A New Assurbanipal Brick Inscription from Nippur

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UM 84-26-12, an inscribed brick, was discovered in the basements of the University Museum during an inventory of bricks from Nippur and Ur. It is a well-head brick presumed to have come from Nippur. The brick measures 360/200 x 235 x 75 mm. and contains a 16 line inscription of Assurbanipal on its outer edge. The text is in Sumerian and is written in an archaic script. It is the third inscription of Assurbanipal found at Nippur.

Transliteration

1 den-lil-la2
2 lugal dingir-re-e-ne-ke
3 nir-gal, an-ki-a
4 nun nam-tar-tar-ra
5 lugal-a-ni-ir
6 AN.SAR,-DU,-DUMU x US
7 sipa še-ga-bi
8 lugal kalag-ga
9 lugal ki-sar,-ra
10 a-pil,
11 ša, e,l-hur-sag-galam-ma-ke,
12 pa-pa-bi nam-lugal-a-ni
13 libir-ra-bi-ta!
14 galam-bi
15 sig,-al-ur,-ra
16 mu-un-na-du,

Translation

For Enlil, king of the gods, hero of heaven and earth, prince of destiny, his king Assurbanipal, his obedient shepherd, the strong king, king of the world, heir* within the Eḫursaggalamma, has artfully built his royal cella of old of baked brick.

1 Behrens, JCS 37 (1985) 240 no. 55.
2 The inscription is partially parallel to the brick inscription CBS 8644 (PBS 15 74) known to have come from Nippur, also inscribed. Lines 10–11 of our inscription would also seem to indicate that it came from Nippur; the Eḫursaggalamma is a name for the ziggurat at Nippur (cf. RLA 2 304 and JCS 3 50), which Assurbanipal is known to have restored (Hilprecht, Explorations in Bible Lands [Philadelphia:1903] 312, 352, 370–1, 375, 376, 460–2 and Peters, Nippur ii [London: 1897] 126–7, 152, 157).

Neither Hilprecht nor Peters mentions any well-head or trapezoidal bricks found at Nippur though they do mention stamped/inscribed bricks of Assurbanipal (Hilprecht, op.cit. 312, 371; Peters, op.cit. 126–7, 152, 157).

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3 The other two inscriptions are CBS 8632 pub. in Walker, CBI no. 80 with duplicates and CBS 8644 pub. in PBS 15 74.

4 This line is the only word of the inscription written in Akkadian. The epithet apil libbi eḫursaggalamma is unique among the epithets of Assurbanipal; but similar is the epithet mār šarrī ēḫū ṣa biṣ redāti (Streck, Asb. A12; Aynard, Asb. i1 and cf. Seux, Épithètes 160. For other epithets of the type mār TN see Tallqvist, Götterepitheta 121.