



## The Sultantepe Tablets

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# THE SULTANTEPE TABLETS

By O. R. GURNEY

## I. THE EPONYM LISTS

WITH THIS NUMBER of *Anatolian Studies* we begin the publication of the Sultantepe tablets, as foreshadowed in Volume II, p. 35. The general nature of the hoard of tablets has already been described in the previous article. We present here three texts which are of some historical importance : the two eponym lists, and the tablet from " M.2 " (nos. 150, 18 + 21, and 331, of the 1952 season). All three provide some additional information about the series of *limmu* officials or eponyms, whose names were used by the Assyrians for dating their years and therefore form the basis of Assyrian chronology ; the first two referring to the period covered by the " Eponym Canon " (911-648 B.C.) and the third to the short period between 648 and the fall of Nineveh (612 B.C.), for which there are no lists. It is hoped to continue the publication of the tablets in succeeding volumes.

### I. 1952, no. 150

This tablet came to light in many fragments. These were joined as far as possible as the work progressed, but the copy published on Fig. 1 was made while the tablet was still in several pieces, which could not be joined without plaster. As a result the lacunae above the lowest portions of columns I, II and III are not accurately reproduced ; but since the text at these points is already well established it has been thought advisable to publish the copy without further delay.

As already mentioned in the previous issue of this journal, the main interest of this tablet centres on the reigns of Adad-nirari II and Tukulti-Ninurta II at the beginning of the text.

#### *Reign of Adad-nirari II.*

The first four eponyms are already known. The name of the fifth, Barmu, had hitherto been in some doubt owing to ambiguous spelling but is here quite clear. Of the sixth name only traces remain and the seventh is entirely missing. The small fragment which has been joined at this point contains the ends of five names, and the fit is sufficiently good to leave no doubt that the first of them is that of the eponym for the eighth year. This and the following name, which had hitherto been unknown, are here seen to end in *-KAK* or *-ni* and *-in-an-ni* respectively. The next name is evidently *Dûr-māti-Aššur*, the eponym for 901 B.C., and from that date to 895 the sequence is assured from the Annals of the king. For the years 895 and 894 B.C. our text offers *Ana-iliya-taklak* and *Šamaš-abûa*, where the Annals have *Ana-iliya-allak* and [*Šamaš(?)abi*]-*ya* : while for the next

