

FOUR UR III ADMINISTRATIVE TABLETS IN THE POSSESSION OF PROFESSOR FRANCIS CARROLL, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA *

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Abstract: Four Ur III Administrative Tablets in the Possession of Professor Francis Carroll, University of Manitoba

The article contains transliterations of four cuneiform tablets in a private collection in Winnipeg, Canada. All four are typical Ur III administrative tablets: three come from Umma and the fourth is from Drehem. The object of the article is to make the contents of these tablets available to the Sumerological community, particularly those specializing in the Ur III period.

Keywords: Sumerian – cuneiform – Ur III – administrative

Resumen: Cuatro tablillas administrativas de Ur III en posesión del Profesor Francis Carroll, Universidad de Manitoba

El artículo contiene transliteraciones de cuatro tablillas cuneiformes que se encuentran en una colección privada en Winnipeg, Canadá. Las cuatro son típicas tablillas administrativas de Ur III: tres provienen de Umma y la cuarta de Drehem. El propósito de este artículo es poner los contenidos de estas tablillas a disposición de la comunidad sumeriológica, en particular de aquellos que se especializan en el período de Ur III.

Palabras Clave: Sumerio – cuneiforme – Ur III – administrativo

Published herein are transliterations and translations of four Ur III administrative tablets belonging to Dr. Francis Carroll, Professor Emeritus of Diplomatic History at St. John's College, University of Manitoba. The story of how Professor Carroll came to possess these tablets is long and, in parts, somewhat clouded, as is often the case with tablets that have been in private collections. Professor Carroll received the tablets from his father-in-law, Dr.

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Wallace M. Foster, a physician who practiced in Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Foster owned the tablets for quite some time (Professor Carroll informs me that his wife recalls bringing the tablets to school for show-and-tell as a girl in the early 1950's). Dr. Foster, in turn, had been given the tablets by the widow of a medical associate who is believed to have acquired the tablets while working in the Middle East during the inter-war years.

I became aware of the tablets quite by chance. While attending a history conference in Minneapolis in 2002, I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Carroll at a party hosted by one of the societies present at the conference. The subject of his tablets immediately came up when I discussed my work in Assyriology. I expressed interest in seeing the tablets and Dr. Carroll was eager to have them translated, but for both of us the matter was set aside. Recently, however, Dr. Carroll and his colleague, Dr. John Stafford, were able to produce excellent digital images of the tablets from which I could make the transliterations and translations below.¹ I would like to thank Dr. Carroll and Dr. Stafford for their work photographing the tablets, and I especially would like to thank Dr. Carroll for generously permitting me to publish his tablets. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Gertrud Farber (Chicago) and Dr. Magnus Widdell (Liverpool) for reading and commenting on my transliterations and translations.

¹ Because these transliterations were made from photographs and not from the tablets themselves; all readings should be considered provisional until they can be collated against the originals.

Carroll 1

dimensions: 4.9 cm × 7.5

Umma (Šu-Suen 5)

<p>obv. 1. 12 guruš u₄-1-šè še-bala-a u₄-2-šè še má-a si-ga u₄-10-šé</p> <p>5. ki-su₇-gu₄-suḫúb-ta nibru^{ki}-šè [má gíd]-da u₄-2-šè má ba-al-la u₄-1-šè še bala-a šà nibru^{ki}</p> <p>rev. 10. ugula lú-^dšára gír lú-^dda-mu mu ús-sa ^dšu- ^dsu.en [lugal úri^{ki}-ma]-ke₄ [bàd mar-tu mu-ri]-iq</p> <p>15. [ti-id-ni]-im [mu]-dù</p> <p>seal: 1. lú-^dšára dub-[sar] dumu lugal-[inim-gi-na]</p>	<p>Twelve workmen: for one day carrying barley; for two days loading barley into the boat; for ten days from the threshing floor Gu-Suḫub [towing the boat] to Nippur; for two days unloading the boat; for one day carrying barley within Nippur.</p> <p>The overseer is Lu-Šara. The <i>gir</i>-official is Lu-Damu. The year after Šu-Suen [king of Ur] built the [western wall] called Muriq-[Tidn]im.</p> <p>Lu-Šara the scribe son of Lugal-[inim-gi-na].</p>
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Comments:

2. The verb bala in this line describes the act of moving grain into piles for measurement and distribution according to Civil 1994: 96, 108 n. 129.
5. See Civil 1994: 143. This threshing floor also appears in Schneider 1930: No. 376: 2.

