

wooden posts of the narrow entrance arranged to take heavy bolts, plainly indicated that the need of defence had been present to those who first built the small post.

The remains of furniture and equipment left behind by the last occupants as of no value showed the same uniform simplicity befitting a remote frontier. There were curious carved handles or hooks of wood, intended, perhaps, as emblems or for supporting stands of arms; pieces of hard wood with leather-lined grooves, which seem to have belonged to cross-bows or small catapults; wooden tent-pegs with rough design of a human head on the top; pieces of painted and lacquered bowls in wood; much-mended rags of silk garments, and, more plentiful still, rope-soled shoes of coarse make (Figs. 173, 174).

Among the dozen or so of wooden records which had found a safe refuge in a layer of refuse on the floor of an outer room, there was one dated in the year 68 B.C. But after all preceding experiences it scarcely needed this documentary evidence to convince me that, in a soil which had seen extremely scanty rainfall for the last two thousand years, and was far removed from any chance of interference by human agency, nothing but wind erosion could prove destructive even to the most perishable remains.

184. GROUND-PLAN OF ANCIENT
WATCH-STATION T.VI.B.

