

Unpublished Demotic Land Allotments Receipts from Thebes

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Abstract:

The land allotments receipts in this study belong to the Oriental Institute's 1929-30 season of excavation at Madinet Habu, and are kept in the Egyptian museum in Cairo holding numbers M.H. 2770, 1852, 3694 and 4085. The date of the texts depends on the style of the handwriting which belongs to the late Ptolemaic period. Texts numbers 1 and 2 are mentioning the date, while the date is missing in the other texts. Most texts have missing parts and have been completed by parallel texts from different places such as Thebes, Gebelen and Hermonthis (?).

It is remarkable that the present receipts came from western Thebes as they begin with $r.rh=w$ formula.

Keywords: Demotic, Ostraca, Land Allotments, Thebes, Receipts.

الملخص:

إيصالات ديموطيقية غير منشورة لتوزيع الأرض من طيبة

تنتهي هذه المجموعة لبعثة حفائر المعهد الشرقي في مدينة هابو موسم 1929-1930 ومحفوظة بالمتحف المصري بالقاهرة وتحمل أرقام (M.H. 2770, 1852, 3694 , 4085) وتم الاعتماد على شكل الخط في تحديد التاريخ والذي يرجح أنه يعود إلى العصر البطلمي المتأخر. تم ذكر التاريخ في النص الأول والثاني بينما التاريخ مفقود في باقي النصوص. معظم النصوص لديها أجزاء مفقودة وتم إستنتاج ما قد يكون مكتوباً عن طريق مقارنة تلك النصوص بالنصوص المنشورة من عدة أماكن مثل طيبة والجلين وهرمونثس ومن الملاحظ أن هذه النصوص قد أتت من طيبة الغربية لأنها تبدأ بصيغة $r . r x = w$. يسبق كل نص المقاييس و وصف القطعة و التاريخ ثم يلي القيمة الصوتية و الترجمة أهم الملاحظات ثم بعد ذلك الفاكسيملي والصور.

الكلمات الدالة : ديموطيقية ، أوستراكا، توزيع الأرض ، طيبة، إيصالات.

Introduction

The land allotments receipts in this study belong to the Oriental Institute's 1929-30 season of excavation at Madinet Habu,¹ and are kept in the Egyptian museum in Cairo holding numbers M.H. 2770, 1852, 3694 and 4085. The date of the texts depends on the style of the handwriting which belongs to the late Ptolemaic period. Texts numbers 1 and 2 are mentioning the date, while the date is missing in the other texts. Most texts have missing parts and have been completed by parallel texts from different places such as Thebes,² Gebelen³ and Hermonthis (?).⁴

It is remarkable that the present receipts came from western Thebes as they begin with $r.rh=w$ formula as for the texts begin with the date then $r.rh=w$ formula came from eastern Thebes.⁵

1- M.H. 2770 Plate I

Potsherd, Brown

9 x 11.5 cm., thick. 0.8-1 cm.

Date: Late Ptolemaic. Ptolemy X Alexander I (91 B.C.) (?).

Description: The text is incomplete as the ostrakon is broken at the left side. The ink is refilled. There is a scratch affected the middle of the first line. The handwriting is neat and regular.

Transliteration:

- 1) r.rx=w r 「.....」 sA PA [...]
- 2) 「.....」 n 9mA [ky]
- 3) ...st3 17½¼ wp (pA) Htr []
- 4) stA1 r st3 1/32(?) r st3 13 r st3 ¼ 「.....」 []
- 5) st3 8¼ r st3 1 st3 1½¼ r st3 10 []
- 6) sh 1r-pA-qrd n h3.t sp 24 []

Translation:

- 1) What they have allotted to 「.....」 son of PA [...]
- 2) 「.....」 in Jeme, [highland]
- 3) ...17½¼ aruras, viz. (the) required []
- 4) 1 arura, makes 1/32(?) arura, makes 13 aruras, make ¼ arura 「.....」 []
- 5) 8¼ aruras, make 1 arura, make 1½¼ aruras, makes, 10 aruras []
- 6) Signed, 1r-pA-qrd in year 24 []

Notes:

The present text concerns an allotments of 17 ½¼ aruras of highland in Jeme. The receipt has been issued in year 24 and from the style of the handwriting it seems that it belongs to the late Ptolemaic period and probably dated to the reign of Ptolemy X Alexander I (91 B.C.).



