

have originally belonged to plaques of regular patterns, turned up in dozens from the sand covering the interior. Mixed with frequently repeated architectural ornaments there were numerous reproductions in low relievo of the figure of Buddha, in the orthodox attitudes of teaching with hand raised or seated in meditation. Other small relievos showed attendant figures in adoration, such as the graceful garland-holding woman rising from a lotus and probably meant for a Gandharvi, which has been reproduced on the cover of this book. Conventional as all these representations are and evidently casts from a series of moulds, they at once arrested my interest by their unmistakable affinity to that style of Buddhist sculpture in India which developed under classical influences. Nor was I less gratified to observe how well many of these small relievos retained the bright colours with which they had been painted. Equally reassuring proof of the preserving power of the desert sand was furnished by the remarkable freshness in which elaborately painted figures of Buddhist saints appeared on pieces of wooden posts and beams that evidently once belonged to the ceiling.

The clearing of this single small shrine not only yielded some one hundred and fifty pieces of stucco relievo fit for transport to Europe, but supplied me with the indications I needed in order to direct the systematic excavation of structures more deeply buried in the sand. So when on the next day I proceeded to a group of small buildings buried below six to eight feet of sand by the slope of a fairly high dune, just half a mile south of my camp, I was able correctly to gauge their construction and character, though only the broken and bleached ends of posts were visible above the sand. They are seen in the accompanying photograph, which shows the place before excavation. The posts soon proved to belong to the walls of two temple cellas (marked as D. II.), once richly decorated with frescoes and stucco images.

As their constructive features and adornment are typical of those observed in other shrines subsequently excavated at this site I shall describe them here briefly. The larger cella forms a square of ten feet inside, with a door opening from the north. The walls, which