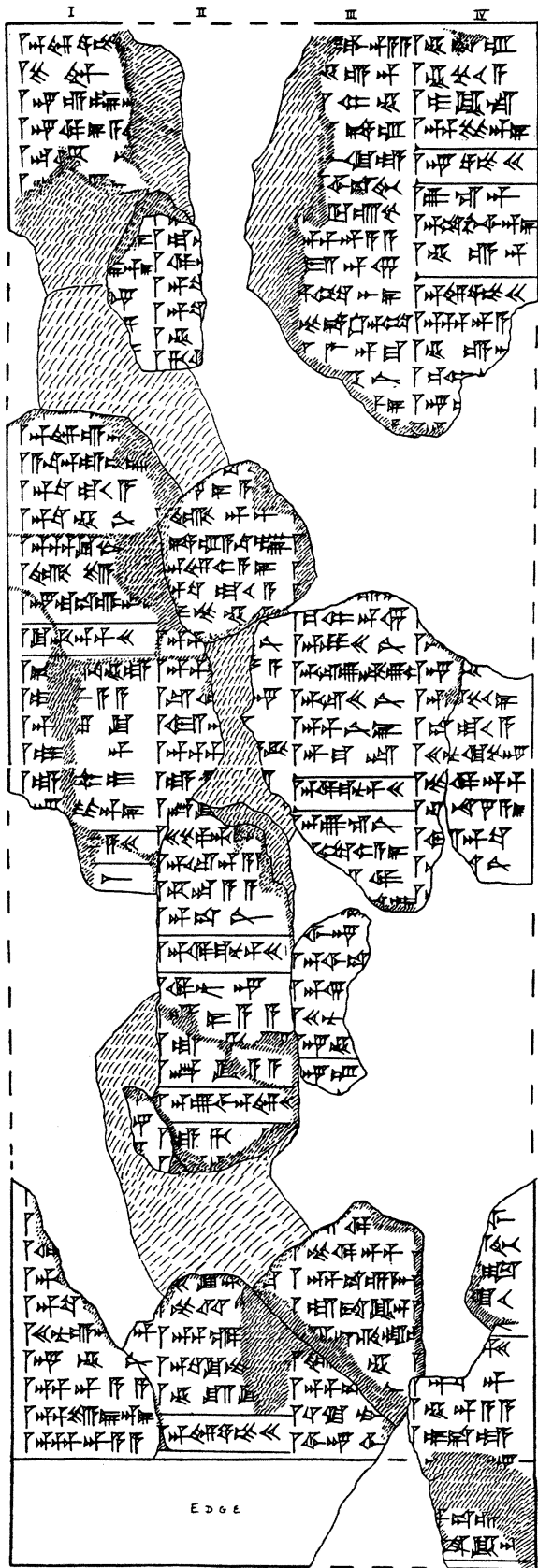


FIG. 1. S.U. 52/150 Obverse.

name (893 B.C.) there is a more serious discrepancy, *Šamaš-bél-ušur* taking the place of *Ili-naḫiṣti-ušur*, which is found in the colophon of the Annals. This variation can easily be explained by the similarity of the signs *EN* (*bél*) and *ṢI* (*naḫiṣtu*). But it is curious that the tablet K.4388 (Ca 2 in Ungnad's terminology) seems to have had yet another variant of this name, for its first line contains the word *-šarru-* (*LUGAL*). This can hardly be a different eponym, as supposed by Ungnad, since in our text only one name, that of *Šamaš-bél-ušur*, intervenes between *Šamaš-abūa* and those of the last three eponyms of the reign, which are identical with those on K.4388 (except for the inexplicable addition to the name of *Aššur-la-kīnu*). Possibly *šarru* may have been substituted for *bél* by an error due to the similarity of meaning. It seems then that the name allotted by Ungnad to 892 should be deleted and the last three names assigned to the years 892, 891 and 890 B.C. The additional name in the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta II brings the eponym-year of this king up to 889 B.C.

The total number of years in the eponym-period of Adad-nirari II on this tablet is thus 21, which agrees with the Khorsabad King-list. Unfortunately, however, some doubt must remain about the correctness of this figure. For on K.4329 (Ca 1) the ends of the names of the three eponyms following Barmu are preserved and these traces do not entirely agree with those on our tablet. The traces of the sixth name on our tablet might indeed be reconciled with those of either the sixth or seventh on K.4329, and the seventh name is missing; but the eighth name on our tablet cannot be reconciled with that on the Nineveh tablet, which ends in *-ma*. Therefore unless there were two different versions of the eighth name, K.4329 must have had one more name than the Sultantepe tablet at this point, and it may be that we ought to assign 22 years to this king and to suppose that one name has been omitted by the Sultantepe scribe.

#### *Reign of Tukulti-Ninurta II.*

The text has the same series of eponyms for this reign as K.4388 with the addition of *Na'id-ili*, who appears before *Yar'i* as in the Annals of this king. The eponym period thus has seven years, as in the Khorsabad King-list, and the hypothesis put forward by Poebel in *JNES.*, II, 73-4, that the omission of the name of *Na'id-ili* from the list in K.4388 was due to a mere scribal error is confirmed.

#### *Rest of the Text.*

From the beginning of the reign of Assurnasirpal to the end of this list in 750 B.C. there are only a few deviations from the accepted text.

In two instances our text provides the correct reading of a doubtful name.

835 *Šēpā-Šamaš* (*GÌR<sup>II</sup>-dUTU*) for *GÌR<sup>II</sup>-MAN* (Ca 2).

802 *Aššur-balti-ekurri*, hitherto read *Aššur-balti-nišē* on the strength of the traces in Ca 2.

The only totally different reading is found in the year 823, where the text has *Ululai* a second time in place of *Bél-bunaya*. There may also have

been a different name in 795, where our text has [. . . . .]-*an-ni* in place of *Marduk-šadūni*; but since most of the name is lost, this must remain doubtful. Col. IV has the normal *Marduk-šadūni* for this year (see below).

