

The fact that the length of the fascines in these stacks was always found to agree with that of the fascines used for the construction of the Limes wall necessarily attracts attention. It had led me, when I first discovered such stacks at the stations T. XII. a, XIII, to assume that the fascines had been stored primarily for the purpose of rapid repairs of the wall. Since it is certain that there was no wall extending along the flanking line of watch-stations by the side of the marshy basin, the discovery of the same stacks at T. VI. b affords definite evidence against this assumption. But the use of the fascines for repairs of the wall, where there was one, is likely enough to have been also intended. In any case, it seems reasonable to connect the special dimension of these stacked fascines with the standard size for wall fascines, which must have been determined by the regulation thickness of the wall.

Fascines  
as used in  
Limes wall.

#### SECTION IV.—THE LAST WATCH-TOWERS OF THE LIMES, T. VI. C AND D

The structural observations made at the ruin of T. VI. b were supplemented in an interesting fashion when I explored the outlying watch-post, T. VI. c (see plan in Plate 37). Situated about three miles further west, it occupies an ideal position on the flat top of a small and completely isolated clay terrace. This rises as a conspicuous landmark to a height of fully 150 feet above the surrounding low ground, and represents the last offshoot westwards of the tongue-like plateau which bears the remains of T. VI. b. Its top completely overlooks the great basin, which is covered near by with scrub and scanty growth of Toghraks, but which, from less than half a mile to the west, is a bare salt-encrusted marsh with here and there open sheets of water. The precipitous wall-like slopes of hard clay, which erosion is slowly but steadily undermining at their foot, made access to the ruin quite impossible except from the narrow eastern end of the terrace, where a steep ravine descends about half-way. Even there I had to use my hands in climbing. The flat top of the terrace, about 80 yards from east to west and nowhere more than 30 yards across, seemed like the roof of a huge natural keep, and its defence correspondingly easy. But what must have formed its chief recommendation for those who laid out the line of these watch-stations was, no doubt, the wholly unbroken view it commanded to the west and the south.

Natural  
strength of  
terrace  
bearing  
T. VI. c.

Standing on such ground, which its height and isolation equally protected from abrading drift-sand and from damp, the tower had survived in a very fair state of preservation. As seen in Plate 37, it formed a square of twenty feet at its base. This occupied the top of a small natural clay terrace rising  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet higher than the floor of the quarters adjoining on the east and south. The sun-dried bricks used for the walls of the quarters, as well as for the solid masonry of the tower, measured  $14\frac{1}{2}$  by 7 inches, with a thickness of 5 inches. The tower tapered slightly towards its top, and there, at a height of about  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet above the floor, were the remains of a small room,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet square, which was obviously meant to serve as a place of shelter for guards. I subsequently found evidence that similar little watch-rooms had once been provided on the top of other towers of the Limes. But owing to more advanced decay they were rarely traceable with equal clearness. A shallow hollow observed on the east face of the tower probably marked the position of the footholds which aided the watchmen in climbing up to the top by means of a rope.

Well-pre-  
served tower  
T. VI. c.

The quarters adjoining the tower had suffered more decay, and their walls, thickest outside, stood nowhere more than 4 feet above the ground. But a uniform cover of débris, in which decayed bricks mingled with reeds and timber from the roofing, had afforded protection for any small relics that had been left behind after the post was abandoned. The arrangement of the rooms bore a distinct resemblance to that in T. VI. b. The small ante-room iv was entered by

Quarters at  
T. VI. c.