

Margaret Beeson
from her loving mother

June 16 1913

BRITISH SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN EGYPT
AND EGYPTIAN RESEARCH ACCOUNT
NINETEENTH YEAR, 1913

THE
HAWARA
PORTFOLIO:
PAINTINGS OF THE
ROMAN AGE

FOUND BY
W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE

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It may seem strange that we are indebted to Egypt for our knowledge of classical portrait-painting. The frescoes of Italy show nothing of the portable pictures which were so highly valued. It is only by a curious adaptation of Egyptian customs that we have preserved to us a branch of the most important division of ancient painting. In looking at these portraits, we must remember that they are only the work of a remote provincial town, surrounded by desert, and belong to the latest age of great art, some four or five centuries after it had reached its zenith. We can dimly see in them what the great paintings may have been, as in portraits painted to-day in Nigeria or Mauritius we might find traces of the methods of Titian or Botticelli. We can only be thankful that we have anything at all.

The portraits were usually painted on thin wooden panels, about 13 inches wide and 15 high. Two here are painted on canvas, and that was the original system. They were framed in Oxford frames, and glazed, to be hung up in the house. On the death of the person, the portrait was taken down, when the body was sent to be embalmed, and the sides of the panel were split off it to reduce it to the suitable size to affix to the mummy. It was then fastened down by the outer bandages of the mummy wrappings, over the face. The mummy, with portrait, then stood for a generation or two in the court or hall of the mansion. After it had become damaged and dirty it was then sent off without any ceremony, often in a cartload of ancestors, and buried in the cemetery. There it lay under a few feet of dry sand until brought to light again in these excavations, after seventeen hundred years.

The people seem to have lived in or near Arsinoe, the capital of the Fayum province, some forty miles south of Cairo. That district was mainly occupied by Greek settlers, mixed with some natives and some Romans, and various traders and officials. The favourite burial-place was the modern Hawara, by the pyramid of Amenemhat III, who was venerated as the great organizer of the province.

Regarding the individuals painted we know but little. Very few had the name placed on them; Artemidoros, Isarous, Dēmōs, Demetris, and above all Hermionē, are all that were named among over a hundred that I have found. Alinē is a name on one other from the same place. Of these the most interesting personally is Hermionē Grammatikē, the grammarian or teacher of the classics, who is the only learned woman of whom we have any remains or portrait ("Roman Portraits," pl. ii.). She herself now stands in the Library of Girton College, once again surrounded by books and girl students, whom she doubtless loved well, long before the Goth and the Arab had broken up her old culture. Demetris must also have been a commanding personality, nearly six feet high, and with a face full of determination and strength which carried her on to the good age of eighty-nine.

The full account of the discovery and dating of the portraits, and the method of painting in coloured wax, is given in the volume on "Roman Portraits" recently published. Four portrait heads, in addition to the twenty-four issued here, were reproduced in colour, together with thirty-two photographs of others, in the same volume.

ROMAN PORTRAITS

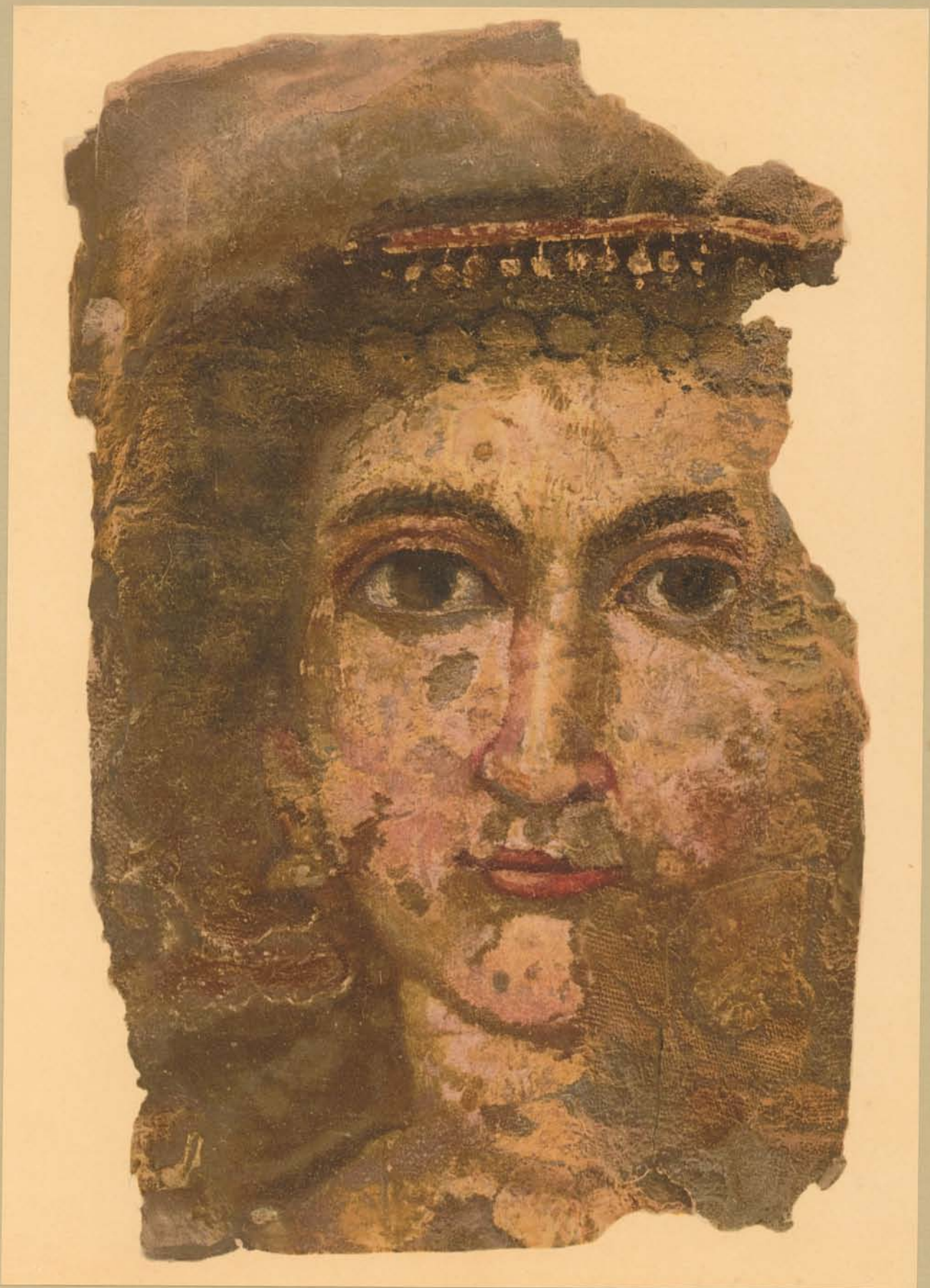
Publishing Number	Registration Number	Approx. Date A.D.		Museum.
i	36	130	Trajanesque man	National Gallery
ii	13	120	HERMIONE	Girton College
iii	6	130	Light-haired girl	Munich
iv	57	170	Greek youth	Carlsberg

