

TWO UNPUBLISHED INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE SOUTH TEMPLE AREA OF KARANIS¹

(PLATE LXIX)

DURING the winter of 1895-96 Grenfell, Hunt, and Hogarth opened up a new phase of Egyptology by digging in Greco-Roman towns in Egypt.² They limited their explorations, primarily a search for papyri, to the Fayûm and succeeded in identifying a number of sites in that region. One of these was Karanis. Here the sebbakhîn had already uncovered the eastern façade of the temple of Pnepheros and Petesouchos (the South Temple) and “the tops of three inscribed doorways.”

Hogarth published the inscriptions on these doorways, but with very meagre descriptions.³ No measurements were taken and no details regarding the type of stone noted. This is particularly unfortunate in the case of a fragmentary inscription, the earliest in date, for the stone has since been lost and no photographs of it were made. Since the Michigan excavations of 1929-30 turned up what I believe to be a portion of the missing section it is pertinent to give in full Hogarth's description to see how well that fits the Michigan stone.⁴

A fallen block, which has formed the lower half of a lintel, found lying on its face just south of the propylon. Very fine and regular lettering.

It is much to be regretted that our diligent search for the upper part of this lintel was unsuccessful; for this inscription, judged by the style of its lettering, is certainly not later than the beginning of the first century A.D., and more probably belongs to the first century B.C. It is the earliest record on the site, and would have given probably a Ptolemaic date for the first construction of a gate to the temple buildings.⁵

A glance at Plate LXIX, 1 shows that the Michigan block formed part of the upper portion of a lintel, for mutilated molding is discernible at the top and at the right end.

¹ I am indebted to the Research Committee of the Museum of Archaeology of the University of Michigan for their permission to publish these inscriptions; especial thanks are due to Dr. E. E. Peterson, Curator of Egyptian Antiquities Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan, formerly Field Director of the excavations at Karanis, and to Mr. C. H. Roberts, Fellow of St. John's College, and Lecturer in Papyrology in the University of Oxford, formerly a member of the staff at Karanis, for supplying information and checking readings. As a member of the staff I had made transcripts of both inscriptions immediately after they were found during the 1929-30 excavations, but later because of suspected errors wished the readings of the larger one checked against the original. This was done in 1935, several years after I had returned from Egypt. Roberts' readings will be further acknowledged in the treatment of the inscription.

² B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, D. G. Hogarth, *Fayûm Towns and Their Papyri* (London, 1900), p. 20.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-34.

⁴ This stone, sandy limestone, measures 16.85 cm. (height) × 27.75 cm. (thickness) × 50.1 cm. (width). It was found as a part of the masonry in the protective stone wall for the south wall of house E42A. See A. E. R. Boak, *Karanis, The Temples, Coin Hoards, Botanical and Zoological Reports, Seasons 1924-31* (Ann Arbor, 1933), Plan III.

⁵ Grenfell, Hunt, Hogarth, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

“Very fine and regular lettering” may well be applied to this inscription also since its lettering, compared with that on all the others found here, is far superior. There is perfect agreement as to date, for the Michigan block is part of a dedicatory inscription on behalf of Ptolemy Alexander (114-88 B.C.). Therefore, if the text of this fragment can be made to complete the one published by Hogarth, it is a fair conclusion that we now have at least part of the stone for which a “diligent search” was made at the end of the last century.

The text of the Michigan fragment is as follows:

ΛΕΩΣΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ
ΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥΘΕΟΥ
ΟΣΚΑΙΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ

The number of letters in each line should be noted; 13½ for line 1; 12 for line 2, which does not extend as far to the right as line 1; and 15 for line 3. This indicates a tendency toward smaller letters, and consequently more letters in subsequent lines than in these first three when completed. Hogarth had for his first complete line τ[εσ]ούχο[υ] τὸ πρόπυλον Πνεφερώτι καὶ, 30 letters. We should, then, expect the three lines of the Michigan inscription to be somewhat less than 30 letters in length. Following another inscription from the Fayûm⁶ they may be completed as

Ἐπὲρ βασι]λέως Πτολεμαίου	(22 letters)
τοῦ καὶ Ἄλ]εξάνδρου θεοῦ	(20 letters)
Φιλομήτορ]ος καὶ βασιλίσσης	(24 letters)

These three lines linked with Hogarth's text beginning τῶν] τέκνων do not have continuity, and we must assume that at least one line was lost in the break. The inscription from the Fayûm just mentioned continues with Βερενίκης τῆς ἀδελφῆς θεᾶς Φιλαδέλφου to which καὶ would have to be added to join with τῶν] τέκνων. This gives 36 letters, which are too many. A papyrus of 101 B.C. gives a clew here.⁷ It has Βερενίκης θεᾶς Φιλαδέλφου to which we must add καὶ for a total of 26 letters. This may be considered a suitable length for the line.

