

AN ARABIC PAPYRUS DATED 205 A. H.

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THE DOCUMENT here described is now in the possession of Yale University. It was recently acquired by purchase from a dealer in Cairo, along with a considerable collection consisting mainly of Greek papyri. The strip measures 22.5 x 11.5 cm., and is in the main very well preserved, as may be seen from the accompanying photograph.

The document is a record of sale of real estate, a city lot with its dwelling house and other minor buildings, sold to a man who is named, by two brothers who had inherited the property from their father. The price paid was three hundred dinars in gold. The house was in Alexandria (though this is not actually stated), and its location is briefly described in terms which doubtless fully sufficed in their own day, but are of no use to us now. It evidently was in a city block, for the boundary on one side was the street, and on the other three sides dwellings designated by proper names.¹

After the description of the property and the account of the transaction, there follow the names of seven witnesses, who are declared to have put their signatures to the official deed of sale, which then was deposited (if my conjectural restoration at the bottom of the papyrus is correct) in the *diwān* of the Mosque of Alexandria.

The document is legible throughout, though rather carelessly written; and even with careful writing there may of course be some ambiguity. D. S. Margoliouth, in his *Catalogue of the Arabic Papyri in the John Rylands Library*, pp. xvi f., describes the customary script, in which "the same sign is employed for at least nine different letters," while the use of diacritical points is looked upon as "insult to the intelligence of the reader." In the present case, there are very few insults.

¹ If we happened to possess in regard to the topography of Alexandria any such information as we have in the case of al-Fustāṭ and Cairo, chance might throw light on one or more of these names. But there were no *Hittas* in Alexandria at the time of the Arab conquest, and no description of the city during the early Muslim occupation has come down to us. In this connection, attention may be called to the very interesting article by Kahle, "Die Katastrophe des mittelalterlichen Alexandria," in the *Mémoires de l'Institut Français* 68 (1935), pp. 137-154.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

- 1 هذا ما اشترى افعدة بن جرجة الزمردى اشترى من توسى
- 2 وفقرى بنى نفر اشترى منهم مصابة نفر (ابو) ابى فقرى
- 3 الذى كان توسى وفقرى (وروثها) ووثها من (ابوهم) ابىهم نفر وهو المنزل
- 4 الذى يكون فى الدار مع أبانى. اشترى ذلك منهم بثلثمائة الدينير
- 5 عيتا ذهبيا (و) فقد وصلت الى توسى [و] فقرى الثالثة (اللسر) الدالير
- 6 وبرى فيها افعدة اليهم. وتوسى [و] فقرى عندما باعوا افعدة
- 7 هذه [ه] المصابة التى ووثها من نفر فى صحة من عقلهم وكسهم
- 8 بمدخلها ومخرجها واسفلها واعلاها. فإن (ادعا) ادعى دغيا من
- 9 أدا (سى) شيئا بوجه من الوجوه او بسبب من الاسباب فعلى توسى
- 10 وفقرى يعاد ذلك من خالص مالهم. وحدت حدود هذه
- 11 الذى اشترها افعدة من توسى وفقرى القبلى الطريق وحدتها
- 12 (الرحى) البخري منزل كيسان وحدتها الغربى منزل الفس (?) وحدتها
- 13 الشرقى منزل يحيى. اشترى ذلك منهم (لسنه) بثلثمائة الدينير عيتا ذهبيا
- 14 شهد على إقراء توسى (وفقرى) وفقرى فيها نفسا. واشهدتها جائر
- 15 امرها يعرف ما لها وما عليها: مرقس بن اسحق
- 16 وكتب عيتا عيتا اللقاء ألواح شهادته بعلمه وحضرته
- 17 وابنتوله بن هرون وكتب عينا عينا اللقاء شهادته بعلمه
- 18 وحضرته وقزمان من (سا) بنى هرون وكتب عينا عينا اللقاء شهادته [ه]
- 19 بعلمه وحضرته وسهؤ (?) بن هرون وكتب عينا
- 20 عينا اللقاء شهادته بعلمه وحضرته
- 21 واسحاق بن البرهيم القرشى وكتب شهادته بيده
- 22 وابرهيم بن ايوب (?) وكتب عينا عينا اللقاء شهادته بعلمه وحضرته
- 23 وصيرف بن فرفرة وكتب [عينا] عينا اللقاء شهادته بمحض فيه
- 24 [بمس] جد اسكندرية [فى] الديوان. وكتب فى رمضان
- 25 سنة خمس و[ما]لتين

هذا ما اشترى افعدة بن جرجة الزمردى اشترى من توسى
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 سنة خمس و[ما]لتين

Words which are miswritten in the original text I have put in parentheses followed by the true reading. Square brackets are used for the words or letters which must be supplied where there is accidental omission or where the papyrus has been broken away. The script closely resembles that of a similar papyrus document (deed of sale) of the year 239, now in the Khedivial Library in Cairo, published by B. Moritz, *Arabic Palaeography* (Cairo, 1905), No. 112.

