

An Itinerary Of The
Route From Sikkim To
Lhasa:
Together With A Plan
Of The Capital Of Tibet
And A New Map Of The
Route From Yamdok
Lake To Lhasa
(1901)



Graham Sandberg

AN ITINERARY
OF THE ROUTE FROM
SIKKIM TO LHASA,

TOGETHER WITH
A PLAN OF THE CAPITAL OF TIBET AND
A NEW MAP OF THE ROUTE FROM
YAMDOK LAKE TO LHASA.

BY
GRAHAM SANDBERG, B.A.

CALCUTTA :
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR AT THE BAPTIST
MISSION PRESS.
1901.



DESCRIPTIVE ITINERARY
OF ROUTE BETWEEN
BRITISH TERRITORY AND LHASA.

Miles to Lhasa.	Miles from Yatong.	Miles from last stage.
-----------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------

Ya-tong ཡཱཏོང, "the desolate upland," often sounded as *Nya-thang* by the native traders and as *Yatung* by Europeans, is the INTERNATIONAL TRADING-STATION established under the Treaty of 1894 in the Chhumbi Valley lying between Sikkim and Bhutan. It is located in lat. 27° 25' 30" N., long. 88° 56' E., at an elevation of 9,980 ft. above sea-level; and is reachable from Darjeeling *via* Kalimpong and Nga-tong over the Jelep Pass in 88 miles or 5 days easy journeying. A very rough descending pathway following the course of an affluent stream of the Amo Ohhu (the Chhumbi Valley river) takes you from the summit of the Jelep Pass in a little under 6 miles to Yatong village. A descent of over 4,000 ft. in altitude is accomplished in that distance. Arrived there, you find you have been descending a small branch valley of the main Chhumbi Valley, within which branch valley or ravine Yatong lies. Just below is a wall-like structure running across the bed of the affluent stream and running up for a short distance on either side of this lateral valley. This structure is the barrier-wall meant to demarcate the line beyond which British subjects may not pass into the main valley and so to the north. The wall is roofed-in and has loop-holes and really

278	0	0
-----	---	---

Miles to Lhasa.	Miles from Yatong.	Miles from last stage.
-----------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------

in part comprises a series of residences wherein dwell three Chinese officials,¹ a Tibetan *ding-pon* or sergeant, and some 20 Tibetan soldiers. In the whole wall there is only one doorway or gateway; the gate is situated on the left side of this branch river-bed, and through this narrow ingress must pass all traffic to and from the Forbidden Land beyond. An inscription on the barrier-gate is said to prohibit the Chinese and Tibetan guardians from suffering any British subject to go through on pain of the severest punishment.² It is feasible, however, by climbing up the hill-slope, above the upper termination of the wall on the Yatong side, to make one's way round into the road beyond the gate and beyond the Rinchengong bazaar, which lies on the other or Tibetan side of the wall. A large monastery, Kachu Gompa, has to be negotiated on the way, however, situated on the hill-side above and beyond the wall.

Rinchengong, built at the point where the Yatong stream flows into the main river, having been traversed by boldly marching through the nominally-guarded gateway, or else compassed by means of the hill-side detour, at one end of the village a long *mendang* of *mani* stones is found with a lengthy wooden bridge beyond it. The bridge crosses the main river, the Amo Chhu, flowing southwards and fed from both the bounding ranges of the Chhumbi Valley. The pathway N. to Tibet proceeds by the eastern bank of the river; and so we cross the bridge. Passing Chhumbi, which with its castle-like buildings is

¹ It is stated that when these officials are changed they travel to and from China not *via* Tibet, but *via* Calcutta and Shanghai—a fact rather suggestive as to whether or not their presence is sanctioned by the real authorities of Tibet in Lhasa.

² The common argument of all Tibetan and Chinese officials on the frontier against acceding to the most trifling infringement of the frontier by Europeans is that if the European persists in passing they cannot prevent him, but the result will be that their (the guards') throats will be cut (*ke chö-ki-re*) by the authorities. This appeal *ad misericordiam* is of course usually effective. We are assured by those who know that the assertion made is unfounded, the Tibetans rarely inflicting such punishments. Our informant adds that a revolver and "a heavy pair of Lancashire boots" would cause the biggest guard to flee

seen on the hill-slope to our left on the opposite side of the stream, a resting-place may be found in one of the many caverns which occur in the vicinity both of Chhumbi and at Yusakha, a place about 8 miles from Rinchengong. One of these caves is a recognized halting-place which may be used or avoided by the traveller according to the circumstances.

