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A NEW LETTER FROM THE HERONINOS ARCHIVE: HERONINOS TO ALYPIOS

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A NEW LETTER FROM THE HERONINOS ARCHIVE: HERONINOS TO ALYPIOS<sup>1</sup>

Theadelphia

8.5 x 19.5 cm

A. D. 249-268

This papyrus, which is in the collection of the Egypt Exploration Society stored at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, comes from the material excavated by Grenfell and Hunt in the Fayûm during the season 1898-1899.<sup>2</sup> It does not have an inventory number and was not published in B. P. GRENFELL, A. S. HUNT and D. G. HOGARTH, *Fayûm Towns and Their Papyri* (1900).<sup>3</sup>

The papyrus belongs to the Heroninos Archive.<sup>4</sup> On its *recto*, written along the direction of the fibres, is a letter from Heroninos himself to Alypius.<sup>5</sup> The *verso* has the address of the letter, written along the direction of the fibres, and scanty remains of an account, written across the fibres. The letter has lost 1-1.5 cm of writing on its left-hand side plus the margin; the bottom half of it is also missing. No sheet-joints can be seen in the original.

The letter is further evidence of the common use of reeds for training vines in the vineyards of the Appianus estate. This is the only case, though, of a demand for reeds from Heroninos to Alypius. The letter also mentions the greatest single number of reeds so far attested.<sup>6</sup>

The very fragmentary jottings on the *verso* record amounts in *dichora* (e. g. δί(χωρα) ιβ twice), presumably of wine, and possibly mention the month Thoth. Because these rough accounts are incomplete, it is very probable, if contrary to initial expectations, that they were written before the letter on the *recto*. Perhaps an old administrative roll, originally written on the *recto*, was reused by Heroninos to draft, on the *verso*, some rough accounts. Later on Heroninos wrote this letter on a strip torn from that roll which had been left blank on the *recto*. The less likely possibility is that Heroninos first used a strip of papyrus blank on both sides to write this letter and later used the *verso* for a jotting for his own use. The extant part of this letter is fairly neatly written. Heroninos could have written the letter but then decided, for whatever reason, not to send it. However it is more likely that it was a draft for or a copy of the fair version.

*recto* —>

Cf. Tafel V-VI

- 1 τῶι κυ]ρίῳ μου Ἀλυπίῳι  
π(αρὰ) Ἡ]ρωνεῖνου φροντιστοῦ Θεαδελφ[(είας)  
ἐπέσ]τιλας δηλωθῆναί `σοι` τὸν ἀρι-  
θμὸν] τοῦ καλάμου τοῦ μετενεχθέν-

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Mr. R. Coles and Mr. J. Rea for the permission to publish this letter and the papyrological help, and to Mr. D. Rathbone for his comments on a draft of this article.

<sup>2</sup> See *Egypt Exploration Fund. Archaeological Report 1898-1899*, pp. 8-15.

<sup>3</sup> The “θ 156” written twice in a modern hand on the *verso* is presumably a find number written by Grenfell and Hunt to ensure that the two pieces of which the papyrus is made could be rejoined later on. Since this is a Heroninos text, θ presumably designates Theadelphia.

<sup>4</sup> According to tradition, the whole of the archive was found in a box by Egyptian workers after Grenfell and Hunt had left Theadelphia. This Oxford letter, clearly found before and independently from the rest of the archive, like *P.Fay.* 133, raises new doubts about the circumstances of the discovery. Nevertheless it cannot be excluded that the bulk of the archive was actually held in a box. Some papyri might have become separated from the others for some reason we do not know.

<sup>5</sup> The papyrus is in Heroninos' hand. Cf. e. g. the plates of *P.Flor.* II 273 and that of the Heroninos account in *Analecta Papyrologica* I (1989), pp. 79-144.

<sup>6</sup> The other texts from the Appianus estate mentioning reeds are the letters: *P.Flor.* II 212, *P.Prag.* I 103, *P.Prag.* I 107, *PSI* VIII 930, *SB* VI 9053, *SB* VI 9054 as corr. M. Salvo, *Analecta Papyrologica*, VI (1994), pp. 155-59. For general discussions about the topic cf. D. RATHBONE, *Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in Third-Century A.D. Egypt*, especially pp. 187-88, 216, 248-49 and 251.

