Average elevation	Approximately 10 m below sea level
Population, 1931	157
Palestinian population, 1944/45	220 Arabs
Total population in the 1944/45 statistical row	320: 220 Arabs in al-Hamidiyya and 100 Jews in Hermonim
Estimated Palestinian population, 1948	255
Total statistical land unit	10,902 dunums; includes al-Hamidiyya and Hermonim
Date of depopulation	12 May 1948
Military operation	Operation Gideon
Military force	Golani Brigade at the wider campaign level; no village-specific battalion is identified in the principal source

Item	Information
Israeli settlements on village land	Khalidi identifies no settlement as founded directly on al-Hamidiyya's land; Hermonim/Chamadya was nearby but not on village land

Location and Geography

Al-Hamidiyya stood on a hill overlooking the Baysan Valley to the east, Wadi Yubla to the north, and lands belonging to the town of Baysan to the south.

The village formed part of the fertile agricultural landscape surrounding Baysan, where soils and water resources supported cereals, vegetables, citrus, and other crops.

A secondary road approximately two kilometers long connected al-Hamidiyya with the highway leading to Baysan, while additional local roads linked it to neighboring Palestinian villages.

Neighboring Villages and Areas

Palestinian maps and community documentation indicate the following approximate geographical relationships:

Direction	Village or Area
North	Jabbul
Northeast	Zab'a
East	'Arab al-Bawati / Khirbat al-Hakimiyya
South	Baysan and its lands
West	al-Murassas

These are approximate geographical relationships and should not be treated as substitutes for historical cadastral boundaries.

Name of Al-Hamidiyya

The village was named after Ottoman Sultan '**Abd al-Hamid II**, who ruled from 1876 to 1909.

The name therefore reflects the village's association with the late Ottoman period in the Baysan region.

Built Form

Al-Hamidiyya had a rectangular layout with narrow lanes intersecting to form a local street grid.

The older houses were constructed of adobe brick, while newer houses built during the first half of the twentieth century used cement and were erected along roads leading toward neighboring villages.

The Palestine Index Gazetteer classified al-Hamidiyya as a hamlet or agricultural settlement.

Population of Al-Hamidiyya

The official 1922 Census of Palestine recorded 193 inhabitants. Census data list 192 Muslims and one Roman Catholic Christian.

By the 1931 census, the population stood at 157, all Muslims, living in 42 occupied houses.

The 1944/45 Village Statistics require particular care because al-Hamidiyya and the nearby Jewish settlement of Hermonim were combined in one statistical row. The row records 220 Arabs in al-Hamidiyya and 100 Jews in Hermonim, producing a statistical total of 320.

The Palestinian village population itself was therefore 220, not 320.

Palestine Remembered later estimated the Palestinian population at 255 in 1948 and the number of refugees and their descendants at 1,567 in 1998. These are

retrospective estimates rather than official Mandate census counts.

Year	Population	Nature of Figure / Notes
1922	193	Official census; 192 Muslims and one Roman Catholic Christian
1931	157	Official census; all Muslims
1944/45	220 Arabs	Palestinian population of al-Hamidiyya; the full statistical row also records 100 Jews at Hermonim, total 320
1948	255	Later estimate of the Palestinian population, not an official census
1998	1,567 refugees	Later estimate of refugees and their descendants

Number of Houses

Year	Houses	Nature of Figure
1931	42	Occupied houses recorded in the official census
1948	68	Later Palestine Remembered estimate, not an official Mandate count

Education

Khalidi's principal village account and the core PalQuest entry do not document a separate formal school in al-Hamidiyya.

This article therefore does not add a school without a secure source, particularly because the village depended on nearby Baysan for a number of administrative and commercial services.

Maqam Khalid

A shrine known as **Maqam Khalid** stood in the northeastern part of the village and was associated with a local Muslim holy man.

The principal source does not provide a secure construction date or a detailed architectural history of the shrine.