Chhumbi Valley is divided into two districts named *Tomo-me* and *Tomo-toi*. Lower Tomo or *Tomo-me* is a flourishing valley in which are many villages and where both cultivation and grass are particularly abundant. At GALINGKHA, a village of two-storeyed stone-built houses, 14 miles from Rinchengong, *Tomo-me* is left and *Tomo-toi* or Upper Tomo entered. Here there seems to be a customs-examination of travellers and traders unless the place is passed at night. There are roads on both sides of the Amo Chbu, but the best track still keeps to the east side until Lingme Phu is reached. Here is a bridge by which the west side is gained only to cross back a couple of miles further up. Henceforward the river has to be continually crossed and re-crossed by bridges or fords; the road always ascending in elevation. The pasture in Upper Tomo is particularly good and there are many herdsmen's camps called *Dok*, where herds of yak and sheep are kept. Villages are now few, but rent for the use of the grass will be demanded by the Dokpa or herdsmen from parties of travellers. At Shemchen Sampa is a big bridge with an official who demands toll on merchandise. Khangbu, with a large monastery, is mentioned as another place for customs blackmail. It lies further north, near Phari. Thieves and raiders from Bhutan are alleged to frequent the whole Chhumbi Valley route. Broils and murders are said to be not uncommon and all traders go armed, their wool being a valuable commodity coveted by the Bhutanese robbers.¹

¹ Sir Joseph Hooker in his Himalayan Journals refers to the evil reputation of the Bhutanese in the Phari district. Dr.

Miles to
Lhasa.

Miles from
Yatong.

Miles from
last
stage.

244 34 34

Phari Jong སམ་རྩོད་ (alt. 14,200 ft.) an important town with a large fort which dominates a considerable number of double-storeyed houses, and the head-quarters of two Jong-pöns or district officers.¹ It stands on a plain surrounded on all sides but the north by hills not far distant; the great Chomolha-ri being a prominent object bearing 88° from Phari. Here is a company of 50 Chinese soldiers, rudely armed, under a Chinese *daloye* with Tibetan troops under a Ku-pön or captain.² The routes from over two or three Bhutan passes converge to this place and most of the trading transactions intended by our Tibetan Treaty to be conducted at Yatong really are carried on here. Customs duties are of course levied at Phari; much vigilance being exercised over all who pass through the station. A thievish set of people haunt the place. As much of the country to be now traversed is arid, loftily elevated, and uninhabited; fodder for ponies and cattle should have been laid in at the *Doks* before reaching Phari. At Phari it is to be had, but at high prices.

Thence the track leads N., the mighty Chomolha-ri with its many attendant peaks being a never-hidden monitor to the E. About 12 miles from Phari the TANG-LA (15,700 ft.) is surmounted by a gradual and hardly-noticeable ascent, the hamlet of Chhukya lying at its southern foot. From the northern face of the Pass (whence is little descent) a desolate plain of gravel and sand very wearing

Macdonald, late of the Scotch Mission at Kalimpong, assures me that the outrages by Bhutanese on travellers in Chhumbi still continue. Recently a very serious affray arose which had to be settled at Rinchengong by the Jong-pöns of Phari and emissaries from the Deb Rajah of Bhutan.

¹ In Clement Markham's "Tibet" will be found Bogle's description of the appearance of Phari in 1770.

² We were informed by Mr. V. Henderson of Yatong that the Chinese soldiers now on duty in Chhumbi Valley were over 200 in number. However, we have the strongest reasons for believing he has been completely misled in this estimate by his Chinese friends. From native Tibetan information of a reliable character, we learn that the actual number of Chinese troops does not exceed 100 at the highest estimate at any time.

to the animals' feet, the *Pün-sum Thang*, is traversed for about 12 miles to

Tuna སུ་ལྷ་ ("Promontory to be taken **220 58 24**
en passant") a village of very poor dirty folk, which is always availed of as a halting and sleeping place. Next day's journey is sure to be most trying: gravel under foot, terrible wind, hot sun. It lies through a series of flat-bottomed valleys with patches of herbage (from July to November), but mostly sterile. *Guau*, marked on the maps, seems to be a mere name without houses yet with pasturage and many streamlets flowing from some hills at the foot of which it is located. A very large lake lies two miles to the E.; its waters salty, but the streams at *Guru* are good and drinkable. The usual place to halt either only for a meal or else to encamp is, however, three miles further on, at *Досняк*, which one Tibetan authority assures me has no houses or inhabitants, but only *chhu-mik* (springs); another man gives it to me as a stage. The great lake still lies to the right; and most people seem to push on to the place styled *Caloashur* by Bogle, really