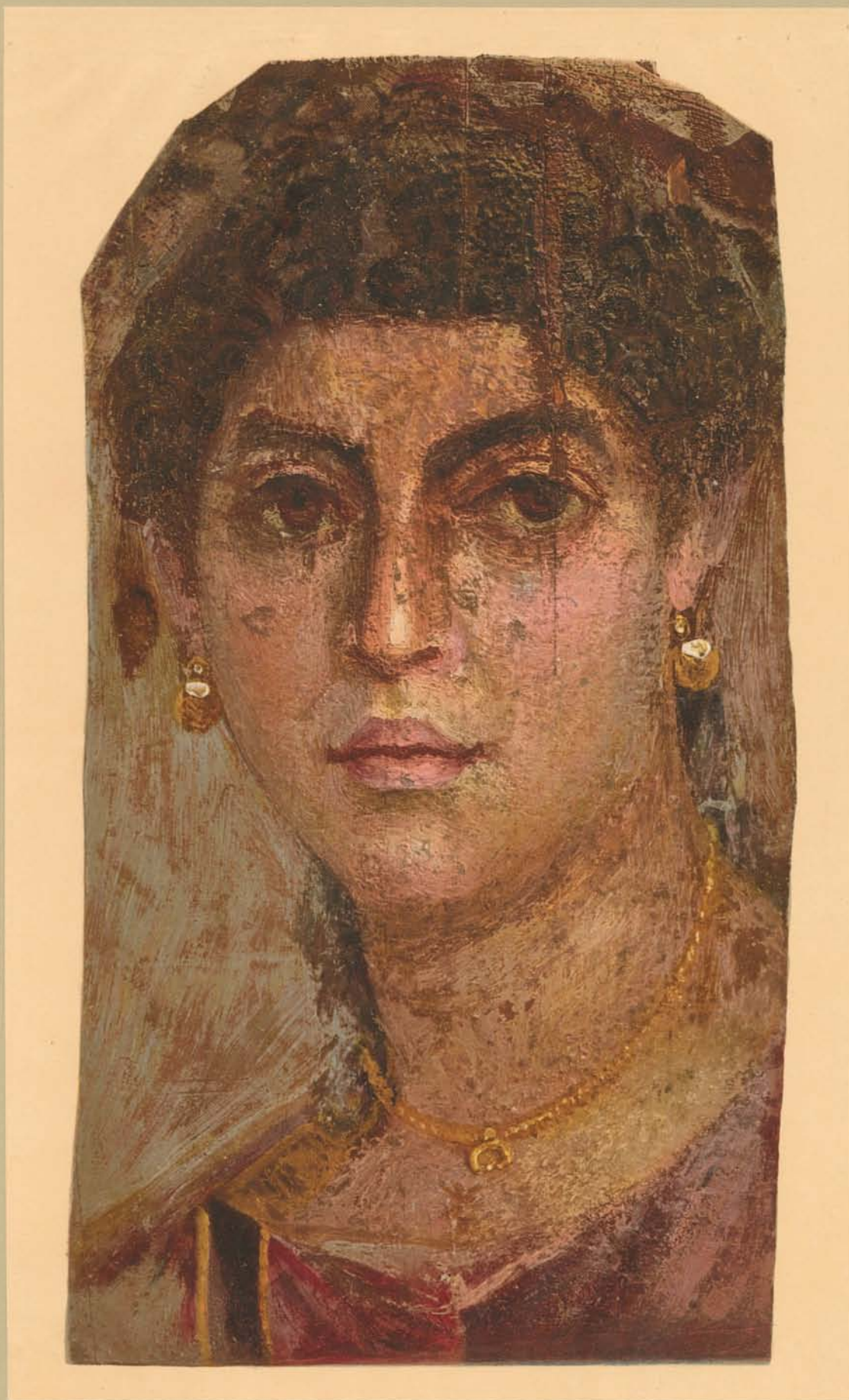
The above issued in "Roman Portraits"

The following issued in this Portfolio :

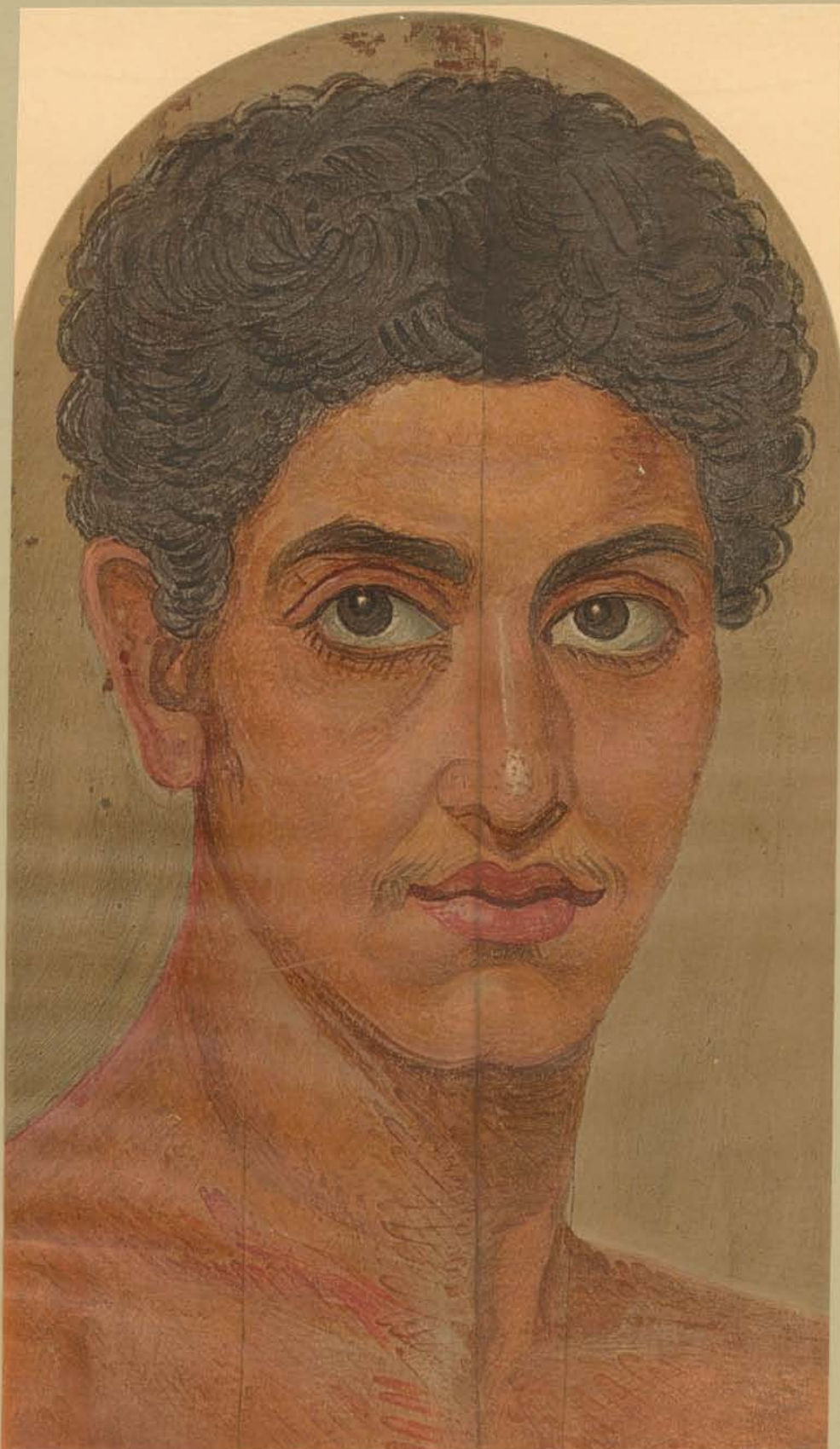
v	YY	90	On canvas. Woman	National Gallery
vi	31	100	On canvas. Woman	Oxford
vii	58	110	Finest style. Woman	National Gallery
viii	TT	110	Dark woman	National Gallery
ix	CC	110	Hard style. Man	National Gallery
x	VV	110	Red-robed woman	National Gallery
xi	12	120	With Hermionē. Man	Carlsberg
xii	51	120	DEMETRIS	Brooklyn
xiii	45	130	Large panel. Man	Brussels
xiv	38	130	The brown youth	(Reserved)
xv	56	130	High Priest	National Gallery
xvi	AA	130	Pink-robed woman,	National Gallery
xvii	50	130	Jewellery girl	Edinburgh
xviii	J	140	Purple-robed woman	National Gallery
xix	54	140	The Mother	Manchester
xx	37	140	Superseded head. Man	Manchester
xxi	8	140	The red youth	(Reserved)
xxii	2	150	Gilt-wreathed youth	New York
xxiii	JJ	160	Old man	National Gallery
xxiv	B	160	Brown-robed woman	Petrie
xxv	GG	170	Crimson-robed woman	National Gallery
xxvi	3	170	Caste-mark. Man	Edinburgh
xxvii	27	180	Reversed head. Man	Manchester
xxviii	Z	180	Gilt border. Man	National Gallery



