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SELECT PAPYRI
PRIVATE AFFAIRS



Translated by
A. S. HUNT
and
C. C. EDGAR

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江苏工业学院图书馆

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

A. S. HUNT

藏书章

AND
C. C. EDGAR



HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
LONDON, ENGLAND

First published 1932
Reprinted 1952, 1959, 1970, 1988, 2001

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ISBN 0-674-99294-6

*Printed in Great Britain by St Edmundsbury Press Ltd,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on acid-free paper.
Bound by Hunter & Foulis Ltd, Edinburgh, Scotland.*

THE LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY

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SELECT PAPYRI

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PREFACE

THIS volume represents the first stage in the fulfilment of a long-standing undertaking to edit for the Loeb Library a selection of non-literary Graeco-Roman papyri. Its appearance has been expedited by the assistance of Mr. C. C. Edgar, who recently took upon himself the bulk of the work; to him belongs a corresponding share of any credit that may attach to the production of this book.

The documents here edited are concerned exclusively with private affairs; a second volume contains official papers. An endeavour has been made to avoid, so far as possible, papyri which have previously been utilized in other selections; a certain amount of repetition was, however, unavoidable. Where English translations were already available, as in the case of texts taken from the publications of the Egypt Exploration Society or the Amherst or the Rylands Papyri, these have been revised, but are often used with a minimum of change. We are furthermore indebted to Professor A. E. R. Boak for permission to print a Michigan papyrus [before its publication] No. (184).

A. S. H.

May 1932

INTRODUCTION

THE papyri edited in this volume cover a period of approximately one thousand years. With the establishment of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt Greek became the official language of the country, and maintained that position throughout the period of Roman rule and down to, and indeed some time after, the Arab invasion. The earliest dated Greek papyrus so far recovered is a marriage contract of the year 311 B.C. (No. 1 in this selection). At the beginning of the eighth century A.D. Greek was still freely employed by the newly appointed Arab officials, and bilingual receipts written in Greek and Arabic persisted for a further century or more.

A scientific pursuit of Greek papyri has been in progress for little longer than a generation. The older collections, those of London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna—to name the more important—were based entirely on purchase from dealers, and it was not till the winter of 1895–1896 that an expedition was organized from this country for the express purpose of the discovery of papyri. Spectacular finds made the following season on the site of the ancient Oxyrhynchus drew general attention to this method of research, and since then excavations have been carried on at a number of Graeco-Roman sites by French, German, Italian, American, as well as British, explorers. Native diggers moreover continued to make discoveries both in the course of their

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agricultural operations and in less legitimate ways. A very large output has been the combined result : the old collections have been enlarged and many new ones formed, both in Europe and across the Atlantic.

The sources of papyri and the conditions of their recovery from the soil of Egypt are consequently now well known. Most have come from the ruins of ancient towns or villages, either from the remains of houses or from the rubbish-heaps which surrounded them. All the Oxyrhynchus papyri, for instance, were found in the extensive mounds of rubbish, some of these being as much as thirty feet in height *and the product of several centuries*. The second main source is tombs, which may be productive in more ways than one. Occasionally, though rarely, treasured papyri accompanied their owners to the grave. In the Ptolemaic period, discarded sheets of papyrus were often used in making painted cartonnage for the embellishment of mummies, and many valuable texts have been extracted from these. Sometimes too they were included in the wrappings of mummified sacred animals : a cemetery of crocodiles at the ancient Tebtunis provided material for a large volume.

Literary papyri, whether representing lost or extant works, of course form but a fraction of what has been found. Of the non-literary or documentary kind those already edited now run into five figures, and there are numbers still awaiting publication. These documentary papyri may conveniently be divided into two classes, the official and the private. The latter is the class exemplified in the following pages. It consists chiefly of wills, agreements,

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receipts, letters, accounts, lists and other memoranda, and religious relics both Christian and pagan. Of agreements there are many varieties—for marriage and divorce, for adoption and alienation, manumission, apprenticeship, labour, surety, sale, lease, gift, division of property, abandonment and settlement of claims, indemnity, appointment of representatives and arbitrators, loan and repayment.

A fertile field is here opened for research in various subjects. For the historian there is a plentiful harvest. Some gleanings for dynastic and political history may be obtained even from private papers. It is, however, in regard to economic and social conditions that these are more commonly instructive. Such subjects as the forms of land tenure, methods of cultivation, organization and development of trade and handicrafts, fluctuation of prices, have abundant evidence. Its significance moreover is not always merely local. For instance, the economic decline which set in towards the close of the third century and contributed to the eventual collapse of the Roman Empire is clearly reflected in the papyri. Here may be traced the gradual replacement of free labour and small holdings by serfdom and overgrown estates supporting semi-independent communities, here too the prodigious fall in currency-values comparable to that recently witnessed in Central Europe. Individual provinces no doubt had their peculiar problems, but they were stricken by the same disease, and a study of the symptoms in Egypt, where the data are so plentiful, assists the comprehension of the general process.

