



The Texts of the Battle of Kadesh

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## THE TEXTS OF THE BATTLE OF KADESH

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A happy addition to the texts on the battle of Kadesh makes a new translation permissible: in the winter of 1925 Professor Breasted uncovered a new inscription on the rear (south side) of the pylon of Ramses II at Luxor, consisting of the Record and the Poem of the Battle of Kadesh. He generously placed all his materials at the writer's disposal, and the writer collated all the available hand copies and photographs of these important documents for a Doctor's dissertation.

The present paper is an abridgment of that dissertation, embodying a translation of eclectic texts. In the near future, the writer hopes to publish a more complete study of the battle, with exegetical and critical notes. The present paper follows Professor Breasted's work, as published in *The Battle of Kadesh* and *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Volume III, §§ 298 ff. The translation is somewhat more free than would be permissible in a more intensive study.

### THE POEM

Caution should be used in extracting historical fact from the dithyrambic lines of the Poem. The first twenty-four lines may be accorded liberal credence; thereafter reason demands a skeptical attitude, as the supreme intent of the scribe has been to glorify Ramses, to the sacrifice of accuracy. To the sources employed by Professor Breasted should be added the new Luxor text, on which is based the line numbering used here. The writer himself in the autumn of 1926 found at Luxor still another copy of the Poem, written retrograde on the outside of the west wall of the court of Amenhotep III. Only the ends of the lines are preserved. But this newest text makes three copies of the Poem and two of the Record in the Luxor temple alone! The writer has also found remains of another copy of the Poem at the Ramesseum (on the front of Pylon II) and another at Karnak (on the outside of the west wall running from Pylon IX to Pylon X).

## TITLE

<sup>(1)</sup>Beginning of the victory of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon, given life forever, which he achieved in the land of Hatti, Naharin, in the land of Arzawa, in Pedasia, in Dardania, <sup>(2)</sup>in the land of Mysia, in the land of Cilicia, together with Lycia, Carchemish, Kode, the land of Kadesh, in the land of Ugarit, and *Mushanth*.<sup>1</sup>

## THE VALOR OF THE KING

Now His Majesty is a young lord, <sup>(3)</sup>valiant, unequaled, (for)<sup>2</sup> his two arms are strong, his heart stout, and his strength like (that of) Montu in his time; fine of appearance like Atum, (so that) there is rejoicing at the sight of his beauty; rich in victories over all foreign countries, (so that) none can face him to fight; <sup>(4)</sup>a firm wall protecting his army, their shield on the day of combat, unrivaled at drawing the bow. More powerful is he than hundreds of thousands together, as he advances and charges into a throng, while his heart is filled with his strength, (so that he is) mighty of courage in the hour of hand-to-hand combat, <sup>(5)</sup>like a flame at its time of devouring; bold as a bull arrayed [on] the field of combat. He has been aware of all lands together; a thousand men cannot stand fast before him; and hundreds of thousands quail at the sight of him: the lord of terror, mighty of battle-cry in the heart of all lands, <sup>(6)</sup>causing dread . . . (*lacuna, about 5 squares*) . . . in the heart of foreigners, like a lion in a valley of wild cattle; going forth in valor and returning after he has triumphed. It is not said boastfully: "excellent in idea and fine in plan," (for) in his <sup>(7)</sup>answer there is found the best—saving his infantry, [delivering hi]s chariotry, bringing away his bodyguard, and rescuing his troops; while his heart is like a mountain of copper—King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon, given life.

## THE DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT

Now His Majesty had prepared <sup>(8)</sup>his infantry, his chariotry, and the Sardinians of His Majesty's captivity, whom he had taken in the

<sup>1</sup> Here and hereafter the names of foreign countries are given without question, although a number of these identifications are still open to doubt. The reader should consult the literature on the subject.

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this translation, parentheses ( ) enclose additions by the modern editor, brackets [ ] enclose restorations of lost portions, and half-brackets <sup>†</sup> enclose uncertainties.

victories of his arm, equipped with all their weapons, to whom the plan of combat had been given. His Majesty journeyed northward, his infantry and his chariotry <sup>(9)</sup>with him. He began to march on the good way. In the year 5, second month of the third season, ninth day, His Majesty passed the fortress of Tharu. [His mig]ht w[as] like (that of) Montu when he goes forth, (so that) every foreign country was trembling before him, their chiefs were [bringing] <sup>(10)</sup>their tribute, and all the rebels were coming, bowing down through dread of the personality of His Majesty. His infantry went on the narrow passes as if on the highways of Egypt.

#### THE MARCH THROUGH SYRIA

Now after days had passed after this, His Majesty was <sup>(11)</sup>in Ramses-Meriamon, the town which is in the Valley of the Cedar. His Majesty proceeded northward, and later His Majesty arrived at the highland of Kadesh. Then His Majesty went forward like his father Montu, Lord of Thebes, and he crossed <sup>(12)</sup>the ford of the Orontes, with the division of Amon (named): "He Gives Victory to Usermare-Setepnere." His Majesty reached the town of Kadesh.

#### THE NORTHERN COALITION

Now the wretched foe of Hatti was come, having gathered all foreign countries to the very ends of the <sup>(13)</sup>sea: the land of Hatti coming in its entirety, Naharin likewise, Arzawa, Dardania, the *Keshkesh*, Mysia, Pedasia, Ilium, <sup>(14)</sup>Cilicia, Lycia, Kizzuwadna, Carchemish, Ugarit, Kode, the entire land of Nukhashshi, *Mushanth*, and Kadesh. He left out no foreign country which was not brought from every [dist]ant land, and their <sup>(15)</sup>princes were there with him, every man bringing his infantry and [his] chariotry, 'coming', exceedingly numerous, unparalleled. They covered the mountains and the valleys, (for) they were like the grasshoppers with their multitudes. He left neither silver nor gold in his land, <sup>(16)</sup>but despoiled it of all its possessions and gave to all foreign countries to bring them with him to combat.