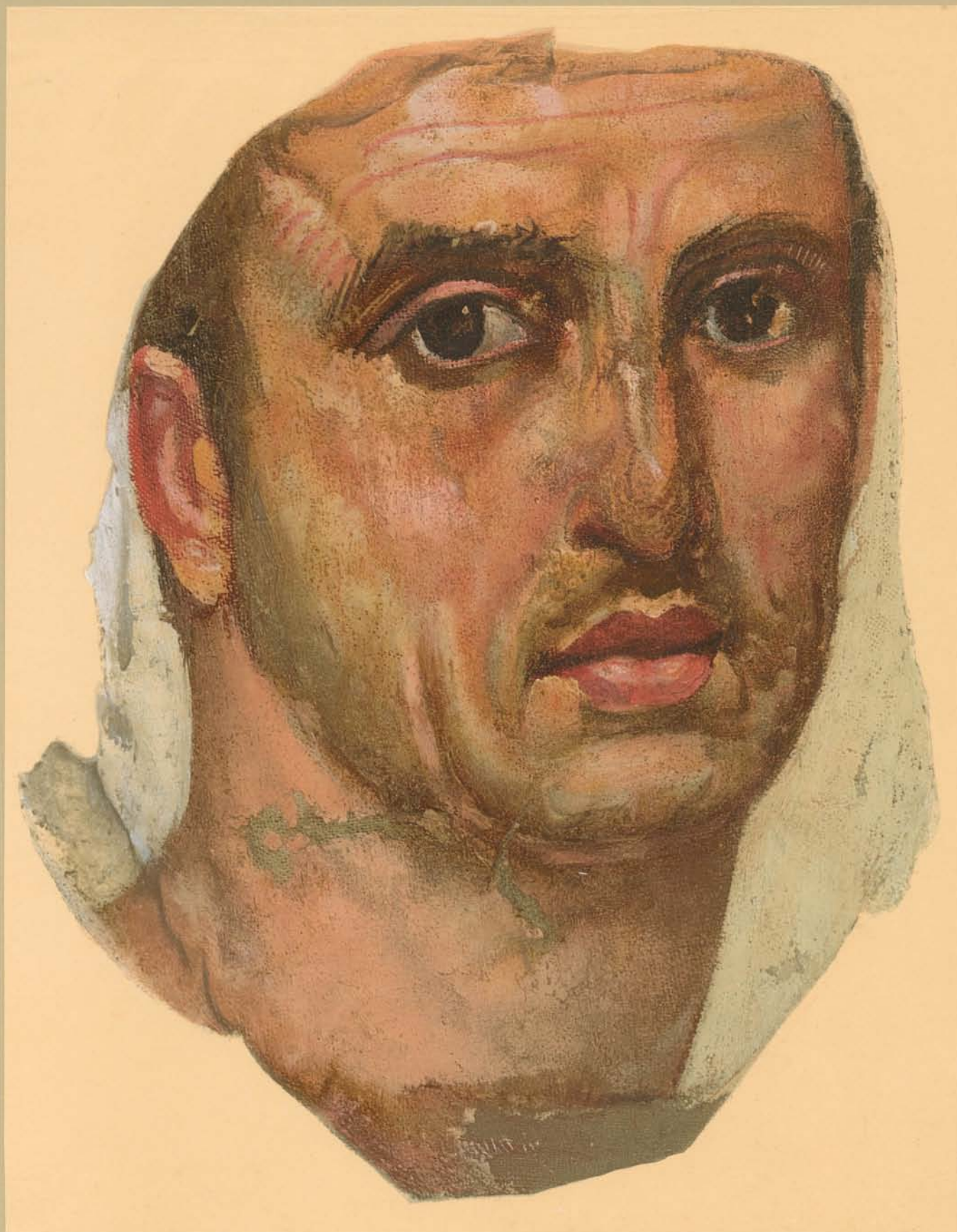


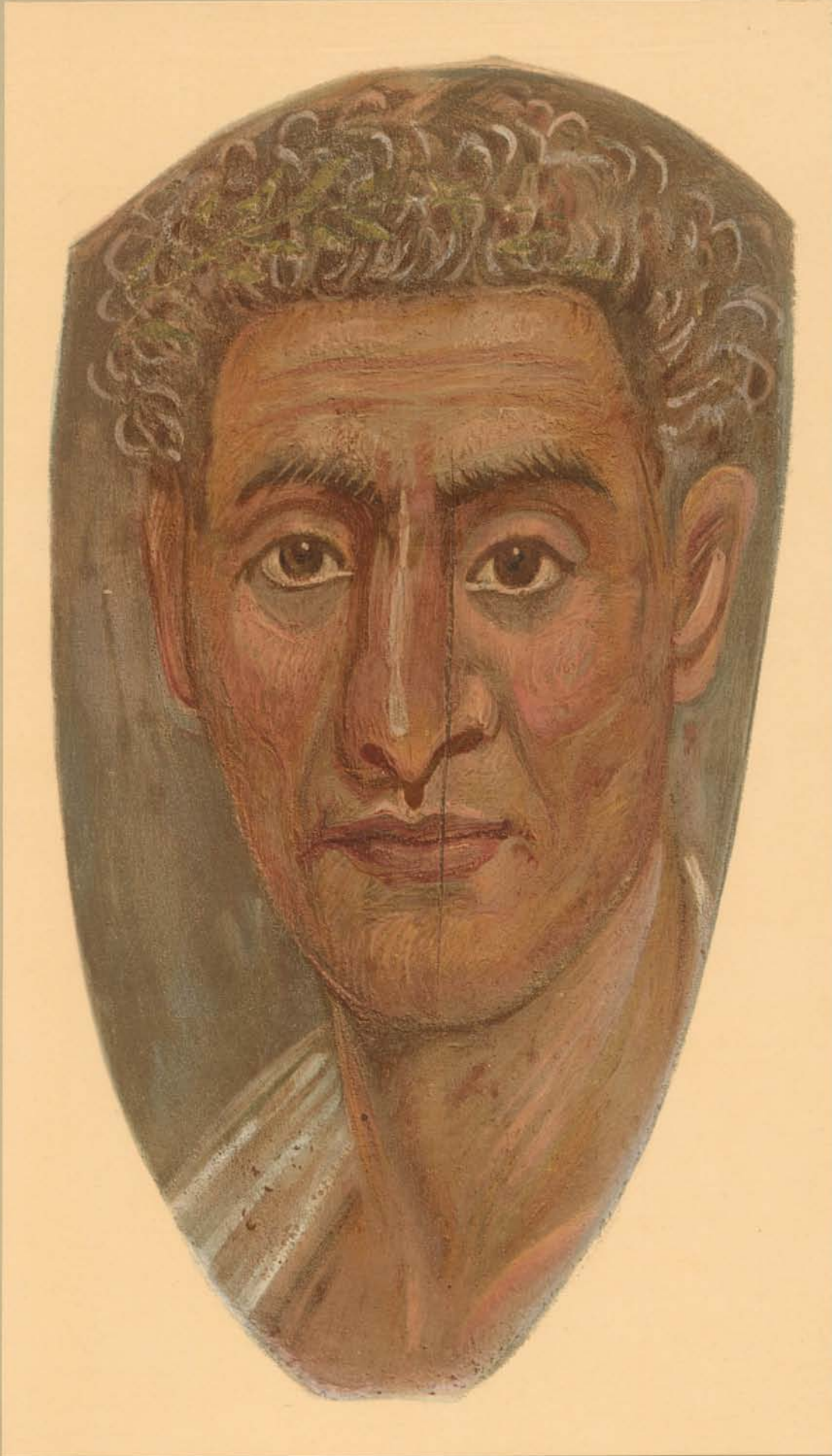