For the illustration of the common life of the time, popular culture, religious ideas, habits and

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amusements, there is a wealth of information. The quantities of correspondence passing between persons of various stations in life and of widely different degrees of education afford many intimate glimpses and amusing details; and nowhere perhaps are the special qualities and significance of the documentary papyri more evident. One such quality is their unconscious and ephemeral character. Herein they differ markedly from inscriptions, which were designed for public view and for posterity, and whose candour is not always above suspicion. The figures in the papyri, on the other hand, are as a rule off their guard; they are to be seen following their ordinary daily pursuits, with a refreshing absence of pose and advertisement. They neither make nor possess any claim to fame, and therein lies their interest. For such people are seldom to be met with in the pages of the ancient historians, where the limelight is commonly focussed upon outstanding personalities, while the multitudes of humbler folk, the material which the supermen worked with and set their mark upon, are left to lurk in obscurity. In Graeco-Roman Egypt this dark background has been illumined and faint outlines made clearer by the papyri.

Another science which has profited largely is that of law. In dealing with papyri there are three legal systems to be reckoned with, the native Egyptian and the imported Greek and Roman; for though the Greek element predominates, the other two are often in evidence. With regard to Roman law in particular, a supply of concrete cases has proved an instructive supplement to the literary authorities. Upon certain subjects, notably marriage, the registra-

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tion and sale of real property, and mortgage, there is quite an accumulation of learned comment. For a general study of the juristic side of the papyri, in the absence of any work in English, reference may be made to the *Grundzüge* of L. Mitteis.

The linguistic contribution of these spontaneous products of ordinary life is also of importance. In those of the later period, especially in the letters, frequent deviations will be noticed from classical usage, and the reader who is familiar with the Greek of the New Testament can hardly fail to be struck by similarities of idiom. This resemblance is natural: the writers of the New Testament and the papyri alike employed the vernacular of the day. But recognition of this simple fact is comparatively recent. So-called Biblical Greek was but lately regarded as a peculiar speech largely influenced by Semitic modes of expression. Many of the words and phrases formerly explained as Hebraistic are, however, now seen to be no more than current vulgarisms. Scriptural interpretation may also be assisted in other ways. For instance in the papyri are found the actual legal conditions and formulae which coloured the ideas, and are often echoed in the language, of St. Paul. Abundant illustration of the value of such data to the student of the New Testament can be seen in, *e.g.*, the works of Professor Deissmann of Berlin, who has been the pioneer-in-chief in this department, or in Moulton-Milligan's *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*.

1969. Some principal editions of non-literary papyri are given here :

B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, and others, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 24 vols., 1896-; *The Tebtunis Papyri*, 3 vols.,

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1907, 1933 and 1938 ; F. G. Kenyon and H. I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, 5 vols., 1893- ; J. P. Mahaffy and J. G. Smyly, *The Flinders Petrie Papyri*, 3 vols., 1893-1905 ; U. Wilcken, F. Zucker, W. Schubart and others, *Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Museen zu Berlin*, 11 vols., 1893-1968, *Griechische Urkunden* ; P. Jouguet and others, *Papyrus grecs de Lille*, 2 vols., 1907- ; G. Vitelli and others, *Papiri greci e latini della Società Italiana*, 14 vols., 1912- ; C. C. Edgar, *Catalogue des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Zenon Papyri*, 5 vols., 1925-1940 ; J. Maspero, *Catalogue*, etc., . . . , *Papyrus grecs d'époque byzantine*, 3 vols., 1911-1916 (cp. *Traité d'études byz.*, II, *Les Papyrus*, A. Bataille, 1955) ; H. A. Sanders and others, *University of Michigan Papyri*, 14 vols. ; F. Preisigke, F. Bilabel, and E. Kiessling, *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten*, 5 vols., 1915- ; U. Wilcken, *Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit*, 2 vols., 1927, 1957. Some series are still in progress. Other publications are cited in the list of sources on pp. xix-xx. New publications are noted in *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* ; *Aegyptus* ; *Chronique d'Égypte* ; *Études de Papyrologie* ; *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* ; *L'Année Philologique* (J. Marouzeau). Note also F. Preisigke and others, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden . . . aus Aegypten* (1925) ; *Namenbuch* (1922) ; *Berichtigungsliste* (1922-). U. Wilcken and L. Mitteis, *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde*, 1912 (a masterly survey) ; W. Schubart, *Einführung in die Papyruskunde*, 1918 ; M. David and B. A. van Groningen, *Papyrological Primer*, 1946. Finally, M. Rostovtseff, *A Large Estate in Egypt*, 1922 ; Claire Préaux, *Les Grecs en Égypte d'après les Archives de Zénon*, 1947 ; and *Économie royale des Lagides*, 1939 ; J. C. Winter, *Life and Letters in the Papyri*, 1933 ; A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 4 vols., 1903-1907 ; E. Bevan, *A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 1927 ; J. C. Milne, *A History of Egypt under Roman Rule*, 1924 ; A. G. Johnson, *Roman Egypt*, 1936 ; H. I. Bell, *Egypt from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest*, 1948.