The remainder of the variants are either alternative spellings or mere scribal errors :

864	<i>Aššur-bêl-ušur</i>	for <i>Šamaš-bêl-ušur</i> (Ca 1 and Cc)
861	<i>Urigal-ilaya</i>	for <i>Aššur-ilaya</i> (Ca 1) or <i>Ninurta-a-. . .</i> (Cc)
831	<i>Šar-KUR-pa-ti-bêli</i>	for <i>Šar-pa-ti-bêli</i> (Ca 2)
825	<i>Aššur-bunaya</i>	for <i>Aššur-bunaya-ušur</i> (Ca 1)
785	<i>Nergal-uballiṭ</i>	for <i>Adad-uballiṭ</i> (Ca 3, Ca 6, Cb 2, Cc)
784	<i>Nergal-šarra-ušur</i>	for <i>Marduk-šarra-ušur</i> (same 4 texts)
780	<i>Šamsi-PAP</i>	for <i>Šamši-ili</i> , <i>Šamsi-ili</i> , or <i>Šamaš-ili</i>
771	<i>Aššur-ŠID</i>	for <i>Aššur-dan</i> , the king (Ca 1, Cb 2)
763	<i>[Bu]r-(d)sa-gi-li-e</i>	for <i>Bur-(d)sa-gal-e</i> (Cb 1, Cb 2)
761	<i>Ninurta-mukin-aḫi</i>	for <i>Nabû-mukin-aḫi</i> (Ca 1, Cb 1, Cb 2)
760	<i>Liš-ki-pu</i>	for <i>La-ki-pu</i> (Ca 1, Cb 1, Cb 2)
757	<i>Ninurta-iddina</i>	(Ca 1, Cb 2) omitted.

Lines are drawn before the names of the kings and in some instances after them also, as in Ca 3. These lines serve only to mark the kings' names and have no significance for the accession years, as pointed out by Jepsen in *AfO.*, XIV, 64–70.

After the eponym for 750 B.C., *Bêl-dan*, the scribe has drawn a line and has then filled the rest of the fourth column with the names for the years 809–764 B.C., which he had already inscribed in columns II–III. Wherever the two series can be compared, the names are identical, with the exception of that for 808, *Urigal-ilaya*, which is given with two different spellings, and that for 795, for which the second series has the normal version *Bêl-šadūni* instead of the anomalous form ending in *-anni*.

S.U.52/150. Reverse.

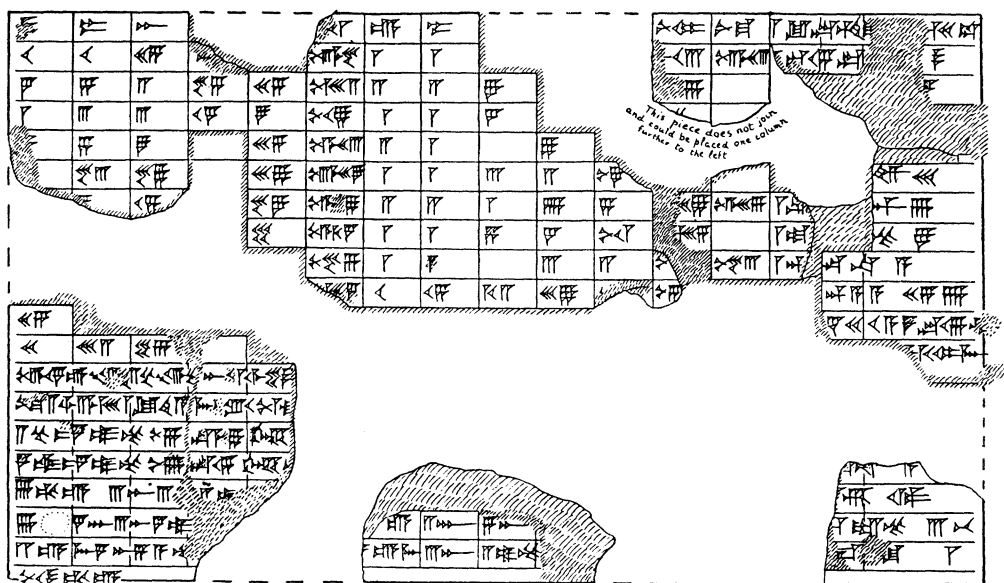


FIG. 2. S.U.52/150 Reverse.

