# Veysel Donbaz'a Sunulan Yazılar DUB.SAR É.DUB.BA.A Studies Presented in Honour of Veysel Donbaz

Yayına Hazırlayan / Edited by Şevket Dönmez

# **AYRIBASIM/OFFPRINT**



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### ASSYRIAN TEXTS FROM THE FOLIOS OF SIDNEY SMITH

#### A.R. GEORGE\*

The late Sidney Smith made respectable hand copies of several Old and Neo-Assyrian tablets that remained unpublished at the time of his death in 1979. When I inherited (so to speak) his folios of cuneiform copies and notes in 1986 and identified the contents, I approached Klaas Veenhof with a view to publishing the Old Assyrian tablets and the late Karlheinz Deller with the aim of editing the Neo-Assyrian tablets. Other commitments intervened to prevent the achievement of both goals, so it seems proper, thirty years after their copyist passed away, to make these modest resources available at last to scholarship. It is a pleasure to place them in a volume that honours Veysel Donbaz, who has done much to elucidate Assyrian texts in Turkish museums and whose hospitality I gratefully remember from a fruitful research visit to Istanbul in 1991.

### The Old Assyrian texts

Sidney Smith's interest in the Old Assyrian tablets from Kaneš (Kültepe) in Cappadocia led him to copy many such texts in the British Museum in the 1920s and '30s, when he was an Assistant Keeper, and in due course to publish five successive volumes under the running title *Cuneiform Texts from Cappadocian Tablets in the British Museum*<sup>1</sup>. The original drawings of some of the copies published in *CCT* IV are preserved in his folios.

Smith also copied Old Assyrian tablets not held in the British Museum. Two of the Old Assyrian texts in his folios were identified by Klaas Veenhof as documents since published by Stephanie Dalley in her catalogue of the tablets in the Royal Scottish Museum (Dalley 1979 nos. 9 and 13). Their museum numbers, RSM 1922/395 and 1963/243, show them to have been accessioned at an interval of forty-one years, and it remains uncertain whether one, neither or both were already in Edinburgh when Smith copied them.

Certainly Smith was alive to the presence of Old Assyrian tablets in private collections, for he annotated his copy of another Old Assyrian document with an attribution of its ownership to Mr. Edward Hart of Blackburn, Lancs. Mr Hart (1878–1946) was the chairman of a rope-making firm, Thomas Hart Ltd, and a well-known public benefactor of whom the town of Blackburn is still justly proud<sup>2</sup>. On his death Mr Hart's collection of antiquities, mostly coins but including the Old Assyrian tablet and its case, passed into the care of Blackburn Museum as the Edward Hart Collection.

Copies of three more Old Assyrian tablets in the folios bear no annotation at all, and are of unknown location, now and at the time of copying. One of these tablets passed through the hands of Burkhart Kienast, who published it very recently as one of four Old Assyrian tablets in the possession of anonymous private collectors (Kienast 2008: 75 no. 4). The remaining two tablets are published here alongside Mr Hart's. I am indebted to Cécile Michel for confirming that none of the three documents is previously known.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> CCT I-V = Smith 1921; Smith 1924; Smith 1925; Smith 1927; Smith and Wiseman 1956.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For more on Edward Hart and his collection of antiquities visit Blackburn's website at http://www.cottontown.org/page cfm?pageid=4394&language=eng (as at April 2009).

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Text no. 1. Old Assyrian tablet and case. Contract for the repayment of silver. The case is endorsed with three different seal impressions (not copied). Identified in Smith's handwriting as a "tablet belonging to R. Edward Hart, Brooklands, Blackburn". Tablet now on public display in Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery.<sup>3</sup> Figs. 1–2.

Text no. 2. Old Assyrian tablet. Letter of Sabasiya to Puzur-Aššur, Dān-Aššur and I kūppī-Aššur. Present location unknown. Fig. 3.

Text no. 3. Old Assyrian tablet. Record of deliveries of textiles. Present location unknown. Fig. 4.

