

26. 27a, 27b, 27c

Fragments of two Copies of a Letter from Maḍmūn to b. Yijū

26	U.L.C. T.-S. 24.66
27a	U.L.C. T.-S. N.S. ⁹⁴ J. fol. 5
27b	U.L.C. XXXX 13 J 7 fol. 13
27c	U.L.C. T.-S. Box K25, frgt. 252

No. 26 is a copy, written ~~XXXXXX~~ by the same clerk who wrote nos. 23-24, of an original, nos. 27, 27a and 27b, written by Maḍmūn. 27a is the beginning of no. 27, and no. 27b is its continuation. ~~(These three fragments were found in three different visits to the University Library, Cambridge, the last item (no. 27b) in June, 1958. No. 26 was identified during a visit prior to the three aforementioned ones.)~~ The fifth line of no. 27a matches the first line of no. 26. No. 27, then, begins with the last word ~~of~~ line 5 in no. 26. It concludes with the second word of line 35 in no. 26. The address has been preserved only in no. 27a, since the custom was to write the address opposite the beginning, on the reverse side of the sheet, and the beginning is also missing in no. 26 and no. 27 (whose beginning is 27a). For this custom of tearing off the beginning, ~~XXXX~~ ^{usually} /containing polite phrases on the recto, and the address on the verso, from a letter which had been received, ~~XXX~~ cf. Introduction, p. .

The clerk worked with great exactitude. There is no deviation from the original. However, he did use many more diacritical marks than his master, but without any consistency.

The original, which was written by the businessman, is also written with great accuracy, and in a more pleasant hand than is usual for him. Erasures, involving the beginning of words, are found in two places only. The writer undoubtedly had accounts before him, from which he copied. We may assume that these accounts were entered in Maḍmūn's ledger which is mentioned several times in these documents.

No. 26 is written on the same grayish paper as nos. 23 - 25, but it differs in its width (11.3 cm.). This would seem to imply that they cut their paper to different sizes, and that it was not bought already cut in sheets suitable for writing purposes. 52 cm. of the length of the sheet are preserved.

The paper is different in nos. 27a and 27b. It appears more brownish, lighter, and smoother than the paper of the other fragments originating from Maḍmūn's office which have been identified up till now. Its width is 9.5 cm. at the bottom, and 10 cm. at the top. Its length is 11cm. plus 25.5 cm. plus 29.5 cm., a total of 66 cm. A space of 12 cm. was left empty on the verso of 27c. Thus, Maḍmūn was not forced to cut short ~~REMARKS~~, as he sometimes did for lack of room.

On the lower edge of the verso of 26 the receiver of the letter, Abraham b. Yijū, wrote, in his own hand, a calendar for the year 1458 of the Era of the Documents, i.e. 1146/7 A.D., for the year 1459, i.e. 1147/8 ~~1148/9~~ A.D., and for another year which is, however, difficult to read, but we may assume that it is for the year 1460, i.e. 1148/9 A.D. The same man wrote a calendar for 1461, i.e. 1149/50 A.D., on the edge of no.

This use of the free space in a letter which has been received is not peculiar to b. Yijū, but is found elsewhere, for example in no. 154, a letter which was sent from Aden to Cairo in 1202. See below, p. , for another calendar written by b. Yijū.

The contents of the letter are as follows:

Aa: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Acknowledgement of receipt of a letter and a shipment^{of pepper} from b.

Yijū, through^{received} the agency of the shipowner Rāshit, and a detailed accounting of what was ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ for goods sold, after the deduction of expenses. (no. 27a ll. 1 - no. 26 ll. 15)

Ab) The receipt of a shipment of iron through the agency of the ship-owner b. Abū 'l-Katā'ib, and a detailed accounting of what was received for goods sold, after ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the transfer of part of the shipment to whomever designated, and after the deduction of expenses (no. 26 ll. 16 - 39)

Ac) The balance in favor of b. Yijū.

