

## Notes on Papyri from Roman Egypt III

W. Graham Claytor





Heidelberg: Propylaeum, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48631/pylon.2025.8.114588>



### Citation

W.G. Claytor, "Notes on Papyri from Roman Egypt III," Pylon 8 (2025)  
Article 10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48631/pylon.20225.8.114588>.

## 16. **W.Chr. 200a** and **200b**: At Home in the *Esenremphieion*



- §1 This pair of documents from Theadelphia is often adduced in discussions of the early Roman census (e.g.  **Claytor and Bagnall 2015**) and poll-tax ( **Rathbone 2019**). Submitted in back-to-back years (19 and 18 BCE) by the same public farmer, Pnepheros son of Phanemius (also spelled Panemeiees), they include information about the declarant's identity, status, and dwelling, but no mention of other household members.
- §2 Pnepheros' dwelling place in the first declaration was printed as ἐν δὲ τῷ(ι) [ . ]εαγραμφι( ) | καταγίνομαι, with Wilcken reading τ<sup>ω</sup> for the first editor's τ<sup>ι</sup> and noting, "es liegt wohl eine griechische Ableitung des ägyptischen Wortes auf ιεῖον vor, geschrieben ἡ(φ)." Wilcken's inclination was right, and on the image, the name of the sanctuary can be read as Ἐσενρεμφιή(ωι), the first attestation of this term. The farmer was thus living within the sacred precinct of (Isis) Esenremphis, whose temple in Theadelphia was already known from the *asylia* decree  **I.Fay. II 114.16–17** (70 BCE): ἱεροῦ Ἰσιδος Ἐσερέμφιος θεᾶς μεγίστης.<sup>1</sup> In the next year, Pnepheros is said to be living simply in a "private house," which is probably a different description of the same dwelling, since houses within sacred precincts, often called παστοφόρια, could be privately owned and alienated (cf.  **P.Aegyptus Cent. 28.7 n.**).






 **Fig. 1: British Library Board, Papyrus 646.**

- §3 The image of  **W.Chr. 200b** also affords some small improvements. Both the first edition and Wilcken's text give the impression that a line containing the addressee is lost, but the papyrus in fact contains traces of ink, amounting to perhaps two letters, which were washed out. In line 7, οἰδία is written, either a phonetic spelling of ἰδία and/or in anticipation of the following οἰκία. Under line 8, the papyrus is cleanly broken, and the current placement of the lower fragment is incorrect, since the end of [ἐπιδίδωμι] in line 9 ought to be visible in this case. The lower fragment needs to be moved down to accommodate at least one missing line, or rather two if the declaration ended with the same formula as  **200a**: διὸ ἐπιδίδωμι τὸ ὑπόμνη(μα) ὅπως καταχωρισθῇ.


 **Fig. 2: British Library Board, Papyrus 647.**

## 17. Kallistratos in **P.Prag. 1 54** (Arsinoite, 19–21)

- §4 The opening of this receipt was printed [ ... σ]ιτολόγος τῶν [Κ]αλλιστράτου Τεσενούφι Δημάτος | γεγε[νημέ]νη Κ[α]λλιστράτου χ(αίρειν) and translated, "... sitologo del distretto di Kallistratos a Tesenuphis figlia di Demas originaria di Kallistratos salve." The unusual γεγε[νημέ]νη Κ[α]λλιστράτου is rather γεωρ[γ(φ)] τῶν Κ[α]λλιστράτου, a parallel construction to the circumscription of the sitologos in the previous line.<sup>2</sup> Tesenouphis is a cross-gender name, here referring not to a woman, as the editor thought, but rather to a male tenant.<sup>3</sup> With τῶν Καλλιστράτου the editor understood τόπων, and this supposed toponym has been registered as  **TM Geo 982**. Kallistratos should instead be taken as an estate owner, with τῶν marking an understood ἑδαφῶν *vel sim.*. Two examples from the archive of the estate manager Athenodoros ( **TM Arch 26**) support this interpretation: παρ' Ἀθηνοδώρου

<sup>1</sup> On Isis Ese(n)remphis, see  **Quaegebeur 1983**. The female personal name Esenremphis ( **TM Nam 178**) is found in Theadelphia in  **P.Mich. inv. 4188** =  **Claytor and Wegner 2022** (62 BCE) and  **P.Cair.Gad 6**, frag. b.8 (II CE).

