

SOME NEW STAMP SEALS  
FROM THE YALE BABYLONIAN COLLECTION(\*)

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During the past several years the authors have been much concerned with the ancient Near Eastern glyptic of the Yale Babylonian Collection. In the course of our activities, especially while cataloguing previously unaccessioned items from the bequest of Edward Newell<sup>(1)</sup> and from the newly established Rosen Babylonian Collection<sup>(2)</sup>, we have noticed a number of stamp seals of definite or probable Anatolian provenience. Here we present drawings and brief descriptions of twelve such pieces<sup>(3)</sup>.

No. 1 (NCBS 890). Scaraboid, with high, straight walls, convex top, and flat base. Brown, yellow, rust and white banded agate. 17.0 x 14.5 x 9.0 mm. Pierced (diameter, 3.5 mm). Early first millennium. North Syria or South-Western Anatolia.

(\*) We acknowledge the kindness of Professor W. W. Hallo, Curator, for allowing us to publish these items in the Yale Collections. We also wish to thank Ulla Kasten and Nancy Leinwand for their perceptive comments.

The drawings are not made to any set scale and readers are referred to the descriptions for the actual measurements of each piece. Those of numbers 1-3 are the work of A. Brown; the rest are by G. Beckman. The text is the result of our combined efforts. The terms "left" and "right" in the descriptions refer to the impressions and not to the original seals.

Abbreviations used are those listed in the first two fascicules of *The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (1980, pp. xxi-xxix, and 1983, back cover) with the following additions: NBC: Nies Babylonian Collection; NCBS: Newell Collection of Babylonian Seals; RBC: Rosen Babylonian Collection; YBC: Yale Babylonian Collection; *Borowski*: M. Poetto and S. Salvatori, *La collezione anatolica di E. Borowski*, Pavia, 1981.

(1) The first 695 items in this collection were published by H. H. von der Osten, *Ancient Oriental-Seals in the Collection of Mr Edward T. Newell*, OIP 22, Chicago, 1934. Of these, nos. 372-94 are Anatolian.

(2) Mr Jonathan Rosen of New York City has generously donated this collection, which includes tablets as well as glyptic.

(3) Previous publications of Yale's Anatolian seals are, in addition to the work cited in note 1, B. Buchanan, *JCS*, 21 (1967), 18-23 (NBC 11014-17, 11031), and G. Beckman, *AnSt*, 31 (1981), 129-35 (YBC 16575).

This seal, featuring a sphinx with a bird's head tail<sup>(4)</sup>, belongs to a group of related scarabs and scaraboids<sup>(5)</sup> which will soon be studied elsewhere in detail by A. Brown. It bears an inscription of six signs in "Hittite hieroglyphs"<sup>(6)</sup>. Beginning immediately before the sphinx and reading below from left to right in the impression, we have *La-wa-tà-s(a)*<sup>(7)</sup>, that is, a genitive, "of, (belonging) to Lawata". Although this personal name is not otherwise attested, a town Lawa(n)-ta<sup>(8)</sup> is known<sup>(9)</sup>. As for the two remaining signs (to the rear and above the sphinx), they do not correspond closely to any known hieroglyphs, and are perhaps best left for possible future interpretation<sup>(10)</sup>. Plain line border, now mostly wanting because of extensive chipping along the edge.

No. 2 (RBC 1128). Scaraboid, with straight sides, convex top, and very slightly convex base. Rust-red, white, and brown jasper (?) with imperfections (see below). 18.5 x 15.5 x 8.5 mm. Pierced (diameter, 2.5 mm). Early first millennium. Anatolia or Northern Syria (?).

A winged genius in the conventional running/kneeling pose to the left in a cursive style showing Neo-Assyrian influence. Behind him, a sphere surmounting a "T". This is perhaps the hieroglyph of the mirror (?), L 304 (*ma<sub>5</sub>*), simply an *ankh*, or possibly is comparable to a similar object seen on other Newell seals and described by von der Osten as a "mace"<sup>(11)</sup>. Plain line border. The areas along the lower wing and on the nose of the figure that appear damaged, are actually flaws in the composition of the stone, which, nevertheless, seems to have been used because of its striking appearance.

(4) On the sphinx in Near Eastern and Greek art, see the bibliography given by A. Erkanal-Öktü, *ZA*, 69 (1980), 237, n. 9, and E. Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*, Berkeley, 1979, p. 248, n. 39.