5    τος] ἀπὸ τῆς κτήσεως. μετηνέχθη  
οὖν μυ]ριάδας θ<sup>---</sup> φορτία ιβ<sup>---</sup>.  
τῶν δὲ] αὐτῶν κτημάτων οὐκ ἐ[χόν-  
των κά]λαμον, ἐάν σου τῆ τύχη δόξη  
± 3 π]ανταχόθεν πέμψε ἡμεῖν  
10 ἄλλ]ας μυριάδας δ<sup>---</sup> ἢ ὅσας ἐάν  
δυνη]θῆς ἀγοράσει. ἐπίστασε γὰρ τὰ  
τῶν] κτημάτων ὅτι πολὺν κάλα-  
μον] δαπανᾷ. ἐπεμψα. [± 2] η  
π]ρὸς Ἡρ. [± 4] ..... [± 4] κ.  
15                    ] και ..... [  
                          ] ..... [  
                          ] σο[  
                          ] εἰσχ. [  
                          ] ενσ. [  
20                    ] (ν.) μ[  
                          ] μιν[  
                          ] ς<sup>---</sup> [

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verso —>

τῶ[ι] κυρίῳ μου (*vacat*) Ἀλυπίῳ π(αρά) Ἡρ[ω]γείνου  
φ(ροντιστοῦ) Σαθρώ

*recto*

2 l. Ἡρωνίνου    3 l. ἐπέσειλας    9 l. πέμψαι ἡμῖν    10 In ὅσας omicron apparently corrected from upsilon  
11 l. ἀγοράσαι, ἐπίστασαι

*verso*

π /; 1. Ἡρωνίνου; φ /

Translation:

*recto*

To my lord Alypios from Heroninos *phrontistes* of Theadelphia.

You wrote (asking) to be informed of the number of reeds transported from the *ktesis*. There have been transported ninety thousand, (in) 12 loads. Since the same vineyards do not have reeds, if your Honour agrees, send us from every possible source another forty thousand or however many you may be able to buy. For you know that the situation of the vineyards is that they make use of many reeds. I (?) have sent...

*verso*

To my lord Alypios from Heroninos *phrontistes* of Sathro.

Notes:

*recto*

3. ἐπέσ]τιλας. The ligatured sigma, though slight, is clear. Cf. e.g. *Analecta Papyrologica* I (1989), pp. 79-144, ll. 27, 29 etc.
5. For the *ktesis* in the Appianus estate cf. D. RATHBONE, *op. cit.* p. 24. Rathbone translates the word as “the Homestead”. Deliveries of reeds from the *ktesis* are also attested in *P.Prag.* I 103 and *SB* VI 9054.

6. μυ]ριάδας. The nominative would be grammatically correct. The accusative here might be a slip due to the memory of sentences like “please send x myriads of reeds to...” or “please fetch x myriads of reeds”. φορτία. This is the first occurrence of the word in documents from the Appianus estate where reeds are always counted in myriads. The use of φορτία in reference to reeds is however quite standard in papyri. Cf. e.g. *P.Mil. Vogl.* II 69A, 133 ff. ; III 202, 9-10; VII 308, 179 ff.
7. τῶν δὲ] αὐτῶν κτημάτων. No vineyards have been mentioned before. Heroninos is presumably referring to the vineyards of his managerial unit.
8. ἔάν σου τῆ] τύχη δόξῃ. The formal and rhetorical expression seems to contrast with the simple and direct tone of the letter (cf. the imperative πέμψε, l. 9) but it is used by Heroninos himself in *P.Flor.* II 273 (*BL* I 55) as well.
9. Before π]ανταχόθεν (for which cf. *P.Flor.* II 127,6) there is room enough for three letters. A possible restoration is καὶ π]ανταχόθεν, which would link the new request to the delivery mentioned at ll. 4-6 and would emphasise the urgent need for extra reeds.
14. π]ρὸς Ηρ. [. Many different characters whose names begin with eta-rho are attested in the archive. See D. RATHBONE, *op. cit.* Indexes, I Persons pp. 473-74.
- 15-22. On the left-hand side approximately five letters are missing in lines 15-19, about seven or even eight in the last three. On the right-hand side the number of the lost letters can be estimated between ten and fourteen in all the lines 15-22.
18. Although the writing is here well preserved, the absence of context does not allow us to make out the very cursive script. This is the reason for dotting the letters. ]σε εὐ]χομαι cannot be excluded. A greetings expression at this point of the letter would imply some kind of *post scriptum* in the following lines.
22. ]ς[. If the reading is correct, this might be the figure for the year. The only possible sixth year of reign is that of Valerianus and Gallienus i. e. A. D. 258/9. The possibility of the day number is unlikely because of the position of the figure. Cf. the plates of *P.Flor.* II 272, 273 and 274, which are all letters from Heroninos.

