

are not quite contemporaneous. The houses along one delta arm might have been deserted because of insufficient water supply at a time when houses along another delta arm were inhabited. Such minor changes inside the delta are impossible to prove with naked facts just now, but they certainly took place. Around 260 A. D., for instance, the region around the Lou-lan station was apparently best suited to the requirements of an agricultural military station, and thus selected for the foundation of the base camp. It may have been the administrative centre even before that time.

6. STRAY FINDS FROM THE LOP DESERT.

The most interesting Lop-nor finds are those recovered from the tombs, but also the small finds picked up from the ground in many different parts of the region are important inasmuch as they furnish valuable information about the distribution of land and water, settlements, roads and so forth in ancient days. As to the origin of the stray finds we are left in uncertainty. In some cases they probably come from destroyed tombs, in others they may have been picked up from dwelling sites where the structural remains are not to be recognized (i. e. 'tati'-finds) and finally, they may have been dropped by travellers in ancient time.

Evidently the stray finds cannot all be contemporaneous but none of those which can be dated is younger than the known end of the Lou-lan occupation.

When HÖRNER and CHEN, in the winter season 1930—31, made their survey of the new lake Lop-nor and the delta of Qum-darya, they also found time to collect archaeological objects as already mentioned. The major part of these consists of loose finds from the eroded clay surface of the ground. In the descriptive list all the articles are mentioned; here only the more important will be treated. On the map Fig. 37 only those finds have been plotted which can be localized to a fixed spot. The inventory numbers of the objects are used also on the maps, though long numbers, e. g. K. 13396 have been shortened to the three last numerals: 396.

In the summer of 1934, Mr. CHEN also collected a certain number of small objects in the delta region. They will be treated in this chapter as well as a few articles found by NORIN. The small finds collected by me and my men in 1934, in a more westerly region than the above (south of Yardang-bulaq and along The Small River) will also be mentioned here.

Coins.

The Wu-ch'u is the most predominating issue. Of the normal type there are 89 pieces, many of them having a small elevation on the middle of the inner rim at its lowest part, Pl. 30:8.