

Verso: τοῖς ἱερέυσι τῶν στολιστῶν
καὶ τοῖς στολιστα[ῖς].

- 5 Read ὑμῶν.
10 γέγραφαν is the corrected reading by the editors of SelPap 104. The original edition had [[γ]] ἔγραψαν.

62 APOLLŌNIOS TO THOŌNIS PRyl IV 593

6 August 35 BCE

Although this document is largely intact and there are few textual difficulties, we know so little about the circumstances of the letter that its meaning is not entirely clear. It is a private letter dealing with some business matter(s). Apollonios instructs Thoonis to deliver a fleece to someone from whom, in turn, he receives the original of a document that Thoonis had sent to Apollonios. One cannot tell whether this document was connected specifically with the delivery of the fleece. The editors of PRyl 593, Roberts and Turner, noted that since the name Thoonis was common in Oxyrhynchos, the letter may well have originated there.

Ἀπολλώνιος Θεώνει
χαίρειν. περὶ οὗ σοι
ἐντέταλκα πόκου
μεγάλου π[.]λου τῶι
5 ἐπιστάτη τοῦ παιδίου
δὸς τῶι ἀποδιδόντι σοι
τὸ πιττάκιον αὐτὸν
ὧν μοι πεποίηκας
ἐπαγγελιών ἵνα μὴ
10 μέμψεις ἔχωμεν
πρὸς ἑαυτούς.
ἔρ(ρωσο). (ἔτους) ιζ β, Με(σορή) ι.

Apollonios to Thoonis greeting. Concerning the large fleece, about which I instructed you, give it to the slave overseer who will return the actual promissory note (?) to you in which you made your offers to me, lest we have complaints against each other. Good-bye. (Year) 17-2, Mesore 10.

- 3 Read ἐντέταλκα.
7 πιττάκιον: the context of the text is not detailed enough to show what type of document is designated by *pitakion*, a word whose meaning varies from century to century and from one context to another. The original editor rendered the word as "memorandum."
12 (Year) 17-2: see T.C. Skeat, "Reigns of the Ptolemies," p. 40, for the explanation of this type of dating formula.

BGU IV 1203-9, is a series of seven letters stuck together on a roll, all but one addressed to a certain Asklepiades. Though various business matters are discussed in the correspondence, it is clear that they are private letters and consist, for the most part, of correspondence between family members. The central figure in the archive is Asklepiades who received or wrote (BGU 1203 seems to be a first draft by Asklepiades himself) all of the letters and who kept them in his file. His sister Isidora is next in importance after Asklepiades; she is the addressor of four of the seven letters. Another brother, Paniskos, is mentioned in four separate letters; Petechon, a recently deceased brother, and perhaps the husband of Isidora, is cited in 1209; and, while the usage may be figurative, Tryphon is identified as yet another brother in 1208 and 1209. Other names are mentioned in the correspondence, some two or more times, but, apart from the identification of Philon as an oikonomos, we do not know their official status or their relation to the family. From the nature of the subjects discussed in the correspondence, it seems the family was relatively wealthy.

The editor of BGU IV 1203-9, Schubart, indicated that the correspondence was part of the papyrus cartonnage from Abusir-el-malaq (Hellenistic Busiris), a town located to the east and slightly to the south of the Fayum (see the map on p. 155). The only place name actually cited in the correspondence, however, is Hermopolis, located more than one hundred miles south of Busiris (see BGU 1204.30).

Three of the seven letters from Asklepiades' files are included in this collection: BGU 1204, and 1206-7.

63 ISIDŌRA TO ASKLĒPIADES BGU IV 1204

2 October 28 BCE

Isidora writes to her brother Asklepiades, notifying him that a letter to Paniskos has been sent under the same seal, and that she needs a response from Paniskos regarding a broken boat. This same Paniskos is mentioned in BGU 1205.10, 15 and 1207.8. BGU 1206.4f. indicates specifically that he is a brother.