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EGYPTIAN DATES

THE Egyptian civil year consisted originally of twelve 30-day months and five intercalary days. It was therefore about a quarter of a day shorter than the natural year. Thus at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period Thoth 1 fell on November 13 (Julian calendar) and at the beginning of the Roman period had moved back to August 30. But in the reign of Augustus the calendar was stabilized by the addition of a sixth intercalary day in every fourth year, so that thereafter the Egyptian months corresponded permanently with the Roman months as tabulated below.

The Macedonian months, by which many papyri are dated, were originally lunar. In the earlier Ptolemaic period their relation to the Egyptian months is, except at certain intervals, somewhat obscure, but they seem to have gradually lost their lunar character, and before the end of the second century B.C. they were finally assimilated to the Egyptian months in the order shown.

Thoth 1	= Dius 1	= August 29 (or after a leap-year 30).
Phaophi 1	= Apellaeus 1	= September 28 (29).
Hathur 1	= Audnaeus 1	= October 28 (29).
Choiak 1	= Peritius 1	= November 27 (28).
Tubi 1	= Dystrus 1	= December 27 (28).
Mecheir 1	= Xandicus 1	= January 26 (27).

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Phamenoth 1	= Artemisius 1	= February 25
Pharmouthi 1	= Daesius 1	= March 26
Pachon 1	= Panemus 1	= April 26.
Pauni 1	= Loius 1	= May 26.
Epeiph 1	= Gorpiaeus 1	= June 25
Mesore 1	= Hyperberetaeus 1	= July 25.
Intercalary 1	= Intercalary 1	= August 24.

In the Imperial age various months received honorific titles, more or less ephemeral, such as Germaniceus, Domitianus. Where such names occur in the following texts their Egyptian equivalents are noted.

According to the Egyptian method of dating, the first year of a reign was the period, however short, between the accession and the following 1st of Thoth. In the fourth and third centuries B.C. the Greeks in Egypt used different starting-points in reckoning the years of the king, but after a time they adopted the Egyptian system together with the Egyptian calendar. The same system continued to be used under the Roman emperors. In the later papyri the Roman practice of dating by consulships (see No. 9) becomes increasingly common; sometimes too an era is employed (see No. 21); and very often we find a reference to the indiction, which was a period of one year in a 15-year cycle originally introduced for fiscal purposes.

EGYPTIAN MONEY

In the earlier Ptolemaic papyri the unit by which sums of money are generally reckoned is the silver drachma (=6 obols). But in the second and first centuries B.C. it became more common to reckon by

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copper drachmae. It is supposed that when the copper standard was introduced one drachma of silver was worth 60 of copper, but the ratio soon rose, and in the texts reprinted here it may be assumed to be about 1:500. A tetradrachm = 4 drachmae, a mina = 100 drachmae, and a talent = 6000 drachmae.

In Roman times the silver drachma (= 7 obols) was the ordinary unit of reckoning, one Alexandrian tetradrachm being nominally equal to a denarius. The purchasing power of this drachma was much less than that of the Ptolemaic and gradually diminished down to the time of Diocletian. Though called silver, the coinage was actually of very base alloy.

In the Byzantine texts the only stable unit is the gold solidus. The inferior currency had depreciated to such an extent that by the middle of the fourth century a solidus was worth about 2000 myriads of denarii, and by the end of the sixth about 7000 myriads. The purchasing power of a solidus was, at a rough estimate, about twenty times that of a Ptolemaic silver drachma.

METHOD OF PUBLICATION AND LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The texts are printed in running form, though for convenience of reference the lines of the scribe are numbered according to the numbering of the *editio princeps*. Accents, punctuation, and marks of diaeresis are added in conformity with modern usage. Interpolations and corrections are incorporated in the text and not specially marked or recorded.

