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NOTES ON THREE LETTERS (HERONINOS ARCHIVE)

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## Notes on Three Letters (Heroninos Archive)\*

### Introduction

The Heroninos archive is a large group of letters and accounts to do with the running of a large private estate in the Arsinoite nome (Fayum) in the mid-third century A.D. Heroninos, the addressee of most of the extant letters, was 'manager' (*phrontistes*) of the estate's 'unit' (*phrontis*) at the village of Theadelphia from late 249 to mid-268; the letters written to him came mostly from fellow *phrontistai* based in other Arsinoite villages and from members of the central administration of the estate which was based in the nome capital Arsinoe. The head of this central administration was a man called Alypius. The estate was owned by an Aurelius Appianus; hence I refer to it as the Appianus estate. The first two letters discussed here belong to the Heroninos archive and relate to the Appianus estate. The third letter, which is similar to many others in the Heroninos archive, probably relates to a separate though similar estate of the same era and area.

### P. Flor. II 160 (cf. Taf. V a)

The text was published without a plate by D. Comparetti in P. Flor. II (1911); no corrections are listed in the BL. It is a letter from Alypius to Heroninos, dated 11th August of an unknown year presumably in the period 250 to 268 when Heroninos was *phrontistes* of Theadelphia. Like many of the letters of the Heroninos archive, this was written on the back of a piece of papyrus torn from a previously used roll. In this case the recto (unpublished) contains part of the beginning of an agricultural account for an anonymous year 1 (probably earlier third century) rendered by a *phrontistes* to a former gymnasiarch.

Comparetti's transcription and translation raise some doubts. In particular, it is implied that Heroninos fixed the price at which wine produced on the *phrontis* at Theadelphia was to be sold, while in all the other cases known from the archive the price was fixed by the central administration of the Appianus estate (cf. P. Flor. II 123; 124; 135; 143; 146; 196; 202). A re-reading of the text, working from a photograph kindly supplied by Professor R. Pintaudi, while not solving all the problems, shows that Heroninos had been asking Alypius to set a price for the wine produced at Theadelphia. Although Alypius seems to have adopted the price suggested by Heroninos, this text too now implies central control of the pricing of estate produce.

The wine of the current vintage referred to in the text can only just have been pressed, since the date, 11th August, is early in the normal vintage season (cf. M. Schnebel, Die Landwirtschaft

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\* I am extremely grateful to Dr J.R. Rea for generous help with palaeographical problems.

I use P. Wess. Prag. I to designate the texts for which the Checklist suggests the designation P. Prag. I and II (in fact published as one series), and P. Wess. Prag. II to designate the texts which the Checklist calls a 'new series' of Prague papyri. The designation P. Prag. is better reserved for the truly new series of Prague papyri of which the first volume has just appeared - which is what I mean by the designation P. Prag. I.

Stanghellini, Corrispondenza: M. Stanghellini, La corrispondenza di Heronino nei papiri fiorentini (osservazioni e note critiche ai testi), (Tesi di Laurea; Florence, 1957/8).

im hellenistischen Ägypten (1925), pp. 275-7). The vintage of this year may have been abundant, for the price of 8 dr. per *monochoron* is the lowest attested in the Heroninos archive, and occurs only one other time in P. Lond. III (p. 103) 1226 recto of September 254.

π(αρά) Ἀλυπίου.  
 ἐπέστελλες ἀξιῶν με ὄρον  
 δοῦναι τῇ τιμῇ τοῦ π[α]ρά σοι  
 τρυγηθέντ[ο]ς οἴνο[υ]. ] λει οὖν  
 5 τ[ο]σούτου φη[ς] εἶναι . . . [ ] ας καὶ  
 τ[ὸ] μονόχωρ[ο]ν πρὸς δραχμάς  
 ὁ]κτὼ ἴνα καὶ οὕτως συνθῶμαι  
 ὄρο]ν τῇ τιμῇ.  
 (m. 2) ἐρρω(σθαί) σε εὐχ(ομαι) φίλ(τατε).  
 10 (m. 1) Ἑρων]ίνω φρ(οντιστῆ) Ναρμούθεως.  
 (ἔτους) [ ] // Μεσορῆ ιη  
 1 π<sup>—</sup> 7 ἴνα 9 ευχ<sup>—</sup> φ<sup>λ</sup> 11 L [ ] //

From Alypius.

You have been writing requesting me to set a level for the price of the wine of the vintage at your place. So . . . . the amount you say it is . . . . the *monochoron* at eight drachmai, so that that is indeed the level I agree on for the price.