<sup>2</sup> The image is not of the highest quality, but τῶν is clear: there is a trace of the tail of tau, a bit longer than that of τῶν in the previous line, which descends nearly to the omicron of ἐκφορίων in l. 3. Little remains following γε (it is unclear whether the dark line above and to the right of ε is ink and, if so, whether it is from the previous line), but traces of the expected initial curving stroke of omega can perhaps be made out, followed by what appears to be a faint trace of the descending rho. This reading leaves room for a gamma raised in abbreviation before τῶν.

<sup>3</sup> On such names in Egypt, see  **Schentuleit 2025** (with pp. 233–234 on the etymology of the name Tesenouphis and 241–242 on the deified individual behind the name).

φροντιστοῦ τῶν Ἀ[σ]κληπιάδου [τ]ῶν ἐν τῷ Ἡρακλεοπολίτῃ (BGU 16 2605.1–3 = Armoni 2018: 129–131) and Ἀθηνόδωρος φροντιστὴς τῶν ἐν τῷ Ἡρακλεοπολίτῃ Ἀσκληπιάδου (BGU 16 2664.3–4).<sup>4</sup> Both Kallistratos in the Arsinoite nome and Asklepiades in the Herakleopolite were owners of private estates large enough to support permanent staff.<sup>5</sup>

- §5 Kallistratos is a common name, but given that his estate employed a σιτολόγος, it is reasonable to see a connection with the θ(ησαυροῦ) Καλλιστράτου in the contemporary order O.Lund. 1 with BL 8 522 (Euhemeria, 19).<sup>6</sup> Another possible reference to the estate is found in P.Mich. inv. 4447d (Arsinoite, 3 July, 12: edition in preparation), a brief rent receipt written by Δημήτριος ἐνυκιωλόγος (l. ἐνοικιολόγος) Καλλιστράτου.
- §6 Another prominent Kallistratos in the Fayum at this time is the agent working for the estate of Livia and Germanicus as προεστὼς κτηνῶν, who submitted the petition P.NYU 2 3 in 5 CE against an ὀνηλάτης in his employ. Little is known of the background of these προεστῶτες of imperial properties,<sup>7</sup> but they may themselves have been local landowners of some note (as were the administrators of Appianus' estate, for instance), so an identification of Kallistratos the landowner with Kallistratos the προεστὼς is not out of the question.<sup>8</sup>

## 18. BGU SPP 22 1 (Soknopaiou Nesos, II–III)

- §7 This summons sent to Soknopaiou Nesos refers to charges brought ὑπὸ Ἀμμ[ωνίου] πράκτορος ταμι[ακ]ῶν, as the edition has it (ll. 3–4). Such an official is not known elsewhere, and the date (before ca. 240 due to the mention of Soknopaiou Nesos) would be early for the use of ταμιακός. The image shows that there is not enough room for the reading, and in any case the top half of an epsilon (not alpha) follows tau. τεῖμων is possible palaeographically but also entails an otherwise-unattested remit, and the mu would also have an unusually-tall peak to its first stroke. Probably we are dealing with the omission of a syllable with haplography, πράκτορος (σι)τεικῶν, although this solution runs against the Lex Youtie. In any case, the πράκτωρ ταμιακῶν can be discarded.

## 19. BGU I 98 (Sonopaiou Nesos, 211)

- §8 Worp 2009: 148 pointed to this text as the only example of a woman described by an οὐλή on her thigh and suggested on the basis of gender roles that μηρῷ in l. 26 was a phonetic variant of μήλω, thereby moving the mark to her cheek. The image now available in BerlPap shows that it was there all along: the papyrus has μήλω.

## 20. BGU 7 1683 = Kolveris 2025 (Philadelphia, III–IV)

- §9 The new edition, made from a digital image, provides an improved text of this third or fourth century business letter excavated at Philadelphia by Viereck and Zucker. The first line is badly smudged but

<sup>4</sup> Similar examples are found in the later Heroninos archive (Rathbone 1991: 30–31). For other variations of Athenodoros' title as administrator of Asklepiades' estate in the Herakleopolite nome, see Armoni 2018: 123–124. This estate is referred to more specifically in BGU 16 2601.8 (= Armoni 2018: 127–129) and BGU 16 2663.4–5 as τὰ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιάδου ἐδάφη and τὰ ἐδάφη τοῦ οἴκου respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Kallistratos' tenant Tesenouphis was no ordinary smallholder, but a lessee of 200 arouras (l. 4). Given the names involved (besides Tesenouphis, a Herieus son of Satabous appears in l. 10), the Prague papyrus was likely found in Soknopaiou Nesos, although the large tract of land in question was no doubt located elsewhere.