Ἰσιδώ[ρα] Ἀσκληπιάδῃ τῶι ἀδελφῶι
χαίρει[ν] καὶ ὑγιαίνειν διὰ παντός.
τὰ πρὸς Πανίσκον γράμματα συνεσφράγισμαι
ὑμῶν. τὴν οὖν ἀπάντων ἀντιφώνησιν
5 ἐν τάχ[ει πέμ]ψον διὰ τὸ πλοῖον
χωρίζεσθαι. καὶ σὺ δὲ διανδραγάθει.
ἕως οὗ ἂν παραγένῃται, καὶ σεαυτοῦ
[ἐπιμελοῦ ἴν'] ὑγιαίνῃς, ὃ δὴ μέγιστόν ἐστι.
ἔρρω(σο). Λγ, Φαῶ(φι) ε̄.
10 τὸ ἐνκοίμητρον τοῦ
παιδίου πέμψον.

Isidora to her brother Asklepiades greeting and may you always be well. I enclosed under the same seal to you the letter to Paniskos. Therefore, whenever you meet him, send his reply in haste on account of the fact that the boat is broken. Moreover, continue to act steadfastly, until whatever time he arrives, and take care of yourself to stay well, which is most important. Good-bye. Year 3, Phaophi 5.

Postscript: Send the child's mattress (?).

64 ISIDORA TO ASKLĒPIADES
BGU IV 1206

2 November 28 BCE

This is another letter of Isidora to Asklepiades written in a different hand than letter 63. BGU 1203–4 and 1207 are all written by a writer described by Schubart as “hand a.” Though Isidora addresses two of the three (1204, 1207), the fact that Asklepiades addresses the third indicates that an employee or servant of the well-to-do family probably wrote all three letters.

In the present letter, as well as BGU 1205, however, another writer penned the correspondence. Schubart called this writer “hand b.” Since both of these letters name Isidora as the addressor, she may well have written them in her own hand. Note that a shortened form of Asklepiades’ name occurs, Asklas, and that Isidora’s own name is spelled differently than in letters written by hand a. The two hand b letters by Isidora are longer and, perhaps, more familial in tone (note the wish for health expressed as a prayer in 1205 and 1206).

Ἰσιδώρα Ἀσκληπιδί τῶι ἀδελφῶι
χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγιαίνειν
καθάπερ εὐχομαι. κεκόμισμαι
ἂ ἐγγράφῃς. ὁ ἀδελφὸς Πανίσ-
κος γέγραφε Νουμήνῃν πεπομ-
φέναι Φίλωνα τὸν οἰκονόμον
ἐπ’ αὐτὸν κατασπουδέως ἐ-
πεὶ τὴν διοίκησιν, οὐπῶι σε-
σήμαγκε τί ἐκβέβη[κ]ε. περὶ
δὲ Ἀρήου αὐτὸς Πατρ . . . γράφῃ
ἐπ’ αὐτὸν χάριν τοῦ π[α]ραγρά-
φου π[υ]ρρῶς. σὺ δὲ καὶ Ἀρα-
μώιτης διανδραγαθ[ε]ίτε ἐν
τῆι εἰσαγῆι τῆς τιμῆς [τ]οῦ
φακοῦ καὶ ὀλυρας. ἐάν τι
ἄλλο προσπέση σημανῶι σοι,
καὶ σεατοῦ ἐπιμελοῦ, ἵν’ ὑγιαί-
νῃς.

ἔρρωσο. Λγ, Ἀθῦρ Ϝ.
20 πρῶι . . .

Verso: Ἀσκληπιδί τῶι ἀδελφῶι [ι].

- 4 Read ἱμῶν.
6 χωρίζεσθαι: Schubart, the editor, notes that this is a very uncertain reading. Διανδραγαθεῖν, though generally a little used word, is used with some frequency by Isidora in her correspondence with Asklepiades. Nonetheless, the exact attitude which she is enjoining by the word is not clear.
10–11 Τὸ ἐνκοίμητρον: though this word probably refers to something that people slept on, the same word means “counterpane” in PCairZen 48.4 (III BCE).

Isidora to her brother Asklas greeting and may you always be well, just as I pray. I received what you had written. Our brother Paniskos wrote that Noumenios has sent Philon the oikonomos zealously to the treasurer (?) himself, but in no way has he indicated what has been shipped. Regarding Areos, Patr . . . himself writes on his behalf because the wheat is being registered. You and Haramoitis must continue diligently to record the worth of the lentil and the olyra. If anything else should happen, I will tell you, and take care of yourself to stay well. Good-bye. Year 3, Hathy 6 early.