#### THE POSITIONS OF THE ARMIES

Now the wretched foe of Hatti, with the numerous foreign countries which were with him, was stationed hidden in battle array on

the northeast<sup>1</sup> of the town of Kadesh, while His Majesty was alone by himself <sup>(17)</sup>with his bodyguard. The division of Amon was on the march behind him; the division of Re was crossing the ford in a district south of the town of Shabtun,<sup>2</sup> at the distance of an *iter* from the place where His Majesty was; the division of Ptah was on <sup>(18)</sup>the south of the town of Arnaim (*Yrnm*);<sup>3</sup> and the division of Sutekh was marching on the road. His Majesty had formed the first ranks of battle of all the leaders of his army, while they were (still) on the shore in the land of Amurru.<sup>4</sup>

## THE HITTITE ATTACK

Now the wretched prince <sup>(19)</sup>of Hatti was stationed in the midst of the infantry which was with him, and he did not come out to fight, through fear of His Majesty. Then he caused to go people and spans of horses, numerous, as many as the sands, with three persons to a span, for they had made their combinations (thus): among every three warriors was one man of the foemen of Hatti, equipped with <sup>(20)</sup>all the weapons of combat. Lo, they had caused them to be stationed in battle array, hidden behind<sup>5</sup> the town of Kadesh. Then they issued from the south side of Kadesh and attacked the division of Re in its middle, while they were on the march, unsuspecting and not <sup>(21)</sup>drawn up for combat. Thereupon the infantry and chariotry of His Majesty gave way before them.

## RAMSES' ATTACK

Now His Majesty was halted on the north of the town of Kadesh, on the west side of the Orontes. Then some one came to tell it to His Majesty. Thereupon His Majesty arose like <sup>(22)</sup>his father Montu, and he seized the adornments of combat; he clothed himself in his coat-of-mail, (so that) he was like Baal in his hour. The great horse that bore His Majesty—"Victory in Thebes" its name, of the great stable of "Usermare-Setepnere, Beloved of Amon"—was in the midst of the

<sup>1</sup> So the new text. The papyrus reads "northwest," which is certainly a mistake, as Major Burne has suggested in *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (1921), p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> The papyrus reads: "was at the ford on the west [of] Shabduna."

<sup>3</sup> The papyrus has: "was opposite ['them']."

<sup>4</sup> The papyrus abbreviates the last two sentences: "The division of Sutekh was on the shore in the land of Amurru."

<sup>5</sup> The papyrus reads "on the northwest of," following its mistake of l. 16 above.

leaders. His Majesty arose quickly; <sup>(23)</sup>then he charged into the midst of the enemy consisting of the foemen of Hatti, although he was alone by himself, without any other with him.

#### RAMSES SURROUNDED

(When) His Majesty went to look behind him, he found surrounding him 2,500 span (of chariotry) in his way out, consisting of <sup>(24)</sup>every warrior of the foemen of Hatti, together with the many foreign countries which were with them: of Arzawa, Mysia, Pedasia, of *Keshkesh*, of Ilium, of Kizzuwadna, of Aleppo, of Ugarit, Kadesh, and Lycia; being three to a span, acting together.<sup>1</sup>

"Yet there was no official with me, nor charioteer, nor <sup>(25)</sup>sergeant of the infantry, nor chariot-warrior, while my infantry and my chariotry were left as a prey before them, (for) not one of them stood fast to fight with them."

#### RAMSES CALLS UPON AMON

Then His Majesty said: "What is the matter, O my father Amon? Has a father ever forgotten <sup>(26)</sup>his son, or are these things which I am doing anything apart from thee? Have I not gone and stayed at thy command? Neither have I transgressed the plan which thou hast ordained, nor have I deviated from thy plans. Too great is the great lord of Egypt to let the foreigners in his way approach! What carest thou, O Amon, for these <sup>(27)</sup>Asiatics, the wretched ones, unknown of the god? Do I not make for thee very many monuments and fill thy temples with my captives? I am building for thee my House of Millions of Years; I give to thee all my goods as furniture. I lead to thee <sup>(28)</sup>all lands together to provide food for thy offerings; and I cause the sacrifice to thee of myriads of cattle, with all sweet-smelling herbs. I leave no good thing behind, not done in thy courtyard, (for) I build for thee great pylons of stone, I erect <sup>(29)</sup>their flag-staffs myself, and I bring to thee obelisks from Elephantine. It is I that do the bringing of stone. I launch for thee vessels on the sea, to fetch for thee the products of foreign countries. May a thin lot befall him who defeats <sup>(30)</sup>thy plan, (while) good is done for him who takes account of thee! O that one may act for thee with loving heart!"

<sup>1</sup> Here we close the historical introduction and swing into the true poem, with Ramses speaking. If there be any criterion of the historicity of what follows, the text is most nearly historical when it reverts to the third person, speaking of "His Majesty." We find more fiction and hyperbole under the first person—"I" and "My Majesty."

## AMON'S AID INVOKED

"I have cried out to thee, O my father Amon, for I am in the midst of a strange multitude, whom I know not: all foreign countries which have united against me, while I am alone by myself, no other with me, while <sup>(31)</sup>my numerous infantry has deserted me, and not one of my chariotry has glanced toward me. I cried out to them, but not one of them hearkened to me, alone among them, when I called. I found that Amon was worth more to me than millions of infantry, <sup>(32)</sup>or hundreds of thousands of chariotry, or ten thousand brothers and children, though they be united single-heartedly. The labor of many persons is naught, (for) Amon is worth more than they. I have come hither by the plan of thy mouth, O Amon, nor have I deviated from thy <sup>(33)</sup>plan."

