

L.C. x. 016. Wooden food-tray; flat, rectang., with slightly raised sloping rim and four sq. projections as feet. All cut from the solid, with small adze or chisel with chipped blade. Under-side much scored from knife cuts. Roughly made. Good condition. $1' 7\frac{3}{4}" \times 9\frac{1}{2}" \times 1\frac{5}{8}"$. Pl. XXVII.

L.C. x. 017. Horn; small, hooked, plugged with wood at base, and pierced with two rectang. holes $1"$ apart in thick part. Prob. handle of stick or pickaxe. Length $5\frac{3}{4}"$, gr. diam. $\frac{3}{4}"$. Pl. XXI.

L.C. x. 018-22. Five frs. of wooden arrow-shafts; 019, 021, 022 butts, showing notch, and 021-22 showing remains of red and black lacquer (?) and bending. Gr. fr. (019) length $9\frac{5}{8}"$, diam. $\frac{7}{16}"$.

L.C. x. 023. Fr. of bent cane lacquered box, side of. Outside black with red lines and border of reversed volutes in black and dark red on red ground. Inside red, with black border lines. $6" \times 1\frac{3}{8}" \times \frac{1}{8}"$. Pl. XXI.

L.C. x. 024-6. Three legs of wooden food-trays; all of plain-waisted cylinder shape, with sq. tenon at top. 026 is upper half of leg only. H. with tenon $4"$, diam. of top $1\frac{5}{8}"$, of waist $\frac{7}{8}"$.

L.C. x. 027. Wooden ladle; small, with round hollowed bowl and straight handle (broken), cut in one piece with bowl and rising from it at slightly acute angle. For this type of ladle, see paper painting Ast. vi. 3. 05 (Pl. CVII). Length $2\frac{1}{4}"$, bowl $1" \times \frac{7}{8}"$. Pl. XXI.

SECTION VII.—THE ANCIENT CASTRUM L.E. AND THE REMAINS ON MESA L.F.

However fascinating were the finds which emerged from the grave-pits of L.C., it was imperative to resume by noon our march towards the day's goal and to leave the completion of the work of clearance for the return journey. As we continued our tramp north-eastwards an uninscribed coin was picked up about a mile from the Mesa, and just there we observed the last of the scanty pottery debris which so far had marked an area of scattered occupation. A little farther on we crossed amidst Yārdangs a perfectly marked ancient river-bed; its winding course came from the south-west and was probably identical with the one we had passed on our way to the Mesa.¹ The clearly defined bed was about 90 yards wide and attained in the middle a depth of about 26 feet, measured from the top of the steeply eroded banks. Beyond it the trunks of dead Toghraks occurred less and less frequently, and about three miles from L.C. ceased completely. The whole landscape was unutterably desolate.

In a belt of boldly cut Yārdangs, about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Mesa, I was surprised to observe some low tamarisks and scanty reeds, all dead, of course, on flat eroded ground between Yārdangs. They could manifestly have grown up only at a time when water had returned to this wind-eroded ground, probably for a short interval. The impression of comparatively recent water action on this ground was confirmed as we proceeded farther. Soon the Yārdangs became short and their slopes assumed a rounded loamy appearance. From about the fifth mile their height sank to 4 or 5 feet only, and we came frequently upon open patches where the almost level surface was covered with *shōr*, hard and cracked. In a few places quasi-petrified reed stalks could be distinguished on the salt-encrusted soil. Wherever Yārdangs were met with up to the seventh mile their soft slopes showed salt-impregnation, obviously due to temporary submersion.

Farther on, patches of dead tangled reeds occurred here and there on the tops of the Yārdangs, which, though now bare of *shōr*, were still quite low and showed the same water-worn appearance. The depressions between them were regularly covered with hard cakes of cracked clay, distinctly suggesting that water had reached this point and dried up there at no very distant date. It has occurred to me since that this may have been due to occasional flooding from the valleys which descend from the Ulun-temen-tu portion of the southernmost Kuruk-tāgh range, and which send their, no doubt, rare drainage in this direction.² It was significant that the tamarisk bushes between the Yārdangs looked in places as if they had died but recently, and that one of the old tamarisks passed was still alive in its upper portion. The level patches of ground with a surface of cracked

¹ See above, p. 225.

² See Map No. 29. D. 2, 3.