In the translation which is here offered, the main difficulty is with the proper names, especially those of the persons who are named in the account of the transaction. These are all unfamiliar to me; and since even the consonants are frequently uncertain, my translation is mere guesswork. I have not wished to overload the text with question marks, but they may be understood wherever a strange name appears. Others may be able to correct my readings.

TRANSLATION

This is that which Af'ida b. Jarjara az-Zumrudī purchased from Tūsī (2) and Faqrī, the sons of Anfar. He bought from them the estate of Anfar Abū Faqrī, (3) which Tūsī and Faqrī had inherited from their father Anfar; and it is the dwelling house (4) which is in the enclosure with certain (other) buildings.

He bought this from them for 300 dinars, (5) in gold coin. The whole amount of the dinars was delivered to Tūsī and Faqrī, (6) and by it (this payment) Af'ida became free of obligation to them.

Tūsī and Faqrī, at the time when they sold to Af'ida (7) this estate which they had inherited from Anfar, were of sound mind, and well aware (8) of its income and its outgo, its lowest and its highest.

If a claim shall be made by any one who (9) has paid out anything, in any matter or for any reason whatsoever, then upon Tūsī (10) and Faqrī that shall revert for settlement from their own property.

The boundaries of this (11) which Af'ida has purchased from Tūsī and Faqrī: The eastern boundary is the street; its boundary (12) on the north is the dwelling of Kaisān; its western boundary is the *manzil* al-Fann (?); and its boundary (13) on the east is the dwelling of Bahīr.

The purchase of this from them for 300 dinars in gold coin (14) was attested by giving Tūsī and Faqrī the reading of it in person.

The following witnessed it as a lawful (15) transaction, with knowledge of its pros and its cons: Marqus b. Ishāq (16)—he wrote in detail ("item by item"), submitting the tablets of his testimony to his knowledge and his presence. (17) And Abtūla (?) b. Hārūn—he wrote in detail the submission of his testimony to his knowledge (18) and his presence. And Quzmān, of the Banī Hārūn—he wrote in detail the submission of his testimony (19) to his knowledge and his presence. And Sahw (?) b. Hārūn—he wrote in (20) detail the submission of his testimony to his knowledge and his presence. (21) And Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Qurašī—he wrote his witness with his own hand. (22) And Ibrāhīm b. Ayyūb—he wrote in detail the submission of his testimony to his knowledge and his presence. (23) And Šairaf b. Farfara (?)—he wrote in detail the submission of his testimony: (all this) in a formal document concerning it (the transaction) (24) in the Mosque of Alexandria, in the *dīwān*.

And this was written in (the month of) Ramaḍān, (25) in the year 205.

NOTES

Line 1. I take the *nisba* from Zumrūd, given in Ibn Duqmāq V. 90, as one of the towns of western Egypt.—The first consonant of "Tūsī" is assured by the pointing in line 5. The *nūn* of "Anfar" is certified in lines 2 and 7.

Line 2. The word مصابة (in this line written with final *tā*) seems to be a technical term for "estate, inheritance."

Line 3. The reading of the ms., ورووف, is possible; but the form *fu'al* as plural of the active participle is used chiefly in poetry, and the verb, as in line 7, was doubtless intended.

Line 5. I think it probable that الله is simply the scribe's labor-saving way of writing الثلاثمائة, cf. line 13; but the reading in the text is possible. The word *dīnār* is written defectively as in line 4, and elsewhere.

Line 12. The familiar name *Kaisān* is probably intended; as also, in the following line, the equally common name Bahīr.—What to make of الفن (which certainly seems to be the reading of the ms.) is a question. It is hardly the name of a person. الفىء, "booty, plunder," and الفر, "fugitives," are possibilities.

Line 14. The correct grammatical form would be جائزاً.

Lines 16 ff. Each witness testifies to his full knowledge of the transaction, and to his presence in person.

Line 17. The second and third consonants of the first name are merely guessed at.—The Hārūn who appears so prominently in these lines, evidently a very well known person, is quite likely Hārūn b. Abdallāh az-Zuhri, who was made *qāḍī* in al-Fuṣṭāṭ by the caliph al-Ma'mūn in the year 217. See Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, p. 246, and al-Kindi's *Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. Guest, pp. 443 ff.

Line 21. The *nisba* is badly written, but is pretty certainly to be read as I have interpreted. Al-Kindi, p. 418, lines 4 ff., mentions an Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Quraṣī as one who was familiar with the law courts of Egypt at just this time.

Line 22. Al-Kindi, in his account of the judges and judicial proceedings of this time, makes occasional mention of an Ibrāhīm b. [Abi] Ayyūb (the "Abi" is more than once omitted), a scribe of the court, who eventually was entrusted with some important affairs. In his later years he was in disgrace, charged with having stolen 30,000 dinars from the court treasury. Ibn Ḥajar (in Guest's *Governors and Judges*, p. 507) narrates how the man was mobbed and barely escaped with his life, in the year 246.

Line 23. The names are perfectly uncertain, and the possibilities are many.

Lines 24 f. There are bad holes in the papyrus, but the restoration of the text is almost necessarily as given. The date is quite certain.