Kalwa Shar ཀལ་ཤར་ (alt. 14,750 ft. 1)¹ **195 83 25**
which stands in an open place beyond a defile beside a brisk river flowing from another lake which lies north of the large sheet of water lately skirted. This new lake is the *Kala* or *Kalwa-tsho*. Here lodgings under cover seem obtainable and the denizens well-disposed. *Thomas Manning* notes his having had quarters in a long, low, rambling dwelling belonging apparently to several families. The track thence keeps to the river flowing out of the east side of *Kala-tsho* and which is the upper stream of that which, further north, is known as

¹ The position of this place seems doubtful, and probably neither *Ohalu* or *Kala-pangka* of the Transfrontier sheet are correctly located. Most likely the two are one and the same place. *Kala-pangka* is possibly an error for *Kala-pag-thang*, the name of a plain south of the *Kala-tsho*. *Kala-shar*, as the name indicates, lies probably east, or perhaps north-east, of the lake.

Miles Miles Miles
to from from
Lhasa, Yatong, stage.

the Nyang-chhu, a considerable affluent of the Tsang-po. Continuing along shut-in valleys bounded by bleak and barren hills between which, now and then, distant snowy mountains may be seen, the next halt is at

179 99 16 **Samando** ས་མ་མོ་ where two narrow valleys meet. On the hill-slopes round here are usually to be seen numerous deer, wild asses, and large byrrhel or *napo* sheep. A few houses make up the hamlet. Journeying onwards, houses and deserted settlements with broken-down huts and sheep-folds are not infrequent; but the pasturage, though fairly general, is coarse and brown. The important staging-station to be next reached is

161 117 18 **Khangmar** ར་ཕ་མའི་, a place marked not far enough to the N. in the North-East Frontier Map of the Survey of India; it should stand some six miles further N. than indicated in that sheet. Here are found a number of good houses, a caravanserai, and a temple. This place is the *Kanmur* of Bogle and *Ganga-maar* of Turner. It is described as a village round which a few willows have been planted, the first trees to be seen since leaving the Chhumbi Valley. A cross trade-route to Lhasa passes N.-E. from Khangmar, joining the main track between Gyang-tse and Lhasa at Ralung and saving some 30 miles for those who do not care to visit Gyang-tse. It traverses some lofty passes, but is the shortest route to Lhasa.

The route *via* Gyang-tse soon after quitting Khangmar assumes a less bleak and sterile aspect. The altitude lowers to 13,500 ft., the river becomes a fertilising influence to the large valley through which it flows, cultivation promoted by irrigation streams is frequent, and small cornmills recur together with straw and hay stacks. Wild fowl and ducks are usually plentiful. Some hot springs, issuing from a rock on the top of a pebbly mound, are met with about 3½ miles beyond Khangmar. The water, which is 100° Fahr. in temperature, spouts out at intervals with a noisy burst and

is partially retained in an artificial basin. At CHANGRA, a place with many willows (possibly the "Dudukpai" of Bogle), a large affluent stream from the S.-E., the Nyiru-chhu, joins the Nyang-chhu or main river. A halt can be called here, but not necessarily for the night, as the next stage is short. Some travellers go on and stop at Ne-nying only four miles out from Gyang-tse in order to prepare to enter the large town fresh in energy and early in the day.

Ne-nying (ལྷ་ཡོང་ཁོང་), four miles S. of Gyang-tse, is a prosperous group of homesteads surrounded by irrigation streams and profuse cultivation. Fields and crops on ledges and on alluvial soil abound. There are two ancient monasteries with temples attached, the whole within a belt of willows and poplars. 151 127 20

Gyang-tse Jong རྩོམ་རྩོམ་ཡོང་ (alt. 12,895 ft.) 147 131 4
lat. 28° 54' N., long. 89° 29' 20" E., the *Tchiantse* of D'Anville's Map of 1733, *Gian-su* of Bogle, *Ghansu-jeung* of Capt. Turner, *Giansu* of Manning, and *Gian-tchi* of Hooker. It is a large town standing on the east or right bank of the Nyang-chhu in a broad well-cultivated valley full of white lime-washed villages. The most prominent object is a steep lofty rock with a castle of many walls and turrets built up from the riverside on the rock-face and crowning the summit. This castle was built 550 years ago, but still continues a sound and sturdy structure. Just north of the fortress is a famous monastery, the Palkhor Chhoide, with a temple nine storeys high, built in octagonal form on the plan of a gigantic chhorten. The town, which is surrounded by a wall, mounts the hillside and contains a large open *thom* or market-place, also about 150 houses disposed in narrow lanes; and the wall surrounding the whole place has been estimated at 1½ mile in circumference. There are two bridges placed across the river, but there is a quantity of water about the place and overrunning the roads. Gyang-tse is noted as a