<sup>6</sup> On this type of order, specific to the Fayum and mentioning private granaries, see Youtie 1950: 102 and O.Lund. 1 introduction.

<sup>7</sup> See Broux 2024: 76–77, with reference to this Kallistratos προεστὼς κτηνῶν.

<sup>8</sup> The NYU petitions give his father's name, likewise Kallistratos. I note two other contemporary texts in which a Kallistratos son of Kallistratos appears: P.Mich. 14 677 (6 BCE), a rent receipt for land around Herakleia, and P.Mich. inv. 4232 (1 BCE; edition in preparation), a receipt for taxes on land around Philadelphia and Hephaistias.

should contain the names of the correspondents (or at least the recipient), since *χαίρειν* follows in the next line. The new edition prints *Εὐ...ι...νε.....* where the first edition had *Εὐγε..... ἀδ[ε]λφῶ*.

- §10 Examination of the original in Warsaw with the aid of a digital microscope shows that the sender's name is *Εὐνους*, which is otherwise not found in Egypt after 109 (☞ **TM Nam 3048**). Fig. 3 contains infrared images of the ending *-νους*, with a wide nu whose final hasta starts with a hook, as elsewhere in the text, followed by a small omicron filled with ink, a V-shaped upsilon starting above the omicron, and finally a sigma in two parts.

 **Fig. 3: Infrared section of BGU 7 1683 line 1.**

- §11 What follows is more difficult, but if the original editors' *ἀδελφῶ* is retained, the recipient's name must be short. In this case, *Ὀλ* works: the omicron is small, and the lambda is just cut off by the break (part of the ink in between could be the "wind up" of the second stroke of lambda, as in *ἀμελήσης*, l. 7): see Fig. 4, with the beginning of the following alpha.

 **Fig. 4: Infrared section of BGU 7 1683 line 4.**

- §12 The proposal for line 1 is thus: *Εὐνους Ὀλ ἀδελφῶ*. As mentioned, the name *Eunous* is rare, but since he is the sender of the business letter, he might not belong to the community of Philadelphia. *Hol*, on the other hand, a variant of *Horos*, is well established in the village (and the Fayum generally) from the end of the third century.<sup>9</sup>

## 21. Compensation for the Work of Slave Girl

- §13 In my edition of the *eiromenon* ☞ **P.Fay. 344 recto**, I described the abstract in ll. 23–24 (labeled with the letter I) as a “loan of 60 drachmas with *παραμονή* of slave girl in exchange for interest” (☞ **Claytor 2013**: 82). Line 23 contains the receipt of the loan, while the next line contains the end of the clause regarding the girl's work, the penalty clause for absence, and the return clause. This last was printed: *μετὰ τὸν χρόνον ἀποδότο ἀργυ(ρίου) (δραχμὰς)· καὶ δώσει ὁ Δι...ο( ) τῇ παιδ(ίσκῃ)·ο( ) καὶ [*. A reexamination of the image (excerpted in Fig. 5) has produced some new ideas.
- §14 Following *ἀργυ(ρίου)*, the expected (*δραχμὰς*) ξ should be read: the ligature between the overstroke of *αργ* and the drachma sign is damaged but otherwise resembles the others, even if the drachma sign is less wavy than elsewhere. It is difficult to distinguish between the xi and the beginning of *καί*, but the figure is not much in doubt, since the amount is spelled out in the previous line: *ἔχιν παρ' αὐ(τοῦ) δ[ι]ὰ χε(ιρὸς) ἀργυ(ρίου) (δραχμὰς) ἑξήκοντα*.
- §15 The name following the article is certainly *Δίδυμο(ς)*, with the base of the second delta and the low undulations of mu clearly visible. The name is added because the two verbs have different subjects: at the end of the contract, the first party must return (*ἀποδότο*, l. *ἀποδότω*) the 60-drachma principal, while *Didymos*, the lender, must give something to the slave girl. The article before *Δίδυμο(ς)* is anaphoric, since he was already introduced in the lost beginning of the abstract.
- §16 ☞ **PSI 6 710.9–10** (Oxyrhynchos [?], II), another *paramone* contract for a slave (but based on lease, not a loan), provides a parallel: *δώσει δὲ ὁ Διόσκορος τῇ παιδί πληρώσαντι τ[ ... ] | χιτῶνα ἄξιον δραχμῶν δέκα καὶ δραχμὰς δεκαδύ[ο ... ]*. As the editor already considered, line 9 can be supplemented *πληρώσαντι τ[ὸν χρόνον]* (the equivalent of *μετὰ τὸν χρόνον*). *Dioskoros*, the lessee of the slave, must, in addition to the regular wages, provide a *chiton* worth 12 drachmas at the conclusion of the contract.