### The Neo-Assyrian texts

Smith's interest in Neo-Assyrian texts is much less well documented. Copies of two documents of the Neo-Assyrian period surfaced in his folios and are published here. Both contain clues of a kind: one was copied on official stationery of the Iraqi civil service, while the other bears the annotation "no. 3199" in Smith's handwriting. Smith was seconded from the British Museum to Baghdad as Director of Antiquities in 1929–30 (Wiseman 1979) and it is possible that he studied the tablet in question then; but it can equally be envisaged that he brought Iraqi stationery back to England and thereafter used it as notepaper. The number 3199 speaks for the second tablet's accession into an established collection. It is not of the right length to be a British Museum number but it could be an Iraq Museum number ascribed to an artefact registered in the period before the Second World War. Unfortunately it is not currently possible to determine even what kind of object bears the number IM 3199, quite apart from whether it is the tablet Smith copied.

Text no. 4. Neo-Assyrian tablet. Deed of sale of real estate, endorsed with five finger-nail impressions. Copied on paper headed "'Iraq, Public Works Department, Serai, Baghdad". Present location unknown. Fig. 5.

Text no. 5. Neo-Assyrian tablet. Conveyance of house, twice endorsed with a seal impression, dated 20.viii eponymy of Bēl-šadû'a (650 BC). Copy labelled in Smith's handwriting as "no. 3199". Present location uncertain, perhaps in the Iraq Museum. Fig. 6.

This article brings to a close the sequence of publications based on Sidney Smith's copies<sup>4</sup>. It is right to record one last time my gratitude to Professor Emeritus H. F. Smith for permission to utilize his father's *Nachlass*, and to Professor Emeritus David Hawkins for passing it on to me.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to the museum's documentation officer, Vinai Solanki, for tracking down Mr Hart's tablet and case, and sending me a copy of Smith's report to Mr Hart (16 August 1935), together with photographs of the museum's other cuneiform inscriptions. These are a cone of Sîn-kāšid and two Ur III documents.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See previously George 1988; George 1991; George 2004; George 2006; George forthcoming.

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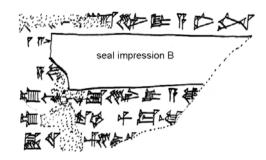
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D.J. Wiseman. "Professor Emeritus Sidney Smith, Litt.D., F.B.A.", Iraq 49: i-ii.

中国一作 『馬馬里 名詞 华耳及图图型 全里 甲属国国家张耳季 图》中华中 医人类 一种 第一 羅米令母於 呼廉買 東 440 UTOMEN F LEEN FILE **生** 以上 口 等 成 随 [ 医型肾 100 后午夕下月 DE TENTE TO **馬風(主員無)** 网络 年間 鼠 中心及中 至今 第一个 第一个 通 个 通 

Fig. 1 Sidney Smith's copy of Edward Hart's tablet (text no. 1), annotation by Smith

#### seal impression A



seal impression doubtful

seal impression B

seal impression C

Left edge: seal impression (C)

Right edge:

seal impression A

seal impression A

Fig. 2 Sidney Smith's copy of the case of Edward Hart's tablet (text no. 1), annotations by Smith

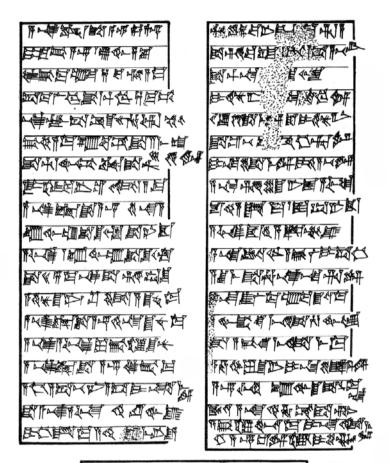




Fig. 3 Sidney Smith's copy of text no. 2



Fig. 4 Sidney Smith's copy of text no. 3

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العر اق

'IRAQ,

SERAI, BAGHDAD.

SERAI, BAGHDAD.

SERAI, BAGHDAD.

DE TO SERAI

DE TO

Fig. 5 Sidney Smith's copy of text no. 4

obv.

美国军军等

seal twice repeated

rev.

Fig. 6 Sidney Smith's copy of "no. 3199" (text no. 5), annotations by Smith