- Htr "compel, to be necessary, obliged, completed".⁶ I followed the translation of Lichtheim who translated it as required which is much closer to the context of the text.⁷

L.6. 1r-pA-qrd : It seems that this scribe is not known before from other texts.

2-M.H. 1852 Plate II

Potsherd, Brown

10 x 14.5 cm., thick. 0.7-1 cm.

Date: Late Ptolemaic

Description: The text is incomplete as the ostrakon is broken partly at the left side and at the bottom. There are scratches affected the text at the middle of the fourth line. The handwriting is big and straight.

Transliteration:

- 1) r.rx=w r..... sA Pa-tm n 「9mA」 [qy....]
- 2) hn 「.....」 n sw 4 ¼ 1/16 1/32 sn 「r(?)」 st3 1/16 r st3 []
- 3) sh 「.....」 h3.t sp 10 tpy 3h.t (?) sw 12 []
- 4) sh 「.....」 r st3 1/8 r st3 1/16 sn(?) []
- 5) 「.....」 []

Translation:

- 1) What they have allotted to.....son of Pa-tm in 「Jeme」, [highland...]
- 2) in 「.....」 of 4¼ 1/16 1/32 (artabas of) wheat again, 「makes (?)」 1/16 arura, makes [] arura
- 3) Signed, 「.....」 year 10, Thoth (?), day 12 []
- 4) Signed, 「.....」 makes 1/8 arura, make 1/16 again (?) []
- 5) 「.....」 []

Notes:

This receipt concerns an allotments of a land cultivated with wheat and has been written in year 10 which seems from the handwriting that it belongs to the late Ptolemaic period and it is difficult to date it to specific reign.

3.M.H. 3694 Plate III

Potsherd, Brown

7 x 12.5 cm., thick. 0.5-0.8 cm.

Date: Late Ptolemaic.

Description: The text is complete. There are many scratches which affected the text in all lines. The text is very faint at last four lines. The handwriting is thin, small and straight.

Transliteration:

- 1) r.rx=w r PA-Sr-pA-Imn(?)¹ sA lr-pA-Is.t [n]
- 2) 9mA ky PA Htr(?)¹ r stA $1\frac{1}{4}\frac{1}{16}\frac{1}{32}$ r st3 $1\frac{1}{8}\frac{1}{16}\frac{1}{32}(?)$¹
- 3) rtb.....¹ PA-Sr-MnT¹
- 4) sX lr-wr¹
- 5) sh.....¹
- 6) sh.....¹

Translation:

- 1) What they have allotted to PA-Sr-pA-Imn(?)¹ son of lr-pA-Is.t [in]
- 2) Jeme, highland the required(?)¹ at $1\frac{1}{4}\frac{1}{16}\frac{1}{32}$ aruras, makes $1\frac{1}{8}\frac{1}{16}\frac{1}{32}(?)$ aruras¹
- 3) artaba¹ PA-Sr-MnT¹
- 4) Signed, lr-wr¹
- 5) Signed,¹
- 6) Signed,¹

Notes:

The date of the text is based on the handwriting as the text probably belongs to the late Ptolemaic period.



L.2. qy: lit. high ground or land,⁸ it was the normal agricultural land covered with bushes which were not reached by the water of inundation and requiring artificial irrigation.⁹

- : st3 in Coptic **ⲥⲱⲧ**, “Arura”.¹⁰ 1 Arura = 100 cubit square = 2756,25 m.¹¹

4.M.H. 4085 Plate IV

Potsherd, Brown

5 x 8.5 cm., thick. 0.7-0.8 cm.

Date: Late Ptolemaic

Description: The text is incomplete as the ostrakon is broken from the right side and at the bottom. The ink is faint at lines 2 and 3. The handwriting is big and regular.