Carroll 2

dimensions: 3.2 cm × 3.2

Umma (XII, Šulgi 42)

- | | | |
|----------|---|--|
| obv. 1. | [3?] ¹ u ₈ bar-su-ga
1 udu-níta bar-su-ga
ri-ri-ga
ki ur-ru-ta | [3?] ¹ ewes, plucked
1 male sheep, plucked
dead (due to violent attack)
from Urru. |
| 5. | kišib lú-kal-la
iti ^d dumu-zi
mu ša-šú-ru ^{ki}
ba-ḫul | Received by Lu-kalla.
The month of Dumuzi.
The year Šašru
was destroyed. |
| seal: 1. | lú-kal-la
dub-sar
dumu ur-e ₁₁ -e šùš | Lu-Kala
the scribe
son of Ur-E'e, chief livestock administrator. |

Comments:

1. bar-su-ga is syllabic writing of bar-sug₄-ga Steinkeller 1995: 56, 69 n. 110. Additional discussion concerning the meaning of this term can be found in Heimpel 1993: 127-130; Van de Microop 1993: 164; and Sigrist 1992: 28.
 3. See Sigrist 1992: 70 for a discussion of the meaning of ri-ri-ga.
- seal 1. For more on Lu-kala see Pomponi 1992: 169-179 and Dahl 2007: 105-113.
3. For more on Ur-E'e see Dahl 2007: 85-96. For the reading of kuš₇ as šùš see Beal 1992: 38-39 n. 48.

Carroll 3

dimensions: 2.2 cm × 2.7

Umma

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| obv. 1. | 1 dug.dida 5
sila kaš-sig ₅
0.0.1. ninda 2 gín ì 2
gín naga | 1 jar of beer wort, 5
sila of good beer,
10 sila bread, 2 gin of oil, 2
gin of seed-seasoning, |
| 5. | 3 ku ₆ 3 sa sum
nu-ḫi-lum gaba-aš | 3 fish, 3 bundles of onions,
(to) Nuḫilum, sent to the edge of the sea. |
| rev. | 1 dug.dida 3
sila kaš gin
0.0.1 ninda 2 gín ì 2 | 1 jar of beer wort, 3
sila of ordinary beer,
10 sila bread, 2 gin oil, 2
gin seed-seasoning, |
| 10. | gín naga
3 ku ₆ 3 sa sum
i-šar-be-lí
u ₄ -9-kam | 3 fish, 3 bundles of onions,
(to) Išar-bēlī.
Day 9. |
| u.e. 15. | iti šu-numun | Month of sowing. |

Comments:

1. Discussion of the term dug.dida can be found in De Maaijer 1999-2000: 253 and Farber 1997: 112.
12. Išar-bēlī appears in this role in Kang 1973: No. 309:12.

Carroll 4

dimensions: 4.5 cm × 6.4

Drehem (Šu-Suen 3)

obv. 1.	103 udu [...] ki a-a-dingir-[ñu ₁₀ -ta] ša úri ^{ki} -[ma] 7 udu ki ur- ^d [ba ^l -[ú-ta]	103 sheep [...] from Aya-dingir-ñu in Ur (and) 7 sheep from Ur-Ba ^u .
5.	ša bi 110-[ta] 10 udu 15 máš kišib ḫal-lí lú ur-[bi-lum] maškim 10 udu kišib ur-kù-nun-na 8 udu kišib al-la-ñu ₁₀	From out of the 110: 10 sheep and 15 goats received by Ḫalli of [Urbilum?] the <i>maškim</i> -official, 10 sheep received by Ur-Kununna, 8 sheep received by Allañu, (and)
10.	67 udu ba-ug ₇ ad ₆ kuš-bi é-gal-šè gíd-dam	67 dead sheep, the hides of their corpses are transferred to the palace.
rev.	[.....] 110 [udu] zi-ga-àm [...] nī-ka ₉ -ag [...] 15. iti ezen- ^d [...] mu si-ma-núm ^[ki] ba-[ḫul]	[Total] of 110 [sheep] are withdrawn [...]. Balanced account of [PN]. Month of the festival of [DN] The year Simanum was [destroyed].

Comments:

7. The restoration of Urbilum in the break is highly speculative.

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