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## A Register of Receipts (?) from a Military Context

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P. Lund. Inv. 213

11.1 (h) × 9.9 (w)

Provenance unknown

2.10.106 CE (recto)

27.12.110 - 25.01.111 CE (verso)

- §1 The medium brown papyrus is torn on all sides; a part of the upper margin can be observed on the recto, with corresponding lower margin on the verso. The fragment preserves parts of two sheets *kollēmata* and is written on both sides. It is housed in the Lund University Library and is in a fragile state.<sup>1</sup> No information survives regarding its provenance, nor does the content point to a certain area.<sup>2</sup> Acquisition information about the piece is also lacking.<sup>3</sup>
- §2 The recto contains, in two columns along the fibers, a possible register of receipts related to military personnel, perhaps of a single unit. Col. ii appears to have continued lines written in the now lost part of the first column, since the name Birrius Florus, which begins the column, is in the genitive case. In line 3 of the second column more than half of the original text survives, while line 2 preserves approximately one third of the line. A *paragraphos* occurs after line 4, marking a division between two receipts. Following line 7, the number of letters in each line progressively diminishes towards the bottom of the fragment.
- §3 Of particular interest in the papyrus is the unusual name Birrius (ii 1), attested in papyrological sources for the first time, and the reference to a *custos armorum* (ii 7: ἀρμοκούστορι). The *nomen* Birrius occurs among soldiers in a few places outside Egypt.<sup>4</sup> Lucius Birrius Priscus, son of Caius, of the Publilia tribe, from Verona, is recorded as a *miles cohortis III praetoriae* on a funerary monument discovered at Rome and dated to the second half of the 1st c. CE (AE 1989, 83). Another Birrius is recorded in an honorific inscription dated to Gordian III's reign: the name is partially preserved as Birr[iu]s S[---]nianus, *miles* of an unknown military unit (AE 2013, 473). The name appears as well in literary sources.<sup>5</sup> However, although less likely, one cannot exclude a *betacism* of the transliterated form of Virrius / Οὐίρριος.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, a certain Βέρριος is attested,<sup>7</sup> while Οὐέρριος is encountered in a few papyri.<sup>8</sup>
- §4 The parties to the second transaction of col. ii are a man named Marcus Valerius M(...), honorably discharged among the veterans, and a *custos armorum* of a *turma* of an auxiliary unit that might be identified with a certain degree of caution as an *ala*. Perhaps Marcus Valerius M(...) was discharged

1 I would like to thank Per Stobaeus, the librarian in charge of the papyrus collection at the Lund University for the excellent collaboration and for providing me with high-quality photos of the papyrus. Most importantly, I would like to express my gratitude to Graham Claytor (University of Warsaw), Ligia Ruscu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca) and Lorelei Vanderheyden (Institut für Papyrologie, Heidelberg University) for their valuable comments on drafts of the paper. All errors or misjudgements are my own. This publication is the result of my participation in the *Lektüre unpublizierter Papyri* seminar led by Rodney Ast from November 2020 to February 2021.

2 The reference to a veteran could indicate the Fayum. R. Alston has commented on the high number of veterans attested there, up to 10% of all veterans at any time; see Alston 1995: 39, 51.

3 For an overview of the history of the Lund collection, see Andorlini 1995. In recent years Todd Hickey has published some of the Lund papyri: e.g. inv. 43 and 48 (Hickey 2009); inv. 12 (Hickey 2011); inv. 177 which joins with P.Heid. IV 298 (Ast and Hickey 2018); inv. 41 (Hickey 2021). See as well DeWitt 2019 for a re-edition of P.Lund 6 10 + P.Mich. inv. 1671.

4 Most bearers of this name are *humiliores*, the name Birrius being usually encountered on Roman epigraphic monuments in Italy and Rome, Dalmatia, Pannonia Inferior, Germania Superior and Gallia Narbonensis (Solin and Salomies 1994: 35; OPEL I 295). Birrius is so far identified in Greek epigraphic evidence at Istros in the 3rd c. CE (IScM I 143, line 6), and at modern-day Kilavuzlar, in Pisidia, in the Imperial period (Smith 1887: 250-251, no. 30).

5 E.g., Horace, Sat. I 4.69: *ut sis tu similis Caeli Birrique latronum*.

6 For the occurrences of this name in Latin inscriptions consult the Epigraphic Database Claus/Slaby; for Greek, see the Packard Humanities Institute database. These occurrences are more or less similar in quantity and distribution to Birrius / Βίρριος. In papyrological sources, Οὐίρριος has not been identified so far. See as well Gignac 1970 for the pronunciation of Greek stops in papyri, especially regarding *beta*.

