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P.Lond. V 1876 desc.: Which Landowner?

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Which Landowner? (*)

H.I. Bell described *P.Lond. V 1876* as follows:

Inv. No. 1626 B. Acquired in 1906. Provenance unknown. 4 1/2 in. x 3 1/8 in. 5th (?) cent. In an upright cursive hand, along the fibers. Probably folded right to left. Fragment from the left side of a document of uncertain character, but probably a lease. One party was Φλ.(αύνος) [sic] Απι], apparently a court official (l. 2, παλατίνου, perhaps but not necessarily miswritten for παλατίου); and γεουχούντι ἔνπανθα in l. 2 recalls the Fl. Apion documents from Oxyrhynchus; but the hand suggests an earlier date than theirs, and in them ἕνταθα is preceded by κατ. Boundaries are specified. The name "Απα Ναξίου occurs in the endorsement. 10 lines, small traces of an 11th, and endorsement, along the fibers (1).

With one exception (2) the papyrus seems to have been ignored until E.R. Hardy mentioned it in his *Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt*, suggesting in a footnote that it was "probably another lease addressed to Flavius Apphous as landowner and son of the late palatine Eulogius" (3). This proposition provided some certainty to Bell’s description; it gave *P.Lond. V 1876* an Oxyrhynchite provenance and a date at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century (4). Almost fifty years later, Hardy’s hypothesis was seconded by one of the present authors, who (from a photo of the papyrus) read lines 1 and 2 as follows:

(*) We express our gratitude to Herwig Machele and Roger Bagnall, both of whom kindly reexamined the back of the papyrus on our behalf; and to the British Library, for permission to publish the text.

1. *P.Lond. V.* p. 274.
2. Bell’s remarks about παλατίνου/παλατίου were revised, cf. *BL I 304: “παλατίνου ist die regelmäßige Form.”
He concluded, however, “In the end, one can suggest, but far from prove, the piece’s connection with the archive [of Eulogius and his descendants].” When they reexamined the Eulogius dossier in 1997, the present authors likewise expressed reservations about the identification of Apphous as the landowner (6), and they promised a complete edition and discussion of the text (7). Hence the present article.

To begin with, it is certain that P.Lond. V 1876 is from the Oxyrhynchite — the phrase ἐκουσίως ἐπιδέχομαι κτλ. (l. 4) should remove any doubt — and that the text is a lease in the form of a ὑπόμνημα, specifically the lease of an artificially irrigated plot of land called a μηχανή(8). There is nothing about the hand that suggests a date other than the fifth (or early sixth) century (9).

(5) Keenan, “From the archive of Flavius Eulogius and his descendants,” ZPE 34 (1979) 133-34, n. 5, cf. BL VIII 194. παλατίνου should have been printed, and as the remainder of the note indicates, it would have been expected. For Keenan’s restorations in ll. 1-2, see the notes to these lines below.

(6) “More from the archive,” 210, n. 8.

(7) Originally intended for P.Bingen, but withheld by the authors from their contribution in deference to editor’s length limit.

(8) See n. to l. 6 below. μηχανή literally means “saqiya,” but synecdochic usage is well attested. Both usages are clearly illustrated in the Coptic vita of St. Matthew the Poor [ed. E. Amélineau, Monuments pour servir à l’histoire de l’Égypte chrétienne aux ivᵉ, vᵉ, et viᵉ siècles (Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire, vol. 4, fasc. 2), 718]:

And it also happened one day that a small boy was up on a méchané [i.e., saqiya] goading the animals [i.e., the ones powering the saqiya] of the monastery of our father apa Matthew. The Devil made the little boy fall down into the lakkos [the saqiya’s reservoir]. He sank in the water, and when a long time had passed, the whole crowd that was in the méchané [here clearly = “artificially irrigated parcel”] cried out.

