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P. Petra V 87. Short Document

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87. SHORT DOCUMENT

Inv. 82E	6 x 20.5 cm	mid-6th c.?
Field No. XIXe	top margin 0.5 cm	
Glass Plate 285	bottom margin 7 cm	
Plate CLX		

This small document could be rolled open without losing much between its layers. It contained fifteen lines of text, and probably nothing is missing before the first line, though the top margin is only 0.5 cm. However, in all only some six centimeters of text is preserved from the middle of the lines. Although we cannot verify the document's original width, it was written *transversa charta* across the fibers. The handwriting is quite clear, with sloping, mostly capital letters. It may belong to Flavius Patrikios, son of Diphilos, whose very similar signature is preserved in **35** 18–28. That document derives from either 533 or 563, but probably the same person recurs in **3** and **5**, both dated securely to 538. This would help to place the present text in the middle decades of the sixth century. The document's nature cannot be determined, except that it was neither of accounts nor mere notes and must have had some financial purpose linked with a church.

↑		
1] τοῖς θεοφιλ[ετᾶτοις] ἐκκλησιαστικ[] . . [.] . ης[. . . to the most God-pleasing (plural) of the church . . .
4] ἁγιωτ(ατη-) ἐκκλησία[] ἰνδικτίων[] ἀπὸ μὲν αὐτῶ[ν] [. . . most holy church indiction from them . . .
8] ἰδίῳ μου κ[ινδύνῳ] ε . . τ[] μένων λιμ[ι[] ἰνδικτ(ίων-) καὶ [. . . with my own personal [liability] indiction and . . .
12] . φδεκ[] αἰς τ[α]ῖς [] του . . . εϛ	
15] ὦν νο(μικμάτων) δε[vacat	. . . <i>solidi</i> . . .

COMMENTARY

5] ἰνδικτίωγ[: in the Petra papyri, the word ἰνδικτίων has appeared only in the genitive; in most cases, it is abbreviated (as here in l. 11), and, where it is written in full, it is always ἰνδικτίονος. The two last letters are very faint and might be something else, but no abbreviation mark is visible.

10]μένων λιμ[: the last letter has a vertical stroke, too long to be, e.g., a *pi*. In Egypt, such a sequence of letters is attested only in a military context, in the word λίμιτον (Lat. *limes*). Although this cannot be excluded here, the letters are too uncertain to make it more than a weak hypothesis.

15 νο(μικμάτων) δε[: the number of *solidi* was probably between ten and nineteen, cf. l. 12, which may possibly contain the same numeral.

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