The line beginning τῶν] τέκνων presents one difficulty which cannot be overcome, that of a personal name. The letters τ[εσ]ουχο[υ] beginning the following line can only be completed with Πε-, giving Πετεςούχου, a personal name very common in the Arsinoite nome (the Fayûm). This was done by Hogarth, and he was probably right in making the case genitive, indicating that this name was preceded by another in the nominative case, giving ---, the son of Petesouchos. What this other name was there is no way of knowing. However, if we follow another dedicatory inscription

⁶ Preisigke, *Sammelbuch*, 4623, 101 B.C. Ἐπὲρ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου τοῦ καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου θεοῦ Φιλομήτορος καὶ βασιλίσσης Βερενίκης τῆς ἀδελφῆς θεᾶς Φιλαδέλφου. . . .

⁷ *P. Teb.* 106. 3-4.

on behalf of Ptolemy Alexander⁸ we may add *καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων* after *τῶν] τέκνων* which together with Πϵ at the end gives 24 letters. The next line contains 30 letters; the preceding 26.⁹ Space is thus left for a name in the nominative case from four to six letters, ample for one of a number of Egyptian personal names.¹⁰ With this restoration the complete text of the Hogarth-Michigan inscription is

Ἐπὲρ βασι]λέως Πτολεμαίου
 τοῦ καὶ Ἄλ]εξάνδρου θεοῦ
 Φιλομήτορ]ος καὶ βασιλίσσης
 [Βερενίκης θεᾶς Φιλαδέλφου καὶ]
 5 τῶν] τέκνων [καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων Πϵ-]
 τ[εσ]οῦχο[ν] τὸ πρόπυλον Πνεφερώτι καὶ
 Πετσοῦχω καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς
 μεγάλοις μεγάλοις ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ¹¹ καὶ τῆς
 γυναικὸς καὶ τῶν τέκνων εὐχὴν.
 10 (ἔτους) ιθ', Μεσορῆ κζ'.¹²

Since the two parts do fit together so well we may feel reasonably sure that they originally formed the lintel of the north propylon and that it was erected in the 19th year of Ptolemy Alexander, Mesore 27, i. e., August 20, 95 B.C.¹³

Also during the excavations in the South Temple area a large limestone block¹⁴ was found just to the south of the steps at the east end of the forecourt. It had been broken into three major portions and was lying against the east wall of the forecourt. Its position and the fact that it was a lintel inscribed with a dedication made it appear that it had been used over the entrance at the head of the stairs. It was very badly scaled, and in some parts the lettering was all but obliterated, making decipherment

⁸ *O.G.I.S.*, 740. Ἐπὲρ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου τοῦ κ[αί] Ἄλεξάνδρου καὶ βασιλίσσης [Κ]λ[εοπάτρας] τῆς ἀδελφῆς θεῶν Φιλομητόρων Σωτήρων καὶ τῶν τέκνων καὶ τῶν [ἐκ]γόνων Ἡρωῖν θεῶι μεγάλῳ Φαμενώθ ἀ.

⁹ As we have restored it.

¹⁰ E. g., Ὡρος, Ὠρίων, Ἀβύκις, Ἀκύλας, Δημάς, Διδάς, Ἐρμῆς.

καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων in no way correspond to the remains of letters as indicated by Hogarth. This, however, is no particular argument against such a restoration. Hogarth himself does not indicate the remains of Πϵ at the end of the line, though he assumes that reading necessary. That is to say he took no particular pains in copying mutilated letters.

Another restoration would be to omit *καὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων* and assume a longer personal name, e. g., with ὁ καὶ giving --- ὁ καὶ --- Πετσοῦχου.

¹¹ Hogarth reads αὐτοῦ.

