# GLEANINGS FROM ADD*

## 1. One of the First Middle Assyrian Texts Found at Assur

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K. 11823 from the Kouyunjik collection of the British Museum was published by
C.H.W. Johns as ADD I, No. 713. That it was not of Neo-Assyrian date could have
been (and no doubt often has been) deduced from the characteristic Middle Assyrian
writing *a-šur* in place of the almost universal *aš-šur* of Neo-Assyrian scribal practice.
However, Johns' copy obscures other typical Middle Assyrian features such as the
ductus, the correct reading of *ši-pár*, and the tablet shape (more or less square with
rounded corners, familiar from Middle Assyrian administrative texts), so we may
perhaps be forgiven for not assigning it directly to its period (it is not, for instance, taken
up in the name lists of Saporetti and Freydank). That the tablet came from Assur could
not have been guessed so confidently, but this information is given by Bezold (*Cat.*,
1197), and he probably took it directly from a paper label glued to the uninscribed
reverse and reading "Calah Shergat". There seems to be every reason to accept this as
the correct provenance, no doubt from Layard's short visit to the site in 1846-7 (*Nineveh
and its Remains*, II, pp. 49ff.).

Transliteration
Obverse
(upper half broken away)
1'. $^{I}$BAR–$^{d}$U.GUR $^{Id}$[

2′. $^{Id}$a-šur–mu-šab-ši $^{Id}$PAP.SUKKAL–x[x (x)]
3′. a-na ši-pár tal-pi-te

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4′. $^{Id}$a-šur–le-i $^{I}$ŠEŠ–SUM-na
5′. $^{Id}$PAP.SUKKAL–A–PAB $^{Id}$a-šur–dam-me-eq
6′. $^{I}$EN–SAG a-na el-la-pu-hi

Reverse
uninscribed

Translation
"Kidin-Nergal, ..., Aššur-mušabši, Papsukkal-... — for the smearing work. Aššur-le'i, Aha-iddina, Papsukkal-apla-uṣur, Aššur-dammeq, Bel(u)-qarrad — for the bladder."

Notes
The "bladder" (ellappuhu, etc.) is already attested in three Middle Assyrian letters from the Babu-aha-iddina archive as a container for anointing-oil (see the dictionaries).

The correct reading of the first sign of RI-pi-te is a long-standing crux. AHw., p. 987, has ripītu, assigning both Middle and Neo-Assyrian words to a root rapā'u which (it must be conceded) is not itself the most secure of lexical entities. The suggested meaning is "etwa 'Verbrauch'". The occurrences of a word written RI-pi-tu/e etc. were later discussed in CTN II, p. 99, to which AHw. also refers later (s.v. talpittu). I do not pretend to understand all the references or to have solved all the problems, but the Neo-Assyrian evidence includes the plural form R]I-pi-ta-a-te, which is of course incompatible with a derivation from rapā'u, and must favour taking this word as talpittu, with a derivation from lapātu(m) D. This is not necessarily valid for the Middle Assyrian texts which should write the t doubled, and they may therefore be using the tapris form, also used as nomen actionis to the D-stem, hence talpītu. Either way, since the ellappuhu of the second section is known to have been used as a container for ointment or anointing-oil, a connection with lupputu, well attested in the meaning "to smear, apply" oil or ointment, is very seductive. As to what, or whom, these gentlemen might have been anointing, I fear I have no bright ideas.

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Since the tablet was presumably a stray find, it is unlikely to belong to any of the archives excavated half a century later by the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft. A search through the Middle Assyrian name lists of Saporetti and Freydank does not reveal any

significant prosopographical links. The nearest is perhaps that the witness Bel-qarrad in KAJ 262 (VAT 8859 = Ass. 14327ce; J.N. Postgate, *The Archive of Urad-Šerua*, no. 23), has a father called Aššur-dammeq. I suppose this father and son pair could appear here in ll. 5'-6', but the two names are common, and it would be unwise to build any theories on this.