

My paper is concerned with the medical texts that were found in Tebtunis in the course of excavations that span the XX century, beginning with Grenfell and Hunt in the winter season of 1899/1900, who wrote the T-numbers on the backs of the papyri they unearthed, perhaps as they packed them in boxes for dispatch to Oxford. More systematic excavations were carried out by Anti and Bagnani, in the 1930s, and Gallazzi, beginning in the 1990s and continuing into the present.

Tebtunis differs radically from the other farming villages of the Fayum in regard to the quantity and quality of papyri of medical content written in Greek and Egyptian (demotic). Until the demotic material is published, it will be difficult to say when this development began at Tebtunis - it probably stretches back into Ptolemaic times, and perhaps even earlier, near to the inauguration of the village and its temple. The location of Tebtunis at the edge of the desert may suggest that its air was drier and its climate was more beneficent than what prevailed along the Nile or in the depression at the center of the Arsinoite nome, making it a more comfortable place for the sick to receive treatments for chronic ailments and to convalesce.

The Greek papyri and the medical artifacts discovered demonstrate that Tebtunis was a well established medical center by the I century CE, continuing to be so throughout the II century, and that medical activities centered at the temple of Soknebtunis. Grenfell and Hunt's T numbers, however, make clear that several medical texts in Greek were also found in the town. Hence collecting and reading medical texts in Greek was not exclusive to the temple precincts. Another way in which Tebtunis differs from other Fayum villages is in the number of census declarations found there from residents of the metropolis of the nome and, after its foundation in CE 130, of Antinoopolis, in addition to declarations from the peasant villagers. These families of higher political and economic status from the Hellenized town and Greek city owned property in Tebtunis and deposited important documents, such as census submissions, there. I also consider them as the likely source for at least some of the sophisticated medical texts.

I then turn to two papyri found by Grenfell and Hunt, *P.Tebt.* II 273 verso and II 676, that will be published in full in *GMP* II. The first is a long receptarium, and I shall focus on a recipe that provides a salve for medicating bites from dogs, humans, asps, and crocodiles. Considering that tourists who visited the temple of Soknebtunis were encouraged to feed the resident crocodiles (*P.Tebt.* I 33), such an incomparable ointment would be useful in case of a mishap to a visiting tourist. Although Grenfell and Hunt labeled the second "medical" in content, it can be shown to be purely astrological in content.