

the local name borne by their particular watch-tower, without that of the company which furnished the picket on duty there, may possibly indicate prolonged local stationing of these officers.⁴⁰ In any case, this would have presented obvious administrative advantages. It should be noted that we have in No. 483 a direct order from the *tu-wei* of the Jade Gate addressed to a watch-tower commandant. Similarly the order conveyed in No. 55 to a *hou-chang* to appear at the official residence emanates from a *ssü-ma*, i. e. a superior officer attached probably to a *tu-wei*.⁴¹ On the other hand, subordination of the *hou-chang* to the commander of his company is distinctly proved by the order contained in No. 377. The *hou-shih* 候史, who are repeatedly mentioned in the documents in connexion with duties similar to those of the *hou-chang* and several times are named immediately after them, evidently were employed as their deputies and assistants.⁴² The curious pay statement preserved in No. 62 shows clearly the modest nature of their emoluments, amounting to twenty 'pieces of money' per diem.

Subordinate officers along the Limes line.

The curious specification, No. 592, concerning the corporal Wang, to which reference has been made above,⁴³ shows us that under the *hou-chang*, who was 'graded' as an officer, there were placed directly the rank and file of the men on duty along the Limes.⁴⁴ But that there were other officers also employed on duties connected with it is shown by two records, Nos. 452, 378, which mention a *wei-shih* 尉史 and a *shih-shih* 士史 respectively. M. Chavannes' note on the former quotes the statement of a commentator on the Former Han Annals according to which 'in all commands along the barrier there were placed officers called *wei* 尉, one for every hundred li; there were besides [under each *wei*] two *shih-shih* and two *wei-shih* who were charged with inspecting the frontier'.⁴⁵ Another, perhaps, more specialized function may have been that of the 'sé-fu of the pass (*kuan*), 關番夫', to whom two documents from the Jade Gate, T. XIV, Nos. 367, 373, briefly refer.

Origin of rank and file named in documents.

It still remains for us to consider what the documents can tell us about the rank and file of the troops which kept watch and guard on the Tun-huang Limes. The very character of the petty records recovered from the ruined watch-stations accounts for the relative frequency with which we find individual soldiers of humble condition mentioned in them. M. Chavannes has already called attention to the interesting information to be gathered about the origin of the men from those numerous documents which name them with a precise indication of the canton, sub-prefecture, and command from which they came.⁴⁶ Referring to his analysis for all details, it will suffice here to state that the soldiers thus specified belong to two groups approximately equal in number. One comprises twelve men from distant provinces, mainly Shan-hsi and Ho-nan; the other is made up chiefly of men from Tun-huang (eight) and two more born in the command of Kan-chou.⁴⁷ M. Chavannes has duly pointed out that the class brought from a distance is much the larger among the men mentioned in the records from T. VI. b, which belong approximately to the period 65-57 B. C.,⁴⁸ and that the opposite holds good of those named in documents from other watch-

⁴⁰ Cf. Nos. 58, 168, 309, 314, 487, 492, 571, 662. In Nos. 439, 613 the name (*Kao-wang*) seems to have been borne both by the locality and by the company which garrisoned it.

⁴¹ Cf. above, p. 746, about *ssü-ma*.

⁴² Cf. *Doc.* Nos. 66, 552, 553, where the *hou-chang* and his *hou-shih* are named one after the other. No. 262 is an issue order for fodder to be taken from the *hou-shih* of a certain watch-post. For other documents see Nos. 81, 190, 405, 459, 460, 542.

⁴³ See above, p. 746.

⁴⁴ In No. 574, however, we see yet another grade, that of *tsao-shih* 造史, inserted under the *hou-chang*, 'to command

non-commissioned officers and soldiers'.

⁴⁵ No *wei* appears to be mentioned in our documents. A *wei ch'êng* 尉丞 is referred to in No. 318, but without any indication of his function. In No. 436 a *wei-liang* 尉良 is mentioned as under the company commander of Ta-chien-tu.

⁴⁶ Cf. Chavannes, *Documents*, pp. ix sq.

⁴⁷ It is to be regretted that in the document No. 392, T. XVII. 2, of 58 B. C., which gives a list of thirty-two men, the place of origin can be made out for three only.

⁴⁸ Out of the eight men mentioned in Nos. 43, 62, 72-5, 77, 183, there are five from Shan-hsi, one from Ho-nan, another from Ssü-ch'uan, and only one from Tun-huang.