¹² Preisigke, *Sammelbuch*, 6252, an inscription from Theadelphia, 137 B.C., paralleling this in form reads: Ἐπὲρ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου καὶ βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας τῆς ἀδελφῆς καὶ βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας τῆς γυναικὸς, θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν, καὶ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῶν Ἀγαθοδῶρος Ἀγαθοδώρον Ἀλεξάνδρου τῆς β' ἱπ(πα)ρχ(ίας) καὶ Ἰσιδώρα Διονυσίου ἡ γυνὴ καὶ τὰ τέκνα τὸ πρόπυλον καὶ τὸν λίθινον δρόμον Πνεφερώτι θεῶι μεγάλῳ μεγάλῳ εὐχὴν. (ἔτους) λδ, Θῶνθ θ.

¹³ This inscription adds a bit to the scanty information of this period. Bevan (*A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* [London, 1927], p. 332) states that the period beginning with the death of Ptolemy Alexander's mother to the end of his reign (101-89 B.C.) is a "blank," with only four Greek inscriptions from the Fayûm belonging to these years.

¹⁴ 38 cm. (height) × 36 cm. (thickness) × 169 cm. (width).

extremely difficult. In each upper corner was carved the crude figure of a crocodile and in the center an incense altar (see Plate LXIX, 2).¹⁵ The lettering throughout was very coarse and irregular, due in part at least to the very poor texture of the stone, and also to the failure of the stonemason to proportion his text before starting to cut. I first transcribed the inscription as

[Y]ΠΕΡ [Λ]ΟΥΚΙΟΥ Α[ΥΡ]ΗΛΙΟΥ
 ΚΟΜΜΟΔΟΥ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥ
 [Μ]ΕΣΟΡΗ ΚΑΤ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΥΣ ΙΓ
 ΥΠΕΡ ΛΟΥΚΙΟΥ ΑΥΡΗΛΙΟΥ ΚΟΜΜΟΔΟΥ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
 ΕΥΤΥΧΟΥΣ.....ΠΤΕΤΣΟΥΧΩ ΚΑΙ ΠΝΕΦΕΡΩΤΙ ΘΕΟΙΣ
 ΜΕΓΙΣΤΟΙΣ ΕΠ ΑΓΑΘΩ

Obviously the first ΥΠΕΡ was a mistake, but I did not check the reading since at the time the exact date was not of any particular importance.

In 1935 I again became interested in the inscription and Roberts,¹⁶ at my request, was kind enough to check my readings and to send me the following transcript together with answers to certain questions:¹⁷

ΛΚ ΛΟΥΚΙΟΥ Α[ΥΡ]ΗΛΙΟΥ
 ΚΟΜΜΟΔΟΥ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥ
 [Μ]ΕΣΟΡΗ ΚΑΤ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΥΣ ΙΓ
 ΥΠΕΡ [...]ΙΟΥ ΛΟΥΚΙΟΥ ΑΥΡΗΛΙΟΥ ΚΟΜΜΟΔΟΥ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΟΣ ΤΟΥ
 ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
 ΕΥΤΥΧΟΥ[Σ]ΚΑ[.....]ΙΗΣ ΠΕΤΕΤΣΟΥΧΩ ΚΑΙ ΠΝΕΦΕΡΩΤΙ ΘΕΟΙΣ
 ΜΕΓΙΣΤΟΙΣ ΕΠ ΑΓΑΘΩ

A very recent study of photographs of the inscription has necessitated a revision of Roberts' transcript as well as my own.¹⁸ In line 4 I can find no traces of letters after ΥΠΕΡ. [ΑΙΑ]ΙΟΥ would not be admissible in that it violates the order of the Roman name; [ΚΥΡ]ΙΟΥ is most unlikely too since it is used at the end of the line.

¹⁵ No single photograph of the entire block is sufficiently clear for reproduction. The drawing, made from several photographs, is a fairly accurate copy except that all lettering is shown as being equally distinct.

¹⁶ See note 1.

¹⁷ "Line 1. The ΛΚ is quite clear; a small space intervenes between it and the subsequent word, but there are no traces of another numeral.

"Line 4. ΥΠΕΡ is unmistakable and there is no room for any letters before it; immediately after it the surface of the stone is worn away and any reading before ΛΟΥΚΙΟΥ must be regarded as doubtful. Perhaps [ΑΙΑ]ΙΟΥ, or less probably, [ΚΥΡ]ΙΟΥ.

"Line 5. The ΕΥ is very lightly cut, perhaps after the rest of the line, and the letters are much smaller than the following ΤΥΧ; whereas the top stroke of the Τ measures 2.5 cm., the space between that stroke and the raised vertical column which marks the limit of the inscription is only 2 cm. The letters vary so much in size that the number of those lost between ΚΑ and ΙΗΣ cannot be precisely calculated."

