

Extracted Route log from Hanzhong to Zhouzhi along the Ancient Tangluo Track by Sir Eric Teichman

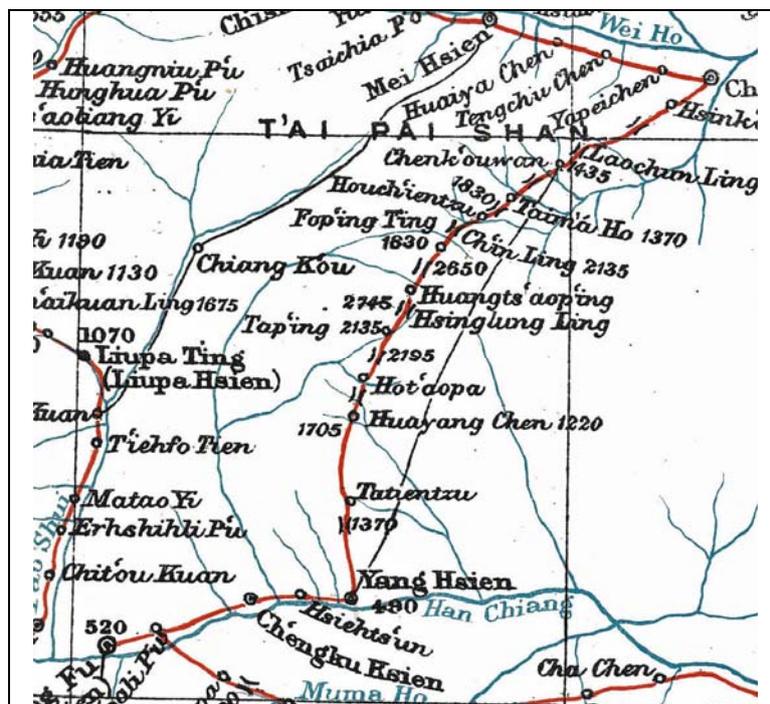
David Jupp
April 2013.

Introduction

In this document has been collected a set of extracts from Sir Eric Teichman's Book:

Teichman, Eric (1921). *Travels of a Consular Officer in North-west China*, Cambridge University Press, 1921.

In these extracts, he provides a reasonably detailed track log of his journey from the Hanzhong Basin to the Wei River valley by means of the central route. The central route was called the Tangluo road since ancient times and is one of the four main Shu Roads normally listed for the sections that crossed the Qinling Range from the Wei Valley to the Hanzhong Basin. Sir Eric provided a map of his travels and the area involved in these extracts is as shown below:



The extracts come from Chapter IV ("From Hanchung in the Han Valley across the central Ch'inling Shan to Fenghsiang in the Wei Basin") and provide estimates of distances travelled in Chinese Li and altitudes of selected places measure by Teichman with an altimeter. As well as this route log, Sir Eric provided a general map in his published book with heights in metres and passes marked. The relevant section is the map above. This map and his description of directions and general bearings as

well as the local terrain are all useful tools to locate his route in modern maps as described [HERE](#). A Google Earth presentation of Teichman's route and other routes that make up the complex of paths in the Tangluo Road can be obtained [HERE](#).

In the following, only sections of text directly related to his travels on the track are included. It is broken up into "stages" summarised in **yellow highlight**, which are a day's travel. He specifically wrote that they stayed over night at the places indicated – except for one (Teichman's Watientzu; Pinyin Wadianzi) where there is no other possible conclusion. There are also 3 additional Notes made by Sir Eric which provide some track information but were mainly included for wider value than just the route.

Teichman's Travel Log

In the introduction to Chapter IV, Teichman writes: "*We returned to the Wei valley by the Fop'ing trail, which debouches on to the plain at Chouchih Hsien, whence we turned westwards to Fenghsiang Fu. From Hanchung to Fenghsiang by this route is a distance of about 840 li*". He then follows with the following extracted description:

Track Notes:

For the first two days from Hanchung the road runs down the valley plain past the district city of Ch'engku Hsien to Yang Hsien, two easy stages of 75 and 60 li respectively.