## WITH AMON'S AID RAMSES ROUTS THE ENEMY

"Now, (though) I was praying from the (very) ends of foreign countries, yet my voice returned to Hermonthis, and I found Amon coming when I called to him. For me he put his hand with me, (so that) I was rejoicing. He cried out behind me: 'Straight on! Forward! I am <sup>(34)</sup>with thee; I am thy father! My hand is with thee, (for) I am worth more to thee than hundreds of thousands, and I am the strong lord who loves valor!' I found my heart stout, my courage in joy. Everything which I was doing came to pass, (for) I was like Montu, (as) I shot to my right and grappled to <sup>(35)</sup>my left. I was like Set<sup>1</sup> in his time before them. I found the 2,500<sup>2</sup> spans of chariotry, in whose midst I was, becoming heaps of corpses before my horses. Not one of them found his hand to fight, (for) their hearts quailed in their bodies <sup>(36)</sup>from terror of me, and all their arms were powerless, (so that) they could not shoot nor find their courage to seize their javelins. I made them plunge into the water as crocodiles plunge, for they were falling upon their faces, one on another, as I slew among them <sup>(37)</sup>whom I desired. Neither could one look behind him, nor could another turn about, and whoever of them fell, he could not raise himself up."

## THE NORTHERN ALLIES ROUTED

Now the wretched prince of Hatti, standing in the midst of his infantry and his chariotry, was watching the combat of His Majesty,

<sup>1</sup> Abydos: "Montu," and Papyrus Sallier III: "Baal."

<sup>2</sup> New Luxor text: "1500," a mistake.

who was alone by himself, <sup>(38)</sup>for neither his infantry nor his chariotry were with him, while he (the prince of Hatti) was standing averted, shrinking, and afraid. Then he caused to go the numerous princes, every one of whom had his spans, equipped with their weapons of warfare: the prince of <sup>(39)</sup>Arzawa, him of Mysia, the prince of Ilium, him of Lycia, him of Dardania, him of *Keshkesh*, the prince of Carchemish, the prince of Cilicia, him of Aleppo, and the brothers of him of Hatti, <sup>(40)</sup>united together. Their total was 1,000<sup>1</sup> spans of chariotry, which came straight on to the fire.

"I launched myself against them, being like Montu, (for) I made them taste my hand in an instant's time, butchering among them, slain on the spot."

#### THE CRY OF ONE OF THE ENEMY

<sup>(41)</sup>"One of them called out to his companion, saying: 'It is not a man who is in our midst, (but) Sutekh, great in strength, or Baal in person! No man has (ever) done the deeds which he is doing. Has one single person ever conquered hundreds of thousands, when there was no infantry nor chariotry with him to [fight]? <sup>(42)</sup>Let us come quickly! Let us flee before him! Let us seek life for ourselves! Let us breathe the air! See, whoever brings himself to approach him, his hand and all his limbs become powerless, (so that) he is not able to draw the bow or the javelins either, <sup>(43)</sup>when one sees him coming at a gallop far away!' "

#### RAMSES' ADDRESS TO HIS TROOPS

"Now His (=My) Majesty was after them like a griffon, while I slaughtered among them and did not leave (any), while I gave my shout to my infantry, saying: 'Be ye steadfast! Let <sup>(44)</sup>your courage be steadfast, O my infantry! You see my victory (achieved) while I was alone, when Amon was my protector and his hand was with me. How wretched is your courage, O my chariotry!<sup>2</sup> Reliance upon you was not ordained. . . . <sup>(45)</sup>Is there no one of you for whom I have made a goodly lot in my land? Have I not stood as the lord, while you

<sup>1</sup> Papyrus Sallier III: "2,500," an error.

<sup>2</sup> Here the writer has followed the hieroglyphic texts rather than the papyrus. Skip to Papyrus Sallier III, V, 10, beginning: "Then His Majesty, L.P.H., cried out to his infantry, his chariotry likewise, and his officials, who had been apart from the combat. His Majesty, L.P.H., said to them."



were the dependents? I let you discharge offices 'for me' every day. I put the son over the property of his father, (so that) every evil-doer <sup>(46)</sup>who was in Egypt fled. I have left to you your slaves, and others were given (if they were) taken from you. Everyone who asks favors—"I will do (it)! Yes, I!" I say to him every day. There is no lord who has done [for] his army what My Majesty has done <sup>(47)</sup>for your sake, (for) I have let you dwell in your towns, (even) though the command of the sergeant was not carried out. My chariotry likewise, I have given them leave (to go) to their cities, saying: "I shall find them the same today in the hour of advancing <sup>(48)</sup>to battle." But see, all of you together act a wretched part, (for) no man of you stands to give me his hand when I am fighting. As the *ka* of my father Amon endures! would that I were in Egypt like my fathers' father, whom the Syrians never <sup>(49)</sup>saw nor fought with, 'charging'! For not one of you comes to report his orders (given) in the land of Egypt.' "

#### RAMSES' BOAST OF VICTORY

"What a happy lot there is for him who presents many monuments to Thebes, the city of Amon! The crime which my <sup>(50)</sup>infantry and my chariotry have committed is greater than can be told. See, Amon has given to me his victory, although there is no infantry nor chariotry with me, (for) he causes every distant land to see my victory by my own arm, while I am <sup>(51)</sup>alone. There is no official behind me, nor charioteer, nor sergeant of the infantry, nor chariot-warrior. Let foreign countries, beholding me, report my name as far as distant unknown foreign countries. As for everyone who escapes my hand among them, <sup>(52)</sup>they are standing averted at the sight of what I have done. Whenever I attack millions of them, their feet do not make a halt, but they flee. As for all who shoot straight at me—lo, their arrows are scattered when they reach me!"

#### RAMSES RALLIES HIS ATTENDANT

"Now<sup>1</sup> when <sup>(53)</sup>Menena, my chariot-warrior, saw that a great total of horses surrounded me, he quailed, his heart was wretched, with very great dread entering into his limbs."

