

Sept. 1, 1938.

Dear William:

Since receiving your letter of Aug. 13, yesterday afternoon, I have again compared all the qws'nl impressions, and am enclosing a new collation of them, with the exception of the phot. of no. 463 which I am putting on the back of the sheet, marking in red ink, what are actually only blurs, and which have led you to adopt the readings of two letters different from those I have suggested. On the handle with two impressions, no. 463, the phot. of which I sent you, several of the letters are blurred, particularly the first and last of the first word in the second line, which I read 'bd, and you tbb. In as much as you are attaching importance for the dating of this seal impression to these particular letters, I am hastening to give you copies of the same letters on other handles, which are clearer. You will notice, that the first time the person using the seal made an impression on handle no. 463, he spoiled it, and tried it a second time on the same handle. (This is not so clear in the phot. you have, but in another phot. I shall have both impressions photographed, and not focus merely on the better one). In the second attempt, the handler of the seal was more successful, and pressing quite hard, produced what is generally the deepest and clearest impression of all those he made. (Almost all of these seal impressions were found at the bottom of one room of level III, stamped on the handles of the same type of jug, although some were found elsewhere in the same level on different types of vessels). However, in pressing hard, he created several lines, partly also because of the fact that the sea may have been dirty, which do not belong to the letters, and which have misled you, who are not familiar with the rest of the seal impressions. Having the other seal-impressions in front of me, I naturally, as also Winnett and Harding who have collated them separately, have been able to discount the blurs. I admit, that looking at the phot. I sent you, the third letter of the first word in the second line looks like a hai, and that the first letter looks something like a tet. Having just gone over the other seal-impressions, I can assure you that the first letter in all the rest of the impressions that is clear is an indubitable 'ayin, and that the third letter can certainly not be a hai, but is a dale. I am also enclosing a very rough and rapid collation that Harding made the other day, which I shall ask you to return to me. He made a careful collation of the Aramaic graffito, which I had intended asking you to publish in the Dec. Bulletin.

In fact, for the Dec. Bulletin, in addition to sending in a rewritten part of the historical treatment of Tell el-beleifch, I should like to submit a careful collation of all the seal impressions, together with several additional photographs, in which, I believe, the debatable letters will show up more clearly than in the photograph I sent you. That is why I should like you if possible to hold back the publication of the qws'nl impression, and also the Aramaic graffito. I should prefer to have you base whatever remarks you make then based on all the material, rather than on photographs, which I see in both instances have misled you, and will therefore certainly mislead others. That would be a pity.

I have tried hard to read a mem for the num of 'nl, but there is no possibility

Sept. 1, 1938.

of doing so. What you have suggested as a light line of a third stroke which might make a nun into a nem is again only a blur. The other impressions show the nun too clearly for any doubt on that score.

I am enclosing drawings of the large jug-type with the qws'nl seal impressions, also the drawing of a cup with a loop handle, of a type of which there were about ten or more in the same room near the bottom of the floor of level III. On the handle of each of these cups was a potter's mark. Every vessel in this room, then, with a few exceptions, had either a seal-impression or a potter's mark. It was some kind of a store, perhaps of an official potter. In other rooms, both types of vessels were found in level III, without potter's marks or seal impressions. On the back of the drawing you will find the copy of the potter's mark.

When would you be inclined to date no. 530? It was found in a disturbed room at a 1.50 m. below the surface, near the bottom of level III. In this room, however, on the top is level IV, and beneath level III are clear traces of levels II and I. By the way, the qws'nl stamped handles were found about two metres below the surface at the bottom of level III.

The Cypro-Phoenician type of juglets which can be dated to \pm 800 B.C. also belong to level III.

Sincerely yours,

NS

The he, as you will see from Harding's and my collations, has a far less or non-lapidary appearance of the type in post-exilic stamps and Mace coins than seems apparent in the phot. I sent you.