Transliteration:

- 1) [r.rx=w r N.N.] sA PA-XrT(?)
- 2) [.....r stA] $1\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}(r)$ st3 $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}\frac{1}{32}$ r st3 $1\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$ n
- 3) []¹ st3(?) $5\frac{1}{16}$ (p3) htr
- 4) []¹ r st3 $\frac{1}{8}$ st3 3.t st3 $1\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$

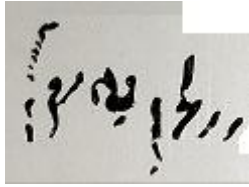
Translation:

- 1) [What they have allotted to N.N.] son of PA-XrT(?)
- 2) [.....makes] $1\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$ [aruras] (makes) $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}\frac{1}{32}$ arura, makes $1\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$ aruras again
- 3) []¹ $5\frac{1}{16}$ aruras(?) (the) required
- 4) []¹ makes, $\frac{1}{8}$ arura, 3.t aruras, $1\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$ aruras

Notes:

The beginning of the text is in lacuna but from the context of the text it seems that it is a receipt of land allotments.

From the handwriting point of view the text belongs to the late Ptolemaic period.



L.1. : This proper name is probably read as PA-XrT(?).¹²

It seems that this text is broken at the bottom as for the name of the scribe should be written at the end of the text.

Conclusion

The land allotments receipts in the present study came from western Thebes as they begin with *r.rh=w* formula and are dated to the late Ptolemaic period. The proper name of the farmer is in lacuna in text no. 1, while the farmers names partly appear in texts nos. 2 and 4. The only text which has the name of the scribe is text no. 1 whose name is 1r-pA-qrD and seems that he is not known before. The date only appears in texts nos. 1 and 2 while it is in lacuna in texts nos. 3 and 4. It is remarkable that the allotment in text no. 1 concerns an area of 17 ½¼ aruras of highland in Jeme , which seems to be a big plot of land while concerns an allotments of a land cultivated with wheat in text no. 2.

Abbreviations

Books:

CDD = J.H. Johnson (ed.), *The Demotic Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago-Illinois, 2001-2009).

DNb = E. Lüddeckens and others, *Demotisches Namenbuch 1-16 vol.* (Wiesbaden, 1980-2000).