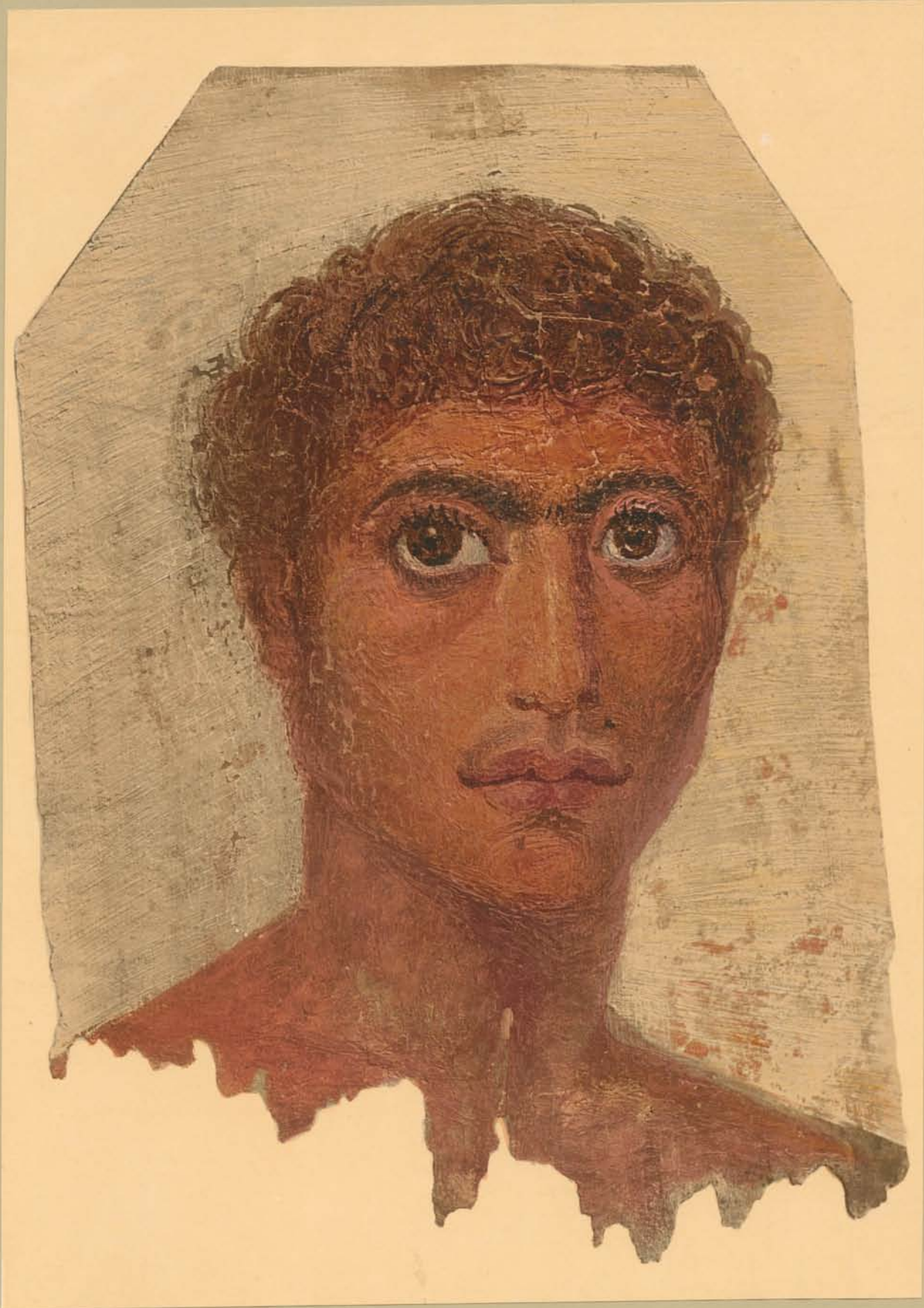


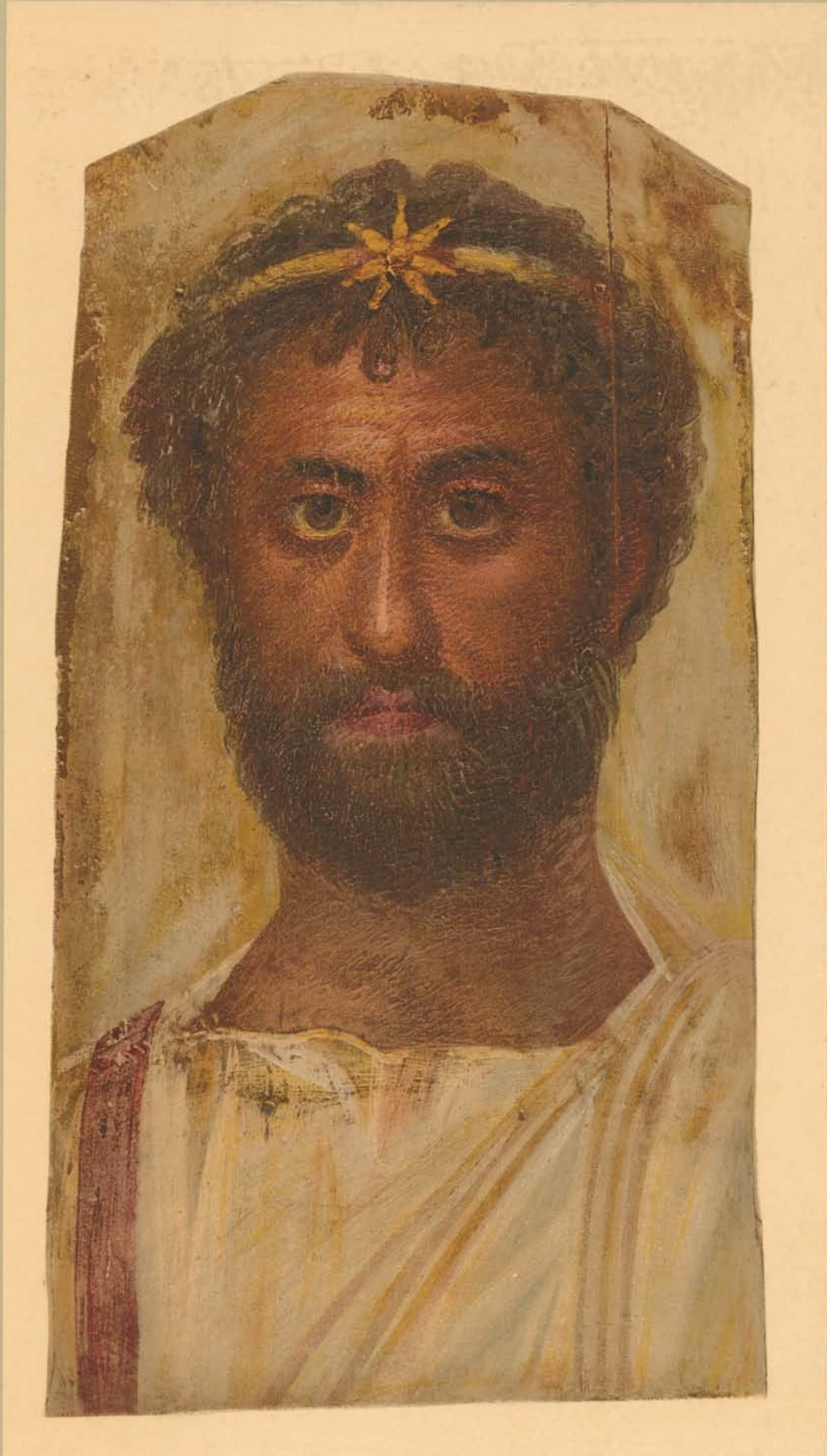