The Al-Hamidiyya Cooperative Society

Palestinian community documentation preserves records relating to the **Al-Hamidiyya Cooperative Credit and Thrift Society** during the 1940s.

The surviving material includes budgets, profit-and-loss accounts, and official correspondence from 1943–1947, demonstrating organized financial and cooperative activity in the village in the final years before the Nakba.

Land Ownership in 1944/45

The combined statistical unit of al-Hamidiyya and Hermonim contained 10,902 dunums.

Using Palestine Remembered's simplified terminology:

Ownership Category	Area in Dunums
Palestinian	4,814
Transferred to Zionists	1,386
Communal/Public	4,702
Total	10,902

The official Village Statistics use the original categories Arab, Jewish, and Public: 4,814 dunums were Arab land, 1,386 Jewish, and 4,702 public.

These figures belong to a statistical unit that **combined al-Hamidiyya and Hermonim**; they should therefore not be represented as a standalone cadastral total belonging exclusively to the Palestinian village.

Some Palestine Remembered versions display 4,720 dunums of public land, but that figure is inconsistent with the published 10,902-dunum total. The official Village Statistics give 4,702 dunums, which is used here.

Land Use in 1944/45

The official 1945 land-use tables contain an internal numerical discrepancy for al-Hamidiyya and Hermonim. The figures are therefore reproduced as published and the conflict is stated explicitly rather than silently “corrected.”

Use	Arab	Jewish	Public	Published Total
Citrus and bananas	164	0	0	164
Plantations and irrigable land	8	4	0	12
Cereals	4,395	1,289	866	6,550
Built-up land	10	40	0	50
Non-cultivable land	401	53	3,836	4,290

The official cultivable-land table gives a total of 6,726 dunums: 4,567 Arab, 1,293 Jewish, and 866 public.

The built-up and non-cultivable table gives 4,340 dunums: 411 Arab, 93 Jewish, and 3,836 public.

Adding those published totals produces 11,066 dunums, which exceeds the official ownership total of 10,902 dunums by 164 dunums—the exact area listed for citrus and bananas.

The official sources used here provide no clear explanation for this discrepancy, so this article does not remove or reclassify the 164 dunums without evidence.

Some simplified Palestine Remembered tables also merge public land into the Palestinian column. For cereals, for example, the official breakdown is 4,395 Arab, 1,289 Jewish, and 866 public dunums, rather than 5,261 Palestinian and 1,289 Jewish dunums.

The same applies to non-cultivable land: the official figures are 401 Arab, 53 Jewish, and 3,836 public dunums.

Economic Life

Agriculture formed the principal basis of the economy.

Villagers cultivated cereals, vegetables, citrus fruit, and bananas, as well as a small area of plantations and irrigated land.

In 1944/45, the official table records 164 Arab dunums of citrus and bananas, 4,395 Arab dunums of cereals, and 8 Arab dunums of plantations and irrigable land.

The village depended on Baysan for administrative services, trade, and the marketing of agricultural produce.

Documents concerning the local cooperative credit and thrift society also show a degree of organized financial activity during the final years of the Mandate.

Water and Wadis

Al-Hamidiyya overlooked the Baysan Valley to the east and Wadi Yubla to the north.

Other Palestinian geographical descriptions record wadis crossing the northern and southern parts of its wider lands and flowing eastward toward the Jordan River.

Khalidi does not provide a detailed list of village springs, although several wells remained identifiable at the site after the Nakba.

Operation Gideon

Operation Gideon ran from 10 to 15 May 1948 and was carried out by the Haganah's Golani Brigade to establish control over the Baysan Valley and displace its Palestinian population.

The campaign led to the fall of Baysan and the occupation or depopulation of much of the surrounding valley within a few days.

Later Palestinian documentation places al-Hamidiyya within the Operation Gideon context. Khalidi's village-specific account describes the village's departure within the wider Golani offensive against Baysan and its valley but does not identify a specific Golani battalion as the unit that entered al-Hamidiyya.