Ba) The purchase of copper for b. Yijū, the price and the freight charges in three different ships (ll. 40 - 50)

Bb) Details of various expenditures on behalf of b. Yijū, and of purchases of copper, lead and of many other necessities (ll. 50 - verso 17)

Bc) The completion of b. Yijū's account (verso, ll. 18 - 19).

C) Acknowledgement of receipt of various shipments, and finally of gifts from b. Yijū.

D) The shipment of gifts, and best wishes.

In order to lighten the reader's burden ~~XXX~~, all the accounts contained in this letter have been reduced to a table. The details will be explained in the commentary. It should be kept in mind that a bahār contains

found
 300 ~~rotl~~, and that the dinar is divisible into 24 ~~qir~~^{qir}, which are combined to an eighth, sixth, fourth, third or half of a dinar, as the circumstances require. The dinars are, naturally, the ones used in trade in Aden in this period, namely, Maliki dinars, see above, no. 20, p. (75).

Ben
The Sale of the Goods sent by b. Yijū and the Money taken in, after the
Deduction of Expenses

A: Pepper - 12 bahār, from which 45 ~~rotl~~^{*found*} were removed, leaving 11 bahār, 255 ~~rotl~~^{*found*}. The price: per bahār - 34 dinars, per ~~rotl~~^{*found*} - $34/300$ dinar.

Total: 374 dinars + $\frac{34 \times 255}{300} = 28 \frac{9}{10}$, rounded out to $28 \frac{5}{6} = 402 \frac{5}{6}$ dinars (Malik.)

The Expenditures on this shipment:

"tithes" (i.e. customs' tax)	$82 \frac{1}{4}$ dinars	
expenses in receiving the goods	$4 \frac{1}{6}$ "	
baskets and porters	$\frac{1}{6} + 1 \frac{1}{4}$ "	
	87 $\frac{5}{6}$ dinars	<u>87 $\frac{5}{6}$</u>
balance in favor of b. Yijū from the pepper shipment		315 dinars

B: Iron - 20 bahār, 120 ~~rotl~~^{*found*}

amount

~~MA~~ given to the merchant Joseph - 3 bahār, 180 ~~rotl~~^{*found*}

" " " " " Khalif - 2 " , 75 "

total: 5 " , 225 "

amount left for sale: 14 bahār, 165 ~~rotl~~^{*found*}. Price: per bahār - 17 dinars

per ~~rotl~~^{*found*} - $17/300$ "

total received: $238 + \left(\frac{165 \times 17}{300} = 9.35 \right)$, rounded out to $9 \frac{1}{4}$ = 247 $\frac{1}{4}$ dinar

various expenditures on this shipment - 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

balance in favor of b. Yijū from the iron shipment - 220 dinars

Total balance in b. Yijū's favor = 220 + 315 dinars = 535 dinars

Shipments of goods and requested items to b. Yijū for the aforementioned sum

A:	5 bahār of ^{brass} copper, and expenditures on them	415 dinars (Malik.)
	hides for packaging them, and the cost of packaging	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
	export tax in Aden	4 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
B:	other purchases and expenses:	
	freight charges for the copper	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
	payment to the captain for the shipments of iron and pepper	2 "
	●copper bars	8 "
	dates	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ + 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
	an Abyssinian hide	2 "
	mats	1 "
	a spread ^{carpet}	5 "
	various items of clothing	6 "
	lead	28 $\frac{1}{2}$ + 1/12 "
	freight charges for the ^{lead} XXXXXX	1 "
	20 Egyptian Mithqāl, which equal	47 "
	<i>Cash (Malikī dinars)</i>	7 "

$$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{8} + \frac{1}{12} = \frac{11}{24}, \text{ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~}$$

535 $\frac{11}{24}$, rounded out

to 535 $\frac{1}{3}$ dinars (Malikī)

However, the $\frac{1}{3}$ dinar is not considered by Maqmūn who states that with these shipments his account with b. Yijū for that year is cleared up.