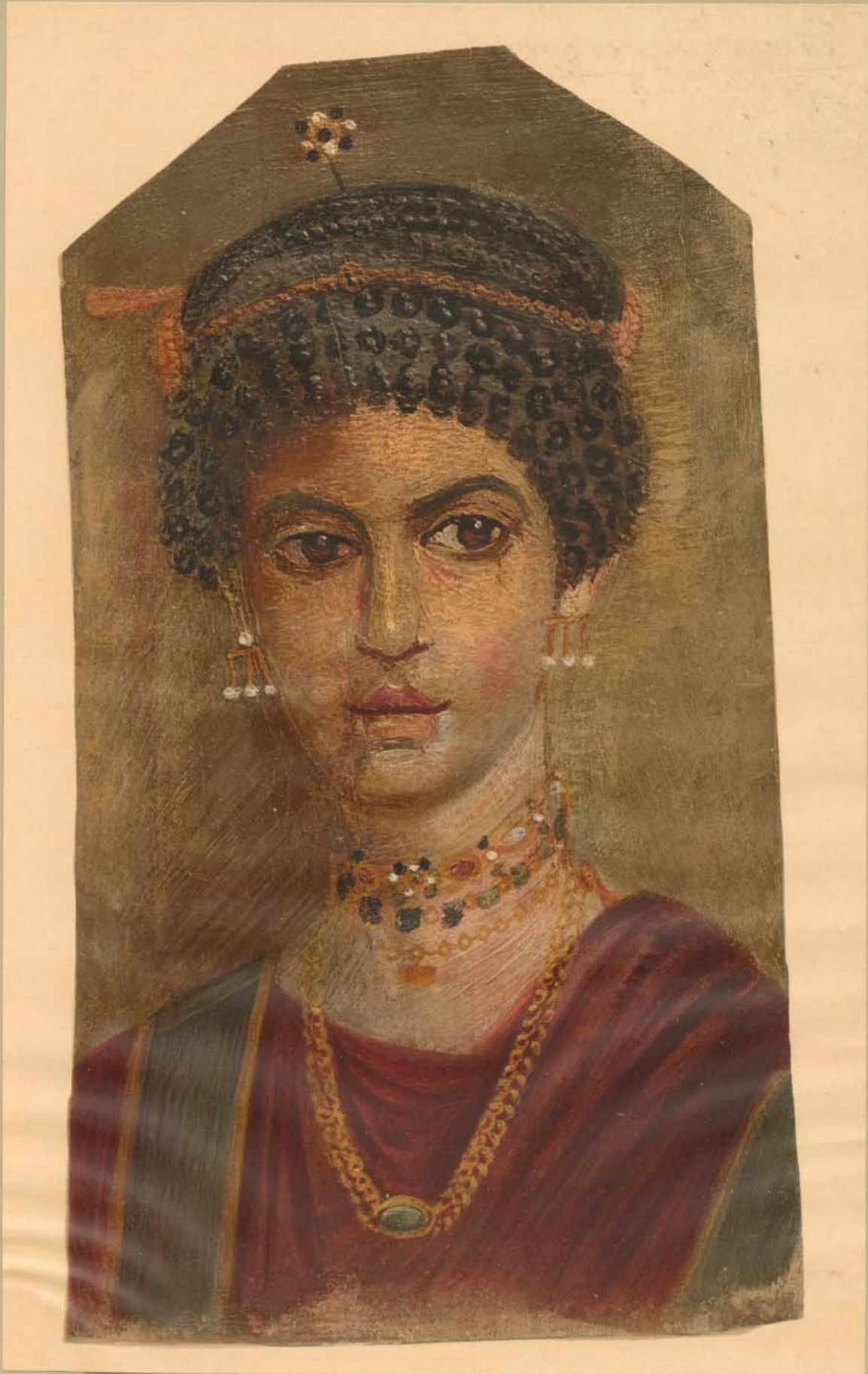




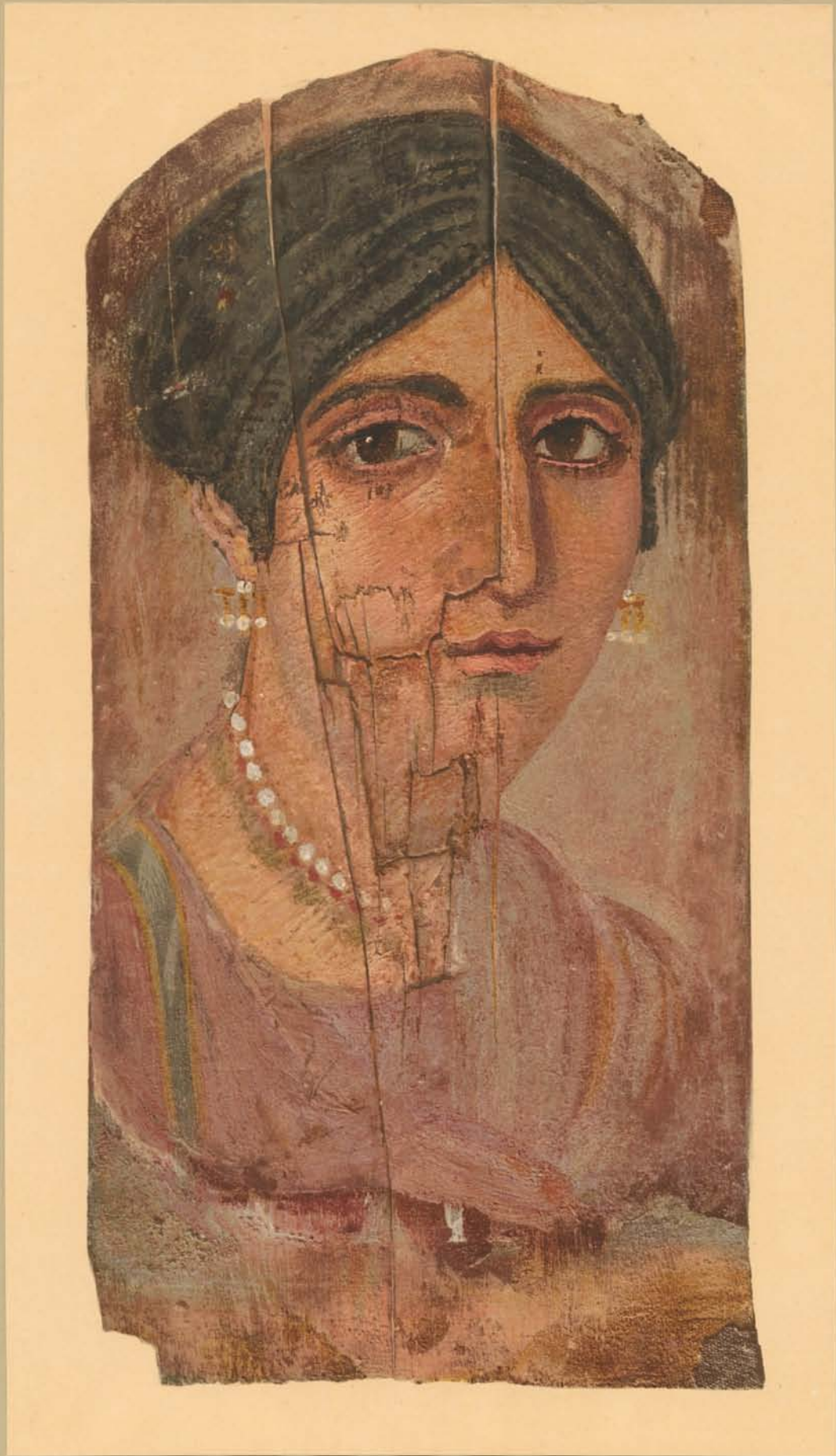