#### verso

Heroninos calls himself *phrontistes* of Theadelphia in the letter, but of Sathro in the external address. For this variation see *P.Alex. inv.* 282 (*PSI* IX 1049). Cf. D. RATHBONE, *op. cit.* p. 30.

#### Addendum

Besides the letter published here, Heroninos is the sender of another twelve published letters from the Heroninos Archive. All of them must have been found at Theadelphia. Why texts which were supposed to be sent to their addresses have been found among Heroninos' papers is not always easy to explain. Most of these letters look like drafts or copies of the fair versions. A few may be fair versions which were kept by Heroninos after he realized that there were mistakes in them. It seems that Heroninos only had use for these drafts or copies for a short time; the papyrus was then kept for possible re-use.

These twelve letters are: *P.Flor.* II 273, *P.Flor.* II 275, *P.Flor.* II 277, *P.Prag.* II 200, *SB* VI 9474 (all to Aypios); *P.Flor.* II 272 (to Neilas); *P.Flor.* II 274 (to Heronas); *P.Flor.* II 276 (to Eudaimon); *P.Giss. Univ.* III 27 (to Heraklas); *PSI* IX 1049 (to Harpalos); *SB* VI 9083 (to Keleas); *SB* VI 9415.28 (to Isidoros).

Plates are given in the original publication of *P.Flor.* II 272, *P.Flor.* II 273, *P.Flor.* II 274, *P.Giss. Univ.* III 27 and *P.Prag.* II 200. I have also been able to see photographs of *P.Flor.* II 275, *P.Flor.* II 276 and *P.Flor.* II 277. The hand of all these letters except *P.Giss. Univ.* III 27 is the same, and since it is the hand of the draft monthly accounts of Heroninos too, it is probably his own hand.

*P.Flor.* II 272, a small scrap of papyrus, appears to have been written in a very cursive hand. From the plate in *P.Flor.* II it seems that the letter is written along the fibres, but no information is provided about the other side and the original cannot be found.<sup>7</sup> It could be a copy kept by Heroninos or even a draft. But it could also be the letter actually sent to Nilas requesting two *sakkoi* and then returned to Heroninos together with those *sakkoi*.

Though *P.Flor.* II 273 is quite neatly written on the *recto* of the papyrus, it was probably a draft or a copy kept by Heroninos. In fact Heroninos himself used the *verso* for some jottings about wine; it was somebody else who wrote an exemplar of the titulature of Macrianus and Quietus on it, for the hand is

<sup>7</sup> Cf. I. CRISCI, *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Papyrology*, Toronto 1970, p.89.

different. Some attempt seems to have been made to erase the beginning of Heroninos' letter, presumably with the aim of reusing that side of the papyrus.

*P.Flor.* II 274 is very cursively written so it could be a copy kept by Heroninos or a draft. It might also be the original brought back to Theadelphia by Heroninos' son Heronas, who is the addressee of the letter. No check of the back side is possible, for the original is lost.<sup>8</sup>

*P.Flor.* II 275 is quite neatly written on the *recto* side. It could be a copy kept by Heroninos. Later on the beginning of the letter was partly erased and the back was reused by Heronas to write out an account of wine.<sup>9</sup>

*P.Flor.* II 276 is very cursively written. The text could be a draft or a copy kept by Heroninos. The other side was previously written.

*P.Flor.* II 277 is just a small fragment of top left-hand corner of a letter. Heroninos made a mistake in the heading and then re-wrote part of it without crossing out the wrong line. The text is very cursively written. Heroninos might have originally meant to send it or, more likely, this might be a rough copy. The papyrus was already written on the other side.

*P.Prag.* II 200 is the top part of a letter. Although it is not very cursively written, the script looks careless and there are some slips at least in the third line. Heroninos might have realized that he had made some mistakes and decided to keep the papyrus for future reuse. In fact the letter has got some jottings, probably about wine, in Heroninos' hand on the back. The letter might also be a draft copy.

*PSI IX* 1049 is said by its editor to be almost completely illegible in the bottom half. This might be due to an attempted erasure.

*SB VI* 9083 only preserves the beginning of a letter. This extant part does not make much sense. The script might be very cursive and erased, which made it difficult for the editor to read correctly or, which I believe is more likely to be the case, we might again be dealing with mistakes made by Heroninos.

*SB VI* 9415.28 is quite neatly written so it could be a copy or draft kept by Heroninos or the original returned to him.