TRANSLATION:

Aa: (27a, 1. 1) The letter of my lord, the illustrious Sheikh,
 arrived ; may God make ~~KKK~~ permanent (2) ^{your} ~~KKK~~ well-being, may He guard
 your ~~KKK~~ life, and may He humble those who envy ~~KKK~~. It was (3) ^a ~~KKK~~ most
 gladdening letter and/^amost delightful message. I was happy to learn of
 your well-being (4/) and your prosperous circumstances, and I have
 entreated God (to grant you) more of every good thing, (5) (= no. 26,
 1. 1) in His mercy. I noted from what you mentioned (no. 26, 1. 2) in
 your esteemed letter (6) that you sent (no. 26, 1. 3) some pepper in
 the ship of the ⁽⁷⁾ ~~Nākhoda~~/^v ~~Ramist~~ (no. 26, 1. 4) - twelve bahār of small
 measure. (8) This has arrived (no. 26, 1. 5) and your servant went to
 pick it up.

From this is to be deducted (26, 6) - as you mention in your
 letter - forty (7)-five ~~roṭl~~, leaving you ~~the balance of~~ eleven (8)
 bahār and two hundred and fifty-five ~~roṭl~~, the price being (8) thirty-
 three dinars (sc. per bahār). The (full) value is, (thus), four (10)
 hundred and three dinars, minus one-sixth.

(11) From this (sum) is to be deducted the "tithe" (i.e. the
 custom's duty), eighty-two (12) and one quarter dinars, ^{the} cost of picking
 up the goods, four and one-sixth dinars, (13) the cost of ~~the~~ baskets and
^a the porter, one and ~~KXKK~~ one-quarter and one-sixth dinars, (14) a total
 of eighty-eight dinars minus one-sixth, ⁽¹⁵⁾ leaving three hundred and fifteen
 dinars (in your favor).

Ab (16) You mentioned that ~~XX~~ you sent some refurbished iron in the ship of the Nāhoda (17) Abū 'l-Ḥasan b. Abū 'l-Ḥatā'ib (18) - twenty-one bahār - but (19) the Nāhoda Abū & Abd-Allāh, his son, only gave me (20) seventeen bahār of large measure ; he stated that (21) the Bānyān (i.e. delivered the Indian merchant) whom you asked to take charge of the iron (22) ~~XXXX~~ ~~XX~~ no more than this to him, saying that the rest of (23) the iron was in under the highlands and had not yet arrived. In reply, I held him to be ~~XXXXXXXX~~ obligation (25) ~~XXXX~~ (24), if this were not true, /to pay the price (of it), according to the ~~XX~~ sale-value in Aden. (26) He is to pay my lord this in India.

(27) The iron I received from you in Aden is about twenty (28) bahār and one hundred and twenty ~~roṭl~~ of small measure. (29) From this is to be deducted: for ^{for elder} Sheikh Joseph b. (30) Abraham, three bahār and one hundred and eight ~~XXXX~~ (31) ~~roṭl~~ ; for ^a Halīf b. Ishāq, two bahār (32) and one-quarter - a total of five bahār and two hundred (33) and fifty-five ~~roṭl~~, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ leaving you four-(34)teen bahār and one hundred and sixty-five ~~roṭl~~, ^{per A} (35) /the price being seventeen dinars (sc. per bahār). The ^{Total} (full) value is, then, two hundred (36) and forty-seven and one-quarter dinars .

From this is to be deducted (37) the "tithes", the expenses and the (cost of) the porter, twenty-(38)seven dinars, leaving two hundred (39) and twenty dinars.

Ac Therefore, the sum total of money coming to you is ^{then} ~~approximately~~ five hundred (40) and ~~thirty~~-five dinars.

Ba Your servant bought you (41) three bags of ^{Copper} ~~copper~~ ^{brass}, weighing (42) five bahār, at a cost of eighty-three (sc. dinars per bahār). (43) (Total)

value: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ four hundred and fifteen dinars. (44) The number of pieces in each bag is twenty-three. (45) The cost of hides and packing, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ one and one-half dinars. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Exit tolls (46) from the port (sc. of Aden), four and one-eighth dinars. I sent you ~~XXXXXX~~ (48) (47) this in the ship of the Nāhoda Rāmīst -/(one) bag - in the ship of al-Muqqadam -(one) bag - and in the ship of (49) *Namān* - (one) bag - a total of three bags. Freight charges for (50) this (were) four and one-half dinars.