I pray you are well, dear friend.

To Heroninos, *phrontistes* of Narmouthis.

Year [?], Mesore 18.

2. Ed. pr.: Επεστειλα εις αξω[ν]ω[ν ο]ρον. Stanghellini, Corrispondenza, p. 79: ἐπέ-  
 στελλε τα[.]ξι\* [.]ω\* [ό]ρον. In the papyri ὄρος is often used of an official decision (cf. ὄρον  
 δίδομαι in P. Thead. 15 = P. Sakaon 31.20) or, in the plural, of 'terms' or 'conditions'; the  
 nearest parallel to the usage here comes in two texts of similar date (A.D.270s) where ὄρον  
 δίδομαι is used of 'setting a quota' for liturgic work (P. Oxy. XII 1409.15 and 1414.4, 6). We  
 may also compare the cognate usage of ὀρίζω: e.g. "καὶ ὀρίσας τῆ(ν) τειμήν" in P. Lond. III (p.  
 210) 1122b verso.7 (as corr. APF 4 (1907/8), 555), another letter to Heroninos.

3. Ed. pr.: του π[α]ρα] σοι.

4. Ed. pr.: τ[ρ]υγηθε[ν]τ[ο]ς οἴνα[ρ]ια εἰ οὖν. Stanghellini, l.c.: τ[ρ]υγηθέντ[ο]ς  
 οἴνο[υ] ἀλλ' εἰ οὖν. The nu in τρυγηθέντος was corrected from sigma. What followed οιν- is far  
 from clear, but οἴνο[υ] fits the traces and space and is expected after τοῦ τρυγηθέντος. The problem  
 of what was written between οἴνου and οὖν is linked to that of what was written between εἶναι  
 and καί in 1.5, in that a main verb should appear in one or the other place. In 1.4 it is indeed  
 possible to read ἀλλ' εἰ οὖν; the combination of conjunctions is perhaps odd, but the real  
 problem is then fitting a main verb into 1.5. It is not easy, on the other hand, to suggest a suitable

main verb for l.4: τῆλει - 'pay !' - would fit nicely, but Heroninos was almost certainly going to sell the wine; πῶλει - 'sell !' - is not impossible palaeographically but would lack an object; another possibility might be ὀφείλει - 'it ought to be the amount you say . . .' (cf. BGU XV 2553.4 and P.Oxy.Hels. 26.17 for ὀφε(ι)λ-).

5-6. Ed. pr.: τι[μ]ας κα-ιτ[α] μονοχωρον. Stanghellini, p.80: τι[μ]ην δ]ὸς κα-ιτά. Since κα appears to be followed by a descending stroke, I read καὶ ι τ[ὸ] μονόχωρον, which avoids the unlikely combination of prepositions in κατὰ μονόχωρον πρὸς δραχμάς. As to what was written between εἶναι and καί, if the main verb occurred in l.4 (see note above), the probable answer is an aorist participle active meaning something like 'having valued'. Elsewhere in the Heroninos archive the verbs used for reckoning or setting prices are λογίζω (e.g. P. Flor. II 123) and οἰκονομέω (e.g. P. Flor. II 135); neither fits here (nor does τιμήσας), but ζητή[σ]ας or αἰτή[σ]ας might be possible.

7. Ed. pr.: δωδ]εκα; corr. Stanghellini, l.c.

8. Ed. pr.: ... ν. Stanghellini, l.c.: τ[αύτ]η.

9. Ed. pr. omitted φίλ(τατε).

10. Heroninos is nowhere else attested as *phrontistes* of Narmouthis, and it is virtually certain that he never held that post. Although another name might be restored in the lacuna, it is more probable, as Comparetti thought, that 'of Narmouthis' was a scribal slip. We may compare the external address of P. Flor. II 132, also from Alypius, where the scribe first wrote Dionysias as Heroninos' *phrontis*, then cancelled it and wrote Theadelphia. No *phrontistes* of Narmouthis, incidentally, is attested in any of the documents of the Heroninos archive so far published.

P. Lips. inv.12 (cf. Taf. V b)

The text was first published (without a plate) as P. Flor. II (1911) 246\* from transcriptions by L.Mitteis and by U.Wilcken, with supplements by D.Comparetti. Some corrections were proposed by G.Vitelli in BL I (1913), 154. Dr D.Döring of the University Library at Leipzig reports that he cannot locate the original, and that it was perhaps a casualty of upheavals during the last war. This revision of the text is based on a photograph which Professor G.M.Parássoglou had made from a microfilm of the papyrus which he obtained from Leipzig in 1978. Professor Parássoglou also kindly made available to me his transcription of the text, which I found largely matched my own.

