

A NEO-ASSYRIAN EXCHANGE CONTRACT

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The tablet here published in hand copy and photographs represents an addition to the limited corpus of Neo-Assyrian legal documents recording exchanges (*ana šapûssi*)¹. The present case concerns real estate, and the document was drawn up for Didī, the governor of the province of Balāt, who is disposing of a ten-homer field in the neighbourhood of Burati for an orchard whose location is now missing. The text is dated to the eponymy of Nabû-šar-ahhēšu, i.e. 646 B.C., the year following the sack of Susa by the Assyrians. If the Burati in question is that mentioned in *ABL* 1348, 6, evidently in Elam, one might hazard that Didī had received a tract of land in acknowledgement of service rendered to Assurbanipal in the course of that campaign, which he wished to dispose of for something rather nearer home, but it is probably more likely that a different Burati is involved. Didī's stamp seal is twice impressed across the obverse in the usual place, and shows a standing male figure, bearded and with a cap and long hair, striding forward with his left arm held behind his back.

The text offers several noteworthy features. The suggestive writing GABA.DU for what elsewhere regularly appears as GABA.DI, "next to, adjacent to", rather weighs against the interpretation of GABA.DI as Aramaic *gb dy* (proposed by F.M. Fales, *CCENA*, p. 62 fn.2), and moreover quite possibly favours interpretation as a phonetic writing rather than an ideogram GABA.DI/DU, although the problem of how to understand the item remains unsolved. Note also the two very unusual personal names Habūr-šezibanni and Habūr-taqqinanni (rev. 7'-8'), formed with Habūr, the (deified) river, encountered (with his spouse Habūrtu) as an independent god in cultic contexts in texts from Assur (see *RIA* IV, p.29). The correct restoration of line 12' remains elusive²,

¹) For documents of this type, see J.N. Postgate, *FNALD*, pp. 100-101, and T. Kwasman, *NALK*, p. 61. This tablet measures 3.8 x 5.2 x 2.3 cms., and was formerly in the collection of Mrs. M.-L. Erlenmeyer, constituting lot 120 on p. 58 of Christie's sale catalogue *Ancient Near Eastern Texts from the Erlenmeyer Collection (Tuesday 13 December 1988)*; the photographs are given here courtesy of Christie's. Thanks are due to Simo Parpola and Tuviah Kwasman for kindly reading through and improving this brief note, and to F.M. Fales for his help and the hospitality of this journal.

²) As S.P. indicates, one expects a word for grain, such as ŠE.PAD^{MES}.

but the item is to be measured out in the city of Ehiman, which is likely to be in the vicinity of Mardin, as shown by a recently published Neo-Assyrian document³.

Transliteration

Obverse

- 1 ^{NA}4KIŠIB ¹Di-di-i
 2 ^{LÚ}EN.NAM šá ^{URU}Ba-laṭ
 3 EN A.ŠÀ ta-da-a-ni

(Two Stamp Seal impressions)

- 4 É 10 ANŠE A.ŠÀ a-na šá-pu-si
 5 ina A.GÀR ^{URU}Bu-ra-a-te
 6 GABA+DU ÍD ^{URU}Zu-za-na
 7 GABA+DU KASKAL šá ṽa-na ^{KUR?}ṽ[x] x x
 8 DU-ú-n[i ...]
 9 ina ŠÀ ^{GIŠ}K[IRI₆ ...]
 10 ṽú/up^ṽ-pi[š-ma ...]
 (Broken)

Reverse

- 1' 5 MA.NA KÙ.BABBAR S[UM-an]

 2' ^{ITI}GU₄ UD.28.KÁ[M]
 3' lim-mu ^{Id}PA-MAN-PAP^{MEŠ}-š[ú]
 4' IGI ¹Šú-nu-PAP^{MEŠ}
 5' IGI ¹AD-DU ^{LÚ}GAL.SIG⁴
 6' IGI ¹AD-DU ^{URU}E-hi-man-a-a
 7' IGI ¹Ha-bur-še-zib-a-ni
 8' IGI ¹Ha-bur-LÁ-in-a-ni
 9' IGI ¹Šum-ma-^dPA
 10' IGI ^{Id}PA-rém-a-ni
 11' ŠE nu-s[a]-ṽhī^ṽ [S]UM-nu
 12' x x x ina ṽlib^ṽ-b[i]
 13' ^{URU}E-hi-man
 14' i-mad-du-du

³) See V. Donbaz, SAAB II/1 (1988), p. 16 rev. 4' and note.