(9) Oxyrhynchite texts are uncommon in P.Lond. V. Organizing them by BM inventory number (as opposed to publication number) yields the following result:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>inv. no.</th>
<th>P.Lond. V</th>
<th>provenance</th>
<th>date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1619 recto</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>probably Oxyrhynchite, cf. BL X 108</td>
<td>VI-VII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1621</td>
<td>1808</td>
<td>Oxyrhynchite, cf. BL VIII 194</td>
<td>VII</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Problematic is the identity of the landowner, who is not surprisingly a member of the "Flaviate" (10). It is certain that his name begins with Απ-. Thereafter, decipherment becomes difficult: the seemingly hopeless bits of ink immediately following pi, faint traces — maybe — of a long descender, perhaps with a tail curling to the right, and perhaps crossed by a line that once joined the dot of ink above the gamma of γεουχοῦντι. Bell's dotted iota must carry weight, but one wonders to what extent it was influenced by the two letters preceding it. Φλάουιος Απ- is of course suggestive — as it was for Bell — of the famous Flavii Apiones (11). His reservations about the hand of the London papyrus are justified with regard to the Apiones who are styled "II" and "III"; the writing likely should not be dated to the forties of the sixth century, the decade during

<table>
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<th>P.Lond. V</th>
<th>provenance</th>
<th>date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1624+1748C</td>
<td>1777+1895</td>
<td>Oxyrhynchite</td>
<td>7.ix.434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1625</td>
<td>1798</td>
<td>Oxyrhynchite</td>
<td>19.ix.434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1626A</td>
<td>1797 = P.Bingen 129</td>
<td>Oxyrhynchite</td>
<td>probably 10 (?) July 501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1626B</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Oxyrhynchite</td>
<td>V-VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1731</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Oxyrhynchite or Hermopolite</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have ignored the texts dating to the Islamic period, cf. BL X 107 on 1738 (the "linch-pin" text in this series): "Die Herkunft... ist nicht zwingend."

With the exception of inv. nos. 1731 and 1759 — the former of uncertain provenance, the latter an "outlier" with respect to its date (and date of acquisition) — all of the Oxyrhynchite texts have an inventory no. between 1619 and 1626 and date between the fifth and seventh centuries. Inv. no. 1623 may well fit the pattern; the provenance of this text dated V-VI is unknown. Inv. no 1620, however, belongs to the archive of Dioskoros of Aphroditō and thus breaks a possible Oxyrhynchite run. That this arrangement was not imposed upon the papyri in London, but rather reflects a common origin (i.e., a single acquisition), seems likely, for the provenances of 1619 recto, 1621, 1622, and 1626B (the present text) were unknown at the time of publication.


which Apion II assumed control of the family’s Oxyrhynchite estate (12). Apion I, whom Bell likely had not encountered (13), cannot be ruled out on such grounds. There are reasons, however, to consider excluding him. For one, Apion has not yet been attested as a landowner in the Oxyrhynchite (14). Line two’s παλατίνου is probably also an impediment. If the first Strategius was Apion’s father (15), then one must reckon with the fact that Strategius likely would not have been referred to as a palatinus (16). If παλατίνω should be read for παλατίνου, then one must attempt to reconcile this with what is known about Apion’s career. At best, one can note that he was a praefectus praetorio Orientis vacans in 503 (17), a title earlier (in the fourth century, post 380) awarded to those completing service as one of the four palatine “ministers” (quaestor sacri palatii, magister officiorum, comes rei privatae, or comes sacrarum largitionum) (18).

What of Flavius Apphous, then? In contrast to our earlier qualms, we would suggest that he is the better fit, though not a perfect one. It is certainly conceivable that Bell’s iota — from the image, we presume that he only saw the end of the downstroke — was in fact part of a phi. This may leave a crossbar (cf. above) unexplained, or, at a minimum, the trace of ink above the gamma of γεουχωντι. We would prefer to see any crossbar — it may just be some darkened fibers — as a pious addition to the tail of a rho, but Απρ[ and Απρ are unappealing. Harder to explain

(12) Cf. P.Oxy. LXIII 4397. Bell’s comments about και ἐντιπθα are applicable to these Apiones.

(13) Of the documentary texts referring to this Apion, only Stud. Pal. VIII 772 was published before P.Lond. V, and without any papyri to provide context, Bell would have had no reason to make the identification. Whether or not he accepted (or even knew of) Spohr’s suggestion (P.land. III 48, p. 115; published in 1913) that the Egyptian Apion mentioned in literary sources like Procopius’ De bello persico (i.e., Apion I) was connected to the family appearing in the papyri is unknown.

(14) Cf. P.Oxy. LXVII 4614, n. 1. 2.

(15) N. Gonis, P.Oxy. LXVII 4614, n. 1. 2, raises the possibility that he was Apion’s father-in-law.

