

# Babylonian Boundary-Stones and Comparable Monuments in the British Museum

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This is a list of the British Museum's holding of *kudurrus* and other stone copies of legal and scholarly documents dating from the Kassite period through to the Neo-Babylonian. They were presumably supplementary copies, made on stone for permanent reference and safe-keeping (usually in temples), given the vulnerability of the normal primary material, unbaked clay. The list is provided because, although L. W. King published the majority of these pieces in *Babylonian Boundary-Stones and Memorial-Tablets in the British Museum (BBSt)*, henceforward referred to by the author's name), he gave little of the information on provenance that can be derived from the museum's archives, particularly those dealing with the official excavations conducted in Babylonia by Hormuzd Rassam and his foremen, the brothers Daud and Abd-al-Ahad Thoma, which I have discussed more fully in the introduction to E. Leichty, *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets*, vol. 6.

In this list I have included all the complete or fragmentary stones that have come to my attention in the categories defined above. I have also included all the items listed by King, with cross-references to U. Seidl, 'Die babylonischen Kudurru-Reliefs,' *Bagh. Mitt.* 4 (1968) pp. 7-220, and two other Neo-Babylonian stones with figurative decoration. In preparing the list I have had the benefit of consultation with my colleague Dr Irving Finkel.

All these objects, unless otherwise specified, seem to be made of fine-grained sedimentary rocks, usually black in colour but sometimes lighter—brown, grey, or even white; heat appears to have had a lightening effect in some cases.

## 17291 (94-1-15,5)

Purchased in 1894, through Selim Homsy & Co., from Rassam's old foreman, Daud Thoma. Despite its *kudurru*-like appearance and material, this fragment from the lower edge of a block has part of 16 lines of lung omens; presumably the object was dedicated in a temple. Here at last we have evidence for

scholarly texts written on stone. Compare 114697 and 139978 (below). Unpublished.

## 32642 (76-11-17,2390)

Purchased in 1876 by George Smith in Baghdad. The bottom right-hand corner of a block, with part of a human figure and of 28 lines of text, mentioning land. Unpublished.

## 38612 (80-11-12,496)

Excavated in 1880 by Daud Thoma, probably at Babylon. Pale brown stone with many traces of purple pigment on surface. The right-hand side fragment of a tablet, with part of a magic figure and of 14 lines of text, mentioning royalty and cult: perhaps part of an official grant to a temple. Unpublished.

## 38646 (80-11-12,529B)

Excavated in 1880 by Daud Thoma at Borsippa (Nabu Temple). Land transaction. King, no. XXII, suggested this might be part of the same monument as 40590; Seidl, no. G 16.

## 40006 (80-11-12,1895)

Excavated in 1880 by Daud Thoma at Borsippa (Nabu Temple). Official grant to a temple (Nabu Temple?). King, no. XXXV; Seidl, no. 101.

## 40204 (82-3-24,71)

Excavated by Rassam's team, probably in 1880 at Babylon or Borsippa. Described originally as being black with a yellowish surface, but now inadvertently baked grey. Left-hand side fragment, with part of six lines, mentioning land. Unpublished.

## 40494A (81-4-28,35A)

Excavated in 1880/1881 by Daud Thoma, probably at Babylon or Borsippa. Fragment of block, with divine symbols. No text extant. Mentioned in *BM Guide* 1922 p. 69.

**40590 (81-4-28,135)**

Excavated in 1880/1881 by Daud Thoma, probably at Babylon or Borsippa. Land transaction, compare 38646. King, no. XXI; Seidl, no. G 15.

**50654 (82-3-23,1645)**

Excavated, probably in 1881 by Abd-al-Ahad Thoma at Sippar (Shamash Temple). Fragment with curses. King, no. XIX; Seidl, no. G 14.

**57943 (82-7-14,2352)**

Excavated, probably in 1882 by Abd-al-Ahad Thoma at Sippar (Shamash Temple). Property transaction. King, no. XXXIII; Seidl, no. T 7.