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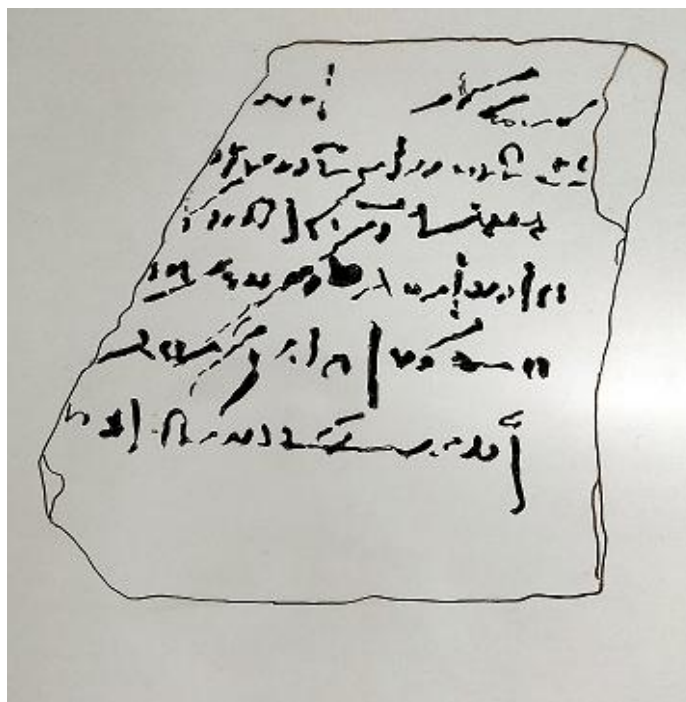
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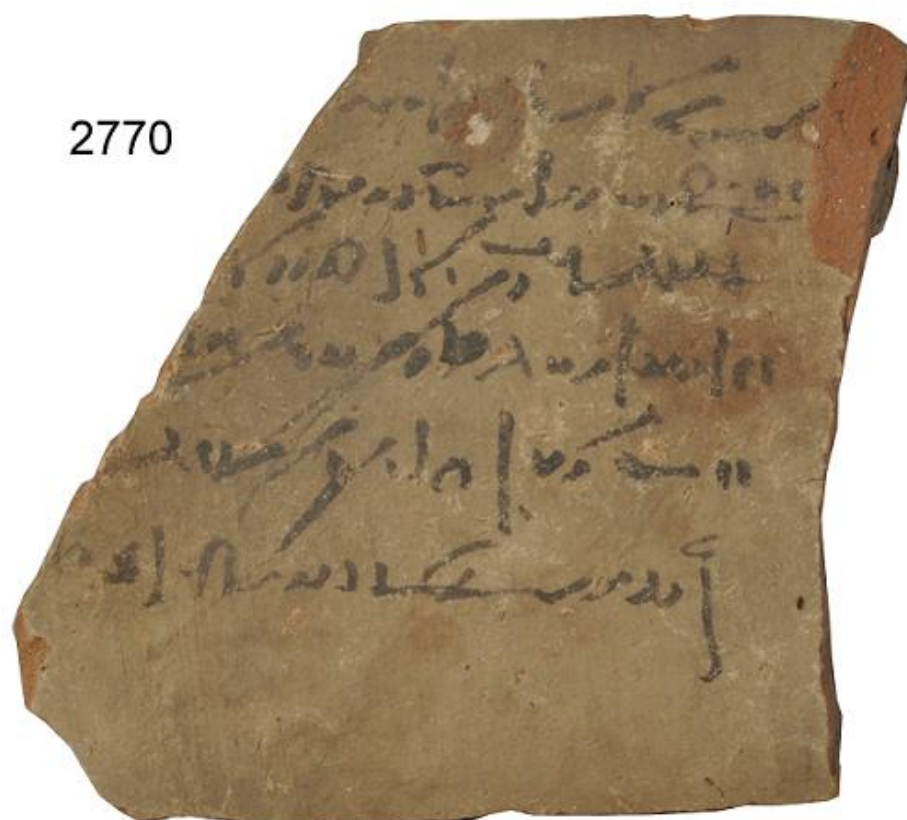
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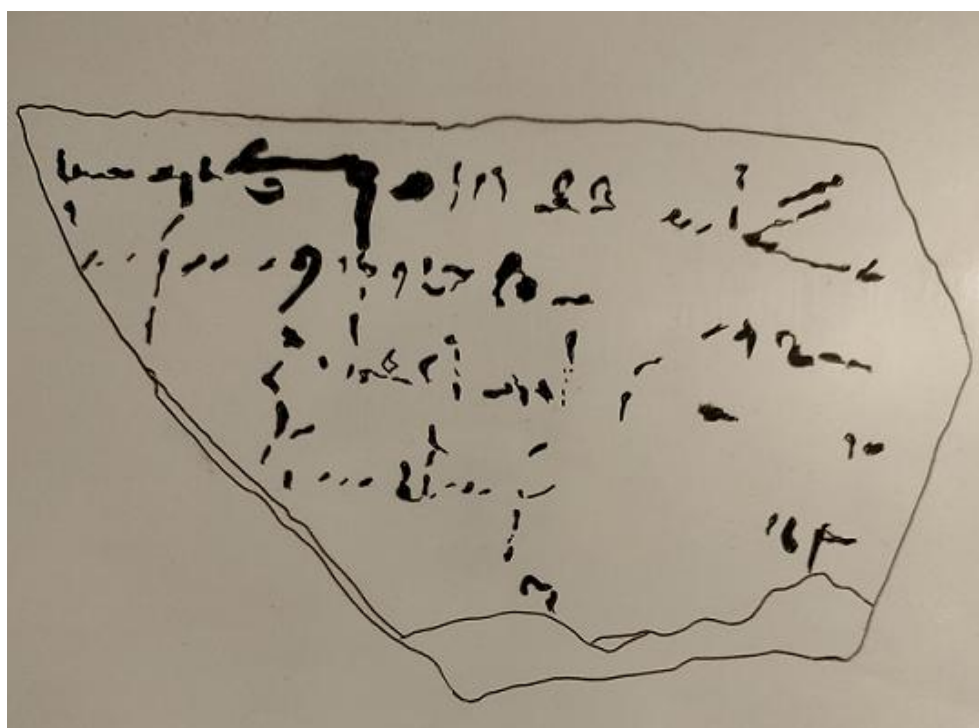
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Plate I



