

expedition, and had been unable to reach dry land before nightfall. . . . This piece of wood furnished another proof that this part of the desert was once a lake-bottom, and that the lake was navigated by boats."

A more conclusive piece of evidence as to the former expansion of Lop-Nor is illustrated in the map accompanying this volume. On hearing that the road from Charklik to Tung Hwang along the south shore of ancient Lop-Nor crossed part of the salt-bed of the old lake, it naturally occurred to me that if the lake ever covered all of the salt plain during historic times, there might be an old road skirting the former shore-line. At Chindelik, near the middle of the old south shore, I hunted for such a road and found two. One follows the twelve-foot strand; while the other runs above the thirty-foot strand along the top of the bluffs which mark it, and from a quarter of a mile to a mile from them. The upper road traverses a plain of sand and gravel, and is marked at intervals by cairns of stones, one large, the others small. For two days I zigzagged between the two old roads, and at various points saw that they always bear the same relation to each other and to the bluffs and beaches marking the strands. The present road runs almost direct from Chindelik, where there are fairly good springs, to Sachgan Sai, the next source of water, where the springs are very saline. The distance is about twenty-four miles, a long day's journey for loaded oxen, donkeys, and camels, even though the track is level and easy. By way of the old road at the base of the cliffs above the twelve-foot strand, the distance between the same points is about thirty-two miles, too much for one day's journey, though the track is per-