Miles to Lhasa.	Miles from Yatong.	Miles from last stage.
-----------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------

pony-mart, where at certain seasons sound and serviceable animals are to be had at from 40 to 80 rupees each. The market for general supplies is the property of the monastery, and opens every day from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Large quantities of mutton, both fresh and as dried carcasses, are brought in for sale; also butter, barley, radishes, and coarse cloths are generally found in abundant quantity as staple products of the place. There are many looms engaged in manufacturing coloured woollens. Besides the market there exist in the town about 20 Nepalese shops and the Chinese keep a few restaurant dens. Lodgings to travellers of position are often assigned in the rooms of a large temple known as Gánden Lhakhang. Gyang-tse is a military station usually occupied by 400 Tibetan soldiers poorly trained and not properly armed, together with a Chinese contingent said to be 50 in number. The Tibetan troops are under a colonel styled a *Dá-pón*; while a Chinaman called *Dáloi* commands the 50 Celestials. There are large Government granaries for the military commissariat, and the Tibetan troops here are said to receive the whole of their pay in barley, which only, however, amounts to 40lbs. per man a month. The Chinese soldiers are better paid, receiving 6 *srangs* or 18 rupees a month each, as well as 18 rupees further and 60lbs. of rice per mensem as "family allowance" for the Tibetan wife and her progeny which every Chinaman takes. The *yul-mak* or peasant militia also assemble periodically at Gyang-tse for drill and inspection.

From Gyang-tse the road to Lhasa at first makes S.-E., and then turns due E., keeping mainly to the banks of a large affluent of the Nyang-chhu, which often bears that name also, and the course of which lies to the left of the route. At first the road is some 20 feet broad, but after a couple of miles becomes a mere path and in the neighbourhood of arable fields serves the purposes of a drain as well. Several villages and hamlets are passed and there is abundant cultivation. Presently the track enters some rough ravines and then turning E.N.-E. runs along the steep banks of the river

which seem composed of red slate with mica. About 11 miles from Gyang-tse (after passing a few hamlets with a temple and 2 or 3 chhortens) a steep narrow valley is traversed with the river changed into a violent hill torrent running below the pathway. A bridge is eventually crossed at Kudung, whence leaving Chyama monastery on the left and then passing through the village of Gyari-dom, the halting stage of Gobshi is reached after a very short day's march.

Gobshi (or "The Four Gates") is a large 132 146 15 village, as villages go in Tibet, having 50 houses, of which three are of fair size and respectable-looking. There are a few poplars and pollarded willows about the place and a stream from the S.-E. makes confluence with the main stream coming from the E., imparting all the importance of a meeting of the waters and demanding the consequential adjuncts of a mill, a mill-house, and a bridge. Crossing the bridge, 8 curious mountain peaks standing in a row are seen to the S.—they are supposed to be 8 self-sprung images (*rang-chung kuten*) of Gur Lha. Two miles from the bridge the track passes Kha-wo Gompa, a monastic establishment of the Nyingma school with the walls of its buildings decorated in blue and red stripes. At five miles from Gobshi another place Go-chye is reached, situated on a long flat open space, very exposed, some 300 feet above the river. Thence penetrating a curious narrow defile, wherein two ponies can hardly pass, the way descends to the margin of the stream, which two miles further on, at ШЕТОИ, must be forded on pony-back.

From Shetoi there are, it appears, two paths leading to Ralung Sampa, the halting-station of the day's march. The road which does not require the just-mentioned fording of the river is the most frequented, but that along the southern or left bank is the shorter path. Taking this latter way, at LONGMA a bridge 80 feet across brings you back again to the north bank and following the riverside you come to the village

Miles	Miles	Miles
to	from	from
Lhasa, Yatsong.	Lhasa, Yatsong.	last
		stage.

of PESAR, where are barley-fields one above the other on narrow terraces. Thence the route gradually ascends until after a journey of about 7 hours from Gobshi the small town of Ralung Chhong-doi is gained.

113 165 19

Ralung Sampa or **Ralung Chhong-doi** is important as a post-station and has a Chinese stage-master with a rest-house large and comfortable for Tibet. It stands at the S.-W. base of the lofty snow-capped mountain range of Noi jin Kang-sang. A few miles south of the post-station amidst a knot of radiating hills lies the monastery of Ralung Thil noted as the headquarters of the Red-cap Buddhist sect to which the Bhutanese belong. The shorter trade-track direct from Khangmar runs in here.

The next stage is a very long one, namely, to Nangar-tse or Nagar-tse Jong, though it may be broken at a petty hamlet named Dzara. It is, moreover, an extremely tiresome and even arduous journey, there being much steep ground while streams generally half-frozen with slippery blocks of ice have to be crossed at frequent intervals. An early start is essential if the full stage is contemplated.