**87220 (94-1-15,517)**

Purchased in 1894, through Selim Homsy & Co., from Daud Thoma. Official decree concerning land. King, no. X; Seidl, no. 109.

**90827 (81-3-24,368)**

Excavated in 1880 by Daud Thoma at Babylon, probably in the Marduk Temple since it was 'about 15 paces' from the Ashurbanipal stela (BM 90864) which was inscribed for the *É-kar-zaginna* area of the Marduk Temple. Official decree concerning land. King, no. III; Seidl, no. 25.

**90829 (82-5-22,1798)**

Excavated in 1882 by Abd-al-Ahad Thoma at Sippar, in Room 50 of the Shamash Temple together with 90835 and 90858 (L. de Meyer, *Tell ed-Dēr* 3 plan 3). Official grant of land. King, no. IV; Seidl, no. 12.

**90833 (25-5-3,100)**

Purchased in 1825 from the widow of C. J. Rich, who had bought it at Babylon (*Babylon and Persepolis* pp. 8 and 106 pl. 8 no. 1a-c). Mentions land. King, no. XIV; Seidl, no. 77.

**90834 (81-4-28,1084)**

Excavated in 1880/1881 by Daud Thoma at Babylon. Commemorative stela, probably erected in the Marduk Temple. King, no. XXXIV.

**90835 (82-5-22,1799)**

Excavated in 1882 by Abd-al-Ahad Thoma at Sippar, together with 90829 q.v. Land transaction. King, no. IX; Seidl, no. 74.

**90836 (90-10-4,1)**

Purchased in 1890 from H. S. Barfoot, having been excavated during the demolition of some seventeenth-century houses in Knighttrider Street in

the city of London (B. T. A. Evetts, *PSBA* 13 [1890] p. 54); with it were two stones probably from Telloh, and all three were presumably in fact brought to England about the 1880s, stored in the London basement, and forgotten there. No text extant. King, no. XVI; Seidl, no. 43.

**90837 (25-5-3,99)**

Purchased in 1825 from the widow of C. J. Rich, but original provenance apparently unrecorded (*Babylon and Persepolis*, p. 186). Royal stela of black basalt. King, no. XXXVII.

**90840 (63-8-26,2)**

Presented in 1863 by Sir Arnold Kemball, who said in a report to the museum that it was found with 90841 at Babylon, in a small mound near Amran (the Marduk Temple area), between Amran and the Kasr/Mujellibeh (palace/Ishtar Gate) area. Official grant of land and privileges. King, no. VIII; Seidl, no. 80.

**90841 (63-8-26,1)**

Presented in 1863 by Sir Arnold Kemball, who said that it was found at Babylon with 90840 q.v. Land transaction. King, no. VII; Seidl, no. 79.

**90850 (DT 383)**

Presented in 1873 by *The Daily Telegraph*, having been purchased by George Smith (*Assyrian Disc.*, p. 241) as from 'the western side of the Tigris, opposite the town of Baghdad,' a very vague description but the text, an official grant, does mention lands by the Tigris. King, no. V; Seidl, no. 62.

**90858 (82-5-22,1800)**

Excavated in 1882 by Abd-al-Ahad Thoma at Sippar, together with 90829 q.v. Official grant of privileges. King, no. VI; Seidl, no. 67.

**90922 (83-1-20,1)**

Excavated in 1882 by Rassam's team, probably at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. Official decree concerning land. King, no. XXVIII; Seidl, no. 96.

**90936 (ex-12065)**

Acquired before about 1895, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. Official grant of land. King, no. XXIX; Seidl, no. 95.

**90937 (48-11-4,284)**

Excavated in 1847 by Henry Layard at Nimrud/Kalhu, in the southern area of the citadel

(*Nineveh* 2, p. 40). Land transaction, dated at Sahritu in Babylonia, and presumably brought to Assyria as booty. King, no. XXVII; Seidl, no. 93.

**90938 (51-10-9,45)**

Purchased in 1851 from Sir Henry Rawlinson, who obtained or found it at Za'aleh near Musayyib on the Euphrates, about 20 km north-west of Babylon (*JRAS* 12 [1850] p. 477 n. 1). Official grant of privileges relating, appropriately, to a canal head. King, no. XXV; Seidl, no. T 4.