¹⁸ Photographs occasionally, as here, are better than the original. Their smallness, compared to the object itself, can bring out letter forms which are obscured by the very size of the actual letters.

Both of us, I believe, were wrong in reading ΕΥΤΥΧΟΥΣ in line 5. The fact that the other dedication on behalf of Commodus at Karanis¹⁹ gave Εὐτυχής as one of his titles exerted too strong an influence on us. In the photograph I can find no trace of ΕΥ. However, ΤΥΧΗΣ ΚΑΙ is fairly plain. Following this is Δ[.]ΜΟΝΗΣ which can only be ΔΙΑΜΟΝΗΣ. I have been unable to find τύχη and διαμονή in combination elsewhere but each is used similarly in other dedicatory inscriptions.²⁰ The complete text then is

(ἔτους) κ Λουκίου Α[ὕρ]ηλίου
 Κομμόδου Σεβαστοῦ
 [Μ]εσορῆ κατ' ἀρχαίους ἰγ
 ὑπὲρ Λουκίου Αὐρηλίου Κομμόδου Καίσαρος τοῦ κυρίου
 τύχης καὶ δ[ια]μονῆς Πετρουσούχῳ καὶ Πνεφερωῶτι θεοῖς μεγίστοις ἐπ' ἀγαθῶ

Μεσορῆ κατ' ἀρχαίους ἰγ is an example of dating according to the old Egyptian "Wandeljahr."²¹ Its equivalent in the Roman calendar is to be determined through documents in which the Egyptian and Roman calendars are equated. Since the Egyptian year was 365 days in length the divergence between the two calendars increased one day every four years. *P.Par.*, 19b, 4-5 (A.D. 138) gives the equation μηνὸς Ἀδριανοῦ ἦ, κατὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀρχαίους Τῦβι ἰῆ. In this year the divergence is 40 days. *P.Fay.*, 139, 4-6 (A.D. 161), a horoscope, has καθ' Ἑλληνας Μεσορῆ ε ὦρα ζ ἡμέρα<ς> κατὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀρχαίους Θῶθ ιϚ, a divergence of 46 days.²² The twentieth year of Commodus is 179/80;²³ Mesore κατ' ἀρχαίους would be in 180. Since the difference between the two calendars was 46 days in 161 this would be increased to 51 days in 180. Accordingly Μεσορῆ κατ' ἀρχαίους ἰγ is equivalent to Παῦνι κβ καθ' Ἑλληνας or June 16, 180, the date on which the forecourt was dedicated.

Since the north gate was repaired and dedicated in the time of Commodus also we may look upon the end of the second century as a period of revived interest in the cult of the two crocodile gods that resulted in considerable building at Karanis. Such building may not have been restricted to the two structures just mentioned although our information is limited to the inscriptions carved on their lintels.

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¹⁹ Grenfell, Hunt, Hogarth, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

²⁰ E. g., *I.G.R.P.*, I, 1289: Ὑπὲ[ρ] Αὐτοκ[ρ]άτο[ρ]ος Καίσαρος [Δο]μυ[τ]ι[αν]οῦ Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ τύχης καὶ τοῦ παντὸς οἴκου αὐτοῦ Ἡρα θεῆ μεγίστη . . . ; *O.G.I.S.*, 708: [Ὑπὲρ] σω[τηρ]ί[ας] [καὶ] διαμονῆς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Αὐτοκράτ[ο]ρ[ος] Καίσαρος Μάρκου Αὐ[ρηλ]ίου [Κομμόδου] Ἀνω[νεί]ου Σεβαστοῦ Εὐσεβοῦ[ς] καὶ τοῦ σύνπαντος αὐτ[οῦ] οἴκου . . .

²¹ For a discussion of such double dating see Wilcken, *Ostraka*, I, pp. 791 ff.

²² The editors state that the divergence here is 44 days, which is in error. In computing probably the numeral ζ after ὦρα was used rather than the ε after Μεσορῆ. These two papyri provide us with a check on the two calendars. The period 138-161 is 24 years in length. Since the divergence increased one day in every four years the increase in this period would be six days. If the difference in 138 was 40 days a difference of 46 days is proper for 161.

²³ Preisigke, *Wörterbuch*, III, p. 54; Wilcken, *Grundzüge*, p. lviii.



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2

SCHUMAN: INSCRIPTIONS FROM KARANIS



HEICHELHEIM: NUMISMATIC COMMENTS