The inscription on the reverse of the tablet runs lengthwise, at right-angles to the obverse, and consists largely of a series of simple sums in arithmetic. Two of these are actually incorrect :  $4 + 5 + 2 + 45 + 25 = 92$ , and  $1 + 3 + 3 + 14 + 7 = 18$ . Only one is both completely preserved and correct ; and that is a remarkably elementary one :  $1 + 1 + 3 + 2 = 7$ . The significance of the first line and the last eight lines, which contain personal names and references to cattle, is not clear to me.

The many mistakes, the apparently purposeless repetition of a section of the list, and the combination of eponym-list and arithmetical calculations, seem to mark the tablet clearly as a schoolboy's exercise. The fact that the list ends in the year 750 B.C. suggests that it was inscribed in that year. If so, it would be fifty years older than any of the dated documents from Sultantepe.

## 2. 1952, no. 18 + 21

Tablet no. 18 had almost disintegrated in the soil and a large part of it is illegible. No. 21 was numbered as a separate tablet but was afterwards seen to be part of no. 18.

This text belongs to the class of eponym lists called "chronicles" in which the position held by the eponym and some brief historical notes are added for each year. These notes, so far as they are preserved, are practically identical with those on other texts of this kind.

In addition to these notes our tablet includes at the end of each reign a statement of the number of years in the reign. It thus combines the features of the two categories Cb and Cc. Unfortunately the figure giving the number of years is in each instance broken off.

The obverse, as far as preserved, covers the years 824–808 B.C. ; when complete it would have run from about 844 to 804 B.C. It is very fragmentary, and the historical notes and offices of the eponyms are almost completely lost. The only variants are :

821	[ <i>Ia-ḥ</i> ] <i>a-li</i>	for <i>Iaḥalu</i>
819	[ <i>Ninurta-u</i> ] <i>b-lam</i>	for <i>Ninurta-ubla</i>
815	[. . . .]- <i>be-el</i>	for <i>Šar-pati-Bêl (EN)</i>
811	[. . . .]- <i>mu-a-a</i>	for <i>Šamaš-kumûa</i>
810	[. . . .]- <i>ka-ša-bat</i>	for <i>Bêl(EN)-qâti(ŠU)-šabat</i>

The reverse is preserved in four distinct fragments, but no line is completely missing except perhaps the last. It runs from 803 to 765 or 764 B.C. There are the following variants :

802	Campaign <i>ina ti-a[mtim ?]</i> instead of <i>ana eli tamtim</i> (Cb 1).
800	Campaign against the Manneans ( <i>ina mat Man-na-a-a</i> ) instead of the Medes ( <i>ana Mad-a-a</i> ). Probably an error.
792	<i>M[u-šal-lim-](d)Bêl</i> for <i>Mušallim-(d)Ninurta</i> (Ca 1 and Cb 2).
791	[ <i>Bêl-</i> ] <i>BA-eš-ám</i> for <i>Bêl-BA-šá-an-ni</i> .
790	<i>Šépâ-(d)Šamši(ši)</i> for <i>Šépâ-(d)Šamaš</i> .