PalQuest's Operation Gideon account notes that the Irgun may have participated somewhere in the wider offensive on the basis of its own announcement that it had occupied five northern villages. This does not establish Irgun participation at al-Hamidiyya itself, so the Irgun is not listed here as the village-specific attacking unit.

Depopulation on 12 May 1948

Al-Hamidiyya was among the few villages in the Baysan Valley whose inhabitants remained until the collapse of the district center.

Khalidi records that the villagers departed on **12 May 1948** under the influence of the exodus from Baysan and under “pressure from the Haganah.”

The account does not specify what form this pressure took and does not provide a detailed description of a direct battle or assault inside the village on that date.

The most precise formulation is therefore that **al-Hamidiyya was depopulated on 12 May 1948 under the impact of Baysan's fall and Haganah pressure, within the broader Golani campaign associated with Operation Gideon.**

Stage	Date	Details
Beginning of Operation Gideon	10 May 1948	Golani Brigade begins the campaign to occupy the Baysan Valley
Fall of Baysan and regional flight	12 May 1948	Collapse of the district center directly affects surrounding Palestinian communities
Depopulation of al-Hamidiyya	12 May 1948	Villagers leave under the influence of the exodus from Baysan and Haganah pressure

Stage	Date	Details
Military force	May 1948	Golani Brigade at the wider campaign level; no village-specific battalion securely identified
End of Operation Gideon	15 May 1948	Completion of the principal campaign in the Baysan Valley

Demolition after Depopulation

In September 1948, nearby Zionist settlements requested authorization from the Israeli authorities to demolish al-Hamidiyya and three other villages in the region.

The account cited by Khalidi does not establish whether formal permission was granted or the precise date on which al-Hamidiyya was destroyed.

No exact demolition date is therefore assigned here without additional reliable documentation.

Hermonim / Chamadya and Al-Hamidiyya

Hermonim: Established in 1942 approximately two kilometers south of the al-Hamidiyya village site.

According to Khalidi, Hermonim stood close to al-Hamidiyya's lands but **was not established on the village's lands**.

In 1952, Hermonim was renamed **Chamadya**, a name selected to resemble the Arabic name al-Hamidiyya.

This geographical distinction should not be confused with the 1945 statistical tables, which combined al-Hamidiyya and Hermonim into a single statistical unit and consequently recorded 100 Jewish residents and 1,386 dunums of Jewish-owned land. Statistical aggregation does not by itself mean that the settlement was founded on al-Hamidiyya's village land.

Al-Hamidiyya Today

According to Walid Khalidi's field description in *All That Remains*, the remains of village houses had been reduced to cement and stone rubble, while the cemetery and several wells remained identifiable.

Thorny vegetation covered much of the site, and the surrounding lands were being used for agriculture and livestock grazing.

A documented photograph reproduced in the village archive is dated 1987 and shows the ruins of the destroyed village.

Khalidi's description should therefore be treated as a field baseline from the 1980s and the period before the publication of *All That Remains* in 1992, not as direct verification of every feature in 2026.

Palestine Remembered also contains later community documentation of the village site, the old railway, and surrounding lands. Such material is useful for tracing later landscape change but does not constitute a comprehensive current archaeological or architectural survey, and an upload date does not necessarily establish the date on which a photograph was taken.

Sources

- [PalQuest – Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question: al-Hamidiyya](#)
- [PalQuest – Operation Gideon](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – al-Hamidiyya, Baysan](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – al-Hamidiyya entry from All That Remains](#)
- [Institute for Palestine Studies – Walid Khalidi, All That Remains](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Census of Palestine 1922](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Census of Palestine 1931: Beisan Sub-District](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Village Statistics 1945: Beisan Sub-District, Population and Land Ownership](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Village Statistics 1945: Beisan Sub-District,](#)

Cultivable Land

- [Government of Palestine – Village Statistics 1945: Built-up and Non-Cultivable Land](#)
- [Palestinian Villages Encyclopedia – al-Hamidiyya](#)