(16) He is only attested as a curator of imperial estates and an honorary comes sacri consistorii, and it is the latter title that he bears in a text (P.Heid. IV 331) just months before his decease. For the palatini, see R. Delmaire, Les institutions du Bas-Empire romain, de Constantin à Justinien, Paris 1995, esp. 122 and n. 7 (with refs. cited).


(18) Delmaire, Les institutions, 15. Note that Apion was PPO vacans quite early — he lived for at least another twenty-one years — and that his son Strategius, whose career is generally thought to be reflective of the family’s upward mobility, was comes sacrarum largitionum only at the end of his life.
is the ink above the gamma. It may be the beginning of a lambda, and 'Απολλωνιός (or the like) seems, in truth, to be an acceptable reading. But no such geouchountes are known to us from the Oxyrhynchite. Apphous, conversely, is attested as a landowner (only) in the Oxyrhynchite (19), and his father Eulogius is described as a palatinus in several papyri (20), which removes any need for thoughts of emending παλατίνου to παλατίνω (21). If indeed Apphous is the landowner, then P.Lond. V 1876 would be the first document that unambiguously concerns his agricultural (as opposed to urban) holdings (22). The eighth (fiscal) indiction mentioned in the text would refer to 499-500 or 514-15 (23), and the text presumably would have been drafted in the prior (chronological) indiction (498-499 or 513-514) (24). The restorations following assume that the document was in fact addressed to Apphous:

1. Φλαουια Άπφοιτο το λαμπροτάτω τριβούνῳ υἱῷ τοῦ τῆς ἀρίστης μνήμης Εὐλογίου γεναμένου] παλατίνου γεουχουνῖν ἐν[ταῦθα τῇ λαμπρᾷ καὶ λαμπροτάτῃ Ὀξυρυγχαὐτῶν πόλει Αὐρήλιος Ἀπανάκιος υἱὸς] Ψευμαμούινου μητρός [- - -]
4. χαίρειν. ἐκουσίας ἐπιδέχομαι μισθώσασθε ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνεστῶτος ἔτους Οξυρυγχαὐτῆς εἰς [ - - -]

(19) He is simply described as γεουχουνῖν ἐνταῦθα; there is no καὶ present, cf. Hickey – Keenan, “More from the archive,” 210, n. 8.
(20) P.Oxy. XVI 1876.3, 1961.6, and SB XVI 12583.5, with the latter two texts dating to the period after his death. Grenfell, Hunt, and Bell (1876.3) classify him among the mit­ tendarii — i.e., as an employee of the CSL or CRP — but he was in fact an agens in rebus, cf. P.Oxy. XVI 1960.4. In theory at least, Arcadia should not have been his province of origin or his domicile, cf. CTh 8.8.4.
(21) If Apphous were an imperial notary, cf. Hickey – Keenan, “More from the archive,” 209, n. 2, palatinus could be applied to him.
(22) Sijpesteijn’s introduction to P.Mich. XV 731 suggests that the British Museum at one time possessed at least one other text from the dossier of Eulogius and his descendants. Tra­ ianos Gagos, however, informs us, “P.Mich. XV 731 (inv. #3303) comes from Lot III of the Nahman collection which was purchased by the University of Michigan in 1925. The purchase was through the famous ‘cartel’ and the papyri went originally to the British Museum where the papyri were checked and evaluated by H.I. Bell” (e-mail, 16 December 1996). In other words, P.Mich. XV 731 was never part of the British Museum collection.
(23) Apphous first appears as a Flavius on 29.xi.495 (P.Oxy. XVI 1891) and is last attested on 17.viii.511 (P.Oxy. XVI 1960). For additional discussion, see n. l. 10 below.
(24) See n. l. 4 below.
αὐτῆς ἐκ νότου ταύτης [------------------------- μηχανήν -----------------
ἐξηρτισμένην πάση [ξυλική ἐξαρτία καὶ σιδηρώμασιν -- καὶ]
8 φυτῶν παντοίων καὶ [παντός ἐτέρου δικαίου ---------------- ἢς?]
γίτονες νότου γῆδια τοῦ [------------------------ τῆς περι-]
βλέπτου μνήμης Ἰωά[ννου]

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246
Back, running perpendicular to front side’s right edge and situated at bottom edge:

1 μίσθο(ωσις) 'Απανακίου μηχ( ) κολ( ) α[ 1
2 Φλ, pap. 2 παλατινονοβ pap. 3 ψεναμονινοβ pap. 4 εκονισωσ pap. 5 ογδόνης; first o ex ε? 6 αντης, νοτον, ταντης pap. 9 νοτονοβ pap.; l. γείτονες back μισοβ, μην, κολ pap.