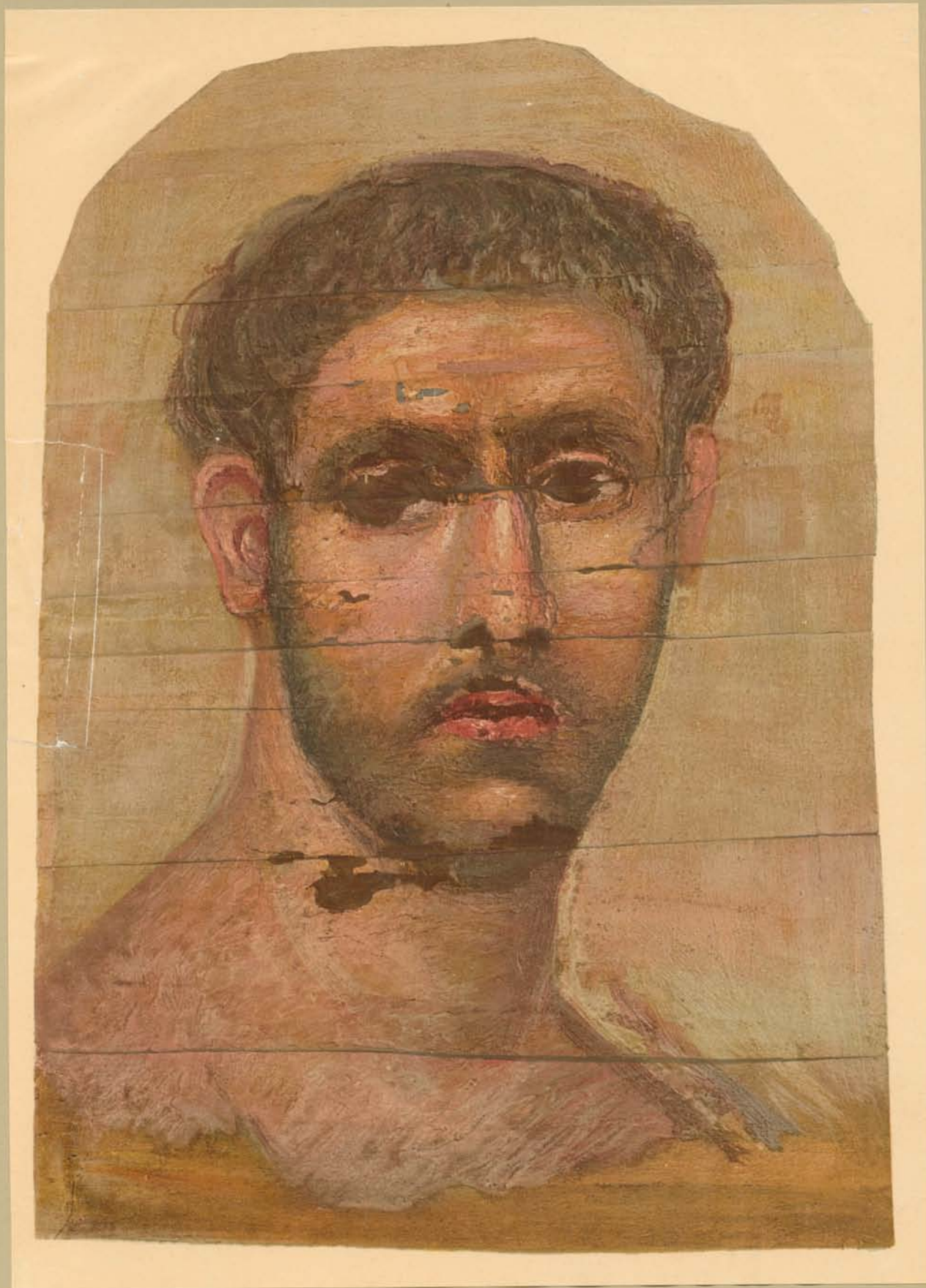


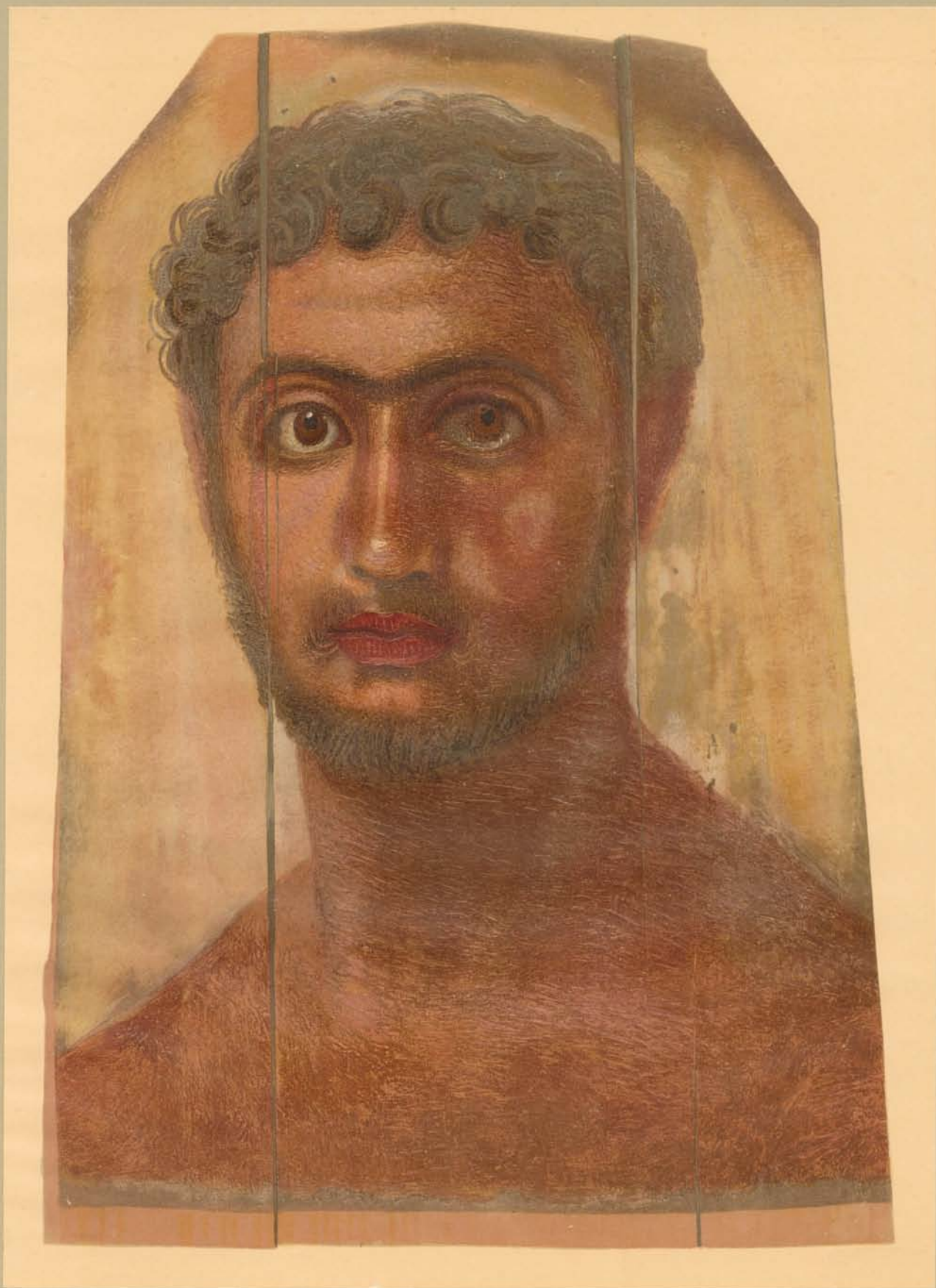