7 SB 18 13102, 4-5 but the reading of *epsilon* and the first *rho* is questionable.

8 O.Edfu 2 257 and 258; P. Select 6.

from the same *ala* as the one where the *custos armorum* was serving, but there is no conclusive evidence in this regard. The term *custos armorum* is found in papyrological sources, e.g., ἀρμοκ[ο]ύστωρ, Alexandria, 2nd c. CE (P.Fouad 1 45) and Pselkis, 2nd c. CE (O. Bodl. 2 2022); ἀρμοροκούστωρ, Abu Duruah, Nubia (SB 1 1592); ἀρμικ(ούστωρος), Syene, 2nd c. CE (P.Wisc. 1 14); ἀρμι[κούστωρ], Bostra, Arabia, 2nd c. CE (P.Mich. 8 466); ἐρμοκούστωρι, Philadelphia, 2nd c. CE (P.Hamb. 1 88); ἀρμορου, Nikopolis, 16 January 179 CE (Rom.Mil.Rec. I 76.15.8); ἀρμοκ( ), Arsinoites 2nd-3rd c. CE (BGU I 344; though the breathing here should be ἀρμο-, if the word comes from Latin *arma*). In the Eastern desert the rank of *custos armorum* is attested in two *dipinti* at Maximianon (Cuvigny 2003: 343) and at Dios on an unpublished ostrakon (O.Dios. inv. 1057), dated not earlier than 115/116 CE, where the *custos armorum* is named Publius Petronius Apollonius (cf. O.Berenike 3 276.1n.). In Latin, the term is encountered in Egypt at Krokodilo (O.Krok. 1 119), at Contrapollonopolis (P.Diog. 1) and on several papyri with unknown provenance (Rom.Mil.Rec. 1 58; Rom.Mil.Rec. 1 129). The Greek equivalent, ὄπλοφύλαξ, appears in Egypt on a papyrus discovered at Berenike dated to the 1st c. CE (O.Berenike 2 131.5) and on another unprovenanced fragment dated to the 3rd-4th c. CE.<sup>9</sup> *Custodes armorum* are attested both in legionary and auxiliary units, and were generally in charge of managing the state supplied weapons for each soldier as well as other financial duties. Our document suggests that they were present in each *turma*.<sup>10</sup> Why a *custos armorum* continued to interact with a veteran is unclear. Could the latter have belonged to a detachment of veterans? The surviving text, meager though it is, gives no reason to think so.

- §5 It is estimated that during the early second century three to four *alae* were stationed in Egypt at any given time.<sup>11</sup> A military diploma issued for Egypt approximately one year before, on 24 September 105 CE, attests three *alae* among the auxiliary units of Egypt: *Augusta*, *Apriana* and *Vocontiorum* (RMD I 9).<sup>12</sup>
- §6 The left column (that is, col. i) preserves twelve line endings, which are difficult to read due to the poor state of the papyrus. Nevertheless, we presume that this column also contained receipts, especially because the receipt at the top of col. ii must have begun in col. i. However, the handwriting in col. i appears to be different from that in col. ii; this suggests that the surviving text in col. i is not directly related to the receipt at the top of col. ii, the beginning of which is now entirely lost.

<sup>9</sup> See the comments on P.Genova 5 204 in van Minnen, P. (2015): 238-239, no. 818.

<sup>10</sup> See the detailed discussion in Speidel 1992: especially 132: “There was one *armorum custos* in every *turma* since there was much work to be done.”

<sup>11</sup> Cf., e.g., Haensch 2012: 70; Fischer-Bovet and Sängler 2019: 172, table 11.2, 173.

<sup>12</sup> Other *alae* that can be pointed out are, for example, the *ala Commagenorum*, *I Thracum Mauretana* or *Veterana Gallica*; it should be mentioned that there are some *alae* known to have been stationed at one point in their history in Egypt – such as *Heracliana* or *Xoitana* – but these are not attested in Egypt during Trajan’s reign (see a detailed discussion in Alston 1995, appendix 1). For the *auxilia*, including those of Egypt, see Haynes 2013.



Fig. 1: P.Lund. 213r.

i

[-ca.?- ]ευσ

[-ca.?- ]τιου

[-ca.?- ]ανω

[-ca.?- ]ησ., σ

5 [-ca.?- ], οηπα

[-ca.?- ]...

[-ca.?- ], αντο

[-ca.?- ]...

[-ca.?- ]...

10 [-ca.?- ]τι..