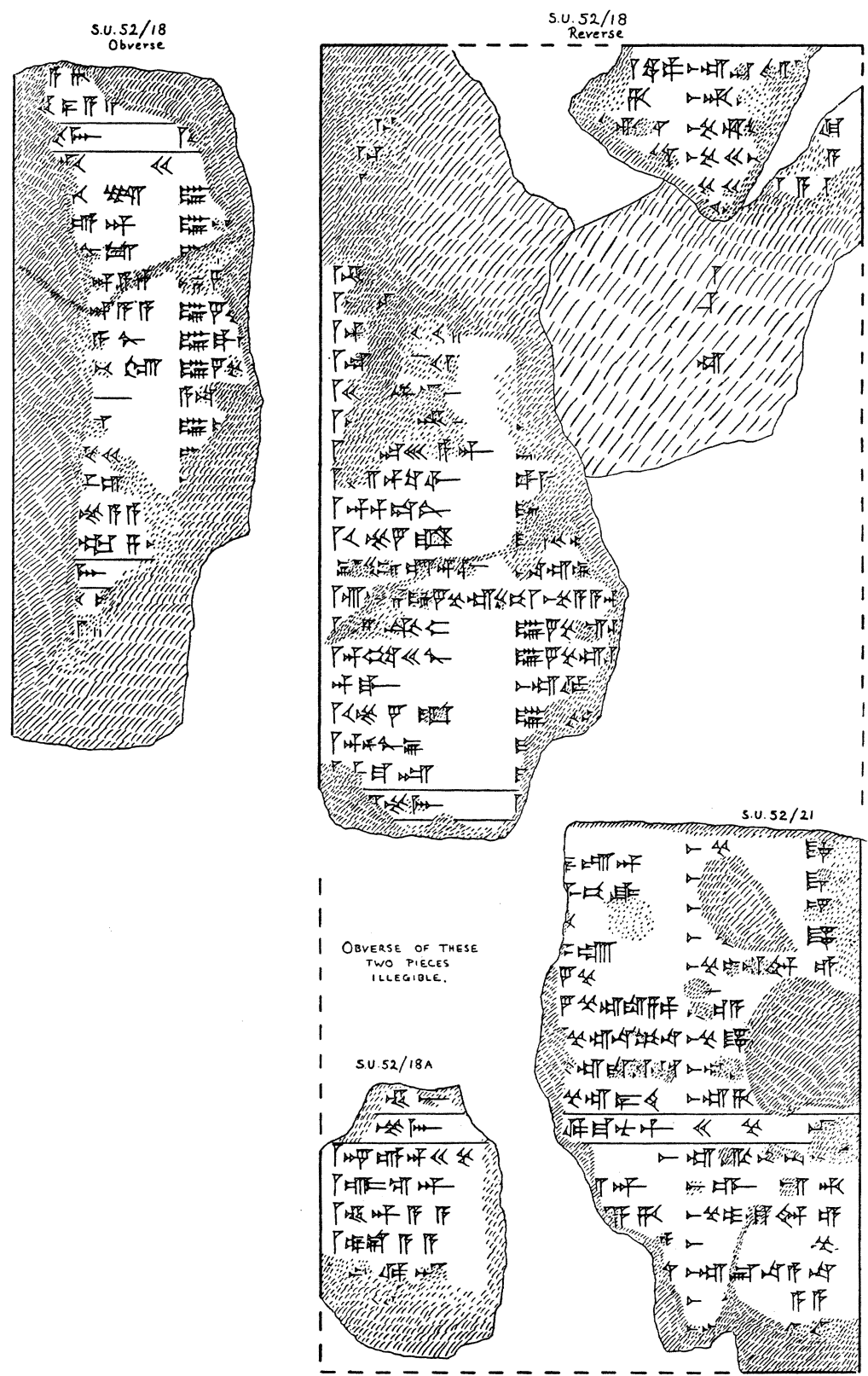


FIG. 3. S.U. 52/18.

- 788 Historical note : *uš-še-e(?) bit (d)Nabû i-na (al)Ninua* [ . . . ].  
 787 *Šil-Ištar* governor of *(al)ŠE/KUR(?)*-*BI* instead of Arbailu.  
 786 *Nabû-šarra-ušur* omitted. See below.  
 785 The note that “ the great god went to Dêr ” is given here at the correct date, although owing to the omission of *Nabû-šarra-ušur* it is linked with the eponym *Marduk-nāšir* instead of his precursor *Adad-uballiṭ*.  
 784 *Adad-mušammir* (already eponym in 788) inserted for a second term of office. See below.  
 775 Campaign *ina KAL(?)* . . . . instead of *ana šad erini*.  
 772 *Kak-ḫi* for *Kal-ḫi*. An obvious error.  
 770 *Šam-si-ili* for *Šam-ši-ili*. Campaign *ina mar-ra-ti* “ at the Salt Sea ”, instead of *ana (al)Marad* (Cb 1). Possibly a better reading.  
 769 Spelling of *Arrapḫa* not clear.  
 767 Campaign *ina (al)Gan-na-a-na* for *ana mat Gannanati*.