<sup>9</sup> Four different men of this name are found in ☞ **BGU 7 1628** (Philad., IV), for instance. An *Aurelius Hol* is also the protagonist of ☞ **TM Arch 35** (late IV).



This parallel suggests that clothing might have supplemented the compensation package in the Fayum contract as well, but the papyrus is bunched up here, and little besides the raised omicron is legible.

§17 The proposed reading is:



§18 μετὰ τὸν χρό(νον) ἀποδότο ἀργυ(ρίου) (δραχμᾶς) ξ καὶ δώσσει ὁ Δίδυμο(ς) τῇ παιδ(ίσκῃ) θ...ο( ) κ...[

 Fig. 5: P.Fay. 344 recto line 24.







## 22. Reflections of Hadrian's Tax Relief Edict of 136

- §19 Following two dangerously low inundations, Hadrian ordered a moratorium on the payment of ἀργυρικὸς φόρος by the γεωργοί of Egypt: payments due for the 20th year (135/136) could be spread over five years in the hard-hit Thebaid, four years in the Heptanomia, and three years in Lower Egypt.<sup>10</sup> Herbert Youtie first identified signs of the implementation of this edict in the payment of (πέμπτον) μέρος γεωμετρίας, that is, an annual installment of 1/5 of the land-survey tax, in several Theban ostraka between 136–140, and the evidence base has since expanded to include a range of money taxes from Thebes and Elephantine, recently examined by Andrea Jördens.<sup>11</sup>
- §20 The Fayum, I believe, also offers a reflection of the edict.  P.Prag. 1 62a is a garden-tax receipt dated to Pauni 17 of Hadrian's 22nd year (11 June, 138),<sup>12</sup> which opens with payments for the previous 21st year. Since garden taxes were normally settled the year following, the payment is routine and can be taken as the full set of dues on what amounts to just under two arouras, as the editor noted. The receipt then takes an unusual turn in that it backtracks to garden taxes of the 20th year, with amounts corresponding to about 1/2 an aroura according to the editor, “quindi circa un quarto della prima serie” ( P.Prag. I 62a.7 n.). The quarter payment for the 20th year is a significant clue: rather than pertaining to a smaller plot of land, it likely represents a τέταρτον μέρος of the full payment on the same plot, just as Hadrian's edict permitted in the Heptanomia.<sup>13</sup>



## Bibliography

-  Armoni, C. (2018) “Aus dem Archiv des Διοικητής Athenodoros: Neuedition von BGU XVI 2601, 2605 und 2618,” ZPE 207: 123–134.
-  Broux, Y. (2024) The Imperial Ousiai of Roman Egypt. Leuven.

10 The edict was published in Alexandria on 31 May, 136 and has been transmitted in four fragmentary copies: three are printed under  P.Oslo 3 78 (=  Oliver 1989, no. 88A–C), the fourth as  P.Heid. 7 396.

11  Jördens 2019: 334–337, drawing on  Youtie 1973: 854–856;  Shelton 1990: 227; Heilporn,  O.Stras. 2, pp. 94–97;  Heilporn 2016: 214–216;  Duttonhöfer 2017: 228–229.

12 The letter “a” refers to the first receipt on the papyrus, which is followed in a second column by a receipt for the φόρος προβάτων (b) and two poorly-preserved receipts (c–d).