[-ca.?- ], π. ης

[-ca.?- ]αφιν

-----

ii

Βιρρίου Φλώρο[υ -ca.20- καὶ οὐδέν σοι]

ἐνκαλῶ. ἔτους δεκά[του Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Νέρ]-

ουα [Τ]ραιανου Σεβαστου Γερ[μανικου Δακικου,]  
Φαωφι ε

— —

- 5 Μάρκος Ουαλέριος Μ[ -ca.10- ἀπὸ τῶν ἐντίμως(?) ἀπο]-  
λελυμένων οὐετ[ρανῶν -ca.20- ]  
ἀρμοκούστορι τύρμη[ης -ca.20- χαίρειν.(?)]  
ἀπέσχον πα[ρὰ σοῦ -ca.25- ]  
τα ἀργυρ[ίου -ca.30- ]  
10 ἐπάρχου [εἴλης(?) -ca.15- καὶ οὐδέν σοι(?)]  
ἐγκ[αλω(?) -ca.?- ]  
--- ---

2 *l. ἐγκαλῶ* 5 *l. Ουαλέριος* 11 *l. ἐγκαλῶ*

(m1) (...) of Birrius Florus (...) (... I make no) claim (against you). The 10th year of the (emperor Caesar) Nerva Traianus Augustus, Germanicus, (Dacicus,) Phaophi 5. (m2) Marcus Valerius M( -ca.?- ), (from among the honorably) discharged veterans, to the *custos armorum* of the *turma* of ( -ca.?- , greetings!). I have received from (you...) money ( -ca.?- ) of the commander (...) (... that I make no) claim (against you? ...).

## Col. I

- §7 2 [...]τιου is possibly the ending of a name in the genitive.  
§8 3 This is perhaps the dative of, e.g., a name ending in -ανος.  
§9 12 If the first partially visible letter is an *alpha* one could read maybe [γρ]άφην for [γρ]άφειν.

## Col. II

- §10 1 Unlike Birrius, Florus is a fairly common Latin *cognomen* (Solin and Salomies 1994: 333; OPEL II, 149).  
§11 2-4 The dating in the last lines of the receipt above the *paragraphos* is 2 October 106 CE. Accordingly, it is safe to assume that the title Δακικου (i.e. *Dacicus Maximus*) was written in the lacuna, as it had been bestowed on Trajan by late 102 CE ( Kienast, Eck and Heil 2017: 117; Venning 2011: 506 offers a precise date, namely December 10th) and is attested for the first time in papyrological sources in Egypt in January/February of the next year (103), as in P. Flor. 1 81 (Sijpesteijn 1983).  
§12 5 perhaps Λ instead of Μ.  
§13 5-6 Alternatively, one could read [τῶν ἐντίμως ἀπο]λελυμένων οὐετ[ρανός]. The form [οὐε]τ[ρανῶν ἀπο]λελυ[μένων] is encountered in the fragmentary last line of a second century account of payments made to a *sitologos* (?) discovered presumably at Theadelphia and dated to the second half of the 2nd c. CE (P.Bas. 2 37). Unfortunately, nothing can be read after this phrase. As the editor of that papyrus observed, it is strange that the adverb ἐντίμως was not written before the word ἀπολελυμένος; as

far as the Lund papyrus is concerned, we assume that the adverb did precede the participle in the now lost part of the text. In papyri dated until the 2nd century CE, the position within the army, for example, στρατιωτῶν or ἰπέων, usually follows in the genitive after ἀπολελυμένων. See, e.g., **P.Fouad 1 44**, 44 CE; **P.Hamb. 1 1**, 57 CE; **P.Mich. 3 185**, 122 CE. In later periods, especially the third and fourth centuries, the preposition ἀπὸ + the military rank follows ἀπολελυμένων. Cf. [ἀπὸ] σημαφόρ[ων] [λεγιῶνος] β' Τραιαν[ῆς] [Ἀντων]τιανῆς (**P.Vet. Aelii 6**, Ankyron, Severus Alexander's reign); ἀπὸ ὀφικιαλίων ἐπάρχου Αἰγύπτου (**P.Oxy. 14 1646**, 28 September – 11 October 270 CE); ἀπὸ δουπλικιαρίων (**BGU 4 1021**, 25 June, 3rd c. CE); on three occasions in the case of Aelius Syrion: ἀπὸ ὀπτιῶνων λεγιῶνος (**P.Vet. Aelii 9**; 11 and 15, Ankyron, 3rd c. CE); ἀπὸ (ἐκατοντάρ)χ(ων) (**SB 6 9222**, Karanis, January – May 309 CE); ἀπὸ οὐξιλ[λαρίων] (**SB 5 8013**, Arsinoite, 363 CE).