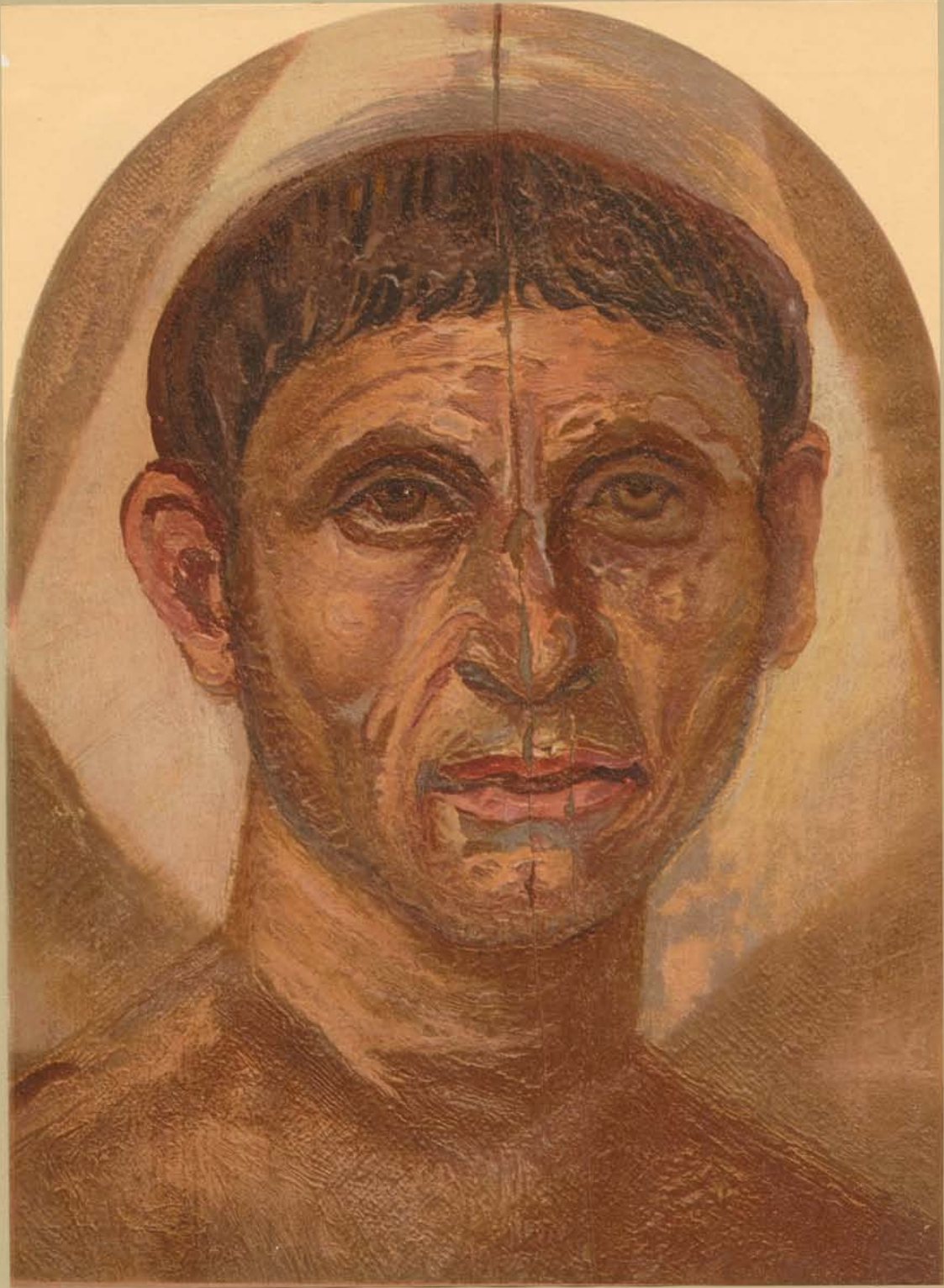


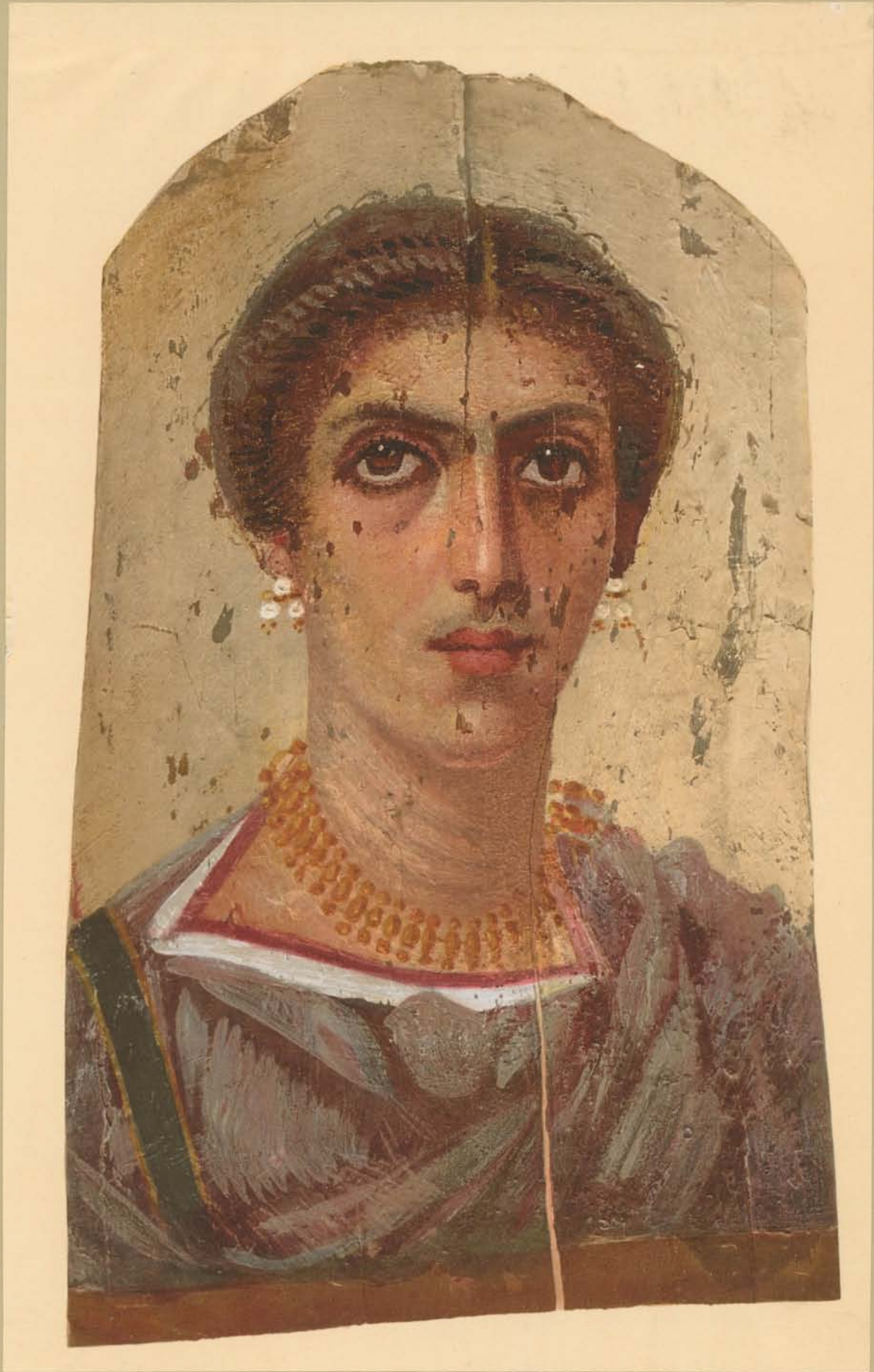






