

SIGNING OF CONTRACT

On the afternoon of April 26th the final meeting took place in the third compound of the university. Those present were:

Mr CHOU CHAO-HSIANG, a former governor of Honan; Professor MA HENG, an archaeologist; Mr Hsü of The Historical Museum; Mr Hsü of The National Library; Professor Hsü of The National University, an archaeologist; Mr HUANG WEN-PI, an archaeologist; Mr WU, teacher of physics; Professor LIU FU; and Mr CHANG, professor in archaeology.

I greeted each in turn. They were very polite and smiling.

We sat down at a long table and began immediately with § 13, which ran as follows: No archaeological excavation is to be undertaken by the mission except on such a small scale as will not in a serious way hinder the movements of the mission, and the material thus collected requires no special equipment for transportation.

This was my own version. I considered it unnecessary and degrading to go slaving to collect for Chinese museums when they had made bones about promising me duplicates. But Professor ANDERSSON asked me to change my course and try to do what I could for archaeology. I therefore now suggested the following amendment to § 13: That is to say, archaeological excavations on a large scale may also be undertaken if they do not hinder the movements of the mission.

This amendment has much scope and force if it is compared with § 5, clause a) The Foreign Field Director (S. H.) is empowered to decide the movement of the mission, the time of work etc., in consultation with the Chinese Field Director.

My suggested amendment was accepted without further parley and CHOU's and my signatures were appended then and there.

When everything was settled, CHOU and I sat down at the long table with the others. CHOU signed the Chinese original in two copies and the English version also in two copies. I followed with my signature. A photographer took first CHOU by flashlight just as he sat writing with his brush and Chinese ink, and then me as I sat writing with a pen. The solemn occasion was to be saved for posterity. The Chinese original is elegant and written on paper that is nearly 200 years old, or from the earlier years in the reign of the Emperor CH' IEN LUNG. Finally we broke up the formal meeting and relaxed for the more intimate discussion of some less important questions.

The game was now so far won, and it remained only to see how the program agreed upon would work out in practice. A couple of the Chinese members had evidently very hazy notions of what was in store for them, for they asked if there were inns all the way between Pao-t'ou and Hami, and seemed disappointed when I replied that there was not a single house along the whole route.