Finding Aid for the Edward A. Dickson Cuneiform Tablet collection, Ur III period-Neo-Babylonian period (ca. 2100-562 BCE)

Transliterations by Justin Cale Johnson. Processed by Sara Brumfield in the Center for Primary Research and Training (CFPRT), with assistance from Kelley Wolfe Bachl, 2008; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Edward A. Dickson Cuneiform Tablet collection

Date (inclusive): Ur III period-Neo-Babylonian period (ca. 2100-562 BCE)

Collection number: 1813

Creator: Dickson, Edward A.

Extent: 1 oversize box.

Abstract: The majority of the eight tablets are administrative in nature, citing loans, receipts, and inventories. Most of the administrative texts date to the Ur III period (Third Dynasty of Ur). One tablet contains a royal inscription from the Early Old Babylonian period (ca. 2000-1800 BCE) on a clay cone. This collection was donated to UCLA by Edward A. Dickson.

Language: Finding aid is written in English.

Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.

Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Restrictions on Access

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

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Processing Note

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Edward A. Dickson Cuneiform Tablet collection (Collection 1813). Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

UCLA Catalog Record ID

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Biography

Edward Augustus Dickson donated his collection of tablets to the University of California-Los Angeles. Dickson was one of the founding fathers of the Los Angeles campus for the California university system. He was appointed to Board of Regents in 1912 and served until his death in 1956, at the age of 76.

Scope and Content

The majority of texts in this collection are administrative in nature, citing loans, receipts, and inventories. All but one of the administrative texts date to the Ur III period (Third Dynasty of Ur), known for its abundance of economic documents. During the Ur III period (ca. 2100-2004 BCE), the state reached a level of centralization that was unprecedented. To accommodate the large population of workers and products under this state run economy, written records of business transactions and inventories were constantly issued.

The collection also contains a royal inscription from the Early Old Babylonian period (ca. 2000-1800 BCE) on a clay cone. Clay cones were often used to commemorate the building of monumental architecture. An inscription praising the king and his deities would be written around the cone on its vertical axis. Then the cone would be inserted into the wall of the structure obscuring the inscription from human eyes.

The cone is from the reign of Lipit-Ishtar (ca.1934-1924 BCE). His seat of power was in the city of Isin. Lipit-Ishtar is best known for his set of laws, issued even before Hammurabi's famous law code. When Lipit-Ishtar published his law code, he also built the Enisisa (literally, "house of justice") and he had its construction recorded on over a hundred clay cones, of which this is just one.

Organization and Arrangement

Tablets are described at the item level.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Subjects
Dickson, Edward A. (Edward Augustus), 1879 or 80-1956--Archives.

Related Material
Cumberland Clark Cuneiform Tablet Collection (Collection 1826)  Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Box 1  
Item: 1  Administrative tablet of sheep and goats from Drehem in the 5th month of the 8th year of Amar-Suen's reign 2039 BCE  
Scope and Content Note  
List of sheep and goats from Drehem, Iraq dating to the Ur III period (2100-2000 BCE). The 8th year of Amar-Suen's reign dates to 2039 BCE. The festival of Ninazu is the 5th month of the Drehem calendar year.

Box 1  
Item: 2  Administrative tablet of sheep and goats from Drehem in the 5th month of the 47th year of Shulgi's reign 2048 BCE  
Scope and Content Note  
List of sheep and goats from Drehem, Iraq dating to the Ur III period (2100-2000 BCE). The 47th year of Shulgi's reign dates to 2048 BCE. The festival of Ninazu is the 5th month of the Drehem calendar year.

Box 1  
Item: 3  Administrative tablet of types of grain from Umma in the 1st year of Ibbi-Suen's reign 2028 BCE  
Scope and Content Note  
Lists of different types of grain from Umma, Iraq dating to the reign of Ibbi-Suen (c. 2030 BCE). The first year of Ibbi-Suen's reign dates to 2028 BCE. The month that "the brick was placed in the brick mold" is the second month of Umma's calendar year.

Box 1  
Item: 4  Administrative tablet of reed mats ca. 2000 BCE  
Scope and Content Note  
A note describing a reed mat(?) of unknown provenience dating to the Ur III period (2100-2000 BCE).

Box 1  
Item: 5  Administrative tablet of sheep and goats from Drehem in the 42nd year of Shulgi's reign 2053 BCE  
Scope and Content Note  
List of sheep and goats from Drehem, Iraq dating to the Ur III period (2100-2000 BCE). The 42nd year of Shulgi's reign dates to 2053 BCE. The month of "eating the gazelle" is the first month of Drehem's calendar year.

Box 1  
Item: 6  Administrative tablet of sheep and goats from Drehem in the 4th year of Amar-Suen's reign 2042 BCE  
Scope and Content Note  
List of sheep and goats from Drehem, Iraq dating to the Ur III period (2100-2000 BCE). The 4th year of Amar-Suen's reign dates to 2042 BCE. The month of An's festival is the 10th month of Drehem's calendar year.

Box 1  
Item: 7  Administrative tablet of hired workers in Umma from the Ur III period. ca. 2050 BCE  
Scope and Content Note  
A list of two hired workers and oxen from Umma, Iraq dating to the Ur III period (2100-2000 BCE). Currently missing from Special Collections holdings.
Box 1

Item: 8  **Royal inscription from the reign of Lipit-Ishtar ca. 1930 BCE**

Scope and Content Note

Royal inscription of Lipit-Ishtar on a clay cone dating to the Old Babylonian period. Lipit-Ishtar was king in Mesopotamia for ten years between 1934-1924 BCE. Lipit-Ishtar ruled from the city of Isin and is famous for issuing a set of laws. When he published his laws, Lipit-Ishtar also built Enisisa, the "House of Justice," and he had its construction recorded on lots of clay cones like this one. Note: this text = RIME 4.1.5.4 (Frayne 1990, 52-54). For another exemplar of this inscription see:


Box 1

Item: 9  **Administrative tablet of a silver loan from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II ca. 580 BCE**

Scope and Content Note

Citing loan of silver and witnesses involved dating to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II in the Neo-Babylonian period. Nebuchadnezzar II was king of Mesopotamia from 604-562 BCE.