(5) Cf. M.-L. Vollenweider, *Catalogue raisonné des sceaux cylindres et intailles*, I, Geneva, 1967, no. 144; O. W. Muscarella (ed.), *Ladders to Heaven*, Toronto, 1981, nos. 239 and 241 (= *Borowski*, nos. 21 and 64); E. Babelon, *Collection Pauvert de la Chapelle*, Paris, 1899, no. 35; M. Henig, *The Lewis Collection of Gemstones*, Oxford, 1975, no. 264; and A. Procope-Walter, in "Archäologischer Anzeiger", 1928, cols. 522-33, figs. 1 and 2.

(6) We have corresponded with Professor E. Laroche concerning this inscription, and wish to thank him for his assistance. Our interpretation, however, differs somewhat from that of Laroche, who did not handle the original seal.

(7) Throughout this paper transcription of the hieroglyphs is according to the system of Laroche, *Les hiéroglyphes hittites*, Paris, 1960.

(8) See G. del Monte and J. Tischler, *Répertoire géographique des textes cunéiformes*, Bd. 6, Wiesbaden, 1978, p. 245.

(9) See Laroche, *Les noms des Hittites*, Paris, 1966, p. 266, for personal names identical to geographic terms.

(10) Pleading ignorance here to the meaning or significance of these two signs seems a more honest interpretation than labeling them simply "decorative filler".

(11) See, for example, NCBS 496 and 498; and cf., for both the sign and the style, C. H. Gordon, "Iraq", 6 (1939), no. 118 (Walters Art Gallery C46).

No. 3 (RBC 1129). Scaraboid, with straight sides, very slightly convex top and flat base. Soft, light green stone, the whole seal quite worn. 20.5 x 16.0 x 8.0 mm. Pierced (diameter, 2.0 mm). Early first millennium. Western Anatolia or Northern Syria.

Side A (the flat base) shows a winged sun-disc<sup>(12)</sup> in a very linear style above a crouching horned animal. From the wings of the sun-disc emerge "arms" whose inverted Y-shaped "hands" grasp spheres, while two groups of three spheres flank the composition. Beneath the wings are two irregular circles, the apparent connection of the one to the "arm" on the left is only a damaged spot on the stone. Line border, now mostly worn away. On side B (the convex back), there is an equid (?) within a hatched, oval border. There is no trace of an inscription.

No. 4 (NCBS 891). Biconvex disc, with two grooves around the edge. Deep red serpentine, quite worn. Diameter, 17.0 mm; thickness, 8.0 mm. Pierced. Late second millennium<sup>(13)</sup>. Anatolia or Northern Syria.

This seal shows a different name on each side<sup>(14)</sup>, probably those of a married couple. Side A: The antithetic L 370 over L 79 identifies this name as that of a woman<sup>(15)</sup>, but only the first sign, *sà*, can now be made out. Side B: A male's name is indicated by the antithetic L 370 over L 386, but again it is badly worn: *x-x-a/i/ya*<sup>(16)</sup>. The remaining elements on both A and B are seemingly filler.

No. 5 (NBC 11065). Biconvex disc, with two grooves around the edge. Black serpentine, very worn. Diameter, 15.0 mm; thickness, 5.0 mm. Pierced. Late second millennium. Anatolia or Northern Syria.

The same name is inscribed on either side of this seal. It is now impossible to determine if the additional elements were also entirely identical. Of these, only the triangle, L 370, surmounted by three short lines on side B is clear<sup>(17)</sup>. We may read the hieroglyphs *A/I/Ya-x-á-na*.

No. 6 (RBC 1127). Discoid<sup>(18)</sup>, with smooth edge. Red jasper (?), fairly worn with some chipping. Diameter, 17.0 mm; thickness, 9.0 mm. Pierced. Late second millennium. Anatolia or Northern Syria.

(12) Bibliography on this iconographic element is given by H. Hellenkemper and J. Wagner, *AnSt*, 27 (1977), 169, n. 11, and by W. Fauth, *UF*, 11 (1979), 235, n. 83. See also A. Taşyürek, *OrAn*, 18 (1979), 315, for its appearance in Urartu.

(13) On this dating of the "double-convex" discs, see Buchanan, *JCS*, 21 (1967), 23.

(14) For such "double seals", see H. G. Güterbock in *Boğazköy V*, Berlin, 1975, pp. 72-74.

(15) Ibid. For the particularly elongated form of L 79, cf. *Borowski*, no. 93.

(16) For this reading of L 209, see J. D. Hawkins, A. Morpurgo-Davies, and G. Neumann, *Hittite Hieroglyphs and Luwian*, NAWG 1973, no. 6, Göttingen, 1974, pp. 155ff.

(17) On this symbol, possibly indicating "fertility" or "prosperity", see Beckman, *AnSt*, 31 (1981), 132-33.