- §14 **7** The address by Valerius to the *custos armorum* will have ended with the customary χαίρειν. At the end of the receipt the dating formula was probably written similarly to the last lines of the receipt above the *paragraphos*.
- §15 **9** A diagonal stroke is visible before the beginning of the line; it is tempting to interpret this as indicating a sum, but its position in the left margin might speak against this.
- §16 **10** If the ἑπαρχος τῆς Αἰγύπτου and not the commander of the *ala* is meant, then the prefect referred to probably would have been Gaius Vibius Maximus (103-107 CE) (**Faoro 2015**: 75-78, no. 38 with references).

## Verso

- §17 The writing is against the fibers, with four line endings visible in the first column. The only secure elements are the mention of a date, a day in the month of Tybi (i.e. 27 December – 25 January) of a 14th year of a reign, presumably that of Trajan, namely 111 CE.



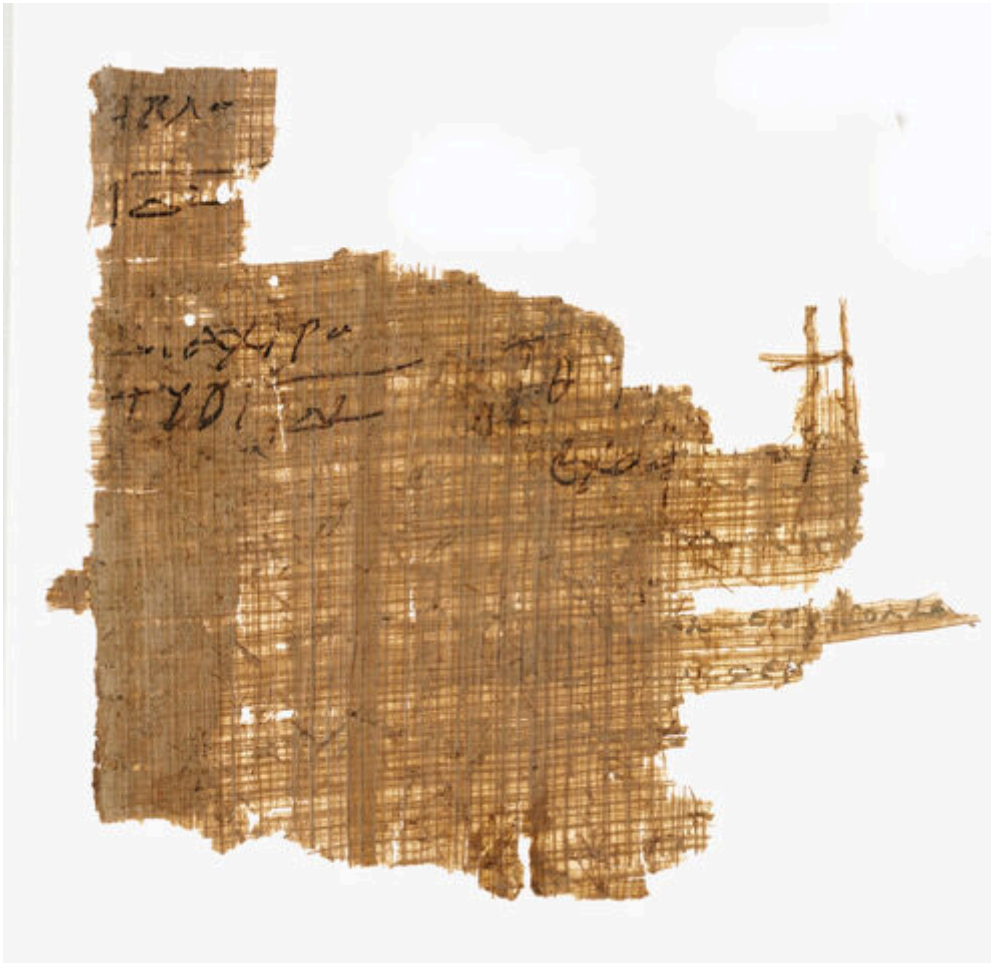


Fig. 2: P.Lund. 213v.

i

-----

[ -ca.-? - ] ιβλο

[ -ca.-? - ] ιδ̄ (ἔτους)

[ -ca.-? - ] *vac.*

[ -ca.-? - ] διὰ χιρό(ς)

[ -ca.-? - ] Τῶβι ιδ̄ (ἔτους)

ii

-----

ιθ̄ η [ -ca.-? - ]

ἔχο Φλαουι [ -ca.-? - ]

-----

---

3 *l.* χιρό(ς) 2 *l.* ἔχο

(...) year 14 (...received) by hand (...) Tybi, year 14. (...)

## Col. I

- §18 1 The horizontal stroke before *iota* makes an identification of the letter with *beta* unlikely.
- §19 2 It is possible that Τῶβτ was written in the lacuna before ἰδ̄.

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