The text is a letter, dated 7th January A.D.258, from Syros, one of the central administrators of the Appianus estate, to Heroninos. The main hand of the text resembles and may be the same as that of P. Flor. II 244 (dated 9th October 255) and of P. Laur. IV 188 (dated 11th January 258), and hence of a number of other letters from Syros. This main hand will have been that of a scribe, while the final greeting in a second hand which closes all these letters from Syros was presumably written by Syros himself.

It was not said in P. Flor. II and it is now impossible to tell for sure whether the piece of papyrus had been re-used and whether there were remains of an earlier text on the other side of it, though the hole in l.4 (see note) implies that this was a piece of scrap papyrus. Such re-use of

papyrus was very common on the Appianus estate. P. Laur. IV 188, for example, written four days later perhaps by the same scribe, had been torn from an old roll of public administrative records, and P. Flor. II 244 had apparently come from the same roll. But this papyrus may equally have come from a different source.

The main historical gain from this re-reading of the letter is that Monimos, who here and in other texts acts as a wine-dealer (*oinopoles*) for the Appianus estate, is now known for certain to have been employed by the estate at some previous time as head of its transport corps (*epiktenites*) - on which post see the notes of J.Bingen ad P. Flor. 119 recto in CdE 25 (1950), 97-9. Other extant and published letters to Heroninos from Monimos are: P. Flor. II 209, 210 and 211, P. Prag. I 110, and P. Wess. Prag. I 20 and 21 (= SB VI 9078 and 9079). Monimos is also mentioned in two accounts from the Heroninos archive: P. Flor. I 76.28, 53, 68-9 and P. Flor. 164 verso.15 (= SB VI 9472).

Σύρος Ἡρωνείνῳ τῷ φιλ(τάτῳ)  
χαίρειν.  
παράδος καὶ νῦν Μονίμῳ  
ποτὲ ἐπικτηνεΐτη  
5 ἀφ' ὧν ἔχε[ι]ς παρὰ [σ]οῖ οἴνου  
μονόχωρα [έ]κ τῶ[ν] ἐτοιμο-  
τέρων ἄλλα ..ιν μονόχωρα  
ἐκατὸν π[ε]ντήκοντα,  
ὧν ἐνάτη[ς λην]οῦ μονόχωρα  
10 ἐκατὸν [καὶ] τετάρτης μονόχω-  
ρα πενήκοντα, τῆς τιμῆς  
αὐτῶν χωρ[ο]ύσης εἰς τιναγ-  
μὸν ἐλαικῶ[ν] κτημάτων·  
ἀλλὰ πάντῳ[ς] δοθήτω αὐτῷ  
15 ἵνα μὴ διὰ τοῦτο ὁ τιναγμὸς  
ἐμποδισθῆ. (m. 2) ἐρρῶσθαί  
ε (ἔτους) σε εὔχομαι  
Τῦβι ιβ<sup>-</sup> φίλ(τατε).

1 φ<sup>λ</sup> 12 τιναγ' 13 ελαϊκῶ[ 15 ἵνα, τιναγ'μος 17 ε/ 18 φ<sup>λ</sup>

Syros to his dear friend Heroninos, greeting.

Hand over now too to Monimos, once *epiktenites*, some *monochora* of wine from the ones you have at your place, from the readier ones again(?) another one hundred and fifty *monochora*, of which one hundred *monochora* from the ninth press and fifty *monochora* from the fourth, the price of them going towards the harvesting of the enclosed olive-groves; but be sure to give them to him so that the harvesting is not held up on account of this.

Year 5, Tybi 12.

I pray you are well, dear friend.

3. Ed. pr.: [M]ονιμω [τω. There is not sufficient space at the end of the line for τῶ.

4. Ed. pr.: επι [τα] κτην[η ον]τι (?); noted as dubious by Vitelli. The final letter is certainly an eta, and it is unlikely, comparing the ends of the preceding and following lines, that there were any letters after it which have been abraded. Once κτηνεῖτη is read, the preceding επι cries out to be attached, thus forming the title of ἐπικτην(ε)ίτης which is well attested on the Appianus estate. The gap between επι and κτην-, in which there was theoretically room for three or four letters, appears to be taken up by a large hole, which presumably existed before the scribe wrote this text.

