

ming company is described as 'of *Yü-mên*' is of interest and agrees with the evidence supplied in a conclusive form by far more abundant documents elsewhere, which proves that the 'Jade Gate' must be looked for on this westernmost portion of the Limes. But it does not help us to determine the exact location of this famous frontier station, which we shall have occasion fully to discuss further on.⁶ The fact that the Hsien-ming company, in the only other document where its name occurs, T. XII. 10, *Doc.*, No. 597, is spoken of as 'of *Kuan-chi*' sufficiently warns us against attaching too great importance to such local designations of detachments. They may often indicate only the place where the head quarters were stationed for the time being, and they always require to be carefully considered in the light of other records, and especially of topographical and archaeological evidence. Such evidence, I may add, in this case excludes all idea of the 'Jade Gate' having at any time been at T. VIII. The ground to the south of the wall is here an absolutely barren gravel plateau without water, and hence wholly unsuited for an important head quarters station such as *Yü-mên* must always have been.

Miscellaneous fittings of quarters.

Of the other inscribed pieces found at T. VIII I need only briefly mention T. VIII. 2, No. 591, which is a large painted board of wood, with an enumeration of various kinds of equipment, including two quivers. All such equipment had been removed long before the tower came to fall and bury the abandoned quarters. Yet the finds of miscellaneous objects left behind as of no use or value were more plentiful here than at the majority of the watch-stations, as a reference to the Descriptive List in Chap. XX will show. The number of painted pieces of wood, T. VIII. 0018, 0022, 0029, &c., evidently fragments of furniture, suggested that some of the fittings of the quarters were still in their place when they were buried by the débris. Painted wooden brackets used as hooks for hanging accoutrements, etc., as already described, and of various types (T. VIII. 004-009, 0030-33, Plate LIV), were numerous here. As they, like most of the larger miscellaneous fragments in wood, were found in room i from 2 to 4 feet above the floor, it may be assumed that they were brought down with the walls to which they were fixed.

Foot and inch measure of Han period.

The possible use of the wedge-shaped wooden block, inscribed with some large Chinese characters too much effaced for decipherment, T. VIII. 1 (Plate LII), has already been discussed.⁷ It, too, had probably been hanging on the wall, just like the interesting wooden measure and 'set square', T. VIII. 4 (Plate LIV), which still retains its suspension string, though broken. Referring to the Descriptive List for a detailed account, I may point out that this measure, resembling in shape a shoemaker's foot-rule, is marked into 10 divisions of an approximately uniform length of $\frac{9}{10}$ inch each, with further subdivisions on the decimal principle. Like the measure T. XI. ii. 13, from a station to be described presently, which is of the same dimensions, it gives us the exact value of the Chinese foot and its ten inches, as in use under the Han dynasty. The interesting instance in which I was able myself to apply the test of this ancient foot-rule to the roll of silk found at the Lou-lan station has been discussed above, and two others connected with strips of silk found on the Limes itself will have to be considered hereafter.⁸ Elsewhere, I have also discussed the confirmatory evidence furnished by the great mass of ordinary 'slips' of wood and bamboo recovered from the Limes as well as from the Niya and Lou-lan Sites which, as Chinese tradition clearly tells us, were meant to measure one foot in length, and which in full conformity always show an average length of 9 to $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches.⁹

⁶ See below, pp. 689 sqq.

⁷ See above, pp. 645, 652.

⁸ Cf. above, pp. 373 sq.; below, pp. 701 sqq.

⁹ See above, pp. 382, 593, 597; *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. 358 sq. I may note here in passing that, according to Chinese information collected by Prof. F. Hirth (*T'oung-pao*,

1896, p. 505), the foot of the Chou epoch is supposed to have measured 23.5 centim., or $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches, which is exactly the length proved by my finds for the foot of Han times. According to the same source the foot under the Ch'in and Han is supposed to have measured 17.3 centim. and towards the end of the latter 29.3 centim. M. Chavannes, *Les livres*