

An Unpublished Septuaginta Papyrus from the Nachlass of Adolf Deissmann

With Plates 14–15

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The papyrus published here was owned by Professor Adolf Deissmann (1866–1937), and was saved in the Spring of 1945 along with only a small number of items from his library in Haus Anatolia, the villa at Wünsdorf (c.40 km. south of Berlin) to which he had retired in 1934. When I met Dr Gerhard Deissmann, his sole surviving child, in Bremen in November 1991 – a meeting which coincided with the 125th anniversary of his father's birth on 7 November 1866 – he entrusted this text to me to publish. I am delighted to acknowledge his generosity to me in this and other matters. The original is now in my possession in Melbourne.¹⁾

The papyrus must have come into Deissmann's possession after his move from the Chair of New Testament at Heidelberg to the Berlin Chair in 1908. He had already published a volume of LXX papyri and other early Christian texts in 1905 (*P. Heid.* I), and this item would surely have been included there if he already knew of it. Furthermore, the envelope containing the papyrus has Deissmann's Wünsdorf address stamped on it, suggesting he may not have acquired the piece until after his retirement and permanent removal from Berlin.²⁾ In Deissmann's hand there is written on the envelope: 'LXX-Papyrus. Prof. Schubart in B(er)l(i)n schätzt das Alter des Papyrus aufs 2. bis 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.'³⁾ No indication of provenance is given.

The yellowish-brown papyrus is a well preserved fragment of LXX Exodus 4.2–6, 14–17, written in dark-brown ink on the verso and recto respectively. The recto is especially clear, the verso a little abraded near the right margin. As well as this margin, a left margin is preserved on the recto, indicating that the piece comes from a single-column codex. No top or bottom margins survive. The present maximum dimensions are 7.5 (B) × 5.0 (H) cm. Since the verso had mostly 30–32 letters in the line, while the recto usually 34–36,⁴⁾ it is possible to calculate that the original breadth was c. 10 cm. (or slightly larger), including the side margins. This reconstructed breadth

¹⁾ The opportunity provided to research the text at the Institut für Papyrologie in Heidelberg was greatly appreciated, as was the friendly advice of both B. and J. Kramer. The photographs were taken by R. Zachmann, who also kindly remounted the papyrus.

²⁾ Until his retirement, his usual address stamp gave his home address in Berlin, as is clear from the originals of some of his letters which are to be published elsewhere.

³⁾ After examining the lettering, Dr B. Kramer told me that she leans to a third-century date.

⁴⁾ For variation in the number of letters between recto and verso in another LXX papyrus of perhaps similar date see *P. Heid.* IV. 290.