Eb (Also) charged to you, the registration fee with the (51) ship's captain for the pepper and the iron, two dinars.

NO. 26, VERSO

charged to you *provided it is accepted*
 (1) Also, there are/twenty-five ~~roṭl~~ of brass bars ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~,
 (2) twenty-eight pieces in number, (3) worth eight dinars ; a basket of dates, (4) ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ 115 ~~roṭl~~, worth two and one-half and one-quarter dinars; (5) ⁽⁶⁾ two dinars, the value of an Abyssinian hide ; one dinar, the price of/Berbera mats ^{ten} which are in a package ~~XX~~ which ~~XXXXXX~~ marked carpet (8) ~~XXXXXX~~ is ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ in Hebrew and Arabic ; a ~~XXXXXX~~/from Broach, worth five dinars, a piece of linen (9) and two Manārī kerchiefs, worth six dinars - (10) all this through Abū Ḡalīb, the ship's captain. (11) He also has with him a piece of lead , weighing (12) two hundred and forty-five ~~roṭl~~, worth twenty-(13) eight and one-half dinars and two qirt, the price (14) (sc. per bahār) being 35 dinars ;/freight charges for the piece of lead, one dinar. Abū Ḡalīb, the ship's captain, has in his possession a bag in which there are twenty Egyptian Mithqāl (16) worth forty-seven dinars (Malikī).(17) In this bag there are (also) seven Malikī dinars.

Be (18) The total sum : five hundred and thirty-five dinars (19) and one third. This completes my lord's account. (20)

C ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ There also arrived the "eggs" which ^{you} sent in the ship of (21) ^{16 n} b. Abu 'l-Hatā'ib, and this was ^{the eggs} received by Sheih Joseph (22) and Sheih Halif, along the lines of the division which you indicated (23) in your letter. ~~XXXX~~

betel-nuts also

~~XXXX~~ The ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ arrived, which (24) you sent to your servant, and this is on the balance of (25) my account with your excellency from last year. (26) But the betel-nuts were extremely mediocre, both the white (27) and the red. There also arrived what you were kind enough (to send), namely 4 (28) locks and two bowls.

D Your servant has sent you (29) with Abū Ḡalib, the ship's captain, ^{brazilwood boxes} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ^{brazilwood boxes} two large ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ of (30) sugar, and two ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ of raisins, and a ^{Egyptian} packet in which there are (31) 3 sets of /Ṭalḥī paper of the best obtainable ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ type. Please accept this, my lord, (33) and may you think well of me in your secret thoughts. If you have any (34) need or service (to be performed) I would be happy to ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ take care of it. (35) May you have abundant well-being. And Peace.

27a VERSO

The Hebrew Address (which was written opposite to the message)

(1) The illustrious Sheih, my lord Abraham

your servant, Maḡmūn

(2) b. Yisū - may God preserve your well-being

b. al-Ḥasan b. Bāndār

The Arabic Address (which was written in the direction of the message)

The exact same words with the addition of : The Israelite (i.e. the Jew), and in place of "Yisū" in l. 2: 'Isū.

COMMENTARY

26:3 - Nāhoda - ship-owner - a Persian word. For the sense of this word see the Index to the Introduction.