[End of first two Stages] Hanzhong to Chenggu 75 Li; Chenggu to Yangxian 60 Li.

The difficulties of this route begin on leaving Yang Hsien. The trail here turns north and reaches the base of the mountains after about 8 li. After following a small valley for a short distance, it leaves the stream and ascends over cultivated downs to reach the edge of a spur between two ravines. There is a steep scramble up this ridge for two hours or more by a very rough rocky track to the top of the first range bounding the valley. The view from this ridge looking north is over a series of steep sparsely timbered ranges, rising one behind the other and blocking the way to Fop'ing. From the pass (4400 feet) there is a steep drop into a winding gorge which debouches after an hour's march into the ravine of a stream flowing S.E.; a short distance up this ravine lies an inn, called Ta Tientzu, 65 li from Yang Hsien, which makes a suitable halting-place for the first stage.

[End of Stage] at Dadianzi 65 Li from Yangxian

From Ta Tientzu the trail continues up the ravine to the north, past the hamlet of Hohsiatzu, for 35 li to the foot of another range running east and west. There is a stiff climb of about a thousand feet to the pass (5500 feet), followed by a precipitous drop of as much down the other side into a ravine which leads straight down to the un-walled township of Huayang Chen, lying in a basin of sandstone at the junction of several ravines which provide water and space for rice fields, the last seen until the descent into the Wei valley five days further north. The surrounding mountains are much broken, prettily wooded, and full of pheasants. To the north a high range runs

east and west across the direction of Fop'ing, while to the south-east there is a large gap in the mountains following the flow of the stream. This stage is also about 65 li.

[End of Stage] at Huayang 65 Li from Dadianzi

The trail now continues north up a boulder-strewn valley which soon contracts to a gorge, and then turns up a side glen which leads after a scramble to the pass (6000 feet), two to three hours' march from Huayang. This ridge is the boundary between the districts of Yang Hsien and Fop'ing Hsien and the magistrate of the latter had left his isolated post in the wilds of the Ch'inling Shan to meet us here. There is a fine view to the north over two high rocky ranges running east and west, the further one rising to a height of over 10,000 feet. From the pass the track drops steeply into the gorge of a stream flowing west, where there are some huts called Hot'ao Pa. Crossing the stream the path strikes almost immediately into another glen, which leads up through dense thickets of the dwarf-bamboo to the top of the nearest of the two ranges seen from the last pass. From the summit there are fine views all around over the mountains densely wooded with pine, birch, and other trees; to the north the same high range still blocks the road to Fop'ing. From this pass (7000 feet) there is a precipitous drop of a few hundred feet into the gorge of another stream flowing S.W., up which the trail turns northwards for a few li to reach some huts and a mule inn called Ta P'ing, with a little cultivation, mostly potatoes. We halted here for the night, 60 li from Huayang.

[End of Stage] at Daping 60 li from Huayang

Note 1 about an alternative Route – on Zhou's main trunk route:

[This is a tiring march, practically one long scramble up and down the mountains all the way, by very bad tracks much too rough to ride over. The second pass can be avoided by taking an alternative route down one stream and up the other, which is said, however, to be impassable for mules.]

Note 2 on Altitudes:

[Ta P'ing is nearly 7000 feet high, Huayang Chen about 4000, Ta Tientzu about 3000, and Yang Hsien about 1300. The trail thus ascends by a series of steps from valley to valley across the intervening ranges from the Han River to the heart of the Ch'inling Shan.]

On the following day's march the trail continues up the stream to the N.E. through forests of pine and birch for about 15 li to reach the pass in the big range. The ascent is comparatively easy except for the last few hundred feet, the valley being flat and open and apparently of glacier origin in contrast to the deep narrow gorges usual in the Ch'inling Shan. From the summit of the pass (9000 feet) there is a fine view to the north towards T'aipai Shan (12,000 feet), which appears as a rocky ridge sprinkled with snow, with a lower range in the immediate foreground over which the path leads to Fop'ing. The pass is called the Hsinglung Ling, and is crowned with an old ruined temple and gateway.