(18) For the shape, cf. *Borowski*, no. 23.

Side A bears a woman's name (note the antithetical L 370 - L 79), the signs of which are too damaged to read. Side B has an unusual grid pattern which may be the result of re-engraving.

No. 7 (NBC 11067). Cupola. Red serpentine, very worn. Diameter, 17.0 to 18.0 mm; height, 11.0 mm. Pierced, with secondary vertical boring for use as a bead (?) and subsequent damage. Late second or early first millennium. Anatolia or Northern Syria.

For the shape, the decorative band, and an example of how this type of seal was set, cf. *Borowski*, nos. 15-19. While both the field provided by the upper portion of the hemisphere and the flat base probably originally bore inscriptions, none are now visible due to wear, and possible re-engraving when the seal was reused as a bead (?).

No. 8 (RBC 1130). Knobbed cone; plain sides with gradual slope. Bronze. Diameter of base, 20.0 mm; height, 23.0 mm. Pierced through knob. Early second millennium. Anatolia.

This seal is to be assigned to Th. Beran's Group I<sup>(19)</sup>. Its design consists of a rectangle with four spiral arms and a circle with a dot in its center.

No. 9 (YBC 16776). Knobbed cone; faceted sides with gradual slope, and three rings around the neck below the knob. Bronze. Diameter of base, 22.0 mm; height, 28.0 mm. Pierced through knob. Early second millennium. Anatolia.

In type, this piece is similar to no. 8. It features a guilloche pattern surrounding two concentric circles, the inner of which contains a cross formed by four arcs, while the space between the two circles is filled with hatching. Around the edge of the entire design are nine additional arcs.

No. 10 (NBC 12053). Tall, slender pyramidal stamp. Black serpentine, the surface much worn. Engraved base, 11.0 x 10.0 mm; height, 27.0 mm. Pierced. Mid second to early first millennium (?). Anatolia (?).

For the shape of this and the next seal, cf. von der Osten, *Altorientalische Siegelsteine der Sammlung Hans Silvius von Aulock*, Uppsala, 1957, no. 84, and, more distantly, von der Osten, *Ancient Oriental Seals in the Collection of Mrs Agnes Baldwin Brett*, OIP 37, Chicago, 1936, no. 111. Both of these pieces, however, bear only crude patterns of crossed lines, while our seal shows a quadruped and five ovals.

No. 11 (NBC 11068). Tall, slender pyramidal stamp. Red serpentine, the surface rather worn. Engraved base, 14.0 x 11.0 mm; height, 26.0 mm. Pierced. Mid second to early first millennium (?). Anatolia.

(19) *Die hethitische Glyptic von Boğazköy*, WVDOG 76, Berlin, 1967, pp. 18f., 47f., and Tf. 1 (especially no. 5). Cf. also *Borowski*, *Tav. XII-XIV*, nos. 33ff.

Within a worn frame, this seal has two elements which may be hieroglyphs. For the larger, see perhaps L 284, but this is uncertain.

No. 12 (NBC 11066). Wedge-shaped seal (or decorated bead?). Red serpentine, with smooth edges, and in very good condition. Engraved surfaces, 18.5 x 17.0 x 18.0 mm; thickness, 3.5 to 8.0 mm. Pierced. Mid second millennium. Anatolia.

This seal or bead, which shows various decorative motifs of a geometric and floral nature on each side<sup>(20)</sup>, is similar to one in the Kayseri Museum published by H. Erdem<sup>(21)</sup>. That this type of object is of Hittite origin is demonstrated by the find of a fragmentary example by the excavators of Boghazköy<sup>(22)</sup>.

(20) For the sketchy, linear style, cf. *Borowski*, Tav. XXV, no. 25.

(21) "Athenaeum", 47 (1969), 110-14, Tav. III.

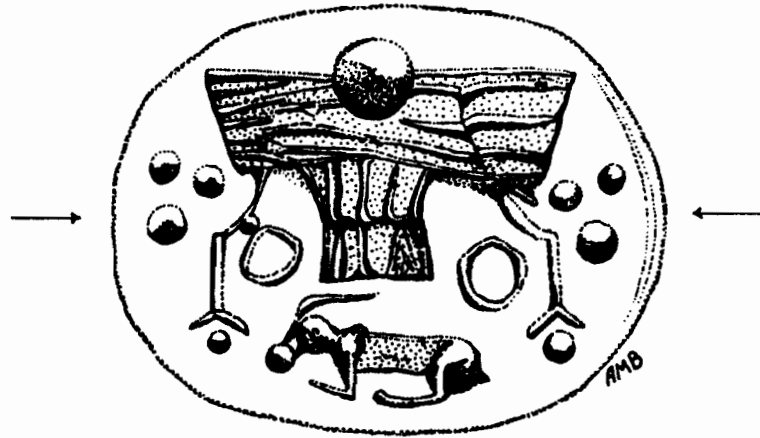
(22) See R. Boehmer, *Die Kleinfunde von Boğazköy*, WVDOG 87, Berlin, 1969, p. 228, no. 2410.



