

turned out to be a consolidated mass of refuse from the sheep-pen and cow-shed overlying the original soil to a height of over a foot and a half. The effect of the protection thus afforded was best illustrated by the condition of the four massive round pillars which had once carried the ceiling and still remained upright. Relatively well preserved up to a height of about three feet from the ground, the bold lathe-turned mouldings gradually grew less and less recognizable higher up owing to the sand-abraded and splintered condition of the wood, as seen in Fig. 110. The rectangular plinths of the pillars were all in perfect state. The jambs of the doors leading into rooms i and vi can also be seen in the photographs.

Finds in  
room L.B.  
iv. iv.

The finds made in this hall were confined to a small fragment of a paper document in Kharoṣṭhī, L.B. iv. iv. 004, the lathe-turned wooden leg of a cupboard, L.B. iv. iv. 003 (Plate XXXIII), and fourteen of those large wooden pins serving to secure timber pieces the decorative use of which has already been discussed above.<sup>8</sup> As the two specimens brought away, L.B. iv. iv. 001-002 (Plate XXXV), show, the knobs of the pins were here of conical shape and lathe-turned. As I found that these pins fitted holes at one end of two narrow beams which turned up in this room, it occurred to me on the spot that they might have been used to secure and, at the same time, to decorate the ends of smaller beams supporting the roof where they joined on to the main cross-beams or else bore the frame of a sub-aethrial opening. Near the northern pillar there was found, embedded in the dung, a large trough, such as used for the feeding of cattle, dug out roughly from a tree trunk. This and an eating tray of equally rough make, 18 by 11 inches, strikingly illustrated the contrast between the original character of the building and the base use made of it when the ancient settlement had fallen to the status of a primitive pastoral station.

Archi-  
tectural re-  
mains in  
L.B. iv. v.

In the poorly-preserved room vi, immediately adjoining on the north-east, the only find was a wedge under-tablet, L.B. iv. vi. 1, subsequently fitted with its covering-tablet, which was discovered in room v. All the richer, in contrast, was the yield of this latter room. As the plan in Plate 28 shows, it measured approximately 25 by 28 feet, and a sitting platform between three and four feet wide ran round three of its sides. Heavy beams, fully a foot thick, served as a revetment, as seen in Fig. 107. The floor of the central area was covered with a solid crust of dung, fully two feet in thickness. It must have accumulated while the building was still more or less intact but used as a sheep-pen and cattle-shed. The fine round pillar, 11½ feet high and 4 feet 7 inches in circumference, which bore the roof, and which in Fig. 107 is seen set up again on its circular base carved of one piece of wood with the oblong plinth, lay on this deposit of refuse. The big double bracket resting on a plain square capital which this pillar had carried (both seen on the right in Fig. 107) was found lying close by to the north-east, just as it had fallen on the dung layer. The inset in Plate 28 shows pillar, double bracket, etc., drawn to scale. On the top of the refuse and just south of the central pillar there lay a piece of diagonal tamarisk matting and a solid wooden frame, 3 feet 2 inches square, made of boards seven inches square in section. Both are likely to have belonged to the roof as it existed while the building was still used by herdsmen.

Lacquered  
wood-  
carvings.

The clearing of the consolidated crusts of refuse took far more time and care than mere digging in sand would have done. But it was rewarded by 'finds' as varied as they were plentiful. If records were restricted to two Kharoṣṭhī tablets and a Chinese slip, apparently undecipherable, there was all the more interest in the fine wood-carvings here recovered. The best-preserved and also artistically most valuable pieces among them are two excellently carved and lacquered wooden uprights from chairs, probably legs or arm-rests, which bring vividly home to us the close and varied relations of the ancient local art of this region with the Far West. One, L.B. iv. v. 0013

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 398.