Then he said to His Majesty: "O my good lord, mighty ruler, the great protector of Egypt <sup>(54)</sup>in the day of combat, we are standing alone

<sup>1</sup> Return to V, 2, in Papyrus Sallier III.

in the midst of the foe. Behold, the infantry and the chariotry have deserted us. Wherefore art thou making a stand to rescue them? Oh, grant that we be uninjured! Save us, O Usermare-Setepnere!"

Then His Majesty said to his chariot-warrior: <sup>(55)</sup>"Be thou steadfast! Let thy courage be steadfast, O my chariot-warrior, for I am about to charge among them as a falcon strikes, while I slay and butcher and hurl to the ground! What carest thou for these cowards, for millions of whom my face has not turned pale?"

#### RAMSES REVIEWS THE BATTLE

Thereupon His Majesty led quickly on; then he <sup>(56)</sup>charged swiftly into the midst of the foe up to the sixth charge among them.

"I was like Baal behind them at the time of his might, when I slaughtered among them and did not leave (any) over. Now when<sup>1</sup> my infantry and my chariotry saw me, that I was like Montu, <sup>(57)</sup>my arm was strong, Amon, my father, was with me, and for me he made all foreign countries as straw before me, they were going, one by one, to approach the camp at evening time, and they found all foreign countries, among whom I had charged, lying stretched out in their own blood, <sup>(58)</sup>namely, every good warrior of the (land of) Hatti and the children and brothers of their prince. I made the plain of Kadesh turn white, (so that) there could not be found a place to set foot because of their multitude."

#### THE ARMY PRAISES RAMSES

"Then my infantry came to praise me, [re]joicing<sup>1</sup> at the sight of what I had done; <sup>(59)</sup>my officials came to extol my arm, and my chariotry likewise, lauding my name, saying:

Hail, thou goodly warrior, making firm the heart!

Thou hast rescued thy infantry and thy chariotry!

Thou art the son of Amon, the efficient one;

For thou hast destroyed the land of Hatti <sup>(60)</sup>by thy powerful arm!

Thou art the goodly warrior, without thy like—

A king fighting for his army on the day of combat!

Thou art great of courage, foremost in the fray;

For thou hast taken no reck of all lands together!

<sup>1</sup> Resume *ibid.* at VII, 4.

Thou art rich of victory in the presence of thy army  
 And against the entire world. It is not said as a boast:  
 "Protector of Egypt and Binder of Foreign Lands,"  
<sup>(61)</sup>For thou hast broken the back of Hatti forever!

## THE KING REBUKES HIS TROOPS

Then His Majesty said to his infantry, his officials likewise, and his chariotry: "Now what have my officials, my infantry, and my chariotry done, who have been apart from the combat? Has no man (ever) celebrated his triumph in <sup>(62)</sup>his (own) city, when he returns (after) he has done valiantly in the presence of his lord? Good, indeed, is a reputation for fighting, even yet, and a man has been esteemed for his (strong) arm since of old. Have I not done good for (even) one of you? As for him of you who forsook me while I was alone in the midst of the foe, how excellent is he with you! Shall he of you <sup>(63)</sup>who took a breath of air while I was alone live? Do you not know in your hearts that I am your wall of iron? 'One is grieved' at the report, when one hears of your deserting me while I was alone without a companion, when there came for [me] no official, <sup>(64)</sup>or chariot-warrior, or sergeant to give me his hand, when I was fighting. (Yet) I vanquished millions of foreign countries, though I was alone."

## THE KING ENUMERATES THE FAITHFUL

"When I was with 'Victory in Thebes' and 'Mut is Satisfied,' my great horses, they it was that I found ready to take my hand, <sup>(65)</sup>when I was alone fighting many foreign countries. I shall continue to let them eat food in my own presence every day, when I am in my palace, (since) they it was that I found (when I was) in the midst of the foe, together with the charioteers and Menena, my <sup>(66)</sup>chariot-warrior, and my court stewards, who were at my side, who were my witnesses of the combat. Behold, I found them, and My Majesty returned in valor and strength, (after) I had overthrown hundreds of thousands together by my arm."

## THE SECOND DAY OF BATTLE

"(When) the earth brightened, <sup>(67)</sup>I marshaled the ranks of battle, being prepared for combat like a powerful bull, appearing against

them like Montu, equipped with the adornments of valor and might, and I charged into the thick of the fray, fighting as <sup>(68)</sup>a falcon strikes. My uraeus-serpent overthrew for me [my] enemies and gave forth its fiery blaze in a flame in the face of my foe, (so that) I was like Re in his rising at dawn, and my rays burned the flesh of the enemy. One <sup>(69)</sup>of them cried out to his companion: 'Prepare yourselves! Take care that ye do not approach him! Behold, it is the great Sekhmet that is with him, (for) she is by him upon his horse, and her hand is with him. Whoever goes to approach him, there comes <sup>(70)</sup>a blast of fire to burn his flesh!' Thereupon they took their stand at a distance, bowing down, with their hands (stretched out) toward me. My Majesty prevailed over them, for I was slaughtering among them, <sup>(71)</sup>and I did not leave (any) over, for they were heaps of corpses before my horses, lying stretched out together in their own blood."