This was probably not the first line; one would expect a dating clause (consuls, month-day, indiction) to have preceded it; cf. Keenan, “From the archive,” 133-34, n. 5.

The restoration is identical to that suggested by Keenan. If Apphous is the landowner, 'Απφο[δ might also be read, cf. P.Oxy. XVI 1595.3. Φλασονιω 'Απφοδ (sic) appears in P.Oxy. XVI 1891.2. άριστης: μακαρίωσ also appears, e.g., in P.Oxy. XVI 1994.4. γεναμένου: Or γενομένου, cf. P.Oxy. XVI 1961.6.

2 ένταύθα is probable, though έν is attested, cf. P.Oxy. LXVII 4615.5. Up to πόλει, the restoration follows that of Keenan, “From the archive,” p. 134, n. 5.

'Απανάκιος: For the spelling, cf. P.Oxy. LV 3804, n. l. 221, and refs.

Ψεναμουνίου: The name seems to have been rare in the Byzantine Oxyrhynchite, only appearing in P.Oxy. XVIII 2195.22.

μητρός: After the name of the lessee’s mother, his profession likely appeared (on which cf. the note below concerning the back of papyrus), then his origo.

Possible Oxyrhynchite eras for Apphous are: 175 = 144, 190 = 159. Note that, following standard Oxyrhynchite practice, these eras should correspond to the seventh (chronological) indiction; the eighth indiction in the following line is the fiscal one.

For possible restorations following the era, see P.Oxy. LXVII 4615, l. 10 and notes.

6 αυτής: Following it has a noun like κόμης been omitted?


7 ξεντισμένην: Dependent upon μηχανήν in the preceding line.


For the "γείτονες clause" in leases, cf. P.Heid. V, n. ll. 16ff. In misthōseis from the late Oxyrhynchite, it only seems to appear in P.Oxy. VIII 1126.
(P.Erl. 75 is actually from the Hermopolite; it is being addressed by Hickey elsewhere.)

10 Ῥοαννοῦ: Admittedly an Allerweltname, but peribleptos (spectabilis) suggests a count, specifically Apio Theodosius Johannes vir sp(ectabilis) com(es) sacri consist(orii) et praesis provinc(iae) Arc(a)d(iae) [so P.Oxy. XVI 1877.11], on whom cf. now J. Banaji, Agrarian change in Late Antiquity: Gold, labour and aristocratic dominance, Oxford 2001, 134. For John’s “archive” — at best really only a dossier, and preferably to be separated into those texts concerning John and those concerning the counts Samouël and Phoibammon — see Montevecchi, Pap., p. 259, no. 78, adding P.Oxy. I 155 (so Banaji), P.Harr. I 91 (included by Rémondon, “L’Égypte,” 144, n. 4), and very probably PSI VIII 957 (cf. BL XI 248-49). Count John is last attested alive on 19.xi.503 (P.Oxy. I 141); if he is the John who is mentioned here as deceased, then P.Lond. V 1876 would have to have been created in 513-14, making it the latest attestation of Flavius Apphous.

Back We suggest that μηχ( ) be resolved μηχ(αναρίου) or, perhaps, μηχ(ουργοῦ). For such lessees, cf. P.Cair. Masp. I 67109 (Antaiopolite, 565) and PSI XII 1233 (Panopolite, 323 or 324), and note the individuals designated οδροπάροχος ἀρσήματος μηχανάριος in P.Oxy. XIX 2241.12, 41. καλ(α) : καλ(ης) seems less satisfactory palaeographically but might also be read. If it is correct, then one should probably read the end of this line as μηχ(ανής) καλ(ομενής) ’Α[.

α[: δ[πο?]

Addenda:

– For additional texts from the archive of Eulogius and his decendants, see now P.Oxy. LXVIII 4686, 4693-94.
– For P.Erl. 75 (n. l. 9 above), see now Archiv 49 (2003) 205.
– For Count John (n. l. 10 above), see now P.Oxy. LXVIII 4696, n. l. 4.

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