Note 3 on the Xinglong Ling Pass:

[There are additional signs that this trail, now unused except by a few isolated coolies carrying salt into the Han valley, smugglers, and others with good reasons for

avoiding the main road, was once a much more important route. It is of course the most direct road from Hsian to Hanchung.]

From the pass there is an easy descent through another flat open valley, where we saw some silver pheasants (or perhaps they should be referred to as blood pheasants, a species of *Ithagenes*), into the valley of a stream flowing west, where there is some cultivation, as usual mostly potatoes, and some huts, called Huangts'ao P'ing; these valleys are less thickly wooded than those on the southern side of the pass. Here the trail leaves the stream at once and strikes up the opposite slope to the north to reach another pass after an hour's easy climb. This range is the last to be crossed before reaching Fop'ing and is a few hundred feet lower than the Hsinglung Ling. From the pass there is a steep descent by a very rough track through a narrow gorge until one debouches after about 25 li into the broad cultivated valley of the Fop'ing River, up which the road runs eastwards through corn fields swarming with pheasants for ten li to Fop'ing T'ing.

[End of Stage] (stayed a couple of days) Estimated 60 Li from Daping using 15 Li between the Xinglong Ling Pass (Teichman Pass 5) and the Caishen Ling Pass (Teichman Pass 6). This distance was not provided directly by Teichman.

Leaving Fop'ing the track climbs up the range immediately to the north by zigzags to reach the pass about a thousand feet above the valley, whence there is a fine view over a wilderness of mountains all around. To the N. and N.W. lies T'aipai Shan, a bare rocky ridge still carrying a good deal of snow in May. This pass (about 7000 feet) is the watershed between the Yangtzu and Yellow River basins, the streams to the north all flowing down into a river called the Hei Ho, which rises in Fop'ing district and flows through the mountains to join the Wei near Chouchih Hsien. The trail to the latter place, however, does not follow down the gorges of this stream, but passes directly N.E. over a series of spurs running down from T'aipai Shan, and is little if at all less arduous than the portion between Yang Hsien and Fop'ing.

From the pass the path drops steeply through a pine wood into a densely wooded gorge running east. After an hour's march down this ravine the stream is joined by one of greater volume flowing down from the snows of T'aipai Shan. The scenery in this neighbourhood is exceedingly beautiful, the torrent descending in a succession of cascades through a gorge hemmed in by densely wooded heights. Continuing down this winding ravine for another hour's march, the village of Houchentzu is reached, where the valley opens out and there is some cultivation. Here the path leaves the stream, which flows off towards the east to join the Hei Ho, and strikes up a gully which leads after a steep ascent to a pass over a ridge some 1500 feet above Houchentzu, whence it drops precipitously into the cultivated valley of another stream flowing down from T'aipai, and reaches the village of Taima Ho, at about the same elevation as Houchentzu (4500 feet) and 60 li from Fop'ing. This was another hard march, scrambling up and down mountains all day; but the scenery was so fine and the air so bracing that no one seemed too tired.

[End of Stage] at Dama He 60 Li from Foping.

At Taima Ho the track again leaves the stream, which flows east into a deep gorge towards the Hei Ho, and turns northwards up the mountain side to gain a pass over a

ridge some 1500 feet above the valley. The ascent is easy, this spur being covered with a sort of clayey loess cultivated in terraces; the appearance of loess so far in the Ch'inling ranges is unusual. From the pass the track drops into the gorge of another stream flowing down from T'aipai Shan; it follows up this gorge for a few li past the hamlet of Ch'enk'ou Wan and then turns up a side ravine to reach the base of a ridge called the Laochün Ling. From here there is a stiff climb for two to three hours, ascending 2500 feet, up a wooded mountain side to reach the pass (7500 feet), T'aipai Shan again becoming visible at intervals. From the summit there is a fine view to the S.W. across the lower ridges traversed by the trail back to the watershed range north of Fop'ing. After a steep drop of 2000 feet through a gorge, Watientzu is reached, a few huts and inns, surrounded by precipitous mountains, in the ravine of a stream flowing down from T'aipai. This is another tiring march of 60 li. One is here in the district of Chouchih, the Laochün Ling ridge being the Fop'ing boundary.