ILLUMINATING THE THRONES AT THE EGYPTIAN JUBILEE

JOHN A. WILSON

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IN 1907 PROFESSOR BREASTED and Mr. N. de G. Davies spent a few days copying and photographing Amenhotep III's temple at Soleb between the Second and Third Cataracts.¹ The most important reliefs in this temple are those which illustrate the royal jubilee or *sed* festival. A few years ago Professor Breasted turned over to me his notebooks and photographs for study and possible publication. The following notes present preliminary observations on an interesting ceremony in the royal jubilee of ancient Egypt.

We are concerned here with four scenes on the Pylon which depict the carrying of torches. These scenes have been partly published by Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*, III, Pl. 84 a-b. Lepsius' copy does not make it clear that there are four scenes, running A-B-C-D from left to right.² The two central scenes, B-C, balance each other, each showing Amenhotep III and Queen Tiy facing a shrine which contains a throne. Lepsius' copyists did not observe that there are actually two such shrines or baldachins shown back to back. They copied as though there were only one structure. These are obviously the two baldachins which are the central feature of the jubilee ceremony. Pharaoh is shown here holding a torch before each. As far as one is able to discern on a badly broken wall, the scenes and inscriptions in B and C are identical. We have a ceremony of illuminating the two jubilee thrones.

The two outer scenes, A and D, are not identical. The scene A, on the left, is almost wholly lost. Just enough is visible to relate

¹ Cf. James H. Breasted, "Second Preliminary Report of the Egyptian Expedition," *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 25 (Oct., 1908), reprinted as *The Monuments of Sudanese Nubia*, p. 83 ff.

² The wall is badly damaged, and only careful study reveals the details. The correlation of Lepsius' Pl. 84 a and 84 b with the scenes A-B-C-D is as follows:

[——— 84a ———] [——— 84b ———]
[——— A ———] [——— B ———] [——— C ———] [——— D ———]

The Committee proposed to the American Philosophical Society the awarding of a grant to enable Mr. Percy Buchanan to study in the field the possible origins of certain Japanese grammatical phenomena in Outer Mongolia. The application was granted.

Endorsement was given to the American Council of Learned Societies in behalf of a project, to be directed by Professor Speiser, for an archaeological reconnaissance of northwestern Persia.

For all of these projects the Committee made every possible effort to secure support. Members of the Society who have well planned projects or completed manuscripts are invited to submit them to the Committee. Such communications should be addressed to Professor Harold H. Bender, Princeton University.

NOTES OF OTHER SOCIETIES

The New Orient Society has received severe blows through the deaths of Dr. Laufer and, more recently, of Professor Breasted. In spite of this, it intends to continue its activities, and has recently published a pamphlet under the title *The New Orient*. It contains an appreciation of Breasted by Professor Olmstead, and four other articles.

The Fourth International Congress of Linguists will meet at the University of Copenhagen, August 27 to September 1, 1936. The president will be Professor Otto Jespersen. For information address the General Secretary, M. Viggo Brøndal, Nørregade 6, Copenhagen.

The University of Madras is preparing a complete up-to-date catalogus catalogorum of Sanskrit manuscripts, to be published by the University of Madras, under the editorship of Mahamahopadhyaya Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastri, M. A., Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology, Presidency College, Madras (on leave), and Curator, Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras—(Editor-in-Chief); Professor P. P. S. Sastri, M. A. (Oxon.), Officiating Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology, Presidency College, Madras; and Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, B. A. (Hons.), D. Phil. (Oxon.). Reader in Sanskrit, University of Madras.



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In Memoriam James Henry Breasted

CONTENTS

OLMSTEAD, A. T., L. BULL, E. A. SPEISER: James Henry Breasted, 1865-1935 (with frontispiece),	115
ALBRIGHT, W. F.: How well can we know the Ancient Near East?	121
ALLEN, T. G.: Types of Rubrics in the Egyptian Book of the Dead,	145
BAETON, G. A.: The Origin of the Thought-Pattern which survives in Baptism,	155
BULL, L.: Four Egyptian inscribed Statuettes of the Middle Kingdom (with five plates),	166
DUNHAM, D.: Note on some Old Squeezes from Egyptian Monuments (with two illustrations in text and two plates),	173
EDGERTON, W. F.: Two Notes on the Flying Gaijop (with five plates),	178
GARDINER, A. H.: The Egyptian Origin of some English Personal Names,	189
JACKSON, A. V. W.: Traces of Biblical Influence in the Turfan Pahlavi Fragment M. 173,	198
KENT, R. G.: The Present Status of Old Persian Studies,	208
MONTGOMERY, J. A.: Ras Shamra Notes V,	226
NELSON, H. H.: Three Decrees of Ramses III from Karnak (with three plates),	232
OLMSTEAD, A. T.: Intertestamental Studies,	242
REICH, N. J.: The Elkan Adler Papyrus No. 31 (with one plate),	258
SAPIR, E.: Hebrew 'argaz, a Philistine Word (with one figure),	272
STURTEVANT, E. H.: Two Hittite Words,	282
TORREY, C. C.: An Arabic Papyrus Dated 205 A. H. (with one plate),	288
WILSON, J. A.: Illuminating the Thrones at the Egyptian Jubilee,	293

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