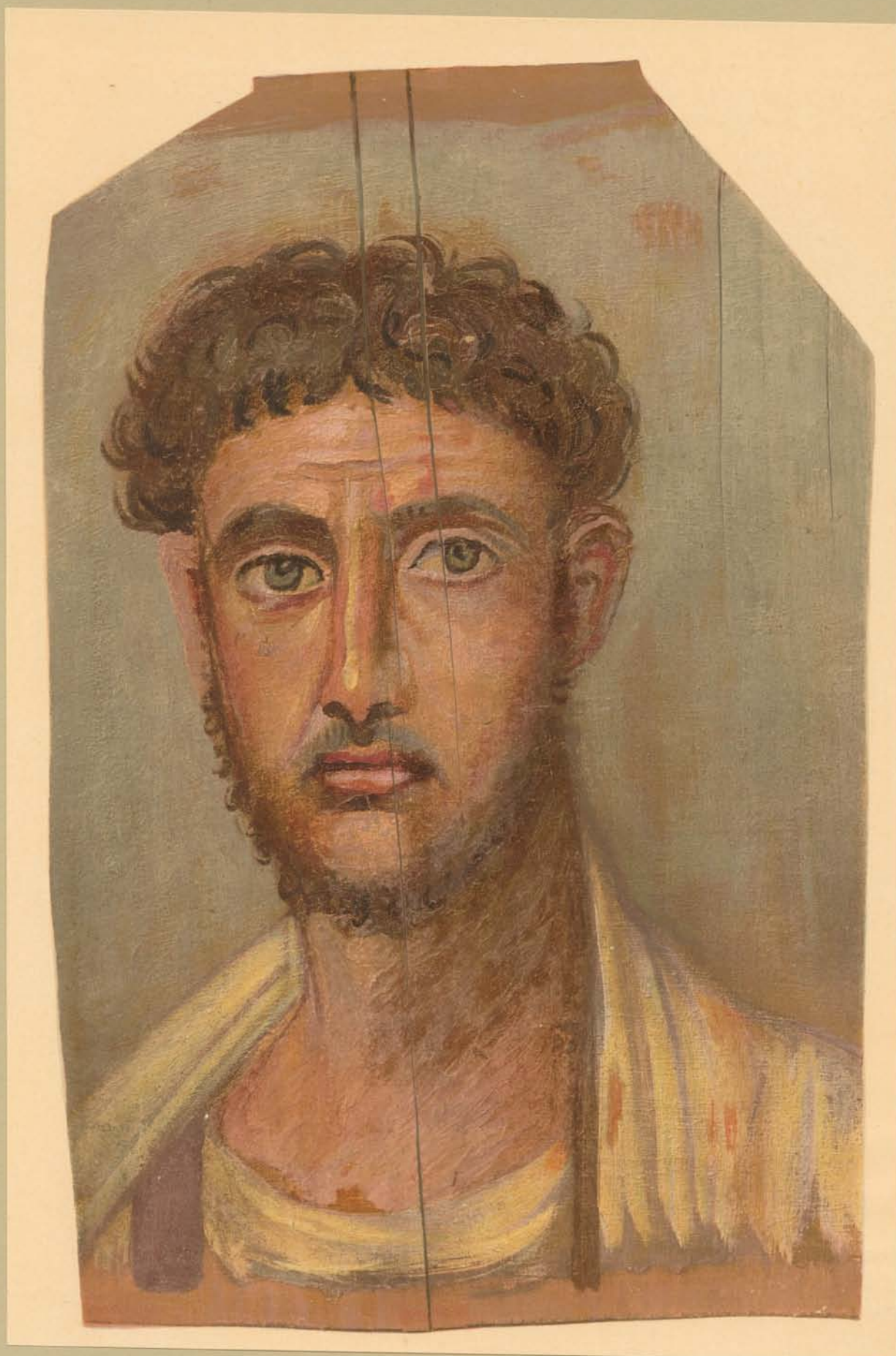














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