**90940 (ex-12072)**

Acquired before about 1895, clearly excavated by Rassam's team at Borsippa. Official grant of land (?). King, no. XIII; Seidl, no. 90a, her 90b being an adjoining fragment in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, no. 9576. I am indebted to Dr E. Klengel for confirmation, from an excavation photograph, that the Istanbul piece, which mentions land in the neighbourhood of Borsippa, is the same as one whose discovery in the Nabu Temple, Borsippa, is recorded by R. Koldewey, *WVDOG* 15 p. 55 no. 21226.

**91000 (81-4-28,34A) and 91002 (81-4-28,33)**

Excavated in 1881 by Rassam at Sippar, as part of a foundation deposit in Room 170 of the Shamash Temple. Official grants (91002 on clay) to the Shamash Temple. King, no. XXXVI.

**91015 (82-9-18,4363)**

Purchased in 1882 by Rassam, and said to have been found at Babylon. Land transaction. King, no. XXX.

**91022 (81-4-28,118B)**

Excavated in 1881 by Rassam at Sippar, in or close to Room 170 of the Shamash Temple. Official grant to the Shamash Temple—the 'cruciform monument' of Manishtushu, interpreted by E. Sollberger as a Neo-Babylonian creation (*JEOL* 20 [1967-68] pp. 50-70).

**91036 (83-1-18,704)**

Excavated in 1882 by Rassam's team, probably at Sippar, Babylon, or Borsippa. Terra cotta cone, with official grant of land by the Euphrates, compare 135743 (below). King, no. I.

**92987 (82-7-4,37)**

Purchased in 1882 from Spartali & Co. Official grant of land. King, no. XXIV; Seidl, no. T 2.

**102485 (1907-10-14,1)**

Purchased in 1907 from Messrs. Shashoua and Dunnoos & Co., described as from 'a place near Babylon.' Official grant of land in the Sea-Land. King, no. XI; Seidl, no. 71.

**102490**

Acquired before 1909, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. Mentions land. King, no. XVIII; Seidl, no. G 13.

**102588 (1908-4-11,96)**

Purchased in 1908 from I. E. Géjou. Official grant of land in the Der (Badra) region. King, no. II; Seidl, no. 1.

**103215 (1910-10-8,143)**

Purchased in 1910 from I. E. Géjou. Official grant of land. King, no. XXVI; Seidl, no. T 6 (misprinted as 103212).

**104404**

Acquired before 1912, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. Official decree concerning land. King, no. XII; Seidl, no. 86.

**104405**

Acquired before 1912, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. Mentions land. King, no. XV; Seidl, no. 94.

**104407 (80-6-17,1690)**

Excavated in 1879/1880 by Daud Thoma at Babylon or Borsippa (Nabu Temple). No text extant. King, no. XVII; Seidl, no. 104.

**104408 (80-11-12,1896)**

Excavated in 1880 by Daud Thoma at Borsippa (Nabu Temple). Probably a land transaction, with possible mention of Borsippa. King, no. XXIII; Seidl, no. G 17.

**104409 (ex-12048)**

Acquired before about 1895, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. Mentions land. King, no. XX; Seidl, no. 89.

**104414 (80-11-12,2173)**

Excavated in 1880 by Daud Thoma at Borsippa, in Room 22 of the Nabu Temple (see Reade, *Iraq* 48 [1986], p. 110). No text extant. King, no. XXXI; Seidl, no. 106.

**104415 (81-7-1,10)**

Excavated in 1881 by Rassam's team at Babylon or Borsippa. Little text extant. King, no. XXXII; Seidl, no. 102.

**108835 (1914-4-7,1)**

Purchased in 1914 from A. Amor; included in Scheil's 1911 catalogue of the B. Maimon collection. No text extant. Seidl, no. 87.

