

built up so as to form a facing on both sides for a mound of coarse gravel, the width of the whole being 8 feet at the top.

There could be no possible doubt that we were once again on the line of the Han Limes, and my regret was great that the necessity of proceeding that day towards Mao-mei precluded any attempt to trace its continuation also to the west. But after our return to Mao-mei in September, the initial marches of our journey across the Pei-shan offered an opportunity of revisiting this ground, and the continuation of the line was then determined for over fourteen miles to the west-south-west of the point where we had first struck it. The direction proved exactly that which would take it to the section of the Limes discovered amidst dunes and tamarisk-cones north of Ko-ta-ch'üan-tzū (Map No. 42. A-C. 4).

Continuation of Limes line to WSW.

After having followed the wall eastwards for about a mile we came upon the ruined tower T. XLVI. a rising on a small rocky knoll about 30 yards to the south of the line. It was built of stamped clay with brushwood inserted between successive layers on a base 16 feet square, and still rose to a height of about 9 feet. On the top the clay was reddened by fire. All round, pieces of mat-marked Han pottery could be picked up in plenty, and in the slight refuse at the foot I found two much-decayed fragments of wooden 'slips', no longer legible. Continuing for a mile along the wall, which was clearly traceable, we reached a small knoll, T. XLVI. b, bearing two heaps of stone. No structural remains were found on it, but from a refuse heap on the eastern slope some 20 feet lower down two Chinese records on wood were recovered, besides a few uninscribed wooden pieces. [One of the former has proved to be a fragment of some text on arithmetic.]

Towers T. XLVI. a, b.

A mile and a half farther the mound marking the *agger* brought us to a small rocky ridge about 60 feet high, T. XLVI. c; its flat top about 55 feet across bore remains of roughly built stone walls. The grey granite blocks of which they were constructed had been brought from elsewhere. An extensive accumulation of rubbish on the eastern slope yielded two fragmentary Chinese wooden records, a bronze arrow-head of the Han type, T. XLVI. c. 05, besides a few miscellaneous small objects. Of a tower, T. XLVI. d, which had crowned a small conspicuous ridge about a mile farther on, only a decayed mound of bricks remained. It measured about 18 feet by 7 and stood to a height of 4 feet. Layers of reeds separated the courses of bricks, which were 17" x 8" x 4" in size.

Remains of watch-posts T. XLVI. c, d.

Beyond T. XLVI. d the line of the Limes leaves the region of broken rocky hillocks and passes into an open gravel Sai. It was traceable here, with a slight change of direction to the SE., as a straight but much-decayed mound from 4 to 8 feet in height. A cutting made showed that the *agger* had been built here of layers of brushwood, which, however, through the action of moisture had decayed into mere reddish earth. A broad dry flood-bed coming from the hills accounted for this moisture. Farther on, where the direction to the east was resumed, it was interesting to observe that a double line of white *shōr* cropping out near the top of the low mound clearly marked the original width of the *agger* as approximately 8 feet, just as it did along completely decayed sections of the wall on the Tun-huang Limes and elsewhere.⁵

Line of Limes marked by mound.

It was only after proceeding more than three and a half miles that we came again upon traces of a watch-post at T. XLVI. f, and this, again, was marked only by debris of Han pottery. At T. XLVI. g, a mile farther on, a small shapeless mound of clay, no doubt the remains of a completely ruined tower, was found to occupy the north-eastern angle of a small enclosure, measuring 57 feet by 79 inside. Its walls, which were reduced to low mounds, had been built of layers of gravel and brushwood.

Remains of watch-posts T. XLVI. f, g.

More interesting were the remains at the watch-post T. XLVI. h, which we reached after advancing another mile. Here a tower, built of bricks with layers of reeds between the courses, had

⁵ Cf. *Serindia*, ii. p. 570, note 9.