- Rāmīst^V - The ships of this great merchant are frequently mentioned in these papers, cf. l. 47 ; no. 28, l. 24 ; no. 29, l. 17 ; no. 51, l. 8-9 ; no. 61, l. 11 ; no. 149, l. 22 ; no. 199, l. 31

Two inscriptions of this Rāmīst^V have been preserved at Mecca, one, dated 529/1135, ^{recording} ~~relating~~ ^{ing} the foundation of a hospice, cf. Repertoire des inscriptions arabes, no. 3075 (v. VIII, pp. 196-7), and the second, his epitaph, from Sa'ban^V, dated 534/April 1140, cf. Repertoire, no. 3099 (v. VIII, pp. 218-9) ; cf. also the Arab historian Ibn al-Atīr, sub anno 532 (ed. Tornberg, v. XI, p. 43, ll. 5-9). One of his agents brought back from Canton in a single voyage merchandise of the value of 500000 dīnār. In 532-1138, he provided for the covering of the Ka'ba with Chinese silk, cf. Gaston Wiet, "Les marchands d'épices etc.", Cahiers d'histoire égyptienne, Cairo 1955, p. 85.

26:4 - of small measure - the relationship between the small and the large measure is clarified ^{by} ~~in~~ this document, both here and in ll. 20, 27-28.

According to these references, 17 bahār (5100 roṭl), of large measure = 20 bahār and 120 roṭl (= 6120 roṭl), of small measure. The ratio is about 1.2:1, see below no. 28, l. 17, and no. 58, l. 23.

26: 5-7- There is no explanation for the deduction of 45 roṭl from 12 bahar, or any indication as to who received them. It seems, however, that

26:12-13
Transfer by the Merchant

this is a polite way of referring to the fee of the Paqid Haṣṣa rīm. This payment, about 1.33%, is not much different from that mentioned above in no. 4, l. 10, where Maḡmūn's father received one qīrāt out of every two dinars of the value of each piece, that is $1/48$. It should be remembered that b. Yijū also did business for the Paqid Haṣṣa rīm of Aden in India, as we learn, for example, from the addition to no. 24, see above p. , and see above in the Introduction. For payments to the Paqid Haṣṣa rīm see the Introduction, p. .

26:12 - Cost of obtaining the goods - $4 \frac{1}{6}$ dinars for goods worth $402 \frac{5}{6}$ dinars, that is, approximately one percent : apparently a government tax.

26:13 - the baskets - this ~~XXXX~~ detail is mentioned ^{elsewhere,} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ for example below in no. 28, l. 18, and above in no. 20, verso, l. 17. It seems that pepper and similar commodities were in need of ventilation, and were transferred from the containers in which they had been brought from India// to the baskets.

26:23 - in the highlands - the reference here is, of course, to the highlands in the south of India, and not, as above no. 24, l. 26, to the central highlands of Yemen.

26:29 - Joseph b. Abraham - cf. below, Introduction to no 51.

26:31 - ^AHalīf b. Ishāq - Chapter 5 of Section 3 is devoted to this man, cf. the Introduction to this part, p. .

26:41 - ^{Copper}~~brass~~ - for the different types of ^{copper alloys} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ see in the Introduction, p. .

26:45 - hides - for packing the brass.

26:46 - Port of Aden - in the original: al-Furdah, the customs house of Aden, cf. ~~Lipgren~~^{of}, Aden - in the dictionary p. 50. cf. in the ~~Introduction~~, p. .

26:47 - Ramist - ~~XX~~^V v. supra l. 3. Either the same ship which brought merchandise ~~XX~~^{from} India, also ~~taking~~^{took} merchandise on the return trip, or in another ship which is mentioned above, ll. 17-19, in order to send merchandise to b. Yijū.

26:48 - Muqqadam - a very general term designating a person wielding power, and it was also the official title of the ~~Parnas~~^{Heads} ~~XX~~^{of} the Eastern Jewish Communities ~~XX~~ⁱⁿ that period, for example v. infra, no. 86, l. 20 and commentary ~~XX~~ ad loc. It is not impossible that the reference here is to a ~~Parnas~~^{Jewish} shipowner, but since the owners of the other two ships bear Indian names, the word 'Muqqadam' may refer to the holder of an Indian office. For the ships of b. al-Muqqadam v. infra no. 56, l. 17. IT

26:49~~XX~~ - Freight charges - in the original; nawl ; cf. ~~Index to the Introduction~~.