*SB VI* 9474 is said by its editor to be written quite neatly but to be barely legible and in an awful condition. This might be the result of another attempt or erasure.

*P.Giss. Univ.* III 27 is not an internal Appianus estate text but, apparently, a letter to an official about fiscal matters. The letter is not in Heroninos' hand, nor, it seems, are the greetings. Since the date was not written and there are a lot of spelling mistakes, we have probably a draft or a copy which might have been kept for possible reuse of the papyrus. On the back the address runs vertically from top to bottom. From the editor's silence there is probably nothing else on this side.

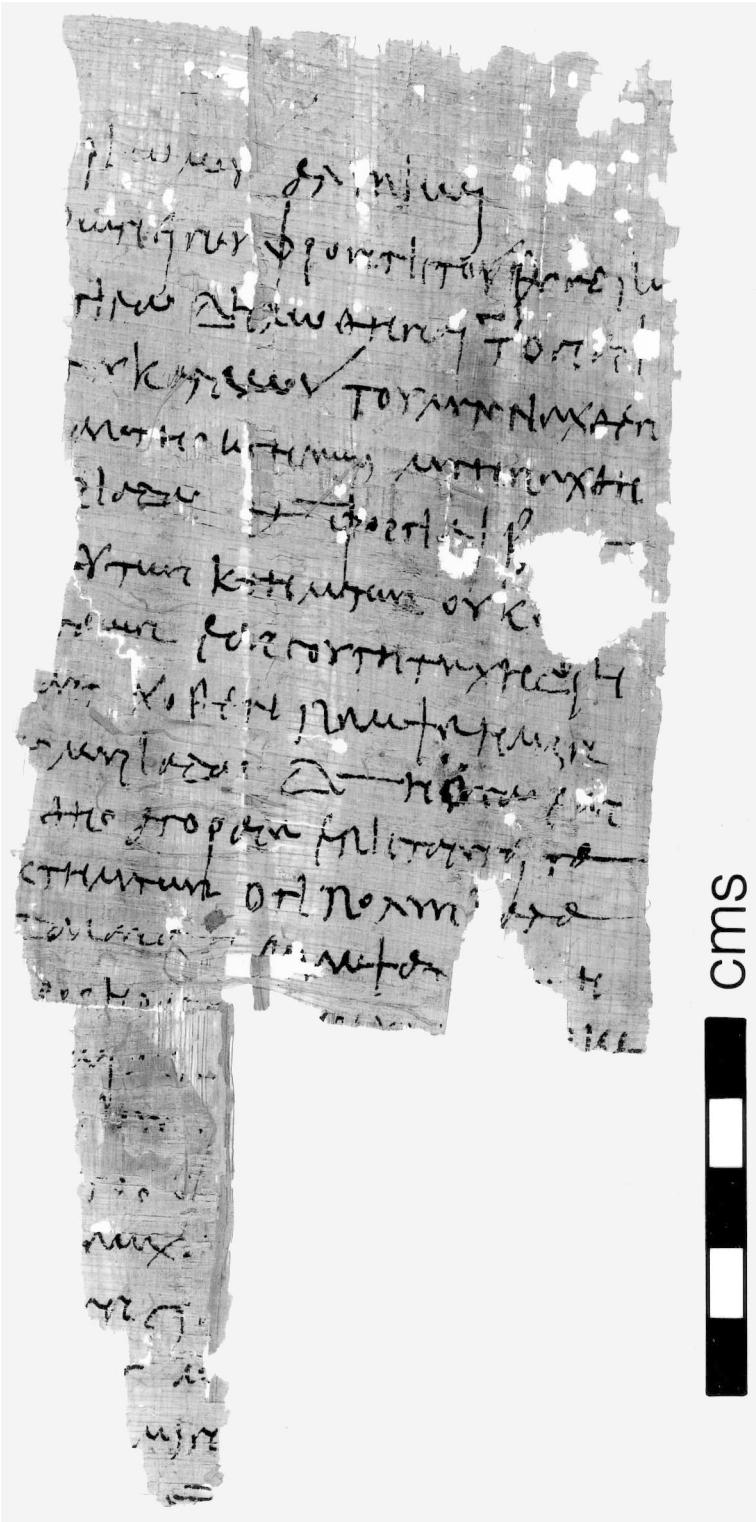
We also know that other letters from the Heroninos Archive, which were actually sent, were not written carefully and were written on pieces of papyrus previously used on the other side. Therefore, in the case of these letters whose sender is Heroninos himself, it is not easy to distinguish between originals, copies and drafts. It can only be pointed out that in some cases there seems to be a larger number of mistakes than average and/or the script is particularly cursive (*e.g. P.Flor.* II 276, *P.Flor.* II 277 and *P.Prag.* II 200).

