

mound adjoining it on the south brought to light fairly well preserved quarters, enclosed within a massive wall about three feet thick, and showing some interesting details of arrangement. The approach lay through a narrow passage, the entrance to which on the north, only two feet wide, still retained massive wooden door-posts. Mortices, about five inches square, cut into the side walls showed where the wooden bars that bolted the door must have rested. From a small anteroom, about nine by eleven feet, a flight of stairs, about two feet wide, once led up to the top of the tower; six steps, each nine inches high, were still intact. Walls about one foot six inches thick and built of single bricks, 16" x 5" x 5", with plastered faces, divided the interior of the quarters. A small apartment, ii in Plate 37, measuring nine by seven and a half feet, held a low sleeping platform built of plaster, and is likely to have been also used as an office; for here were found eight Chinese records on wood, some in good preservation. One of them, *Doc.*, No. 255, I may mention at once, records the arrival of an officer, giving the exact date, May 10, 68 B. C.

The larger room to the east, iii, measuring seventeen by twelve feet, served probably as living quarters for the men on duty at the post. In the north-east corner I found a fire-place or oven, separated from the rest of the room by a thin round clay wall burnt red. Ashes with débris filled it to a depth of about four feet. How this oven or stove was actually worked could not be exactly determined. In any case, it is curious to note that this was the only place among the stations on the Limes where some permanent arrangement for heating could be traced. Open fires or portable braziers may have been used elsewhere. Another fitting still *in situ* was a wooden shelf or rack about one foot wide, made of Toghrak sticks and bearing a reed matting with plastered surface. Leaving the records from these quarters¹ to be considered together with the far more abundant harvest of documents which, as we shall presently see, rewarded the clearing of the layers of refuse elsewhere, I may briefly mention a few of the miscellaneous relics that were found here.

Among them is the point-end of a two-edged iron sword-blade, T. vi. b. 001 (Plate LIV); a small well-lacquered wooden bowl, showing remains of scroll ornament, T. vi. b. ii. 001 (Plate LII); a wooden bracket for hanging up equipment, T. vi. b. iii. 001 (Plate LIV), etc. Two wooden objects are curious, and their purpose has still to be determined. T. vi. b. 003 (Plate LII) is a wedge-shaped block painted black, about eleven inches long, of a type also represented by two other specimens, T. vi. c. iii. 001 and T. viii. 1, which bear traces of two or three Chinese characters. A loop of string fixed into the broad end showed that the piece of wood was intended to be carried about or hung up. A conjectural explanation of its use proposed by my Chinese secretary is recorded in the note below.² More puzzling still are the two wooden bars, two feet long and evidently forming a pair, T. vi. b. 004. a-b (Plate LII). The long slits cut down the middle of the narrow sides show remains of a leather lining, which suggests that a string or some other thin object was meant to move in these slits. Is it possible that these bars formed part of a catapult or some similar contrivance? A short Chinese inscription painted on one of them is no longer legible.

At the very time of my arrival at this station the extent of the refuse-heaps near it had

¹ I may note here a few corrections in the site-marks shown for these records in *Documents*, pp. 62 sqq.: No. 261 should read T. vi. b. iv. 3; No. 264, T. vi. b. ii. 1.

² Chiang Ssü-yeh thought that the two large characters painted in red on the big wedge T. viii. 1 (Pl. LII) might be read as a personal name and would give no sense otherwise. This and the loop of string always found with these wedges recalled to him that, at Lan-chou and other garrisons, he had

seen soldiers, when off duty and permitted to absent themselves from their posts, carrying about conspicuous pieces of wood inscribed with their commandant's name as tokens of their 'permit'. Such a token would save the bearer from being questioned whether his absence was authorized; if provided only in a single specimen, it would also prevent too numerous applications for leave. I give my learned secretary's ingenious guess for whatever it may be worth.

Living quarters of soldiers.

Miscellaneous relics from quarters.