After a ride of two hours or less due N., an extensive flat high above the river is attained. On this level plain, which passes eastwards and which is overhung by a long wall of mountain, is much pasturage and several large black yak-hair tents of Dokpa herdsmen are always to be seen pitched around. The plain soon begins to slope steeply upwards over tiring ground and the track, veering eastwards, leaves the vicinity of the river in order to ascend in the direction of the Kharu Pass. On this grassy but stony plain are numerous streams running down to feed the river just left. They descend from the glaciers of the Noi jin Kang-sang range, the snowy peaks of which are now striking objects to the N.-E., and the ascending plateau across which they run is styled Womathang or the Milky Plain. Many yak are to be seen grazing and presently the track skirts the foot of a glacier. There, at the

summit of the sloping flat, the path turns directly E. through an open valley to gain the Pass, and a small Dokpa hamlet or winter-lair named Pamthang being left on the left hand, it continues for about two miles up a slight ascent whereupon two small stone bridges are reached built over the channels of a small river running north up a glen. A short way further brings you to the *laptes* or climax of the Kharu-la, a tall cairn and a chhorten marking this point in the Pass. The Kharu Pass is estimated at 16,600 ft. above sea-level and is the highest point reached on the road between Yatung and Lhasa; the slope up to it is, however, very gradual. Most of the way hence to Dzara is along a series of bleak verdureless valleys with the steep spurs from the Noiijin Kang-sang range protruding into these flats with deep ravines in between. Just before Dzara is reached the track descends rapidly and for about 250 yards passes down an awkward bank of loose sand and gravel.

Dzara or Dza-wa possesses a post-house for official travellers of rude build containing a couple of cells about four feet in height, but it is styled the *gya-khang* or Chinese circuit-house. No forage or fuel, save dried-dung, is obtainable here. About two miles from the place the country opens out into spacious flats with several meandering streams and grassy plots where yak and sheep are grazing. Combining, the streams form the Kharnang Phu-chhu, along the northern bank of which the path runs through rocky gorges in a rapidly-descending course for six miles until Ringro or Ring-la is reached. Here the defiles are left behind and an extensive stony plain is entered upon which stretches thence to Nangar-tse and the shores of Lake Yamdok. Quick travelling is possible on these flats and Nangar-tse Jong with its houses on a steep slope overhanging the fort may be reached after a ride of six miles.

96 182 17

Nangar-tse Jong (really Nam-kar tsar
ད-ལའ་རྩེ) is situated on the W. shore of the famous

81 197 15

Miles Miles Miles
to from from
Lhasa Yatong. stage.

Scorpion Lake, the Yamdok-tsho. The blue waters stretch away to the N.-E., a fine sight with the mountains of the curious island or rather peninsula encradling them into a broad estuary-like bay near the town.¹ Samding monastery forms also a prominent object on a conical hill about three miles to the E. of Nangar-tse. This is the well-known establishment of both monks and nuns presided over by a great abbess, who is the incarnation (*tulku*) of the goddess Dorje Phagmo. The hill on which the monastic buildings stand is ascended by a series of numerous stone-steps now in a broken and dilapidated condition. From the summit is a wonderfully weird view not only of the great lake and its mountainous island-like peninsula, but also of a strange darksome inner lake just below the southern cliff, known as the Dudmo-tsho or Female Demon Lake. The lady-abbess may probably be interviewed; she is a great lady, the only woman in Tibet allowed to be carried in a sedan-chair.²

Nangar-tse stands on a fertile flat engirt with much swamp and grass and is 14,100 ft. above sea-level. It has a fisherman as well as an agricultural population, a few boats of hide of the rudest construction being possessed by the denizens. Outside, in the near vicinity, a number of yak herdsman dwell in black tents. The route from the place trends N. and keeps to the shore of the lake making the village of Hang in about two miles and thence passing through Hailo, Dablung Dah, and De-phu. At Hailo fish can be generally bought. De-phu is a hamlet located

¹ The natives of the Yamdok basin all agree in asserting that the water of the lake is unwholesome for human consumption, although it is in no way salt or brackish and animals drink it with impunity.

² Since writing this, we have learnt that the lady, who was in power in 1892 when Sarat C. Das paid his visit, died in 1898, and that, in accordance with the usage as to re-incarnations of the highest class, the new goddess and abbess was found in an infant girl. Dorje Pagmo, the new lady-abbess, is thus now (1901) a child only 4 years of age. Her mother lives with her for the present at Samding.

