

Abu Rawa / Jabarat

Abu Rawa / Jabarat - Palestinian Bedouin Clan of the Beersheba Subdistrict

Abu Rawa was a Palestinian Bedouin clan associated with the Rawa'a branch of the Jabarat tribe in the Beersheba Subdistrict. It was not a single nucleated village with one permanent built-up center, but part of a tribal community whose dwellings and encampments were concentrated around Wadi al-Hasi and nearby areas between the northern Naqab and the southern Palestinian coastal plain.

'Arif al-'Arif, as reproduced by 'Umar Rida Kahhala, records the dwellings of the Jabarat Rawa'a at Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih. These areas formed part of the broader Jabarat domain extending northeast of Gaza toward Burayr and al-Faluja.

Item	Information
District	Beersheba
Tribe	Jabarat - Rawa'a
Type of Community	Bedouin/semi-settled clan with multiple encampments rather than a single nucleated village
Documented Dwelling Areas	Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih within the wider Jabarat tribal domain
Population in 1931	No independently verified Abu Rawa-specific figure; the commonly reproduced 4,452 figure refers to the Jabarat as a whole
Estimated Population in 1948	230 - later estimate, not an official census
Attack and Displacement Period	17 July 1948 appears in some sources as a general Jabarat attack/occupation date; WAFA records Abu Rawa's displacement on 20 October 1948
Military Operation	Operation Yoav in the final recorded displacement phase

Item	Information
Military Unit	No specific brigade or battalion is independently documented at the Abu Rawa clan level
Land Area	No independent Abu Rawa land total; the approximately 60,000 dunums quoted in some sources concern part of the wider Jabarat domain
Settlements on Clan Land	No specific Israeli settlement can be reliably assigned to Abu Rawa land from the sources reviewed

Abu Rawa and the Jabarat Rawa'a

Abu Rawa appears in Palestinian tribal documentation within the Rawa'a grouping, one of the branches of the Jabarat.

'Arif al-'Arif places Jabarat Rawa'a dwellings at Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih. The Jabarat as a whole occupied territory along both sides of Wadi al-Hasi and toward the areas of Burayr and al-Faluja.

Abu Rawa should therefore not be treated as a conventional masonry village with one fixed built-up center, but as a clan within a broader tribal territorial system.

Tribal Tradition of Origin

Later Palestinian tribal accounts describe Abu Rawa as belonging to the Khalaween and preserve a tradition that an ancestor came from the Hijaz and settled among the Jabarat around Wadi al-Hasi.

The same local tradition associates families such as al-Barraj and al-Shafi'i with the Abu Rawa grouping.

This information comes from later tribal genealogy and is therefore presented as community tradition rather than independently verified Mandate-era genealogy.

Clan Leadership

Palestinian documentation of the Jabarat shaykhs identifies the leader of the Rawa'a before the Nakba as:

Salam bin al-Hajj 'Id Abu Rawa.

Later tribal narratives mention other members of the Abu Rawa family as shaykhs in different periods, reflecting changes in leadership across generations.

Encampments and Location

'Arif al-'Arif locates the Jabarat Rawa'a at **Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih.**

Wadi al-Hasi was an important geographical axis for the Jabarat, whose tribal domain stretched between Gaza and the northern Naqab and lay near agricultural localities such as Burayr and al-Faluja.

A single coordinate, elevation, or distance from Beersheba would therefore be misleading for Abu Rawa as a whole.

Population before the Nakba

Several modern Palestinian databases display **4,452 inhabitants in 1931** on pages associated with Abu Rawa or the Jabarat. This figure refers to the Jabarat as a whole in those sources, not to Abu Rawa alone.

No separate official 1931 Abu Rawa figure could be independently verified from the sources available for this article.

No population figure is therefore inferred from the wider Jabarat total or mathematically derived from the later 1948 estimate.

Estimated Population in 1948

Palestinian registers of depopulated communities give an estimated **230 people** for Abu Rawa / Jabarat in 1948.

This is a retrospective estimate rather than an official population census conducted in 1948.

Year	Population	Nature of Figure
1931	Not independently verified	The commonly reproduced 4,452 figure belongs to the wider Jabarat, not Abu Rawa alone
1948	230	Later estimate, not an official census

Households and Dwellings

No independently verified official house count is available for Abu Rawa.

In Bedouin sources, a “house” may refer to a household, tent, or encampment unit rather than a permanent masonry structure. No housing total is therefore inferred from population figures or wider Jabarat statistics.

Land and Property

The 1945 Village Statistics do not provide a separate Abu Rawa land unit from which a village-style ownership or land-use table can be constructed.

Later Palestinian sources describe approximately 38,000 habal—roughly 60,000 dunums—as part of the broader Jabarat tribal lands northeast of Gaza near Burayr and al-Faluja.

This figure belongs to the wider Jabarat domain and cannot be reassigned to Abu Rawa alone.

No Palestinian / Transferred to Zionists / Communal-Public table is therefore

supplied for the clan without independent land documentation.

Economic Life

Abu Rawa shared the mixed pastoral and agricultural economy of the Jabarat.

The Wadi al-Hasi region lay close to productive agricultural areas of the southern coastal plain, allowing Jabarat communities to combine livestock raising with cultivation.

