PREFACE

The Book of Joshua in Greek is far from being a new interest for me. But I have very much welcomed the invitation to study it primarily for its own sake, not (just?) as witness to the developing tradition of the Hebrew book. In company with the other contributions to this series, the focus of attention here is not an eclectic reconstruction of a presumed ‘original Greek translation’ of Joshua – but rather a single Greek manuscript. My immediate choice was the text of ‘Jesus’ in Codex Vaticanus, the so-called LXX (henceforth B): one of the early great codices, possibly the earliest – and amongst them the most distinctive when compared with the traditional Hebrew text (MT). The huge importance of this manuscript has of course long been known from transcripts in polyglot Bibles and critical editions. However, it has been a particular thrill, thanks to the publication in 1999 of the magnificent colour facsimile edition of the whole Codex: Bibliorum Sacrorum Graecorum Codex Vaticanu B, Roma: Istituto Poligrafi co e Zecca dello Stato, and thanks to generous support from Edinburgh University Library and special funds in New College Library which supported purchase of a copy, to have obtained much closer, though not immediate, access to this most important of texts. I am also happy to acknowledge the freedom given me to research and prepare this translation and commentary in two sabbatical terms, one provided by the University of Edinburgh and the other by the Arts and Humanities Research Board.