5-6. Ed. pr.: μονοχωρα [ο]κτω; corr. Vitelli: παρὰ [σο]ι {οῖνου} | {μονόχωρα} [ἐ]κ τῶ(ν). But οῖνου μονόχωρα is no mistake, even if the resumption of ἐκ τῶν κτλ. and the repetition of μονόχωρα are inelegant.

7. Ed. pr.: α[λ]λ[οιων]; corr. Vitelli: ἄ[λ]λ[α οῖνου]. Dr Rea has persuaded me that ἄλλα ὕν cannot be read; he tentatively suggests ἄλλα π[ά]λιν. Syros makes similar 'emphatic' use of πάλιν in P. Wess.Prag. II 41.6 (= SB VI 9415.20).

9. Ed. pr.: [ων τριτης λην]ου; corr. Vitelli: [ἀπό . . . λην]οῦ. A 10th *lenos* is attested in P. Flor. II 139.

10. Ed. pr.: εκατον τεταρτης μονοχωρα.

14. Ed. pr.: παντα δοθητω.

17. Ed. pr.: υμας ευχομαι. But the letter is to Heroninos alone, and σε is clear. *Verschleifung* of the dotted letters in σε εὔχομαι is often found in the countersignatures to Syros' letters which he presumably scribbled himself (cf. for example P. Flor. II 244.11 and 245.21, both published with a plate). Although most of the following letters were published without a plate, it is probable that σε εὔχομαι should be read in them in place of the various longer readings proposed: P. Flor. II 242.16 (ἐπεύχομαι); 252.14 (ὕμας ἐπεύχομαι, although ὕμας is correct here); 254.18 (σε ἐπεύχομαι, with plate); P. Prag. inv.I1Hb.23 = SB VI 9466 (ἐπεύχομαι); P. Wess.Prag. II 41.23 = SB VI 9415.20 (σεεεεὔχομαι); and perhaps P. Wess.Prag. II 40.18-20 = SB VI 9415.19 (σε | σε εὔχομαι).

P. Iand. III 36 (cf. Taf. VI a)

The text was published without a plate by L.Spohr in P. Iand. III (1913). No corrections are listed in the BL. It is an epistolary receipt from Aurelius Isidoros, a *phrontistes*, to Aurelius Nepotianus, *phrontistes* of Philadelphia. Although the exact provenance of the papyrus is unknown (most of the papyri published in P. Iand. III were purchased at Ashmunein, some at Giza), this Philadelphia is fairly certainly the Arsinoite village. The text is written in a third century hand and dated year 9, Phamenoth 30, which must be 26th March of either 230 or 262 (Severus Alexander or Gallienus). A re-reading of the text, based on a photograph kindly supplied by Professor H.G.Gundel, has produced rather negative results, yet of some importance: Isidoros, like Nepotianus, seems to have been manager (*phrontistes*) of part of a private estate rather than

guardian (*phrontistes*) of a lady; Teschia, the alleged name of this non-existent lady, is a ghost-name; the transfer for which this text is the receipt was ordered by the owner or a superior administrator of this estate and not by the Prefect of Egypt (in fact neither Reinmuth nor Bastianini cited this text in their lists of Prefects).

Nepotianus was not a common name in Roman Egypt, and our man is almost certainly to be identified with the Nepotianus, steward (*epitropos*) of the 'most perfect' Valerius Titanianus, who in SB IV 7464.12 (= Sel.Pap. II 291), dated 22nd November 248, is reported to have been a witness to an assault in Philadelphia. From the account P. Mich. XI 620, dated A.D.239-40, and some other texts (see the list in CdE 59 (1984), 350), we know that this Valerius Titanianus, who had been Praefectus Vigilum in A.D.217, was owner of a large private estate in the Arsinoite nome, with units under *phrontistai* attested at Alexandrou Nesos, Dionysias, Theadelphia and, apparently, Philadelphia. His *epitropos* in 239-40, according to the Michigan account, was a certain Aurelius Areios. If P. Iand. III 36 is assigned to 230, it could be that Nepotianus was then *phrontistes* of Titanianus' unit at Philadelphia, and was later promoted to *epitropos*. However he may, like other managers known from the Heroninos archive, have worked at the same time for two or more separate estates, and have been *phrontistes* of someone else's unit at Philadelphia. Isidoros, the writer of the letter, does not help us to place it in context because the name of his *phrontis* is largely indecipherable while his own name is very common. Several men of this name appear in the Heroninos archive, but none have any attested links with the Memphite nome or are in any other way promising candidates for identification. Until and unless new evidence emerges we may only conclude that P. Iand. III 36 dates to either 230 or 262, and comes from a large private estate in the Arsinoite nome, perhaps that of Valerius Titanianus.