No independently documented crop acreage, orchard area, or livestock count is available specifically for Abu Rawa.

Water, Education, and Services

Rawa'a encampments were associated with Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih, but the principal sources do not provide an independent inventory of Abu Rawa wells or water resources.

No separate school serving the entire clan is sufficiently documented either. Schools in Burayr, al-Faluja, or other nearby villages are therefore not reassigned to Abu Rawa without direct evidence.

The July 1948 Attack

Some later Palestinian sources give **17 July 1948** as an occupation date for the Jabarat and repeat it on pages for individual tribal branches.

This date falls within the intense fighting on the southern front during the Ten Days between the First and Second Truces.

However, sources that list Abu Rawa independently give a later final displacement date of 20 October 1948. The July date is therefore treated as an earlier attack or general Jabarat date rather than as the conclusively established final removal of the entire Abu Rawa clan.

Final Displacement during Operation Yoav

WAFA records an estimated population of 230 for Abu Rawa / Jabarat and gives **20 October 1948** as their displacement date.

This fell during **Operation Yoav**, which began on 15 October and ended on 4 November 1948.

The operation aimed to break Egyptian lines in southern Palestine and connect Israeli forces in the Naqab with those farther north. The Giv'ati, Yiftach, Negev, and Har'el brigades participated at the operation-wide level.

PalQuest, however, does not list Abu Rawa independently among the named affected localities. No one brigade can therefore be identified as the specific force that displaced the clan without additional evidence.

Occupation and Displacement Chronology

Stage	Date	Details
Pre-Nakba Encampments	Until 1948	Jabarat Rawa'a occupied Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih within the wider Jabarat domain.
Reported Summer Attack	17 July 1948	This appears in some sources as a general Jabarat occupation or attack date but does not match Abu Rawa's later recorded final displacement date.
Beginning of Operation Yoav	15 October 1948	A major Israeli offensive began against Egyptian forces on the southern front.
Recorded Final Displacement of Abu Rawa	20 October 1948	This is the date recorded by WAFA for Abu Rawa / Jabarat.
Occupation of Beersheba	21 October 1948	The capture of the district's principal administrative center followed one day later and further transformed control of the Beersheba region.

Stage	Date	Details
End of Operation Yoav	4 November 1948	The operation had substantially altered military control across southern Palestine.

Military Operation and Unit

Military Operation: Operation Yoav provides the immediate military context for Abu Rawa's recorded displacement on 20 October 1948.

Military Unit: No specific brigade or battalion is independently documented at the clan level.

The Giv'ati, Yiftach, Negev, and Har'el brigades participated in Operation Yoav on different axes, but none should be assigned specifically to Abu Rawa without direct clan-level evidence.

Cause of Displacement

Abu Rawa's displacement occurred in the context of direct military operations on the southern front and the offensive that culminated in Operation Yoav.

The difference between the July attack date reproduced in some sources and the 20 October final displacement date suggests a multi-stage process rather than one single event.

The most supportable description is therefore **military attack and wartime displacement during the southern campaign**, without adding unsupported details about the departure of individual families.

Destruction of Encampments

There was no single compact masonry village called Abu Rawa for which a reliable destruction percentage can be calculated.

The clan belonged to the dispersed Jabarat Rawa'a community around Wadi al-Hasi

and Abu Suwayrih, and the sources reviewed do not provide a complete inventory of houses, tents, wells, or structures destroyed.

No unsupported description such as “completely destroyed” or numerical destruction percentage is therefore used.

Settlements on Abu Rawa Land

The reviewed Palestinian sources do not provide a separate cadastral map of Abu Rawa land from which a particular Israeli settlement can conclusively be assigned to the clan's property.

Some Palestinian references explicitly note the absence of specific settlement data for Jabarat branches at this level.

No modern locality is therefore assigned to Abu Rawa solely because of geographic proximity.

Abu Rawa / Jabarat Today

There is no single former “Abu Rawa village site” to describe today because Abu Rawa did not constitute a nucleated village before the Nakba.

The Abu Rawa name continued as a Palestinian tribal and family name after displacement. Palestine Remembered preserves a substantial oral-history interview recorded in 2006 with Muhammad Abu Rawa, born in 1927, documenting memories of the Jabarat and the Nakba.

Such oral histories are valuable evidence for the clan's social memory, but they do not constitute a contemporary census or a cadastral survey of the historical Abu Rawa lands.

A precise present-day reconstruction would require matching Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih with historical clan-boundary and property maps. This section is therefore not a comprehensive 2026 field survey.

Sources

- ['Arif al-'Arif – Tarikh Bir al-Saba' wa-Qaba'iliha](#)
- ['Umar Rida Kahhala – Mu'jam Qaba'il al-'Arab: Jabarat Rawa'a and their dwellings at Wadi al-Hasi and Abu Suwayrih](#)
- [Encyclopedia of Palestinian Villages – Abu Rawa / Jabarat](#)
- [Encyclopedia of Palestinian Villages – Jabarat Tribe and Branches](#)
- [WAFA – Palestinian Localities Depopulated in 1948: Abu Rawa / Jabarat](#)
- [PalQuest – Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question: Operation Yoav](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – Oral History Interview with Muhammad Abu Rawa, Jabarat](#)