

Large cella,
D. II.
Construc-
tion of walls.

The large cella, as seen in Plate XXV, formed a square of 9 feet 6 inches inside, with a door opening in the centre of the north wall. The cella was enclosed by a quadrangular passage about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide on the east and west sides, but broadening to 6 feet 5 inches on the north and south. This passage, which undoubtedly served for the purposes of circumambulation or *pradakṣiṇā*, had its entrance from the north, but a little to the east of the centre. The photograph reproduced in Fig. 29, which shows the cella as seen from the north after excavation, will help to illustrate the construction of the walls enclosing the cella and passage. They consisted, as in all structures subsequently explored at this site, of a wooden framework having a kind of wattle in its interstices, and coated on either side with layers of plaster to a total thickness of $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The principal parts of the timber framework were massive posts, about 4 inches square, set approximately 3 feet apart. These posts rested on massive beams embedded in the ground and forming a foundation; higher up they were held in position by horizontal transverse beams. Remains of the latter are clearly seen in the photograph reproduced in Plate III, showing the cella from outside its south-east corner. This also helps to indicate how beams and posts were jointed by means of dowels. The beams fixed at vertical distances varying apparently from 3 to 4 feet (the decayed condition of the upper wall makes it impossible to trace anywhere the positions of more than two lines of beams), also served to keep in position a double row of stout sticks, usually three or four to the interval between each pair of posts. Between the double row of sticks were inserted horizontal layers of reeds, clearly seen in Fig. 29, the whole forming a very stout wattle for the support of the plaster coating. The latter consisted of clayey loess mixed with coarse straw and grass, and was surfaced with a finer layer of the same materials containing an admixture of vegetable fibres to increase its consistency. Provided with a coating of distemper the wall surfaces were quite smooth and firm enough to receive fresco paintings, such as were found to cover the walls inside the cella and passage in this as well as in other shrines. The walls of the cella had suffered far less damage than those enclosing the passage; yet even they did not rise anywhere to more than 5 feet above the floor. The latter was found to be covered with plaster similar in make to that of the walls.

Remains of
stucco
images.

The interior of the cella was once occupied by a colossal statue made of stucco and painted, which most probably represented a Buddha. But of this only the feet remained, about 13 inches long, raised on an elaborately moulded oblong base, 3 ft. 3 in. long, 2 ft. 9 in. wide, and about 3 ft. high. As seen in Fig. 29, the top of this base was formed into a lotus pedestal on which the feet of the image rested. This pedestal was found to be covered by only about a foot of sand. Owing to this want of protection the other parts of the statue had crumbled away long ago. The fragments unearthed close to the surface comprised parts of the legs and of the lower drapery, the latter still bearing traces of its dark red colouring. They broke at the slightest touch and could not be removed. These fragments were worked in the same reddish clay, largely mixed with fine vegetable fibres, which is shown by some small stucco reliefs representing seated Bodhisattvas, D. II. 3, 6, 12 (see Plates LIV, LV); these were found within this cella, and probably belonged to some long-perished wall decorations. Of the wooden framework or core, which once supported the heavy image, only the lowest part was still intact, fixed within the left foot (as seen in Fig. 29). Each of the four corners of the cella was occupied by a draped stucco figure, probably somewhat under life-size, standing on a lotus pedestal. But of these statues only the one in the north-west corner was found intact to below the waist. The pose of the legs and the wavy drapery as seen in a photograph recall the small attendant figure R. iv. among the colossal images of the Rawak Vihāra (see Fig. 61); but the drapery is treated in a far more conventional fashion, and the execution is less careful. Of the other corner statues nothing