#### THE HITTITE KING'S LETTER

"Then the wretched, vanquished prince of Hatti sent (a letter) <sup>(72)</sup>invoking the great name of My Majesty, the likeness of Re, saying: 'Thou art Sutekh (or) Baal in person, and the dread of thee is a fire-brand in the land of Hatti.' Then [he] caused his messenger to come with a letter <sup>(73)</sup>in his hand to the great name of My Majesty: 'Addressed to the Majesty of the palace of Horus: Mighty Bull, Beloved of Truth, the king who protects his army, mighty by his arm, a wall for his troops on the day of combat; King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere; <sup>(74)</sup>Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon, given life forever. This (thy) servant says and causes that it be known, to wit: Thou art the son of Re, proceeding from his loins, and he has given to thee all lands together. The land of Egypt and the land of Hatti, they are thine, thy servants, and they are beneath thy feet, (for) <sup>(75)</sup>Re, thy august father, has given them to thee. Do not act mightily against us, (for), behold, thy prowess is great, and thy strength is burdensome on the land of Hatti. Is thy slaughtering of thy servants good? For thy face is savage among them, and thou hast no pity! Behold, thou madest <sup>(76)</sup>yesterday thy slaughter of hundreds of thousands, and today thou art coming (again)—thou wilt leave [us] no heirs! Do not make thy answer harsh, O mighty King! (for) peace is more satisfactory than combat! Give us breath! "

## THE COUNCIL URGES PEACE

"Then My Majesty relaxed in life and satisfaction, so that I was like Montu in his time, <sup>(77)</sup>when his conquest is accomplished. Then My Majesty caused that there be brought to me every leader of my army and the chariotry and my officials all together, to let them hear the proposition about which he had sent. Then [I le]t th[em know] <sup>(78)</sup>these words which the wretched prince of Hatti had sent to me. They said with one voice: 'Exceedingly good is peace, O King, our lord! May there be no diminution of the peace, when thou makest it! Who can oppose thee on the day of thy fury?' "

Then <sup>(79)</sup>His Majesty commanded obedience to his words, and he set himself in peace to journeying southward.

## THE RETURN TO EGYPT

His Majesty returned in peace to Egypt, with his infantry divisions and his chariotry, while all life, stability, and satisfaction were with him, and the gods and goddesses were the protection of [his] body. He had repelled all lands through the terror of him, (while as for) the strength of His Majesty, <sup>(80)</sup>it had protected his army (so that) all foreign countries were giving praise to his goodly countenance. He arrived in peace in Egypt at Pi-Ramses, Great of Victory, and rested in his Palace of "Life of Thebes", like Re upon his two thrones; (while) the gods of this land were <sup>(81)</sup>giving greeting, saying to him: "Welcome! our beloved son, King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon, given life!" They have given to him a million *sed*-jubilees forever upon the throne of Re, and all the lands and all the vanquished, rebellious foreign countries are beneath his soles forever and ever.

## COLOPHON OF THE PAPYRUS

This was written in the year 9, second month of the third season, day . . . of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Userma[re]-Setepnere, L.P.H.; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon, [L.P.H.], given life forever and ever, like his father Re. [It is well finished in peace and dedicated to the *ka* of the Chief Librarian . . . , Scribe of the Treasury, . . . of the Treasury of Pharaoh, [L.P.H.], . . . the Treasury of Pharaoh, L.P.H. The scribe Pentaur did it . . .

*(End of Poem)*

## THE RECORD

The employment of a few new texts of the Record makes a reconsideration of this inscription feasible. The following sources have been used herein: (1) Abu Simbel; (2) Ramesseum, first pylon; (3) Ramesseum, second pylon (the few fragments published in Quibell's *Ramesseum*, Plate IV); (4) Abydos, temple of Ramses II, rear wall (only the ends of four lines); (5) Luxor, north side of east tower of Ramses II's pylon; (6) Luxor, south side of same. The first four of these texts are the simple narrative, such as is rendered in Breasted, *Ancient Records*, Volume III, §§ 317 ff. The two Luxor texts have received a poetical redaction; i.e., they have been expanded with material of little historical value, very like the Poem in phraseology (see especially ll. 24-25 below).

## THE CAMP SOUTH OF KADESH

<sup>(1)</sup>Year 5, third month of the third season, day nine, under the Majesty of Horus: Mighty Bull, Beloved of Truth; King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon, given life forever. Then His Majesty was in Zahi on his second victorious campaign, and the good watch in <sup>(2)</sup>Life, Prosperity, and Health at the tent of His Majesty was on the highland south of Kadesh.

## THE FALSE MESSAGE

After this, in the early morning time, His Majesty appeared like the rising of Re, and he took the adornments of his father Montu. (After) the lord proceeded northward, His Majesty arrived at the vicinity south of the town <sup>(3)</sup>of Shabtun. There came two Bedouins of some of the Bedouin tribes, to speak to His Majesty as follows: "Our brethren, who are the greatest tribes with the foe of Hatti, made us come to <sup>(4)</sup>His Majesty to say: 'We will become servants of Pharaoh, L.P.H., and we will flee from the foe of Hatti;<sup>1</sup> for the foe of Hatti is encamped in the land of Aleppo, on the north of Tunip, and he is (too much) afraid <sup>(5)</sup>of Pharaoh, L.P.H., to come south.' " Now these Bedouins spoke these words which they uttered to His Majesty

<sup>1</sup> The two Luxor texts here insert some badly broken lines which seem to run: "His Majesty said to them: 'They! 'Where are they?' . . . you come to tell 'the plan to His Majesty?' [The Bedouins] said: 'In the place where the wretched prince of Hatti is, since the foe of Hatti is encamped . . . ' "

falsely, for the foe of Hatti had made them come to spy out <sup>(6)</sup>the place where His Majesty was, with the aim of preventing the army of His Majesty from drawing up to combat with the foe of Hatti.

#### THE POSITIONS OF THE ARMIES

Now the foe of Hatti was come,<sup>1</sup> with his infantry and his chariotry, with the princes of every land [which was in] the region of the land of Hatti, and their infantry and their chariotry, <sup>(7)</sup>which he had brought with him as support, (and was) stationed, equipped, in battle array, behind Old Kadesh, although His Majesty did not know that they were there. His Majesty proceeded northward, arriving at the northwest of Kadesh. <sup>(8)</sup>The camp of His Majesty was pitched there, and His Majesty sat upon a throne of electrum, on the north of Kadesh and on the west side of the Orontes.