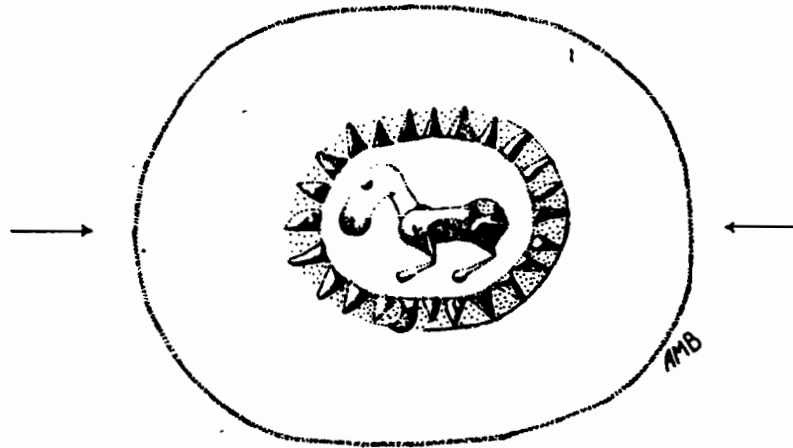
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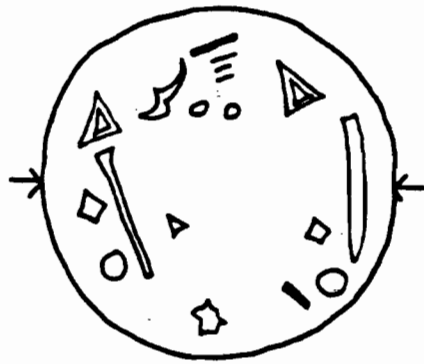


A



B

No. 3 RBC 1129



A



B

No. 4 NCBS 891



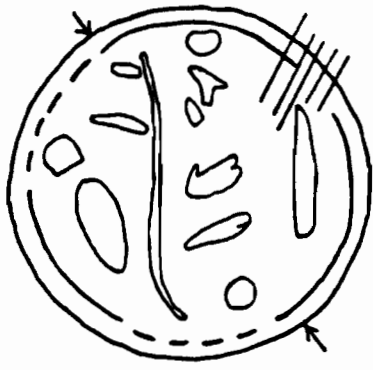
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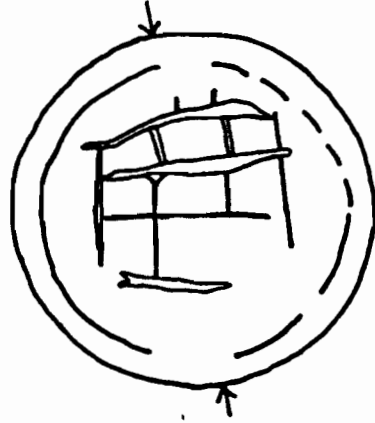
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No. 5 NBC 11065



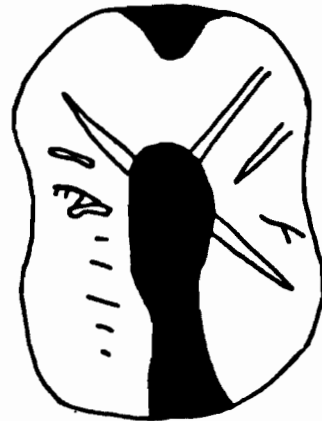
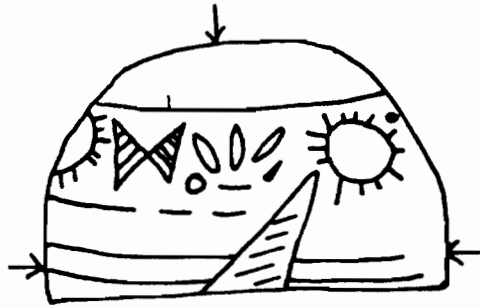
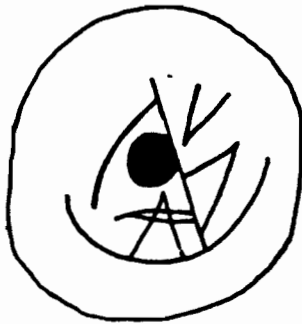


