from N. i. (about 41, including several fragments) corresponding under-tablets belonging to original pairs. A number of these detached tablets have since been re-united by Mr. Andrews and Professor Rapson into complete 'double-wedge' documents, e.g. N. i. 16+104 already referred to. This possibility had, indeed, from the first suggested itself, in view of the close approach in number of the two classes of wedge-shaped tablets recovered. It is probable that the covering- and under-tablets of many of these documents still lay close together, even though their original fastening may have been missing when Ibrāhīm lighted upon them. But in view of the thoroughness with which he had disturbed the original position of this collection of documents no certain opinion can be expressed on the point. The fact of the tablets subsequently excavated by me in other places of N. i. having proved to be mainly detached pieces suggests that the deposit of documents may either have been disturbed by some earlier searchers, or originally thrown down in confusion just as seems to have been the case in N. iv.

Description of wedge-shaped tablets from N. i.

The exact details of the ingenious method of fastening adopted for these remarkable documents on wood were fully ascertained by me only on the subsequent discovery of practically perfect specimens among the rich finds yielded by the ancient rubbish-heap N. xv. It will, therefore, be more convenient to leave their discussion, as well as that of other technicalities of archaeological interest connected with the use of this ancient 'stationery' on wood, for a later section (iv.). Exact details as to the size, type, and condition of each tablet found in N. i. are given in the inventory list at the end of this chapter. It will hence suffice to describe here the general appearance of the wedge-shaped tablets recovered from this particular place, and to call attention to individual pieces. The length of the tablets, which in each pair fitted each other exactly in size and shape, varies from $7\frac{1}{4}$ in. to $15\frac{1}{2}$ in. (N. i. 9. a), and their width at the square end proportionately from $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. to $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. The thickness of the wood is from a quarter to three-quarters of an inch. The wood is generally of uniform thickness throughout each tablet, except near the right hand or square end of the covering-tablets, where an extra thickness has ordinarily been spared for the square seal-socket. The raised edges of the latter are always neatly bevelled down sideways towards the square and pointed ends of the tablets, while the upper and lower edges are left high for the formation of the string grooves (three on each side). The seal-socket is rectangular, in most cases square, the sides varying in proportion to the width of the tablet from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch. Plates XCVIII and C show the complete double-wedge documents N. i. 122 and N. i. 9 as seen from the Reverse of the under-tablet, with their original fastening of hemp string. In Plate IC the Obverse of N. i. 103 is reproduced; here the string crossfolded through the grooves and seal-socket is visible, owing to the clay sealing which had once been inserted in the latter having perished, as in the great majority of tablets.

Kharoṣṭhī text of wedge-shaped tablets.

The text, invariably written in Kharoṣṭhī characters and running from right to left parallel to the longer side, occupies the inner surfaces of the tablets, i.e. the Rev. of the covering- and the Obv. of the under-tablet, which in the arrangement of pairs as originally fastened were turned towards each other. The text always commences on the top of the Obv. of the under-tablet, and only its conclusion is written on the Rev. of the covering-tablet, which explains why the latter often shows only a single line of characters or is left altogether blank, as in N. i. 23, 24, 67, 43, 55. The reproduction given in Plates XCVIII, IC of the inside faces of complete wedge-shaped documents from N. xv. will serve to illustrate the corresponding arrangement in all wedge-shaped tablets of N. i[3].

[3] The inside faces of two documents (N. i. 104+16 and N. i. 105) will be found reproduced among Prof. Rapson's *Specimens*.