Αὐρήλιος Ἰσίδωρος  
 φροντιστῆς  
 ... ε̅ χ̅ιω̅σ̅[ ]α̅κα̅  
 τοῦ Μ̅ του  
 5 Αὐρηλίω Ν[ε]φωτια-  
 νῶ φροντιστῆ Φι-  
 [λ]αδελφίας χ̅α̅ί̅ρ̅ει̅ν̅.  
 [π]α̅ρ̅έ̅λ̅α̅β̅ο̅ν̅ [π]α̅ρ̅ά̅ σ̅ο̅[ῶ]  
 [ε̅ξ̅] ἐ̅γκε̅λεύ̅σε̅ω̅ς̅ τοῦ  
 10 [ ± 5 ]η̅μ̅[... ] τ̅[...]  
 [ ± 4 ]... [ ± 7 ]  
 [..]ιω[ ± 9 ]  
 ἐ̅β̅δο̅μή̅κ̅ον̅[τα ...]  
 ἡ̅μισ̅υ̅ τέ̅τα̅ρ̅τον̅.  
 15 (ἔ̅του̅ς̅) θ̅ // Φ̅α̅μ̅(ενὼ̅θ̅) λ̅



Aurelius Isidoros *phrontistes* of [ ? ] of the Memphite(?) to Aurelius Nepotianus *phrontistes* of Philadelphia, greeting.

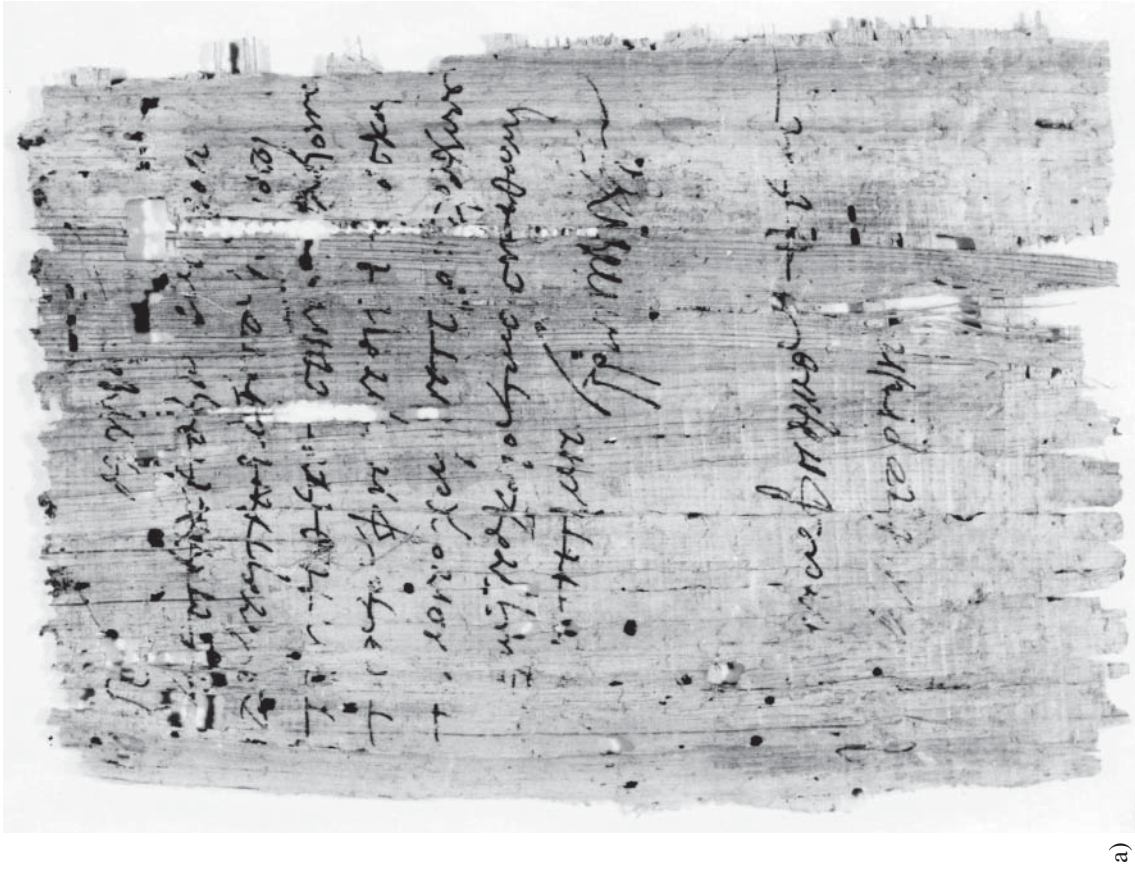
I have received from you by order of [ ? ] seventy [+?] and a half and a quarter [*artabai* of wheat ?].