13 There follows an installment of the γεωμετρία for the 20th year, about half the full amount. The amount is usual, but such late payment is not. The γεωμετρία was due every four years and generally settled in two installments, one the year of, one the year following ( P.Col. 5, pp. 272–275); the payment in the 22nd year was thus either one or two years late depending on which installment it was. The laxness with the deadline fits the spirit of the edict, even if the taxpayer should have been allowed to disperse payment of the γεωμετρία over four annual installments. Cf. Jördens 2019: 336–337, remarking on the various methods of implementing Hadrian's edict: “Dies läßt zugleich darauf schließen, daß das kaiserliche Zugeständnis erneut die Prinzipien vorgab, den lokalen Behörden hingegen relativ freie Hand darin gelassen war, diese Vorgaben in konkrete Maßnahmen zu überführen. Dadurch wurde es möglich, flexibel auf die jeweilige Situation vor Ort zu reagieren und allfälligen Besonderheiten gerecht zu werden, so daß es in den verschiedenen Steuerbezirken zum Teil zu erheblichen Abweichungen bei der Umsetzung kam. Doch war es möglicherweise nicht zum geringsten eben dieser Flexibilität zu danken, daß das Verfahren auf so große Akzeptanz der Bevölkerung stieß und sich letztlich auch als solches bewährte.” Indeed, the τέταρτον μέρος γεωμετρίας later became institutionalized as a method of payment for dues on oustiac land ( P.Col. 5, pp. 274–275): while not a direct result of Hadrian's edict (which concerned taxes for 135/6 only), it may nevertheless have been inspired by it. I plan on returning to the topic of garden taxes in the Fayum via editions of the receipts P.Lond. inv. 2708 and 2712 in a future volume of P.Lond.

- ☞ Claytor, W.G. (2013), "A Schedule of Contracts and a Private Letter: P.Fay. 344," *BASP* 50: 77–121.
- ☞ Claytor, W.G. and Bagnall, R.S. (2015) *The Beginnings of the Roman Provincial Census: A New Declaration from 3 BCE*, *GRBS* 55: 637–653.
- ☞ Claytor, W.G. and Wegner, W. (2022) "Eine Quittung über didrachmia des Suchos," *CdÉ* 97: 173–196.
- ☞ Duttonhöfer, R. (2017) "Korrekturen zu Ostraka aus Elephantine III: Anmerkungen zu O.Bankes und verwandten Texten" *ZPE* 202: 221–247.
- ☞ Heilporn, P. (2016) "Papyrologica. III: 17. P. Bingen 87 et l'étalement des impôts de l'an 20 d'Hadrien," *CdÉ* 91: 214–216.
- ☞ Jördens, A. (2019) "Reflexe kaiserlichen Wirkens in ägyptischen Papyri und Ostraka" *Chiron* 49: 299–342.
- ☞ Kolveris, N. (2025) "A New Edition of BGU VII 1683" *ZPE* 234: 222–223.
- ☞ Oliver, J.H. (1989) *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (Philadelphia).
- ☞ Quaegebeur, J. (1983) "Eseremphis: Une Isis de haute époque en vogue dans l'Égypte gréco-romaine," in G. Grimm et al. (eds) *Das römisch-byzantinische Ägypten. Akten des internationalen Symposions. Trier, 26.–30. September 1978. Mainz*: 67–75.
- ☞ Rathbone, D. (1991) *Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in Third-Century A.D. Egypt. The Heroninos Archive and the Appianus Estate*. Cambridge.
- ☞ Rathbone, D. (2019) "The Age of Poll-Tax Exemption in Roman Egypt" in M. Maiuro et al. (eds) *Uomini, istituzioni, mercati. Studi di storia per Elio Lo Cascio*. Bari: 353–361.
- ☞ Shelton, J.C. (1990) "Ostraca from Elephantine in the Fitzwilliam Museum" *ZPE* 80: 221–238.
- ☞ Schentuleit, M. (2025) "Egyptian Cross-gender Names in Graeco-Roman Dime and Beyond," in Almásy-Martin, A. and Broux, Y. (eds), *Greek Personal Names in Egypt*. Oxford: 221–258.
- ☞ Worp, K.A. (2009) "Οὐλαί on Women's Thighs?" *ZPE* 170: 147–148.
- ☞ Youtie, H.C. (1950) "Greek Ostraca from Egypt," *TAPA* 81: 99–116.
- ☞ Youtie, H.C. (1973) "Review. Tax Rolls from Karanis. Part I." *Scriptiunculae II* (Amsterdam): 851–857.