This text further increases the confusion which already exists for the group of names in the years 788–783 B.C. We now have four versions of these names :

<i>Ca 6, Cb 2, Cc.</i>	<i>Ca 3.</i>	<i>Sultantepe 150.</i>	<i>Sultantepe 18.</i>
<i>Adad-mušammir</i>	<i>Adad-mušammir</i>	<i>Adad-mušammir</i>	<i>Adad-mušammir</i>
<i>Šil-Ištar</i>	<i>Šil-Ištar</i>	<i>Šil-Ištar</i>	<i>Šil-Ištar</i>
<i>Nabû-šarra-ušur</i>	<i>Balāṭu</i>	<i>Nabû-šarra-ušur</i>	<i>Adad-uballiṭ</i>
<i>Adad-uballiṭ</i>	<i>Adad-uballiṭ</i>	<i>Nergal-uballiṭ</i>	<i>Marduk-šarra-ušur</i>
<i>Marduk-šarra-ušur</i>	<i>Marduk-šarra-ušur</i>	<i>Nergal-šarra-ušur</i>	<i>Adad-mušammir</i>
<i>Ninurta / Marduk-nāšir</i>	<i>Nabû-šarra-ušur</i>	<i>Ninurta-nāšir</i>	<i>Ninurta-nāšir</i>

Undoubtedly the first version is most likely to be correct and the others in various respects corrupt. Fopper has shown in *MVAG*. 1915, 3, that *Balāṭu* was probably designated eponym for 786 but died before assuming office, *Nabû-šarra-ušur* taking his place. But any such explanation for the repetition of *Adad-mušammir* in *Sultantepe 18* is unlikely to be correct, since he would hardly have been designated for a second term of office only four years after his first term. The fact that the historical notes in this text are placed against the correct years in spite of the error in copying the names of the eponyms suggests that they were originally inscribed on a separate document and that the list of eponyms had already become corrupt before they were combined with it.

## II. THE TABLET FROM ROOM M.2

This small tablet was found in the room which contained the ivory palette, glass bottles and other toilet articles. The obverse is almost flat, but the reverse is sharply curved. It is a tablet of accounts, the obverse listing issues of wine, the reverse payments of silver for various purposes.



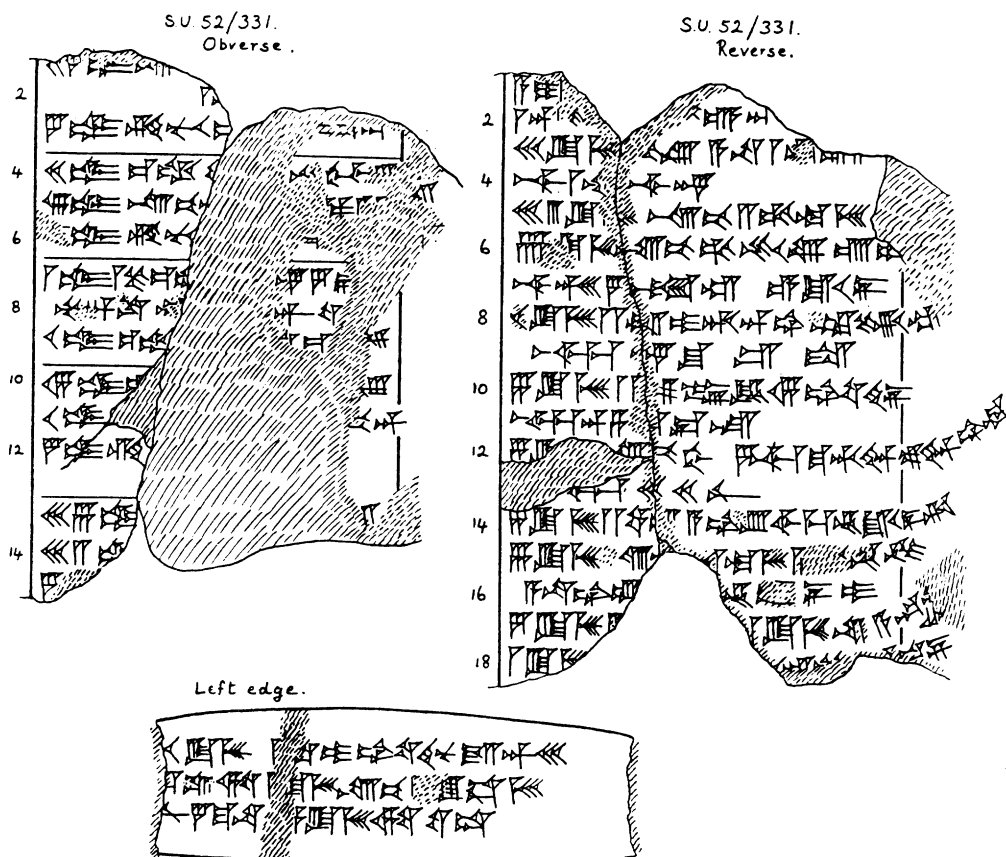


FIG. 4. S.U. 52/331.