Year 9, Phamenoth 30.

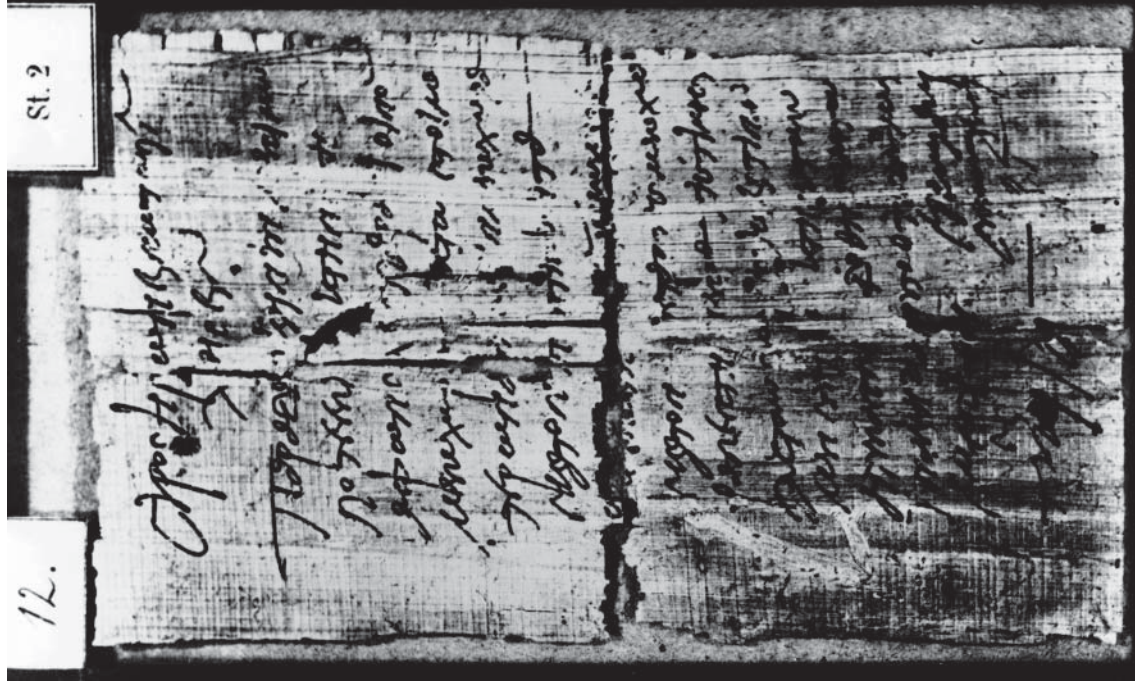
3-4. Ed. pr.: Τησχίας Ἀκοῦτος ἰ τοῦ Μύστου. In 1.4 we might read Μ(εμ)φεΐτου, a case of careless haplography perhaps not implausible from someone dashing off a standard receipt.

10-12. Ed. pr.: [διασ]ημ[οτ(άτου)] ἐπ[ρ-]χου πυ]ρο[ῦ μέτρῳ δη-μ]οσίῳ [ἀρτάβας]. The traces of these lines are too scant for so complete a restoration. Since this is a private letter [κυρίου] ἡμ[ῶν + NAME or perhaps [εὐσχ]ήμ[ονος are likelier restorations in 1.10. The sub-units 'a half and a quarter' make it probable that the measure concerned was the *artaba* rather than a wet measure; the receipt may well have been for a quantity of wheat, and πυροῦ ἀρτάβας may have been written, perhaps abbreviated, in the second half of 1.12. The remaining spaces doubtless contained some of the various standard phrases, such as ὦν λόγον δώσω, διὰ Χ ὀνηλάτου and so on, which are commonly found in similar receipts from the Heroninos archive.

13. A blank space may have been left after ἐβδομήκοντα, but they may have been another short number, perhaps δύο or ἕξ.



a)



b)

Briefe aus dem Heroninos Archiv: a) PFlor. II 160, b) P.Lips. inv. 12



a)

a) Brief aus dem Heroninos Archiv (P.Iand. III 36)