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RECEIPT FOR PAY ADVANCED BY AN ACTUARIUS


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This document belongs to a small collection stored in the Ashmolean Library, Oxford, but belonging to the Egypt Exploration Society, a collection from which the papyri published in P.Herm. also came. It is interesting for the occurrence of the rare word ἀννυονοκατίτον (2), which, like other words of similar formation, e.g. οἰνόκρεον, εἰτόκρηθον, denotes a combination of categories inside some overriding general group, in this case the combination of the ἀννοναι and κατά, the personal ration and the fodder ration, which made up the elements of the stipend of the late Roman army and civil service. Both are here commuted to money. Still more interesting is the illustration of the activity of the actuarius, the official responsible for the issue of stipends, in making an advance on the guarantee of the stipend still to come. This behaviour of the actuarii was known, chiefly from the law of Anastasius which regulated it, see A.H.M. Jones, The Later Roman Empire i 674, ii 1278 n. 156, referring to CJ XII 37.16. The actuarius addressed is the same as one who appears in P.Herm. 70, unfortunately undated. The other party is an otherwise unknown person, Flavius Menas son of Phoebammon, who was evidently either a soldier, possibly one of the equites Mauri scutarii stationed at Hermopolis, cf. P.Oxy. LXIII 4381. 3-4 n., or a member of the militia officialis.

The writing, a sloping broadly-spaced Byzantine official cursive, suits a date in the late fifth or sixth century. The use of the minus carats system for the amount of the payment suggests a date after AD 444, see K. Maresch, Nomisma und Nomismatia 159. The low rate of the deduction may favour one before AD 498, see op. cit. 78.

The document is written across the fibres of the recto of a roll, in other words transversa charta, see E.G. Turner, The Terms Recto and Verso (Pap. Brux. 16) 26-53. This is proved by the presence of a sheet-join running through line 2, overlapping upwards, indicating that the present left edge was the top of the roll as viewed in the classical position. The surface was damaged before the piece cut from the roll was used for this document, which has led in places to second attempts at writing letters, e.g. the second omega of ἀννυ «ν (5), to strokes made on the lower layer of papyrus, e.g. the iota of Φ[ο...μ]|(o|ν|o) (7), and to unexpected spaces, e.g. between ὅω and πρὸ(κε|ττα|ι) in 8.

The subscription appears to be in the same hand as the document. At the lower right, looking very different, there is a short scribble which has not been read. It might be shorthand or contain elements of shorthand. On the back there are more traces of ink, very much abraded, some of which look like a single-line endorsement and others which seem not to be writing.

Tafel I
Receipt for Pay Advanced by an Actuarius

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To my lord brother Herminus, actuarius. Flavius Menas son of Phoebammon.

‘I received from you out of my items of annonocapitum, through Mathias, weighmaster(?), son (?) of Philadelphus, in certain sums in carats, yet another five solidi less seven carats of gold, total gold sol. 5, less car. 7, and these I am ready to credit to you from my subscription, as aforesaid. Flavius Menas son of Phoebammon: the voucher for the five solidi less seven carats satisfies me as aforesaid. Written on Mecheir 14th of the 9th indiction.’

(Undeciphered annotation and endorsement.)

1 οδηγός; έρμινους ακτουαρίφ, φίλου, φοιβομ[μι]?, cf. 7  2 Μ. Μαθίου  4 γι/χρ/ν, π/κερ/  6 ινδικάτων
7 προκ/φιλουμ?, cf. 1, φοιβομμι, ενταγη/ 8 κερ/προκ/ινδικατον

‘To my lord brother Herminus, actuarius, Flavius Menas son of Phoebammon.’

‘I received from you out of my items of annonocapitum, through Mathias, weighmaster(?), son (?) of Philadelphus, in certain sums in carats, yet another five solidi less seven carats of gold, total gold sol. 5, less car. 7, and these I am ready to credit to you from my annonae and capita as the account is made up, and for your security I have made you this voucher above my subscription, as aforesaid. Flavius Menas son of Phoebammon: the voucher for the five solidi less seven carats satisfies me as aforesaid. Written on Mecheir 14th of the 9th indiction.’

(Undeciphered annotation and endorsement.)