*Obverse.*

1. 24 imêrê ina lib[bi . . . . .]
2. (m) [ . . . . . ]
3. 4 imêrê gi-nu-u . [ . . . . . ] -ili

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4. 20 imêrê (iṣ)karānu . [ . . . (m) ] Mu-šal-lim- . [ . . . ]
5. 16 imêrê ina lib-bi . [ . . . . . ] . . . [ . . . ] . .
6. [x] imêrê gi-nu-u [ . . . . . ]

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7. 1 imêru 1 KUR(?)<sup>1</sup> (iṣ)karā[nu . . . . (m) Aš]šur(?) -GAR-ni(?) [ . . . . ]
8. MU . AN . NA . [ . . . . ] (il)Šamaš [ . . . . ]
9. 10 imêrê (iṣ)karānu [ . . . . . ] . . . [ . . . ] . .

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10. 15 imêrê (iṣ)[karānu . . . . . ] .
11. 10 imêrê [ . . . . . ] -ili
12. 4 imêrê gi[nu-u . . . . . ]

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13. 36 imêrê [ . . . . . ] .
14. 32 imê[rê . . . . . ]
15. 4 [imêrê . . . . . ]

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps ŠE.

*Reverse.*

1. a- . [ . . . . . ]
2. (m)(il) . . [ . . . . . ]-dan(an) [ . . . . . ]
3. 30 šiqlē . . -ru a-na (m) . . . . .
4. ina lim<-me> (m) M[u-ša]l-lim-Aššur
5. 33 šiqlē ina lib-bi 2 alpi epinni
6. 8 šiqlē ina lib-bi (alap)mu-u-ru bīt . . [ . . . . ]
7. ina pān (il)Sin šá ina qabal dli e-lu-u-ni
8. 10 šiqlē ana (m)Li-i-ti-ili (amēl)ka-šir āli
9. ina lim-me (m)Aššur-gimilli-tirra(ra)
10. 5 šiqlē ana (m)Si-in-qi-Ištar (amēl)u<sub>4</sub>-hi-ni
11. ina lim-me (m)(il)Ilbaba-eriba
12. 5 šiqlē ina lib-bi sinništī šá ina pān (m)Ma-ti-<sup>3</sup>-si-<sup>2</sup>i
13. [ina] lim-me (m)Sin-šarra-ušur
14. 5 šiqlē ana (m)Nūr-e-a (amēl)šangī <ina> lim-me (m)Bēl-lu-u-dà-ri
15. 6 šiqlē [ina ?] lib(?) -bi(?) (iṣ)epinné(?) (m)[ . . ]-en-nam
16. a-na (amēl)šangī [ . . . . ] Bēl . . ni-i
17. 4 šiqlē . [ . . . . . ] x šiqlē ina libbi(?) a-ba- . [ . . ]
18. 60 šiqlē [ . . . . . ] . . . . .

*Left Edge.*

1. 10 šiqlē (m)Šamaš(?) -na'id (amēl)u<sub>4</sub>-hi-nu ša (il)Sin
2. . . . kaspu x šiqlē ina lib-bi x kerré
3. napḫaru 4 ma-na x šiqlē kaspu ūṣī(Ē).

*Translation**Obverse.*

- 1-2. 24 homers for [ . . . . . ] . . [ . . . . . ]
3. 4 homers as regular offering . . [ . . . . . ] . .

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4. 20 homers of wine [ . . . . ] Mušallim-A[ššur ?] <sup>1</sup>
5. 16 homers for [ . . . . . ]
6. x homers as regular offering [ . . . . . ]

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7. 1 homer . . . of wine [ . . . . Aš]šur- . . . . .
8. year . . [ . . . . . ]-Šamaš <sup>2</sup>
9. 10 homers of wine [ . . . . . ]

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10. 15 homers [of wine . . . . . ]
11. 10 homers [ . . . . . ]-ili <sup>2</sup>
12. 4 homers as regular offering [ . . . . . ]

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13. 36 homers [ . . . . . ] .
14. 32 homers [ . . . . . ]
15. 4 homers [ . . . . . ]

<sup>1</sup> If this is the correct reading, one might restore : [in the eponymy of] Mušallim-Aššur ; cf. rev. 4.