50 - registration charges - in the original: , written once ,

v. infra, no. 62, l. 18. All merchandise which was carried in a ship was registered, and after the arrival of the ship the captain received a set fee for this list. The word ~~Sting~~^{Sting} designates both the list and the fee, cf. the ~~Index to the Introduction~~. From the fact that the value of the pepper and the iron together, before the various deductions, was approximately 800 dinars, we see that the registration fee was about $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the value of the merchandise.

no. 26, verso

3 - basket - in the original: qawṣarah, a word found in Aden to this day, cf. Stace, English-Arabic Vocabulary (Aden Colloquial), s.v. basket for dates.

5 - hide - cf. no. 56, margin, l. 4.

6 - Berbera mats - v. supra, no. 24, l. 12.

- which are in - ~~in~~ the original, which is written in an ornate but very legible script has ^{obvious} ~~XXXXXXXX~~ ^{clerk} ~~XXXXXXXX~~ . However, it is ~~XXXXXXXX~~ that the ~~XXXXXXXX~~ here copied mechanically what he was unable to read, and which certainly read ~~XXXXXXXX~~ in the original.

7 - for merchants' markings and rubrics cf. in the Introduction, p. .

8 - Broach - on the north-western coast of India. If this carpet, which Nadmūn⁸ sent b, Yijū from Aden to Southern India, was really made in Broach, we have here the interesting⁸ fact that far-off Aden was the intermediary between two ports on the western coast of India. However, ^{since} we have found ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ that there was a land route between Broach and Mangalore (or "Mangaror") in Southern India, v. infra, no. 133, ll. 26-35, it is hard to believe that the reference here is to an object which was actually brought from Broach ; perhaps the reference is to a carpet manufactured in 'Broach ~~in~~ style', or similar to the type which was handled in Broach.

9 - Manārī - Manārah is the name of a locale in south-west Muslim Spain, near the city of Sidunah (Yāqūt, Geographical Dictionary, p. 648). We may assume that these woven goods were named after this district. There is also a border city in Spain, near Saragossa, which bears this name, cf. Yāqūt, ibid. A kerchief of the same type was sent from Aden to India, ~~cf.~~

according to no. 67, ll. 9, 18-19.

10 - Abū Ḡalīb, the ship's captain - v. infra, l. 15, 29. It is not specified whether this captain commanded one of the three ships mentioned above, recto, ll. 47-49, or another ship.

11 - lead - needed in the manufacture of copper vessels with which b. Yijū dealt. v. infra, Introduction to Chapter 3, p. .

13 - 35 dinars - the exact reckoning: $\frac{35 \times 245}{300} = 28\frac{1}{2} + 1/12$

15 - The Egyptian ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Mithqāl (or dinar) is here worth 2.35 Maliki dinars, just as below no. 28, l. 32. v. supra p. (-75-)

~~XXXX~~ 19 - one third - the ^{Madman} Paq. HaS. forgoes this one third, v. supra, recto,

ll. 39-40. Above, however, as was shown in the analysis of the account which was given before the translation, he rounded off small amounts to the disadvantage of b. Yijū.

20 - "eggs" - v. index. Either a type of cardamon, or a form in which iron was shipped, cf. no. 66, l. 6, no. 67, l. 29.

- arrived - the merchandise was delivered to the Paq. HaS. who divided them among those for whom they had been ordered.

At the same time,
27-28 - / b. Yijū sent these same presents, to the Adenese merchant ^{Representative} ~~Truster of the Merchant~~ Half b. Isaac, but the Paq. HaS. received four locks while this merchant received two, v. infra, commentary to no. 57, l. 16

18 29 + baqqam + brazilwood boxes, i.e. boxes made from the wood of the 'baqqam' tree. It should be kept in mind that the word 'baqqam' could be the designation of various tree species, cf. Dozy, ~~q~~.

31 - Ṭalḥī paper - named after Ṭalḥa b. Ṭāhir, ruler of Ḥurāsān in north-east Persia, who died in 828, cf. Encyclopedia of Islam, s.v. Kāghad. It is interesting that the name of a ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ commodity remained constant for over three hundred years.