

comfort. This point deserves to be specially noted with regard to questions raised by the documents about the organization of the detachments which in ordinary times were actually stationed on the Limes Wall. The plans sufficiently illustrate the disposition of the small rooms to which apparently, for reasons of safety, access was gained only by a single narrow entrance.²³ The walls were mostly built of bricks of the same size as generally found in the masonry of the towers, and they, too, were amply covered with whitewash.

It only remains for us to pass in rapid review the few ruins, distinct from the wall and watch-towers and yet connected with the Limes, which I was able to trace, and of which the true character has been revealed by my explorations. As they have in each case been fully discussed, the briefest reference will suffice here. Starting from the east, we have first the ancient magazine, which is represented by the imposing ruin of T. XVIII, situated in a carefully selected position on what is still the route towards Lop. We have documentary proof that it goes back to the first century B.C., and we are justified in assuming that it was probably built at the same time as the westernmost extension of the Limes and the first organization of the military and trade route to Lou-lan. Of the traffic which then passed along it, the great size and solidity of the structure affords striking evidence. Next we come to the site of *Yü-mên*, or the Jade Gate, marked by the small but massive fort and the adjoining débris-covered mound of T. XIV. This site, too, is on the direct route to Lop, and its position was carefully chosen to meet the needs of a headquarters station and *point d'appui* for the 'barrier' (*kuan*) which formed the terminal and most exposed section of the Limes.²⁴ The detailed discussion in the preceding sections of the historical notices referring to the Jade Gate makes it unnecessary to emphasize the importance and interest of this site. Badly decayed as the remains on the mound adjoining the ancient fort are, the extent of refuse-heaps there found and the contents of the documents which they yielded clearly show that the site must have been occupied during Han times by an agglomeration of quarters, numerous if probably not very substantial. The last remark applies also to the site of T. xv. a, due north of the Jade Gate and only a short distance behind the Limes wall. I have, I believe, proved above that it was occupied by a subsidiary 'gate' station of *Yü-mên* controlling the 'New Route of the North' opened about A.D. 2.²⁵

Ancient
Limes
magazine,
T. XVIII.

Site of the
Yü-mên
head-
quarters.

We next pass the small watch-station of T. XII, placed at a point where the configuration of the ground made it particularly easy to exercise additional police control over the traffic on the Lou-lan route.²⁶ Then, after sighting from afar the outpost of T. IX. a, thrown out well beyond the wall for the sake of a better command of the foreground, which was here unprotected by marshes,²⁷ we arrive at the terminal western corner of the Limes, T. IV. I have fully explained above the indications which lead me to assume that there once stood here an entrenched camp or caravan halting-place capable of defence.²⁸ Unfortunately, the physical conditions at this locality have deprived us of documentary evidence to verify the character of the scanty remains. Finally, following the line of the watch-towers échelonné along the south-west flank of the Limes, we come to the site of T. VI. b, where an abundant harvest of documents going back to the first half of the first century B.C. has allowed us to recognize a small station forming the sectional headquarters for the outposts that guarded the extreme flank of the Limes.²⁹

Terminal
western
corner of
Limes.

South-west
flank of
Limes.

One more remark in conclusion. There probably never existed on our globe a systematically organized and guarded border-line stretching over desert ground which was as barren and forbidding

²³ Cf. T. VI. b, c, T. VIII, XXVII in Plans Pl. 34, 37, 38.

²⁴ See above, pp. 683 sqq.

²⁵ Cf. above, pp. 705 sqq.

²⁶ See above, pp. 679 sq.

²⁷ Cf. above, p. 662.

²⁸ See above, pp. 636 sqq.

²⁹ Cf. above, pp. 644 sqq.