A

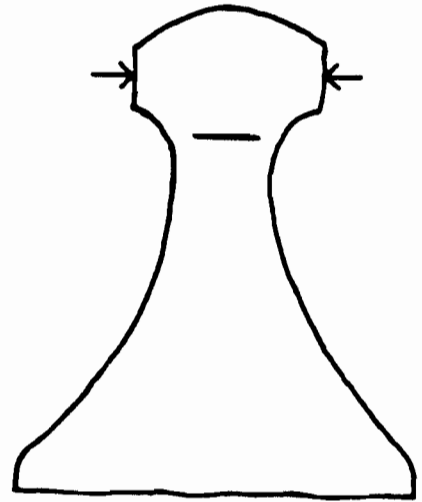
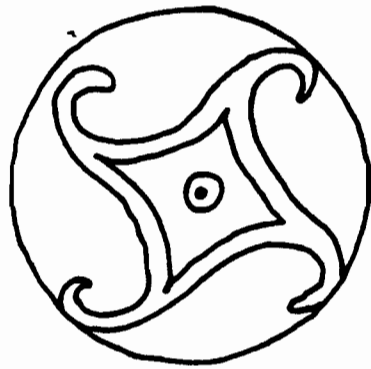


B

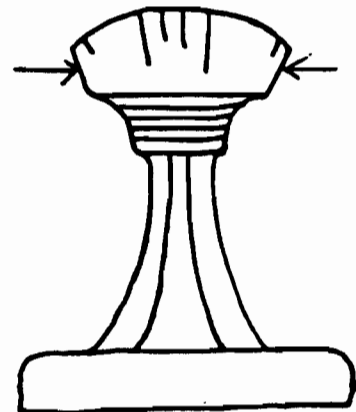
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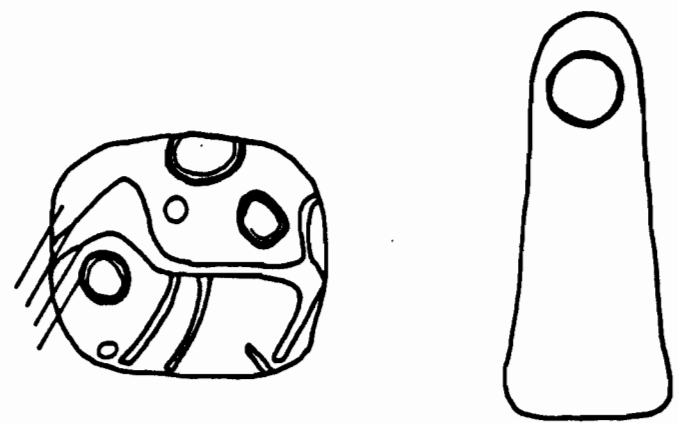
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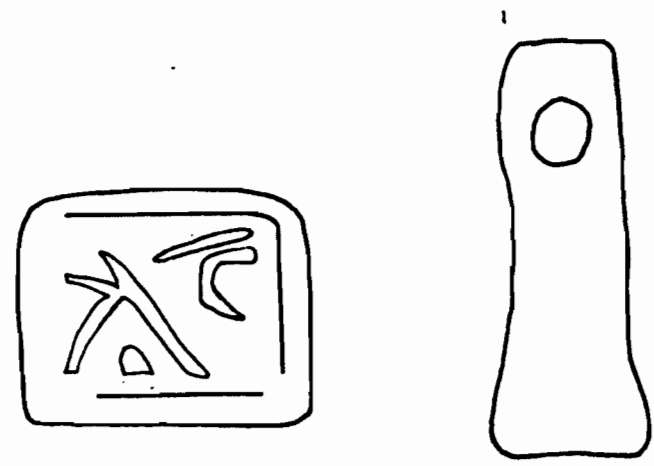
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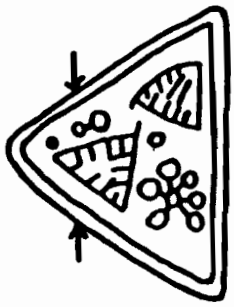
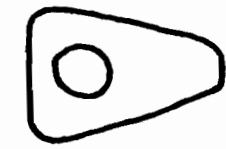
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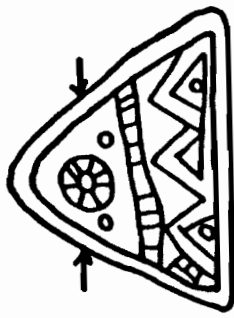
No. 10 NBC 12053



No. 11 NBC 11068



B



A

No. 12 NBC 11066