500 yards from the margin of the lake with a few barley-fields around it. The lake here becomes rather a narrow strait between the peninsula and the main shore; and on the rocky slopes of the heights, overhanging the in-shore valleys to the left, herds of wild sheep and wild goat are constantly visible. Three miles from De-phu and nine from Nangar-tse the shore-line turns westward and the path winds along the side of a steep bank within only some 20 or 30 feet of the water. The white walls of the castle and houses of Palde Jong appear here on the horizon standing up from across the waters. Wild geese (*ngang-pa*) and long-billed white-breasted cranes (*tung-tung*) are abundant in this part.

The furthest point westward of the lake is styled Yarsik, where there is a large village;¹ but the track does not get so far to the W., but takes to an artificial embankment which has been constructed across the shallow western neck or swamps of the lake, thus saving a considerable detour. About 100 ft. of the middle portion of the embankment is constructed of rubble, and the whole is about 550 ft. in length and 20 ft. in breadth and runs from S. to N. After crossing this construction, which is pierced by several gutters for the passage of the water pent in on the western side and which bears the name of Kalsang Sampa "the bridge of good-luck," you arrive on a foot-path trending eastwards along the northern shore of the lake and occupying a ledge of the mountain

¹ Yarsik appears to be a considerable place and is sometimes taken in the route to and from Lhasa. Sarat Chandra Das called in at it on his way back from Lhasa. "At 8 A.M.," he writes, "we reached Yar-szig, where we cooked our breakfast, sitting in the court of a gentleman's house. Yar-szig is a large village containing about 200 families. We obtained enough of yak-milk, eggs, butter, and flour, and all at a comparatively low price.....After a short conversation with the householder respecting the rains and pasturage of Yamdok, and also of the revenue which people pay to the Government, we bid them farewell. The rains had been uniform in Teang and an excellent crop was expected this year. The pasturage of Yamdok was most luxuriant. The upper or western part of Yamdok, extending in front of and beyond Yar-szig, was overgrown with long rank grass upon which hundreds of dairy yak were feeding."

Miles Miles Miles
to from from
Lhasa, Yatong stage.

cliff overhanging the lake. Presently, to avoid a headland, the path ascends into a narrow saddle-like pass, where between two pilasters of natural rock are strings of coloured rags and, hardby, places for burning incense to the mountain demons. The cliff beyond bears an evil reputation for murders by footpads, and is styled Sharü-theng. A ride of about an hour thence brings the traveller to the important town of

65 213 16 **Palde Jong** (པལ་དྲོ་རྩེ་ pron. "Peh-te Jong," alt. 14,200 ft.), the place after which in the old maps the lake was named Lake Palti. It stands on the margin of the waters, its massive white-washed fortress a conspicuous object, and comprises many respectable houses placed within courtyards. It lies at the base of the wall of mountain known as Khaмба La Ri, which separates the Yamdok Lake basin from the valley of the great Yeru Tsang-po, the upper Brahmaputra. To get into this valley is the object of the traveller to Lhasa. Two routes are in use. Some way to the W. of Palde is one Pass, the Nabso-la (five miles from Palde), but this is not considered the best road. The usual way is to follow the lake coast-line some nine miles or so eastwards to where the ascent to the **KHAMBA-LA** begins. Here is a village Tama-lung by name. The way up to the Pass though steep and tortuous is not a lengthy business on this the southern side and the path is a good one. The *lap-tse* or culminating point of the Pass, which is marked by a couple of cairns, stands some 900 ft. above the lake-surface and may be reached after a climb of two hours from Tama-lung.

We may now at length for the first time look down into the valley of the mighty Tsang-po; and we shall at once perceive how much deeper it lies than the basin of the lake we have just left—in other words, its altitude above the sea is much lower, only in fact a little over 11,000 ft. It follows that the descent from the Pass top on that the northern side is much longer and steeper than the southern descent to the lake; but, in travellers to Lhasa, being a descent, it is as easy as the

shorter ascent just surmounted. The zig-zag downwards is very trying for a few hundred feet and the distance to the northern foot of the Pass is estimated at five miles. Low down, wild roses and brambles grow on the sides of the road, also a few small fir trees and rhododendrons are seen about. Here at the base of the Pass is a large wooden bridge with stone approaches crossing a ravine. Perched on a flat slope hardby are two or three huts for shepherds, hundreds of sheep feeding around. The path edges a muddy rough-tumbling stream from the bridge and is itself little better than a watercourse full of gravel and rock *débris*. A short way on lies the village of KHAMBA PARTSE, described by S. C. Das as a straggling collection of about 40 wretched cottages. Here is a halting-place with a *gya-khang* (circuit-house) half-a-mile N.-W. of the village, overlooking the Tsang-po which lies 300 yards below. Proceeding by the track in a northern course and avoiding the *gya-khang*, the way takes first over rocks with the river beneath and then along sandy cliffs, two or three hamlets being passed *en route*. The river runs N.N.-E. just there, be it noted, and the path-way accompanies it. Some four miles beyond Khamba Partse the track begins to ascend and when two *chhortens* have been passed it mounts a steep cliff rising abruptly from the river and thence in less than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile reaches the large village or *shyo* (as it is styled) attached to the monastery of PALCHHEK OHHU-WO-RL. It is here that the famous old chain-bridge across the Tsang-po is to be found.¹

