

Watch-tower above ruin.

Magazine remembered in Tun-huang tradition.

Ruined town O-ts'ang mentioned in *Sha chou chih*.

the foundations of a room about 15 feet square, partly dug out of the solid clay, partly walled. Besides a few miscellaneous objects, including two woven string shoes, a *Wu-chu* coin, and a wooden die, T. XVIII. iii. 003 (Plate LIII), there was found here a fragmentary wooden record, *Doc.* No. 414, also dated 52 B. C.⁷ In addition, I need only mention a ruined watch-tower built on the edge of the gravel plateau which overlooks the site from the south. It rises only to about 12 feet in height and seemed of inferior construction, being built of layers of coarse clay separated by reeds at intervals of 3 or 4 inches. Owing to its position it is visible from a considerable distance, and may have been erected as a signal station or road-mark. The ruined magazine itself, in spite of its great size, cannot be sighted from afar because it is placed low down in the marshy basin.

We have no direct archaeological or documentary evidence for settling the approximate date at which the magazine ceased to be occupied. It is, however, obvious that its use could not well have continued beyond the period when the garrisoning of the Limes stations ceased, about the middle of the second century A. D. Fortunately the very size of the ruined structure seems to have assured it attention in the local tradition of Tun-huang, and to this circumstance we owe brief references made to it in two treatises of T'ang times that deal with the *mirabilia* and other local topics of Tun-huang. Both are preserved in manuscripts recovered from the walled-up temple library of the 'Thousand Buddhas'. One of these is the *Tun-huang lu*, which Dr. Giles has translated from a booklet in my collection, and to which reference has already been made. There we read: 'The town of *Ho-ts'ang* is 230 li north-west of the city. In ancient times a military magazine stood there.'⁸ There cannot, I think, be any doubt that the ruined magazine of T. XVIII is meant here.⁹ The bearing to the north-west of Tun-huang town is correct, and the distance of 230 li indicates as close an approximation to the actual distance along the route shown by Map No. 78, viz. 50 miles, as we can possibly expect. I have already given abundant evidence to prove that the *li*, as used by the Chinese of T'ang times for road measurement in Central Asia, corresponds to about one-fifth of a mile.¹⁰

The other text containing a mention of our ruin is the *Sha chou chih*, which Professor Pelliot brought away from the 'Thousand Buddhas', and which Mr. Lo Chên-yü subsequently published in his *Tun huang shih shih i shu*. According to Dr. Giles's note, the *Sha chou chih* states of the 'ancient town of O-ts'ang 阿倉 (as the name is there written)' the following: 'It is 242 li north-west of Tun-huang, and is usually called the town of O-ts'ang. Its date is unknown. The place is in ruins, but the foundations still remain.' A further statement of the text is quoted by Dr. Giles to the effect 'that its walls were only 180 paces in circumference'. It is easy to see that the description given by the *Sha chou chih*, a text dating also from T'ang times but apparently somewhat older than the *Tun-huang lu* (Mr. Lo Chên-yü, as Dr. Giles informs me, assigns to it the approximate date of A. D. 713-42), is perfectly correct if taken to refer to the ruined magazine of T. XVIII. The bearing and distance agree, as well as the dimensions given for the walls. The block of three big halls which must be meant measures about 1,000 feet in circumference, and to this the estimate of 180 double paces—for such are obviously intended—corresponds accurately enough. It is of interest to note that the term *ts'ang* 倉 found in the name, as recorded by both texts,

⁷ The site-marks of *Doc.* Nos. 426, 427 have been misread, and ought to be T. XVIII. i. 10, 12; not T. XVIII. iii. 10, 12.

⁸ Cf. Giles, *Tun Huang Lu*, *J.R.A.S.*, 1914, p. 722. I am informed by Mr. A. D. Waley that the name as written in the *Tun-huang lu* (see p. 14, as reproduced *loc. cit.*, p. 728) is O-ts'ang 阿倉, and therefore identical with the form found in the *Sha chou chih*. [But see Dr. Giles's remark in *Add. & Corr.*]

⁹ Dr. Giles himself was 'much tempted to identify the military magazine with the huge ruined structure' T. XVIII, of which I had already given a fairly detailed account in *Desert Cathay*, ii. pp. 127 sqq. But, owing apparently to a misapprehension as to the distance indicated in the texts, he inclined in the end to the conclusion that 'our author has made a mistake in locating the magazine at O-ts'ang'.

¹⁰ See above, pp. 320, 559; 649, note 12.