2 άκο τόν άννυνοκαπιτόν μου. Presumably τόν is not a mistake for τοῦ and so τό άννυνοκαπίτο means the items or elements of his combined stipend, made up of the personal ration and the animal fodder ration or their equivalent in money.

For the rare word άννυνοκαπίτον see I.-M. Cervenka-Ehrenstrasser, J. Diethart, Lexikon der lateinischen Lehrwörter etc. 1 (Alpha) 83-4, citing especially J. Gascou, in Hommes et richesses dans l’empire byzantine, Tome i (IV-VII siècle) 293 and n. 66. Gascou refers first to the Latin form annonocapitum found in the accounting of the papal estates in Italy in the seventh century as recorded in the Liber Pontificalis2 (ed. L. Duchesne) i 366, 369, going on to suggest tentatively that what was given in the form ἱνο (sc. ἱνο/νο) κατά την ήμεν (sc. ήμεν) in P.Lond. V 1889 v. 3 should be interpreted as ἱνο/νοκαπίτα ήμεν (l. άννυνοκαπίτα ήμεν). The papyrus is assigned to the sixth century and has frequent confusions of omicron and omega. Subsequently F. Mitthof contributed to the Lexikon d. lat. Lehrwörter loc. cit. the suggestion that in Stud. Pap. XX 231.23 (VI-VII) πι(τάκιον) α ανιν(ωνη) κ(ά)π(το) should be reinterpreted as πι(τάκιον) α (=ίνικ) ανιν(ωνιου) κ(ά)π(τοτου), ‘voucher for 1 annonocapitum’. The present text appears to be the first to corroborate these interpretations by presenting the Greek word in an incontrovertible full form.

2-3 It seems clear that Mathias was here described as a ζητοτάτης. Cf. P.Oxy. LXIII 4395.26-7 n., but it is not clear whether the trace at the end of line 2 is the omicron of this word or a mark of abbreviation. The traces at the beginning of line 3 are very scanty, but they do not seem compatible simply with -τάτου νοιο, or with the nominatives which are perhaps allowed by the incorrect case of Μαθίου. Nevertheless it seems more likely that Φιλαδηλέου is a personal name, e.g. a patronymic, in this context than that it is an unknown place name.

3 φανερών κερατία. This combination is traceable only in P.Land. II 20.8-9 ἐπείδη ἡ χρεωτότιμα φανερῶν κεράτα ἡ ἁλ(εξανδρέας) χρεο(ου) ἦν ινδικάτων. The meaning is not clear and the photograph (Tab. VI) is not really clear enough to give certainty about the text after κεράτια. We may compare φανερῶν χρέα (M.Chr. 71.3), φανερών κέμα (P.Col. VIII 242.4), and φανερών χροιούς ποιότητας (P.Oxy. XVI 1876.4, PSI VIII 872.6), cf. WB s.v. φανερῶς (3) and LSJ s.v. III, where it is glossed with indefinite τι. It is not really obvious what it means to say that five solidi minus seven carats have been received ‘in certain sums in carats’, and probably this phrase does not truly reflect the meaning, but the minus carat system itself implies payment in the subsidiary coinage rather than gold, in spite of the fact that a carat is a measure of gold weight and not a coin, and payment in base metal may be all that is involved here.
4 Cf. introd. para. 2 and 2n. para. 4 on the low rate of the carat deduction and its implication for the date.
4-6 Cf. BGU XII 2184.4 καὶ ἐποίμως ἐξω τοῦτος σοι λογίας θατερ λόγου γενομένου. That document is a sixth century receipt for rent from Hermopolis; it identifies itself as an ἐντόχυν, i.e. ἐντόχυν (3), see next note.
6 ἐντόχυν, cf. 7. In C.Just. XII 37.16.2 documents drawn up between actuarii and their customers are called pittacia. The two words were often used as synonyms in the papyri, see P.Oxy. LVIII 3958.25-6 n.
8 On the date see above 2n. para. 4.
9 It is impossible to say what this scrawl was. We might look for the subscription of an amanuensis, because the recipient’s subscription is in the same hand as the body of the document, but the standard formulas for that should be recognizable. If it is not the subscription of an amanuensis, then apart from this line all the writing is presumably in the hand of Flavius Menas himself.