#### THE TRUE REPORT

There came a scout who was of the bodyguard of His Majesty, and he brought two scouts <sup>(9)</sup>of the foe of Hatti. They were led into the presence, and His Majesty said to them: "What are you?" They said: "We are of the foe of Hatti; he it was who made us come to spy out the place where His Majesty is." Said <sup>(10)</sup>His Majesty to them: "Where is he then, the foe of Hatti? Lo, I have heard that he is in the land of Aleppo!" They said: "Behold, the foe is come, with the <sup>(11)</sup>many foreign countries which are with him, which he brought with him as support, from the land of Dardania, the land of Naharin, the *Keshkesh*, Mysia, Pe[dasia, the land of Cilic]ia, together with Lycia, the land of Carchemish, the land of Arzawa, the land of Ugarit, Ilium, the [land of] *Mushanth*, Kadesh, Aleppo, and the entire land of Kode. They are equipped with their infantry and their chariotry, bearing their <sup>(12)</sup>weapons. They are more numerous than the sands of the shore. Behold, they are stationed, equipped, in battle array, behind Old Kadesh."

#### RAMSES ADDRESSES HIS COUNCIL

Then His Majesty had the officials called into the presence, <sup>(13)</sup>to let them hear every word which the two scouts of the foe of Hatti who

<sup>1</sup> Luxor (south) runs: "'Now' the foe of Hatti 'had sent these' Bedouins 'to speak' these words to His Majesty, while he was coming."

were in the presence had spoken. His Majesty said to them: "See the state in which the governors of the garrisons <sup>(14)</sup>and the princes belonging to the land of Pharaoh, L.P.H., are! They stand telling Pharaoh, L.P.H., every day: 'The foe of Hatti is in the land of Aleppo; (for) he fled before His Majesty, <sup>(15)</sup>when he heard that, behold, he had come.' Thus they spoke to His Majesty every day. But, lo, I have held an audience in this (very) hour with the two scouts <sup>(16)</sup>of the foe of Hatti, to the effect that the foe of Hatti is come, with the many foreign countries which are with him, consisting of people and horses, as numerous as the sands, and, behold, they are stationed, hidden behind Old Kadesh. But <sup>(17)</sup>the governors of foreign countries and the princes, under whose charge the land of Pharaoh, L.P.H., is, were not able to tell us that they had come!"

#### THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

The officials who were in the presence of His Majesty spoke as follows: "It is a great crime which the governors of the foreign countries and the princes of Pharaoh, L.P.H., have committed <sup>(18)</sup>in not causing that the foe of Hatti be scouted for them everywhere that he was, and in their telling his report to His Majesty every day." Then the vizier was commanded to hasten the <sup>(19)</sup>army of His Majesty, on the march south of the town of Shabtun, in order to bring them to the place where His Majesty was.

#### THE NORTHERN ATTACK

Then, while His Majesty sat talking with <sup>(20)</sup>the officials, the foe of Hatti came with his infantry and his chariotry likewise and the many foreign countries which were with him. They crossed the ford which is on the south of Kadesh. Then they charged into the midst of His Majesty's army, while they were on <sup>(21)</sup>the march, unsuspecting. Thereupon the infantry and chariotry of His Majesty gave way before them northward to the place where His Majesty was. Then the foe, <sup>(22)</sup>the Hittite enemy, surrounded the bodyguard of His Majesty, which was at his side.

#### RAMSES PREPARES FOR COMBAT

Then His Majesty saw them and he arose quickly, furious against them like his father Montu, lord of Thebes. He seized the adornments of combat, <sup>(23)</sup>and he clothed himself in his coat-of-mail, (so that) he



was like Sutekh at the time of his might.<sup>1</sup> Then he mounted to "Victory in Thebes," his great horse, leading quickly forward, although he was alone by <sup>(24)</sup>himself. His Majesty was mighty, his heart stout, . . . . His every district before him was 'encompassed' by a blaze of fire, and he burned up every foreign country in his blast, while his two eyes were glaring when he saw them, and his personality blazed 'fire' against them. He was without reck among the foreigners, when he saw them, like . . . .

#### RAMSES' COUNTERATTACK

When His Majesty charged into the midst of the foe, the Hittite enemy, and the many foreign countries which were with them, His Majesty was like Sutekh, the great in strength, like Sekhmet at the time of her raging, for His Majesty slaughtered the foe of the wretched enemy of Hatti '[in] its [entire]ty'<sup>1</sup>, together with his great ones and his brethren in their entirety likewise, and all the princes of every foreign country who came with him, and their infantry and their chariotry, fallen on their faces, one on another. His Majesty was slaying among them, and His Majesty was casting them down, <sup>(25)</sup>in heaps of corpses before his horses, although His Majesty was alone, no other with him. His Majesty was casting down the foe, the Hittite enemy, upon their faces, one on another plunging into the waters of the Orontes.

#### RAMSES' BOAST

"I vanquished all foreign countries, although I was alone, although my infantry and my chariotry had deserted me, and not one of them halted to return. For I was after them like a griffon! (I swear), as I live, as Re loves me, and as my father Atum favors me, that, as for every matter which My Majesty has said, I did it in truth, in the presence of my infantry and my chariotry."

*(End of the Record)*

#### THE RELIEFS

Herewith are offered one or two new readings, one or two additions to the Reliefs as found in Breasted, *Ancient Records*, Volume III, §§ 328 ff.

<sup>1</sup> Variant: "Baal in his hour."

I. IN THE EGYPTIAN CAMP<sup>1</sup>

The division d'élite of Amon: "He Gives Victory to the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere, Given Life," in which Pharaoh, L.P.H., is, in the act of pitching camp.

II. BEFORE THE KING IN COUNCIL<sup>2</sup>

The good god, great in victory, slaying all foreign countries, making a mighty carnage among their princes: King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon, given life forever.

III. THE ROYAL SPAN IN CAMP<sup>3</sup>

The great first horse of His Majesty: "Victory in Thebes," of the great stable: "Usermare-Setepnere, Beloved of Amon."

IV. THE ROYAL LION<sup>4</sup>

A living lion, follower of [His] Majesty, slayer of his enemy.