¹ Manning in his journal thus describes that portion of his journey which was evidently the stage between Khamba Partse and the Chaksam ferry: "No part of Tibet that I have seen is so pleasant as the part we passed through in our next morning's ride. The valley was wide, a lively stream flowed through it, houses and villages were scattered about; and under shelter of mountains on the further side was a large white town pleasantly situated and affording an agreeable prospect. The place was not destitute of trees nor of arable land, and an air of gaiety was spread over the whole and, as I thought, over the faces of the people. We stopped while horses were preparing under a shed in a large clean pleasant paved-yard like an inn-yard in England. We had good cushions set out for us and

Miles to Lhasa.	Miles from Yatong.	Miles from last stage.
-----------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------

65 213 16

This bridge (if it may be still called so) which goes by the name of *Chaksam Chh'ori* consists only of two massive rusty chains about 4 feet apart, from which depend at very short intervals loops of rope carrying a narrow planking, the whole being elevated from 70 to 50 ft. above the waters, the greater altitude being at each end. It is over 800 ft. in length and the extremities of the chains are fastened to huge logs of wood embedded in the masonry of two well-built abutments with bases about 20 ft. square. Considering the length and weight of these enormous chains their anchorage in the masonry is somewhat of an engineering feat, all the more remarkable when it is borne in mind that the whole mechanism was set up 470 years ago. The bridge has been long in a state so dilapidated that I am told no one has made use of it for the past 18 or 19 years. Everybody now resorts to the ferry (*tru-kha*) close by, which is provided with both hide and wooden boats—*ko-a* and *shing-gi tru*. The wooden boats are some of them very large carrying 50 or 60 persons and are also used to convey ponies, cattle, and sheep, the hide *ko-a* are much smaller.¹

were served with *suchi* with a cheerfulness and alacrity I had not before witnessed. They also brought us a joint of good mutton to put in our wallet. We trotted on till we came to a town standing on the bank of the river, whence we descended to the sandy shore.²

¹ The *ko-a* or hide-boats are made of yak-skin stretched over ribs of willow poles running longitudinally with a few cross-pieces; and are 8 to 10 ft. in length, 4 ft. in breadth, and 2½ to 3 feet in depth. Sarat Chandra Das thus describes his passage across the Tsang-po: "It was past 5 and we had waited for an hour standing on a slab of rock, the lower part washed by the waves of the river. When the boatmen arrived there seemed to be a regular storm, which made them afraid, as they averred, to attempt crossing. The head boatman, however, appeared to be a gentlemanly sort of person, polite and obliging, and I promised him *chhang-rin* (wine-money) if he would immediately start his boat to take us over. The waves were furious, yet the hide-boats steered with wonderful agility. The two wooden boats were heavily laden with passengers. We were a dozen in one of them like a shallow wooden-box 20 ft. or more in length and 8 ft. broad, the planks joined by nails. Indeed, Tibetans seem perfectly ignorant of the art of boatmaking. One of the crew baled out the water accumulating from the numerous leaks by means of a

A halt might be made for the night in the large village of Chaksam Chh'ori, but the ordinary practice seems to be to cross the river at once either to Dzimkhar, half-a-mile from the northern chhorten on the opposite bank, or to Chhushul Jong, a little lower down the stream.

The appearance of the country around Chaksam Chh'ori and indeed in the valley of the Tsangpo generally is by no means the typical Tibetan landscape of shallow valleys sparsely-grassed and treeless. Bushes and trees abound down here on the spurs and in the intervening dells. Much sand in wind-swept heaps lies about near the river; but willow and tamariak are not the only trees seen. A native traveller from Lhasa has mentioned to me especially the many walnut and peach trees he saw at Chaksam Chh'ori.

Dzim-khar (alt. 11,290 ft.) stands across the sand heads of the Tsang-po about five furlongs from the landing-place. Here are a fort and cottages 38 240 27 fronted on the south and east by stretches of grass-land. Some good houses are near the chief residence or fort, but the village of Dzim lies nearly a mile away to the N.-W. The point of exit of the Kyi-chhu (ཀྱི་ཆུ་ "River of Happiness"), the river upon which Lhasa stands, into the Tsang-po is about three miles E. of the ferry; the Tsang-po taking a sudden sweep round towards the S.-E. to join the Kyi.

hide scoop. We paid the captain at the rate of one tanka (6 annas) for each pony and two annas for each man. Our ponies stood quietly, though the donkeys were alarmed by the rolling of the boats. We landed near the chhorten on the opposite bank; but the river having overflowed, we had to wade for about 15 minutes in the shallow water alongside a stone embankment." Manning says of this mode of conveyance here: "We found a large and good ferry-boat ready to waft us over the stream, whose width here was considerable. We all went over together, men, cattle, and baggage." Boats also, we are told, come down the Kyi-chhu from Lhasa to the Chaksam ferry.