Show

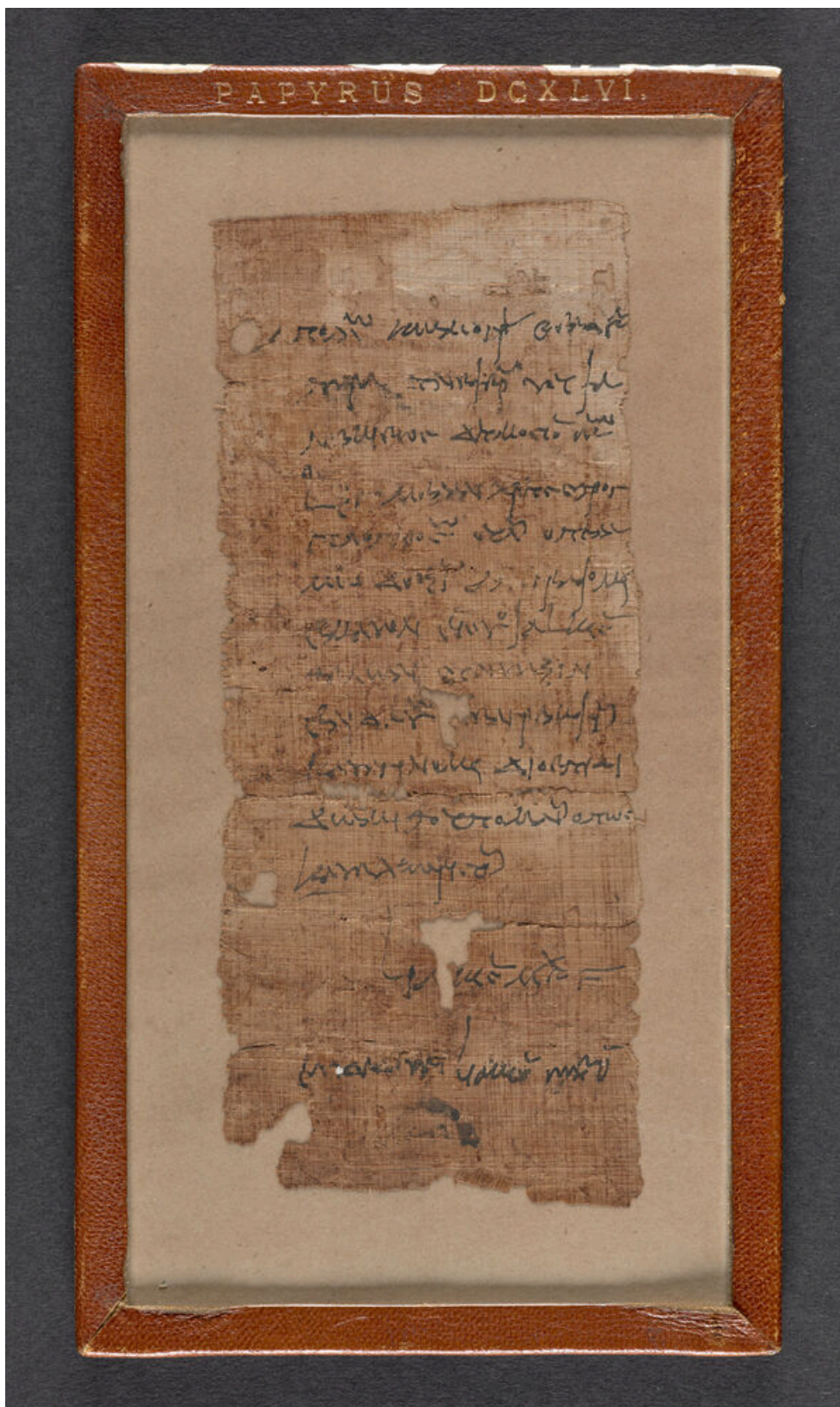


Fig. 1: British Library Board, Papyrus 646.