⁴) With regard to ^{LÚ}GAL.SIG, S.P. draws my attention to ^{LÚ}GAL.SIG-na-ni in CT 53, 233, 5' (=SAA I, no. 72), and ^{LÚ}GAL-si-ka(-a)-te in ND 2307 and 2308.

Translation

(1) Seal of Didī, the governor of the city of Balāt, owner of the field to be sold. (Seal impressions). (4') An estate of 10 homers of land, for exchange, within the irrigated land of the city of Burati, adjacent to the river of the city Zuzāna, (and) adjacent to the road which goes to [...] ...; (9) for an orch[ard ...] (Break)

(Rev. 1') He is to pay five minas of silver. Month Iyyar (II), day 28, eponymy of Nabû-šar-ahhēšu. (4') Witness Šunu-ahhē, witness Abu-ukîn, the chief ...; witness Abu-ukîn, the Ehimanean; witness Habūr-šeziḫanni; witness Habūr-taqqinanni; witness Šumma-Nabû; witness Nabû-rēmāni. (11') They will pay the grain tax, and they will measure ... out in Ehiman.

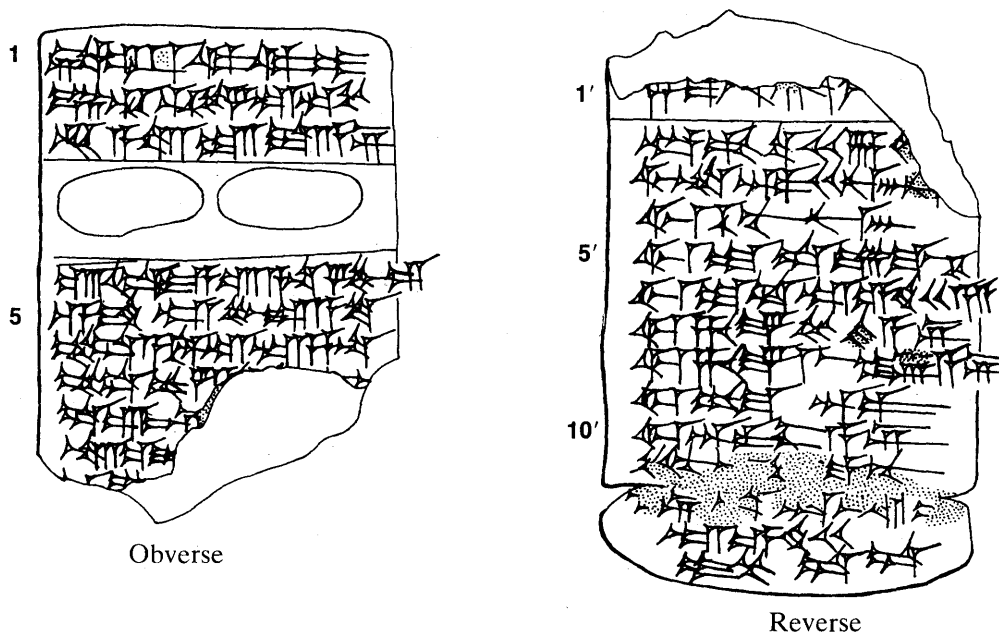


Fig. 1: Copy of the Erlenmeyer Collection Tablet

PLATE I



The Erlenmeyer Collection Tablet
Obverse



The Erlenmeyer Collection Tablet
Reverse