Outside address: To my brother Asklas.

- 4 Read ἀδελφός.
5 Read Νουμήμιον.
7 Read κατασπουδαίως. Read ἐπί.
14 Read εἰσαγωγῆι.

65 ISIDORA TO ASKLĒPIADES
BGU IV 1207

received 5 November 28 BCE

As the addressor’s date shows (line 14) this letter was sent three days before letter 64, but its present position on the roll to which it was attached by Asklepiades indicates that it actually arrived later. Though fragmented near the beginning, it appears that Isidora is acknowledging the receipt of certain things which Asklepiades had sent to her. Owing to the private and haphazard nature of postal service, it was probably necessary to take inventory when parcel post arrived. The middle of the letter is very similar to letter 64 in reporting that Paniskos, the brother of Isidora and Asklepiades, has apparently been accused of some type of financial (tax?) irregularity; Philon, the oikonomos (see letter 64), has been sent to intercede on behalf of Paniskos. The fact that Asklepiades is exhorted both here and in 64 to attend diligently to the way in which he records the value of certain crops suggests that Paniskos’ difficulty arose for an analogous reason. After closing the letter, Isidora added a somewhat puzzling postscript about the receipt and transfer(?) of silver drachmas.

ἐλ(ήφθη) Λγ, Ἀθῦρ θ̄ διὰ Πτολ(λίωνος).

.....

- Ἰσιδώρα Ἀσκληπιδί τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαίρειν
καὶ ὑγιαίνειν [δι]ὰ παντ[ός] . . . κ[. . .] μῆ . . . ἐγγράφῃς
5 κεκ[όμισμαι] περὶ στρώματα
σανδύκινα [.] . . . ωνια ἰ ἀεροεξί[δ]ῆ γ
περιστρώμα[τα] συκαμῖωνια β. περὶ δὲ
Πανίσκου τοῦ ἀδελφῶν πέπομφε Νουμήν[ι]ος
Φ[ί]λωνα τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπ’ αὐτὸν
10 κα[τὰ] σπουδῆν ἐπὶ τὴν διοίκησιν. σὺ οὖν καὶ
[Ἀραμώιτης] ἀνδραγαθεῖτε καὶ εἰσάγεσθε
τ[ιμῆν] φ] ακοῦ ὀλυρίω, καὶ τἄλλα σατοῦ δὲ
ἐπιμ[ελοῦ] ἵν’ ἡ (γιαίνης).
ἔρρωσο. Λγ, Ἀθῦρ γ̄.
15 ἐάν δέ τι προσπ[έ]ση σημανῶ ὑμῖν,
[εἰ] δ[ο]κεῖ ἄγεσθε ἕως γράψω
κεκόμισμαι διὰ τοῦ χειριστοῦ ἀργυ(ρίου) τ. βω
καὶ κομίζει σοὶ Πτολλίων ἀπολογῆ . . .
ἐάν οὖν πέμπῃς [ἀρ]γύριον μελῆ . . . τ[έ]λλος
20 εἰκοστόν.

Verso: Ἀσκληπιδί.

Docket of receipt: Received year 3, Hathy 9 through Ptolionos.

Isidora to her brother Asklepiades greeting and may you always be well. . . . I received what you had written: . . . red bed coverings, . . . three light-colored (?) . . . two mulberry-colored(?) bed coverings. Regarding our brother Paniskos, Noumenios has sent Philon his brother zealously on his behalf to the treasurer. Therefore you and Haramotes must continue to be diligent and record the value of the lentil to the olyra. And, for the rest, take care of yourself to stay well. Good-bye. Year 3, Hathy 3.

Postscript: If anything should happen, I will tell you. If you should decide to transport (silver) in order that I should write you, I have received by means of the worst silver 802 drachmas and Ptolion receives. . . . Therefore, if you should send silver, make sure that it . . . the twentieth.

- 1 ἐλ(ήφθη): ἐλ is an abbreviation of ἐλήφθη, not ἐλάβομεν or ἐλαβον, as the editor Schubart originally conjectured. See the justification of the present reading on letter 49, note to line 1.
3 Read Ἰσιδώρα.
11 Haramotes is restored from letter 64.12f.
15 Read ἱμῶν.