[End of Stage] at Watianzi 60 Li from Dama He

From Watientzu the path runs down the narrow wooded gorge for about two hours' march, and then turns north up a gully which leads after a steep climb of 2000 feet to the summit of another ridge trending S.E. This is the last of the eleven passes which have to be crossed on this trail between the Han and Wei valleys. From the northern face of the range there is a very fine view over the Wei valley plain nearly five thousand feet below. From the pass the track descends by steep zigzags and then through a narrow gorge for three hours' march to reach the village of Hsink'outzu, lying a little above the plain at the base of the mountains, 80 li from Watientzu.

[End of Stage] at Xinkouzi 80 Li from Wadianzi

From Hsink'outzu to Chouchih Hsien, a distance of 30 li, the track descends across an undulating plain, which in spring is one vast wheat-field dotted with hamlets and the walled farms peculiar to the Shensi plains. Chouchih, a first class Hsien city and the centre of one of the rich agricultural districts of the Wei valley, lies a few li to the south of the Wei River.

[End of Journey] at Zhouzhi 30 Li from Xinkouzi

Route Table of Places

The information in this extract can also be tabulated as a route of ordered places visited. The following Table provides Teichman's name, Pinyin equivalent, the altitudes given in the text in feet (where it is recorded), the altitudes from the map in metres (not always the same) and a conversion of the text altitudes to metres. The comment usually indicates the size or importance of a settlement.

There are some anomalous distances and altitudes that involve decisions about the conversion of Li to Km as well as the accuracy of Teichman's altimeter. All of these are discussed and analysed in the technical Document describing the production of the Google Earth map and its accuracy.

Teichman Tangluo Road Journey Summary

Teichman WG	Pinyin	Altitude Text (ft)	Altitude Map (m)	Text (m)	Comment
Yang Hsien	Yang Xian	1300	490	396.24	
Pass 1	Pass 1	4400	1370	1341.12	Top of first range.
Ta Tientzu	Dadianzi	3000		914.4	End stage (overnight) 65 li from yangxian
Hohsiatzi	Heixia Zi				past the hamlet of Hohsiatzu
Pass 2 (Mountain top)	Pass 2 (Hill Top)	5500	1705	1676.4	
Huayang Chen	Huayang Zhen	4000	1220	1219.2	End Stage 65 Li from Dadianzi
Pass 3	Pass 3	6000		1828.8	Boundary between Yangxian and Foping
Hot'ao Pa	Hetao Ba				some huts called Hot'ao Pa
Pass 4	Pass 4		2195		
Ta P'ing	Daping	7000	2135	2133.6	End stage 60 li from Huayang
Pass 5 (Hsing- lung Ling)	Pass 5 (Xinglong Ling)	9000	2745	2743.2	15 Li from Daping
Huangts'ao P'ing	Huangcao Ping				some huts, called Huangts'ao P'ing
Pass 6	Pass 6 (Caishen Ling)	7000	2650	2133.6	
Fop'ing Ting	Foping Ting	6000	1830	1828.8	End of stage (Est. 60 Li from Daping)
Pass 7 (Ch'in Ling)	Pass 7 (Qin Ling)	7000	2135	2133.6	
Houchentzu	Houqianzi	4500		1371.6	Houchentzu is reached, where the valley opens out and there is some cultivation
Pass 8	Pass 8	6000	1830	1828.8	
Taima Ho	Dama He	4500	1370	1371.6	End of stage 60 li from Fop'ing
Pass 9	Pass 9	6000		1830	Ridge 1500 ft above valley
Ch'enk'ou Wan	Zhenkou Wan		1435		hamlet of Ch'enk'ou Wan
Pass 10 (Laochtin Ling)	Pass 10 (Laojun Ling)	7500	2285	2286	
Watientzu	Wadianzi	5500		1676.4	End of stage 60 li from Taima Ho
Pass 11	Pass 11				Summit of SE trending ridge
Hsink'outzu	Xinkouzi		610		End of stage 80 (?) li from Watientzu
Chou-chih Hsien	Zhouzhi Xian		365		30 Li from Xinkouzi