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Faults of orthography and grammar, if likely to cause any difficulty, are corrected in the critical apparatus. Approved restorations and emended readings, most of which have been published or republished in Preisigke's *Berichtigungslisten*, are adopted without remark. Iota adscript has been printed where so written, otherwise iota subscript is employed. Square brackets [] indicate a lacuna, round brackets () the resolution of a symbol or abbreviation, angular brackets < > a mistaken omission in the original, braces { } a superfluous letter or letters, double square brackets [] a deletion. Dots placed within brackets represent approximately the number of letters lost or deleted; dots outside brackets indicate mutilated or otherwise illegible letters. It has not been thought necessary, for the purpose of this edition, to follow the usual practice of placing dots under such letters as are doubtful; but questionable readings, if of any importance, are duly noted.

In the Greek text (2nd hand), (3rd hand), etc., indicate that the following words were not written by the same hand as the preceding part of the document. The numbers in the critical notes refer to the lines of the text, and *l.* stands for *lege*. To prevent a possible misunderstanding it may be well to emphasize the fact that the translation gives the sense of the Greek as corrected in the critical apparatus. For instance, when a scribe, as often happens, misspells ῥῆμας as ὑῆμας, we reproduce his spelling in the text, correct it in the notes, and translate in accordance with the correction.

The abbreviated references used in the present volume are as follows:

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- B.G.U. = *Ägyptische Urkunden aus den Museen zu Berlin: Griechische Urkunden.*
- B.S.A.A. = *Bulletin de la Société archéologique d'Alexandrie.*
- Class. Phil. = *Classical Philology.*
- J.E.A. = *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.*
- P. Amh. = *The Amherst Papyri*, vols. i.-ii., by B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt.
- P. Bour. = *Les Papyrus Bouriant*, by Paul Collart.
- P. Cairo Masp. = *Catalogue des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Papyrus grecs d'époque byzantine*, vols. i.-iii., by J. Maspero.
- P. Cairo Zen. = *Catalogue des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Zenon Papyri*, vols. i.-iv., by C. C. Edgar.
- P. Columbia = *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*, vol. vi.: "A Lease from the Estate of Apollonius," by W. L. Westermann.
- P. Cornell = *Greek Papyri in the Library of Cornell University*, by W. L. Westermann and C. J. Kraemer, Jr.
- P. Eleph. = *Elephantine-Papyri (B.G.U., Sonderheft)*, by O. Rubensohn.
- P. Fay. = *Fayûm Towns and their Papyri*, by B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, and D. G. Hogarth.
- P. Flor. = *Papiri Fiorentini*, vols. i. and iii. by G. Vitelli, vol. ii. by D. Comparetti.
- P. Giess. = *Griechische Papyri zu Giessen*, vol. i., by E. Kornemann, O. Eger, and P. M. Meyer.
- P. Giess. bibl. = *Mittheilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der Giessener Universität*, iii., by H. Büttner.
- P. Grenf. = *Greek Papyri*, series i. and ii., by B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt.
- P. Hamb. = *Griechische Papyrusurkunden der Hamburger Bibliothek*, vol. i., by P. M. Meyer.
- P. Hib. = *The Hibeh Papyri*, part i., by B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt.
- P. Lond. = *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, vols. i.-v., by Sir F. G. Kenyon and H. I. Bell.
- P. Oslo = *Papyri Osloenses*, by S. Eitrem and L. Amundsen.

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- P. Oxy. = *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vols. i.-xvii., by B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt.
- P. Par. = *Les Papyrus grecs du Musée du Louvre*, published in *Notices et Extraits*, t. xviii. 2, by W. Brunet de Presle and E. Egger.
- P. Petr. = *The Flinders Petrie Papyri*, parts i.-iii., by J. P. Mahaffy and J. G. Smyly.
- P. Ryl. = *Catalogue of the Greek Papyri in the Rylands Library*, vol. i. by A. S. Hunt, and vol. ii. by J. de M. Johnson, V. Martin, and A. S. Hunt.
- P.S.I. = *Papiri della Società Italiana*, vols. i.-ix., by G. Vitelli and others.
- P. Tebt. = *The Tebtunis Papyri*, parts i. and ii., by B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, J. G. Smyly, and E. J. Goodspeed.
- Rev. Ég. = *Revue égyptologique*.
- Stud. Pal. = *Studien zur Paläographie und Papyruskunde*, by C. Wessely and others.
- U.P.Z. = *Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit (ältere Funde)*, vol. i., by U. Wilcken.
- M.Chrest. = L. Mitteis, *Chrestomathie*.
- W. Chrest. = U. Wilcken, *Chrestomathie*.