**113891 (1919-7-12,640)**

Purchased in 1919 from I. E. Géjou. Fragment with curses. C. J. Gadd, *CT* 36 pl. 13; Seidl, no. 66.

**113913 (1919-10-11,3) + 139434 (1983-1-1,9)**

The 113913 piece was recovered by H. R. Hall in 1919, almost certainly during his excavations at Ur, and the other piece, acquired before 1975, presumably derives from other work at the site, in this century or the last. Fragment from a monument of black stone, probably granite, with part of a human figure and of 10 lines of Neo-Babylonian royal inscription in archaizing script. The join was made recently, but both pieces are apparently unpublished.

**114697 (1924-9-27,1)**

Presented in 1924 by H. C. Beck, and said to have come from Layard's excavations at Nineveh: presumably the piece reached England in the nineteenth century, but the Nineveh provenance is quite likely to be a guess. Fragment of a columnar object with about 54 lines giving part of the omen series *šumma izbu*, compare 17291 and 139978. Unpublished.

**130827 (1949-11-12,4)**

Purchased in 1949 from the Duke of Northumberland's Alnwick Castle collection, but originally published in Moscow in 1891, as explained by E. F. Weidner, *AfO* 16 (1952-1953) pp. 43-45. Land transaction in Uruk.

**132255 (1957-11-9,1)**

Purchased in 1957 from Mr E. S. David. A daguerreotype seen by C. B. F. Walker in the Fox Talbot collection, Lacock Abbey, Wilts., indicated that in 1856 this piece was in the collection of the bibliophile, Sir Thomas Phillipps of Middle Hill, Broadway, Worcs.; so it might have been an early nineteenth-century acquisition from the Babylon region. White limestone fragment, with a female figure and a Neo-Babylonian text concerning land. Mentioned by R. D. Barnett, *BMQ* 26 (1962-1963) p. 92 pl. XXXVb.

**135743**

Acquired before 1973, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Sippar, Babylon, or Borsippa, especially since it is a duplicate of 91036 q.v. Terra cotta cone. See C. B. F. Walker in L. de Meyer, *Tell ed-Der* 3 p. 112.

**139433 (1983-1-1,8)**

Acquired before 1975, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. Flake from *kudurru*, with part of symbol and scrap of text. Unpublished.

**139434 (1983-1-1,9)**

See 113913.

**139978 (1983-1-1,339)**

Acquired before 1975, quite probably excavated by Rassam's team at Babylon, Borsippa, or Sippar. About 22 lines of worn text, perhaps from an omen series, compare 17291 and 114697. Unpublished.

**N 2050 (AOC 36)**

Excavated in 1850 by Henry Layard at Babylon, in the Kasr/Mujellibeh (palace/Ishtar Gate) area. White limestone, with divine figures and scraps of text: perhaps part of a throne. Layard, *Discoveries* p. 508, with illustration.

**81-3-24,354**

Excavated in 1880 by Daud Thoma, probably at Babylon or Borsippa. Fragment with ends of 6 lines, probably from a *kudurru*. Unpublished.

**1932-12-10,18**

Excavated in 1930/1931 by R. Campbell Thompson at Nineveh, in area R of the Ishtar Temple. Probably a land transaction: dated at Babylon, and presumably brought to Assyria as booty, like 90937. Unpublished.

In the collection the following sites are thus represented, often with varying degrees of probability:

**BABYLON:**

38612, 90827, 90833, 90834, 90840, 90841, 91015, N 2050.

**BORSIPPA:**

38646, 40006, 90940, 104408, 104414.

**BABYLON or BORSIPPA:**

40204, 40494A, 40590, 104407, 104415, 81-3-24-354.

SIPPAR:

50654, 57943, 90829, 90835, 90858, 91000, 91002,  
91022.

BABYLON, BORSIPPA, or SIPPAR:

90922, 90936, 91036, 102490, 104404, 104405,  
104409, 135743, 139433, 139978.

MUSAYYIB (ZA'ALEH):

90938.

KALHU (NIMRUD):

90937.

NINEVEH:

1932-12-10,18.

UR:

113913 + 139434.