

of course, have effected that purpose; but nothing of the kind was found in the rubbish-heap of N. xv., and seeing how rich it proved otherwise in stationery sweepings of all kinds, this negative fact may claim some weight. Now, it is interesting to note that in several of the larger leather documents, but nowhere more clearly than in N. xv. 88 and 305 (see Plates XCII and XCIII) we have distinct indications of a flat oval-shaped object having once been inserted between the third and fourth fold of the document and towards the proper left of it. These indications consist of concavities in the surface of the obverse retaining the impression of the object once placed there, and of a corresponding discoloration of the surface portions thus affected<sup>4</sup>. It is obvious that the object inserted must have remained in that position for some time in order to leave so lasting an impression, and the conclusion that it was a seal thus becomes still more probable. The fact of the impression being found on the same side of the document as the half-detached strip of leather previously noticed suggests a connexion between the two.

Traces of  
former  
sealing.

It is possible to imagine more than one device by which the loose end of the narrow leather strip might be passed round the edges of the doubled-up roll, and ultimately passed between the two folds where the impression just mentioned appears, to be fastened down there by a seal. But in the absence of any direct evidence on the point it would serve no useful purpose to detail such devices. In the case of any such fastening as suggested, it would have been necessary either to cut the strip or to destroy the seal in order to open the document, just as we shall find it to have been the case with the sealed Kharoṣṭhī tablets. But what I am unable to make out clearly is how the reinsertion of a spurious fresh seal could be prevented, the application of a proper seal to the sealing material being made difficult by the very limited space available between the folds. But clerical dexterity, such as we have ample reason to credit the scribes of these ancient 'Daftars' with, might have overcome this difficulty, especially if the sealing material was mainly clay, as in the case of all seals which turned up at this site whether on tablets or separately. In no leather document did I find any actual remains of the seal, and hence only a chemical examination of the surface retaining the mark of the now vanished seal could, perhaps, enlighten us as to the substance used. That it could not have been one likely to affect the writing, as our sealing-wax undoubtedly would, scarcely needs special explanation.

Addressing  
of leather  
documents.

By the described arrangement of folding, the whole of the obverse surface of the document containing the text was protected. The reverse was always left blank, except for a brief line which appears in all well-preserved specimens on the fold that was exposed. Being placed on the back of the left proper side of the obverse, it cannot be seen in the reproduction of N. xv. 310 (Plate XCI). The fact that this short line invariably ends with the same word *dadavo*, 'to be given (to)', which appears on the obverse of all wedge-shaped covering tablets near the string hole, and that the two or three words preceding always close with the genitive ending in *-sa*, left no doubt from the first as to its containing the address. The recurrence of identical names, among which that of the Cojhbo Somjaka is most frequent<sup>5</sup>, immediately after the initial formula of all official orders, enabled me on the spot to assure myself of the correctness of this conclusion. Owing to its exposed position on the outside surface, the writing of the address has often become faint or been partly rubbed off. But the ink on the obverse has in most cases retained remarkably

<sup>4</sup> In N. xv. 310 the impression appears also on the folds above named, but towards the proper right edge of the document, and the discoloration is less marked.

<sup>5</sup> See N. xv. 88 (Pl. XCII), 305 (XCIII). For the same

address on wedge-shaped tablets see N. xv. 24 (Plate IC), 137 (Plate XCVIII), 318 (in Professor Rapson's *Specimens*, p. 15).