Show

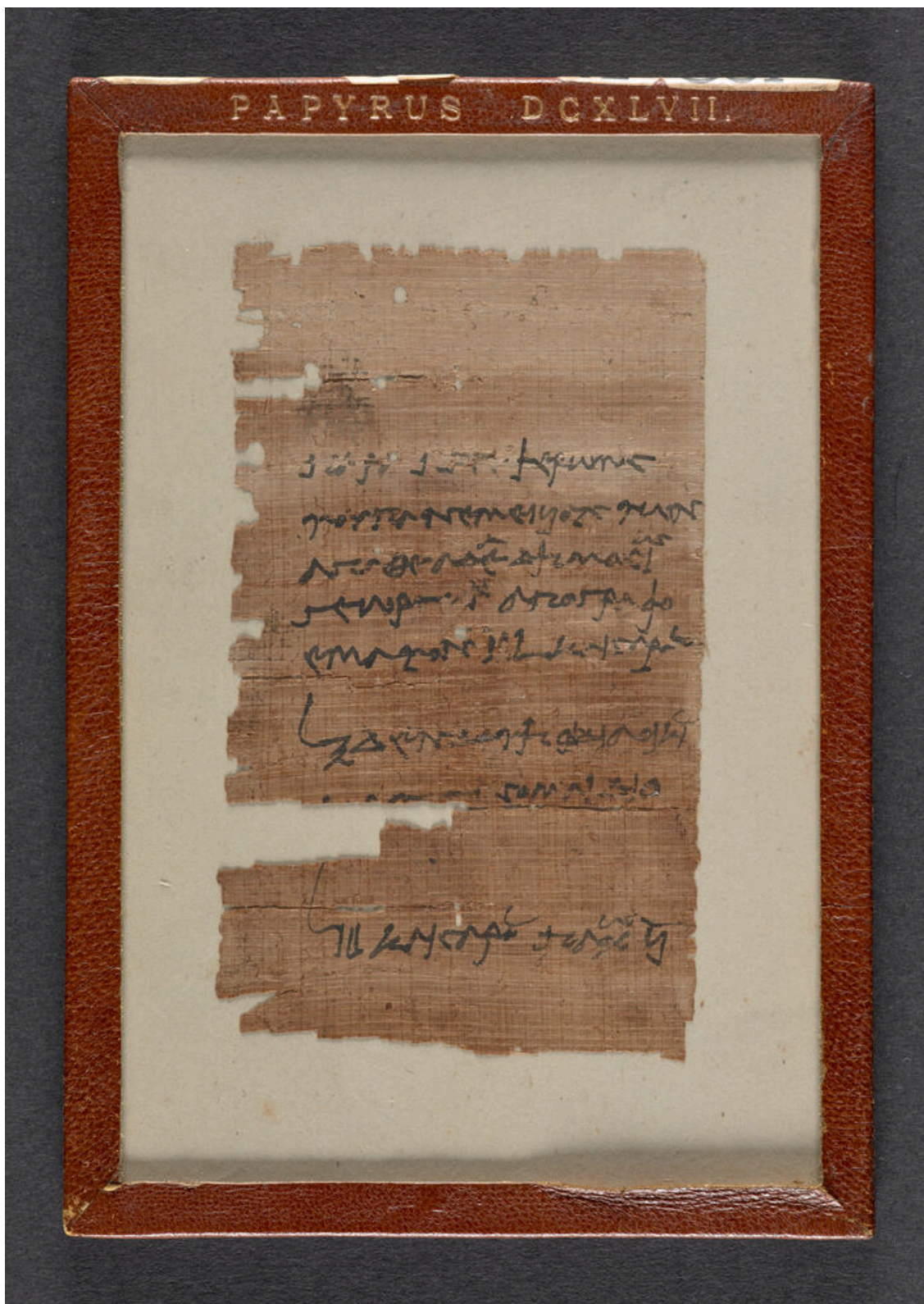


Fig. 2: British Library Board, Papyrus 647.



Show

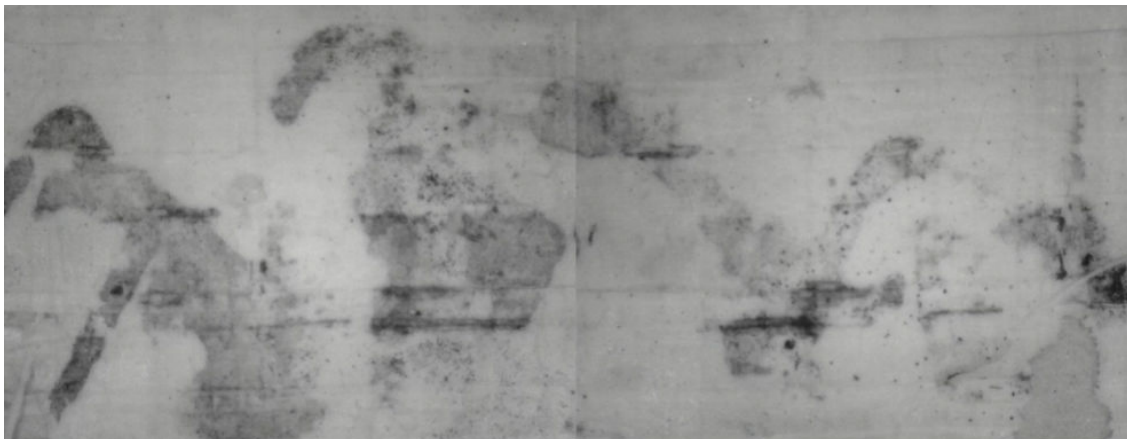


Fig. 3: Infrared section of BGU 7 1683 line 1.