What emerges without doubt is the sparing use of the papyrus by Heroninos. In fact, in all the instances when the other side of the papyrus is published or I have been able to see it, either the letter was drafted on a piece of papyrus previously written on the other side or the *verso* was reused later on.

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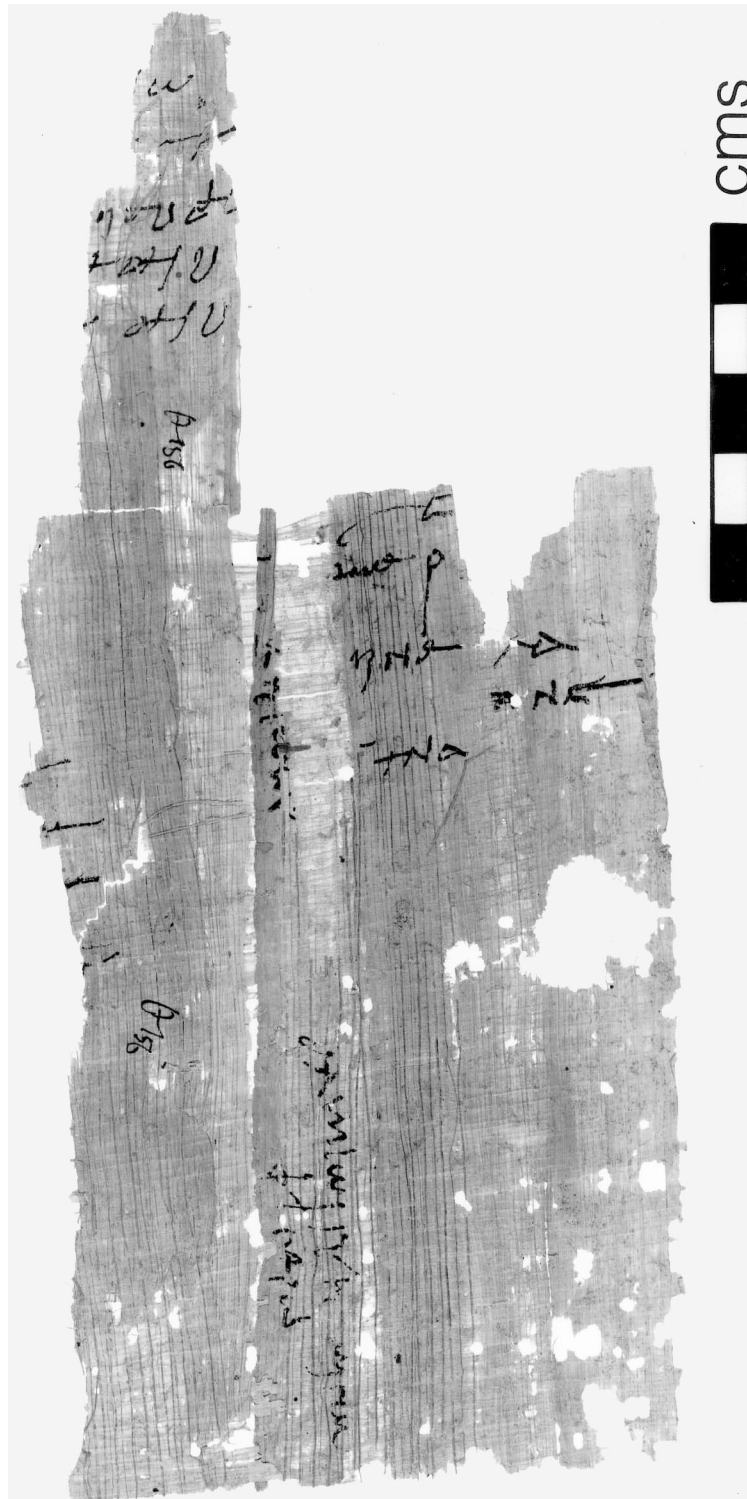
<sup>8</sup> See note 7.

<sup>9</sup> *P.Flor.* II 275 *verso* = *SB XIV* 11554.



P. Fayûm, recto; M. Salvo, pp. 131–134

TAFEL VI



P. Fayûm, verso; M. Salvo, pp. 131–134