No. 1

Plate II

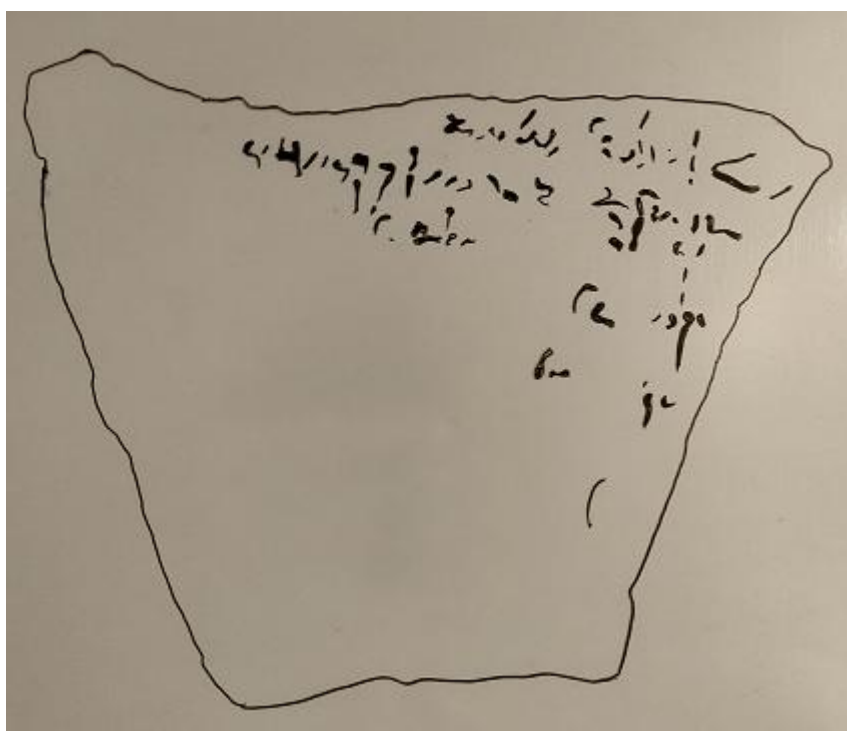




1852

No.2

Plate III

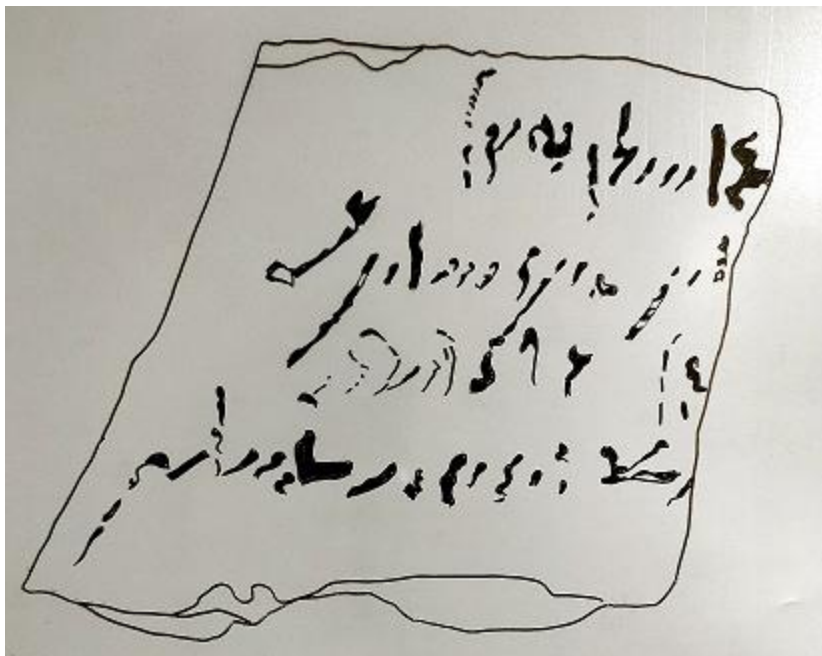


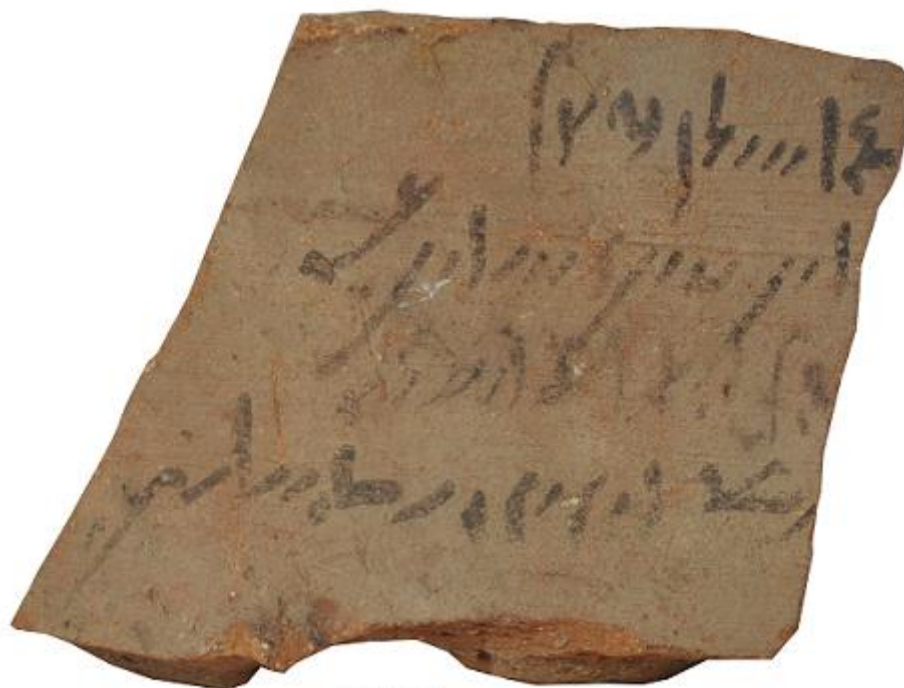


3694

No. 3

Plate IV





4085

No.4

- ¹ U. Höschler, *Medinet Habu Reports vol. 2 The Architectural Survey* (Chicago-Illinois, 1929-1930) .
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- ⁴ Wängstedt, *Ausgewählte Demotische Ostraka*, nos. 68, 69.
- ⁵ U. Kaplony-Heckel, 'Theben – Ost 1 Acker- Schreiber und Familien- Archive nach den demotischen r-rx=w Ostraca', *ZÄS* 120/1 (1993), 43; e.g. Thompson, *Theban Ostraca*, nos. D2,49, D82, 50; Wängstedt, *Ausgewählte Demotische Ostraka* , nos. 66, 70-71; Nur El-Din, *The Demotic Ostraca in the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden*, nos. 73-76; Hughes, *Catalog of Demotic Texts*, no.144 .
- ⁶ W. Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar* (Kopenhagen, 1954), 343; CDD 1 (2009), 313.
- ⁷ Lichtheim, *Demotic Ostraca from Medinet Habu*, no. 122, L.3.
- ⁸ Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar*, 532; CDD Q (2004), 6.
- ⁹ F. L. I. Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester*, 3 vols. (Manchester and London, 1909), 147, n.4; G. Mattha, *Demotic Ostraca from the Collections at oxford, Paris, Berlin, Vienna and Cairo* (Le Caire, 1945), 217; A. H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica, vol. 1* (Oxford, 1947), 10, Wängstedt *Ausgewählte Demotische Ostraka*, no. 51, n. L. 3; Abdel Aal, *ACPSI* 20, no. 1, n. L.2.
- ¹⁰ Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar*, 472.
- ¹¹ S. P. Vleeming, 'Maße und Gewichte', *LÄ III* (1994), 1210.
- ¹² DNb 3, 211.