<sup>2</sup> End of a personal name.

*Reverse.*

1. . . . .
2. . . . . -dan <sup>1</sup> [ . . . . . ]
3. 30 shekels . . . . to (personal name)
4. in the eponymy of Mušallim-Aššur,
5. 33 shekels for 2 plough-oxen,
6. 8 shekels for a calf of the . . . -house,
7. "in front of" (i.e. as an offering for) Sin, which came up from the middle of the city,<sup>2</sup>
8. 10 shekels to Lîti-ili, the city-prefect,<sup>3</sup>
9. in the eponymy of Aššur-gimilli-tirra,
10. 5 shekels to Sinqi-Ištar, the "unripe-date-man",<sup>4</sup>
11. in the eponymy of Ilbaba-eriba,
12. 5 shekels for a woman who is "in front of" (i.e. at the disposal of?) Mati'si'u, the farmer,
13. in the eponymy of Sin-šarra-ušur,
14. 5 shekels to Nûrea, the priest, in the eponymy of Bêl-lu-dari,
15. 6 shekels for (?) ploughs (?) . . . . -ennam <sup>1</sup>
16. to the priest [of?] Bêl . . . .
17. 4 shekels [ . . . . . ] x shekels for . . . . .
18. 60 shekels [ . . . . . ]

*Left Edge.*

1. 10 shekels to Shamash (?) -na'id, the "unripe-date-man" of Sin,
2. . . . silver, 10 shekels for x lambs.
3. Total : 4 minas x shekels of silver paid out.

*Notes*

The payments recorded on the reverse of this text clearly extended over a period of several years, since five different eponyms are mentioned. These five eponyms—Mušallim-Aššur, Aššur-gimilli-tirra, Ilbaba-eriba, Sin-šarra-ušur, and Bêl-lû-dâri—are all known to have held office after 648 B.C., when the lists come to an end.<sup>5</sup> In view of this tablet it seems probable that they held it in successive years.

It has already been pointed out in *AS.* II, p. 35, that the lines rev. 6–7 seem to prove that there was a temple of Sin in the city.

The personal name Mati'si'u is interesting, since it is a type of name that is peculiar to the Harran area. See Johns, *An Assyrian Doomsday Book*,

<sup>1</sup> End of a personal name.

<sup>2</sup> If *mûru* is indeed singular, *elûni* must be 3 sing. subj. after *ša*. Otherwise we might translate : "they came up before Sin, who is in the middle of the city." Another possibility is : "before Sin, who came up from the middle of the city."

<sup>3</sup> Literally "city-musterer", a title otherwise unknown to me.

<sup>4</sup> This title also seems to be unknown.

<sup>5</sup> For a list of the post-canonical eponyms see Streck, *Assurbanipal* I, pp. CDLXI-CDLXV.

where it is shown that the element *si'u* is a dialect form of the divine name Sin.

Of philological interest is the use of the expression *ina libbi*. This is commonly used in Assyrian contracts for giving the price of some commodity which precedes it in the text. Here we have the opposite usage, the sum of money expended being stated first and the commodity following the preposition.

The use of the sign *KUR* in obv. 7 is puzzling. It appears to represent a measure, and indeed a measure *mātu* is attested in the Nuzi texts (Gadd, *Rev. d'Ass.*, 23, p. 132). But this is equivalent to 80 *imêru*, and would not therefore follow immediately after 1 *imêru* (or even 60 *imêru*, which is an alternative reading). It seems here to be a subdivision of the *imêru*. It is just possible that the sign is a badly written *ŠE*; but even with this reading the interpretation is no easier. For if the "grain" was used as a fraction of the *QA* (cf. Deimel, *Šum. Lex.*, no. 367, 19 d), its relation to the homer (= 100 *QA*) would be 1 : 720,000, and it is most unlikely that such a small fraction would be mentioned without any intermediate unit.