

After gaining Altmish-bulak by the most direct route from the north and taking his supply of ice there, he had examined certain ancient remains in the extreme north-east of Lou-lan for which I had not been able to spare time on the previous year's march. Then striking south-west from the point where the ancient Chinese route entered the salt-encrusted bed of the dried-up Lop sea, he had by very trying marches traced its shore line to the northernmost of the lagoons then reached by the spring floods of the Tarim. Finally, after crossing the area of formidable high dunes traversed by me in January 1907, but in another direction, he gained the foot of the Kuruk-tagh. From this exceptionally difficult exploration, which had kept the party from contact with any human being and even the sight of a living animal for a month and a half, he brought back an accurate plane-table survey and detailed diary records, besides interesting archaeological finds.

We subsequently moved westward to the point known as Ying-p'an, situated near to the point where the ancient bed of the 'Dry River' was found to turn off from the Konchedarya, the river from Kara-shahr, as it then flowed. Interesting remains of a ruined fort and a small temple site, first noticed by Colonel Kozloff and Dr. Hedin, were proved by the evidence of finds to belong to a fortified station. A Chinese record mentions it under the name of *Chu-pin*, on the river carrying water to Lou-lan in the early centuries of our era. The station was obviously meant to guard an important point of the ancient Chinese route where its line is crossed by the track still leading from Charkhlik to Turfan. That it held a Chinese garrison was shown by the remains found in some well-preserved tombs.