Show

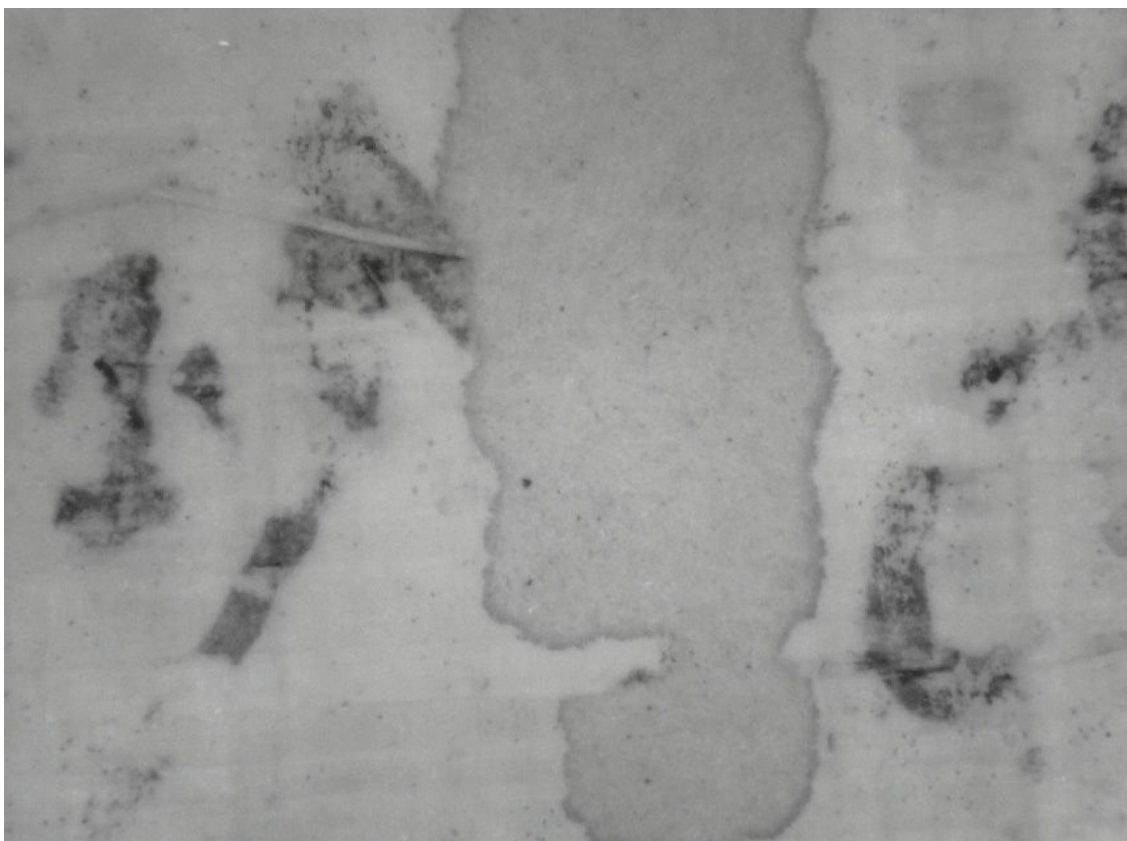


Fig. 4: Infrared section of BGU 7 1683 line 4.

Show

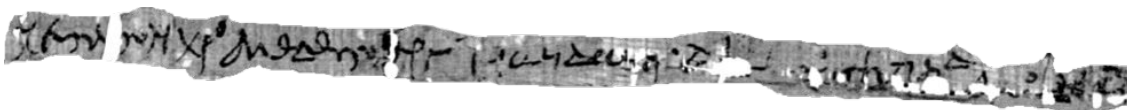


Fig. 5: P.Fay. 344 recto line 24.

Claytor, W. Graham

GND:  <https://d-nb.info/gnd/1164982230>

ORCID:  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9838-3318>

University of Warsaw

[w.claytor-vi@uw.edu.pl](mailto:w.claytor-vi@uw.edu.pl)