

January 14, 1945

Dear Mr. Bennett,

Once in a while I get a chance to check on one of my reconstructions, and get a great thr  ll when I find that my guess was right. I was almost certain of that word ~~90782~~, but that's different from finding out that Sundwall agrees.

I've been trying to locate that article "Knossisches in Pylos" for some time, but with no luck whatever. Do you think Mr. Blegen might lend me the reprint for a week or two? and if so, could you let me have his address? Our school librarian is standing on his head now, trying to get me Hrozny's attempt to translate Minoan, and I'm afraid the man will get a complex from frustration if I ask him to get Sundwall as well. It's harder to get articles published in Europe during the war than it was to get military secrets during the war.

About those punch cards--I've only been experimenting on a small scale, but I've worked out cards of ~~this~~ the kind enclosed. I used a small hand-punch my mother once bought in the five-and-ten for some card game they played at one of her clubs. My brother has now made a punch for me, which can turn out two or three cards simultaneously. Of course, the IBM system won't work, and the cards have to be handled manually, but even so, they are an enormous help for quick comparison.

There are about 80 signs used syllabically--either regularly or occasionally--in Linear B. The size of card enclosed will take 80 holes, with a little space between them for notations. The specimen enclosed is a copy of one for the series in which I worked out which signs any given sign is followed by. The holes are numbered according to the Evans' numeration, with a few additions and changes. The card is for B 40 5, and shows that it is followed by B 1 A, 10, ⁹, 11^u, 21^v, 31^w, 40 5, 44a ^z, 45^y, 46^x, 49a^x. I've combined Knossos and Pylos material here. The small number I wrote over each hole is the number of times the combination occurs, and the letters are: I for initial, M for medial, and P for penultimate. I usually make a duplicate on colored paper with the same information written inside the hole, so that I can read them easily. If I want to check on the coincidence of usage between B 40 and some other sign, I just place the cards above one another, and presto! (Usually the information is useless).

So far, I've worked out cards for juxtapositions, both signs preceding and signs following any given sign, and for alternations. I haven't really explored all the possibilities. It takes a long time to prepare the cards, but once they are done, they save hours.

You would find it particularly useful to compare the usage at Pylos and Knossos. I can't do that because I don't have enough Pylos material.

At the moment, I'm trying to find out if I can work out some method to determine which signs have the same consonants and which the same vowels. I'm not getting ahead very fast, although I keep hoping success is just around the corner.

*From enclosing another
at school and
submits the paper
preceding & following
the number of
card. The yellow number box for duplicate copies.*

By the way--the word you read 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 from ILN 1, which is so like 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 (Thebes #1. I am beginning to think that the last two signs 𐤁𐤀 may be an inflectional variant of 𐤀. Perhaps 𐤁𐤀 and 𐤀 have the same consonant. Do you have any pairs to justify the supposition? I actually have only one pair, 𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀, 𐤁𐤀𐤀 and that from Sundwall, not in an inscription, although he says the two words are used in the same inscription.

Here's a list of what I have; ink for actual existence, red pencil for possible variants.

𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀 - 𐤁𐤀 (𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀)
 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 - 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤀 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 - 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 (but 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀!)
 𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤀𐤀𐤁𐤀
 𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀 𐤁𐤀𐤀𐤁𐤀

To return to the cards--if you use a hand punch, your cards will have to be at most two inches wide, since most of those punches have an internal clearance of only an inch. Also, you will get lots of blisters. I have tried to figure out some way to adapt the work to the IBM, but I haven't had enough experience with the IBM. That's where you will have an advantage.

Another thing--I infer from what you said about the word 𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀𐤁𐤀 that the sign 𐤁 exists in Pylos and is quite different from the middle sign of the word. Is that right? I ask because on several occasions when I was writing rapidly, I started to write 𐤁 and came out with 𐤁𐤀.

After I checked your transcriptions carefully against the photographs and my own guesses, I find I agree with you everywhere except on the words I asked about, where your reading seems logical, and 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 (ILN 2, line 6) where you have 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀. Do you mean the last sign, that is, 𐤀, or is it 𐤀?

If you want any further clarification of my use of the cards, I'll be glad to supply it. I'm afraid my explanation is a little vague.

Alice Kober

A file system is necessary to supplement the cards, in case you want to check for the word or words involved. The most useful one I have is one in which ^{quite} any two signs appearing together in a word, whether juxtaposed or not. For instance my card for A used with 𐤀 has:

22A 𐤀

𐤀𐤀

𐤀𐤀𐤀

𐤀𐤀𐤀𐤀

𐤀𐤀𐤀𐤀𐤀

(I used blue pencil for main word words).

(B40) followed by

3P

5P

18

2P

4P

31
2h?

18

4P
2P

45
1P

4C
2M

49a.
2P

5 (70) followed by

3P?

1P

1P

2P

II

2M

8P

2P

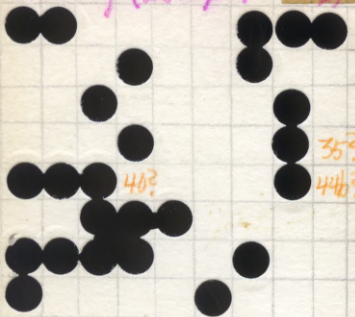
1E

2M

2P

1 Fall by (25 squares)

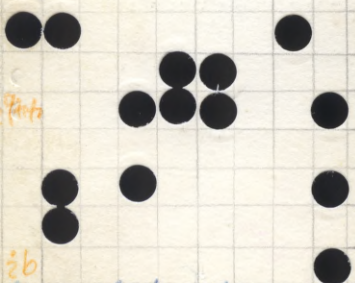
25



40?

35?

44?



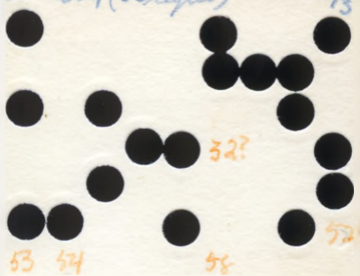
26

26
25
14

1 Pass. by (14 squares)

a tree by (30 rings)

73



41



77



53



72



5 6

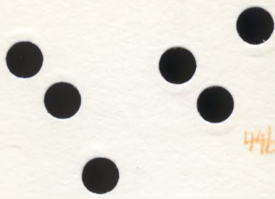
a tree by (30 rings)

13

5 Fall by (6 rows)

6² 7²

7



44b

44a

31²



3 Row by (3 rows)

7