V. CAPTURING SPIES(?)<sup>5</sup>

'Bringing them' into the presence of Pharaoh, L.P.H.

VI. BEATING SPIES<sup>6</sup>

The arrival of the scout of Pharaoh, L.P.H., bringing two scouts of the foe of Hatti into the presence of Pharaoh, L.P.H. They are belaboring them in the presence, in order to make them tell the place where the wretched prince of Hatti is.

VII. BEFORE THE KING IN BATTLE<sup>7</sup>

(<sup>1</sup>)The good god, mighty in strength, rich in victory, vanquishing all foreign countries, (<sup>2</sup>)the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon. (<sup>3</sup>)The stand which His Majesty made, while he was encamped on the northwest (<sup>4</sup>)of Kadesh,<sup>8</sup> when he charged into the midst of the foe, (<sup>5</sup>)the Hittite

<sup>1</sup> Breasted, *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 332.

<sup>2</sup> Luxor.

<sup>3</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 330.

<sup>4</sup> Abu Simbel, within the camp enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> Abu Simbel, within camp inclosure: two soldiers beating a crouching figure.

<sup>6</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 330.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, § 336.

<sup>8</sup> A variant inserts: "He was rising quickly and mounting to 'Victory in Thebes,' his great horse."

enemy, although he was alone by himself, no other <sup>(6)</sup>with him. He found surrounding him 2,500 <sup>(7)</sup>spans in four bodies in his every pathway. He butchered them, <sup>(8)</sup>made heaps of corpses before his horses; he slaughtered <sup>(9)</sup>all the princes of all foreign countries, the allies of him of Hatti, and <sup>(10)</sup>his great officials, his infantry, and his chariotry; <sup>(11)</sup>he cut them to pieces, fallen upon their faces; he cast them down, one on another, into the <sup>(12)</sup>waters of the Orontes. <sup>(13)</sup>Then the foe of Hatti was standing averted, <sup>(14)</sup>his arms (stretched out) in adoration of the good god. <sup>(15)</sup>The good god, lord of achievement, <sup>(16)</sup>lord of the two lands: Usermare-Setepnere; <sup>(17)</sup>lord of diadems: Ramses-Meriamon, <sup>(18)</sup>beloved of Montu.<sup>1</sup>

#### VIII. THE ROYAL SPAN IN BATTLE<sup>2</sup>

The great horse of His Majesty: "Victory in Thebes,"<sup>3</sup> of the great stable: "Usermare-Setepnere, Beloved of Amon."

#### IX. THE ROYAL MESSENGERS<sup>4</sup>

The scout<sup>5</sup> of Pharaoh, L.P.H., returning to hasten the division of Ptah, saying to us (*sic*): "Follow forward! Pharaoh, L.P.H., your lord, is making a stand, . . . , alone, alone!"

#### X. A ROYAL PRINCE<sup>6</sup>

Fanbearer on the Right Hand of the King, Royal Scribe, Commander of the Army, . . . , [First Charioteer of] His Majesty: Perehirunamef.

#### XI. OTHER PRINCES<sup>7</sup>

[The] arrival which [the] 'army of' Pharaoh, L.P.H., made, 'under [the command]' of the royal sons, and t[he sons] of the divine mother, . . . , [when they were] fleeing on [the] west side of the camp. 'Save yourselves from the foe!'"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A variant text runs: "The good god, smiting the Nine Bows, slaying a million in the completion of an instant, making the princes of foreign countries like that which is not, stretched out in their (own) blood. No other was with him. King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Usermare-Setepnere, given life; Son of Re: Ramses-Meriamon." Another variant ends as follows: "while he was like a whirlwind when it comes forth from the sky. His might was like a flame in the brush, while his power was like (that of) his father Montu: Usermare-Setepnere; Ramses-Meriamon."

<sup>2</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 337.

<sup>3</sup> The variant name, "Meriamon," is probably an error.

<sup>4</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 334.

<sup>5</sup> A variant: "the vizier."

<sup>6</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 332.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* The restorations are largely conjectural.

XII. ON THE WALLS OF KADESH<sup>1</sup>

Town of Kadesh.

XIII. THE HITTITE KING<sup>2</sup>

The vanquished, wretched prince of Hatti, standing in the midst of his infantry and his chariotry, with his face averted, shrinking, his heart weak. He did not go forth to fight for fear of His Majesty, since he saw His Majesty prevailing over them of Hatti and the princes of every land [which] was with him, while His Majesty . . . . He gave praise to the good god, saying: "He is like Set, great in strength, or Baal in person."

XIV. THE PRINCE OF ALEPPO<sup>3</sup>

The wretched prince of Aleppo; he is being 'turned upside down' by his army, after His Majesty hurled him into the water.

XV. NORTHERN WARRIORS<sup>4</sup>

Zuzasi (*Twtš*, Commander of the (Foreign) Troops of *Yenes* (or *Tenes?*).

Tarkhutazash (*Trgtšš*), Commander of the (Foreign) Troops of 'Kabesos' (*Kbš*).

Egama (*gm*), Commander of the (Foreign) Troops of *Penes*.

Labashinna (*Rbšnn*), Commander of the (Foreign) Troops of *Yennenes*.

Mezirme (*Mtrm*), brother of the foe of Hatti.

Shubbizali (*Sptr*), brother of the foe of Hatti.

. . . . q . . (. . . *k*), brother [of] the foe of Hatti.

Tidili (*Tdr*), Commander of the Bodyguard of the foe of Hatti.

Girbutash (*Grbtš*), Chariot-Warrior of the foe of Hatti.

Khalpasili (*Hrpsr*), Letter-Scribe of the foe of Hatti.

Paiassi (*Pyš*), Charioteer of the foe of Hatti.

Bantigi (*Bntk*), Charioteer of the (man of) Hatti.

Tarkhunassi (*Trgnšš*), Charioteer of the foe of Hatti.

. . . . nassi (. . . *nnš*), Charioteer of the foe of Hatti.

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 337. Variant: "The wretched Kadesh."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, § 338.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, § 337.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* The reader is cautioned that all the personal names below are quite conjectural, the conjectures being based on Luckenbill's article in *AJSL*, XXVI (1909-10), 96-104.

Kamazi (*Kmt*), Chief of the *Thr*-warriors.

Tidili (*Tdr*), Chief of the *Thr*-warriors.

Labasili (*Rbsr*), . . . . .

Samartassi (*Šmrts*), . . . . .

Tarkhun . . . . (*Trgn* . . . .), . . . . .

#### XVI. NORTHERN TROOPS<sup>1</sup>

*Thr*-warriors who are before him: 8,000 men.

Other *thr*-warriors of combat who are behind him: 9,000 men.

*Thr*-warriors of the chariot-warriors, the bodyguard of the foe of Hatti.

The *hr* of the foe of Hatti.

. . . . of the foe of Hatti, very numerous in people and chariotry.

*Thr*-warriors of the chariots (*tpṛt.t*) of the camp of the foe of Hatti.

#### XVII. THE REINFORCEMENTS<sup>2</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup>The arrival of the *Nṛn*-troops of Pharaoh, L.P.H., from the land of Amurru. They found the foe, the Hittite enemy, surrounding the <sup>(2)</sup>camp of Pharaoh, L.P.H., on its western side, when His Majesty was encamped with no infantry with him, while the foe, consisting of those spans [of Hatti], surrounded [His Majesty] . . . [while] there were coming his . . . <sup>(3)</sup>and his infantry divisions; before the division of Amon, in which Pharaoh, L.P.H., was, had finished pitching camp, while the division <sup>(4)</sup>[of] Re and the division of Ptah were on the march, and their sergeants had not yet come forth from the forest of Bai. The *Nṛn*-troops <sup>(5)</sup>attacked the foe (belonging) to the wretched foe of Hatti, while they were entering the camp of Pharaoh, L.P.H., <sup>(6)</sup>and the servants of Pharaoh, L.P.H., slaughtered them and did not allow one of them to escape, for their heart was filled with the great strength of Pharaoh, L.P.H., their <sup>(7)</sup>good lord, behind them like a mountain of copper, like a wall of iron, forever and ever, eternally.

#### XVIII. THE KING AFTER THE BATTLE<sup>3</sup>

The good god, fighting for his army; his arm repelled the Nine Bows; a king powerful among the foe. There is not the equal of that

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 337; accompanying the prince of Hatti.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, § 340.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, § 346.

which he did: charging into a multitude of all foreign countries and making them heaps of corpses. His face was glaring 'in the presence of' the prince of Hatti, 'Kode', Naharin, for he prevailed over them: Usermare-Setepnere; Ramses-Meriamon, given life like Re, making 'captives.'<sup>1</sup>

#### XIX. THE ROYAL SPAN, AFTER THE BATTLE<sup>1</sup>

Great first horse of His Majesty: "Mut is Satisfied," of the great stable: "Usermare-Setepnere, Beloved of Amon."

#### XX. PRESENTING CAPTIVES<sup>2</sup>

Bringing prisoners into the presence of His Majesty, namely those whom [he] carried off in the victory of his arm from this wretched land of Hatti, after His Majesty caused [to be announced to] his infantry, his chariotry, and his officials, saying: "[Behold] the captives of my own capturing, when I was alone, when there was no infantry with His (*sic*) Majesty, no official with me, nor chariotry."

#### XXI. RECEIVING THE CAPTIVES<sup>3</sup>

Receiving prisoners whom His Majesty carried off as living captives, in the victory of his arm, from this wretched land of Hatti, this wretched land of Naharin, and the princes of all foreign countries who came with the foe of Hatti.

#### XXII. THE SPOIL<sup>4</sup>

List of those foreign countries which His Majesty slew, while [he] was alone, to wit: corpses, horses and chariots, bows, swords, and all the weapons of warfare.

#### XXIII. PRESENTING PRISONERS TO AMON<sup>5</sup>

Those carried off from all foreign countries, who came to encroach upon His Majesty and whom His Majesty slew, bringing their subjects as living captives, to fill the storehouse of his father Amon.

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Records*, Vol. III, § 347.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, § 343.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, § 342.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, § 351.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, § 344.

XXIV. PRISONERS PRESENTED TO AMON<sup>1</sup>

List of the princes of the land of Hatti whom His Majesty, L.P.H., carried off as living captives to the house of his father Amon: Dardania, Pedasia, Cili[cia], . . . .

## COMMENT ON THE TEXTS

A few comments can hardly be avoided. In the Poem, the new text fills in two serious lacunae. In line 11, the garrison town of Ramses-Meriamon is located in "the Valley of the Cedar," clearly a district in Syria. The writer knows only one other occurrence of this valley: in "The Tale of the Two Brothers." Is it the Biḡâc or a Lebanon mountain pass?

In line 17, the words "place where His Majesty was" are new and important. In the judgment of the writer, they necessitate the locating of Shabtun roughly two miles from Kadesh, on the Brook el-Muḡadiyeh.<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to point out that the action during the battle is heavy on the west side of the camp, agreeing with this new location, and that the time of the battle is very considerably cut down under this new location, thus making Ramses' stand against overwhelming odds much more plausible.<sup>3</sup>

The argument on both these points will be taken up in greater detail in a future publication.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, § 349.

<sup>2</sup> An *iter* is not over 1.4 miles (Breasted, *Ancient Records*, Vol. II, § 965), and Ramses was encamped northwest of Kadesh.

<sup>3</sup> The previous locating of Shabtun at Ribleh put it some 7 or 8 miles from Kadesh. Ramses had to hold out until reinforcements arrived from south of Shabtun. The location here suggested cuts down his stand from roughly three hours to about an hour.