¹ Many travellers take ferry across the Tsangpo to Chhushul instead of Dzim-khar. Chhushul is a large village of 60 cottages nearer the point of junction of the Kyi Chhu and the Yeru Tsang-po, which point is about 1½ mile S.-E. It stands

Miles	Miles	Miles
to	from	from
Lhasa,	Yatong.	last
		stage.

Journeying E., **СЯНУШУЛ ЖОНГ**,¹ a village with a ruined fort, standing on a craggy ridge above the Tsang-po, is left to the right; and the path then makes N.-E. across a sort of delta of streams, with bridges over some; and at length on reaching higher ground the Kyi-chhu can be seen lying in a shallow marshy valley. There are several hamlets each embeltd with poplars and willows perched on mounds amid the marshy tracts. Much of this ground seems to have been at different times deposited by the Kyi-chhu which has probably altered its point of junction with the Tsang-po from time to time. In the midst of these marshy grounds near the river is Taha-bu-nang.¹ After a troublesome journey over plains of sand and gravel intersected with streamlets, a plateau of firmer ground about 4 miles square is gained. Proceeding 4 miles N.-E. across this plateau the track reaches a collection of hamlets known as JANG-WOK or JANG-XE, a flat full of cultivated fields with knots of cottages each with clumps of trees about them. We still keep a mile or two W. of the actual banks of the Lhasa river. JANG-TOI, further north, is still richer in vegetation; here are field after field of peas, beans, and white mustard, which at the flowering season impart a bright and homelike appearance to the country, and so fertile then do the surroundings seem that it is difficult to believe the whole is situated at an elevation of some 11,400 ft. above the level of the sea. Here at Jang-toi is a small river running from the W. into the Kyi Ohhu, which in early summer floods the road and causes much inconvenience with baggage animals.

Beyond Jang-toi, and about 16 miles from Dzim-khar, the track takes to the riverside

surrounded by fields of barley, rape, buckwheat, and wheat and has a stone-bridge over a small river which runs by to the E. to join the other rivers near their juncture. Half-a-mile S.-W. of Ohhusai village is a monastery, the Ohboikhorling, and 2 miles N. a larger establishment, the Jang-ohhubling.

¹ This is probably the place where Manning halted for the night after crossing the Tsang-po. Nain Sing, who calls Chabonsang, halted here in 1666, as also did U. G. in 1833.

scaling the rocky banks along a narrow pathway. After a three miles' run the way reaches a valley with stream coming in from the W. and breaking the wall of the Kyi-chhu. Here stands the village of Nax with a few groups of houses and some poor-looking plots of cultivation. Immediately beyond, the pathway becomes again a cliff-side track much more precarious than before, mounting up and down steep places with precipitous banks below it and the river swirling beneath. This portion of the track is perhaps as bad as any part of the route and is known as the *Gag-lam* or "path of hindrances"; it continues for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Then the course becomes easier, lying still along the bank of the river, and often passing over rocks and lengthy deposits of sand. Presently the day's journey is done; for the river-valley opens out into a fertile plain with fields and belts of small trees and with a stream hurrying across from the N.-W. to join the Kyi-chhu. We have arrived at an important and historical place, the village of

Ne-thang, (ནེ་ཐང་) the last stage before reaching Lhasa and the sacred spot where the famous Buddhist missionary from India, Atisha, died. The lands round this place are low-lying and are often flooded in early summer by the Kyi river as well as by a feeder of this river which flows down here from the N.-W. and brings with it the melted snows of the great Noi-jin T'ang-lha range. S. C. Das describes a barrack-like building here two storeys high, 50 ft. in length, and 30 ft. in breadth. There are several *ne-tshang* or lodgings to be had in the village; also a large *gya-khang*, in the verandahs and outer rooms of which ordinary travellers may get shelter, while the inner rooms are reserved for high officials on inspection duty. The road passes through a dirty village street flanked by houses of two and three storeys mostly of a mean and filthy exterior. A large number of pack-ponies and donkeys are kept by the inhabitants to let out by the dozen or so to travellers. 16 362 2?

Miles	Miles	Miles
to	from	from
Lhasa.	Yatung.	stage.

Leaving Ne-thang the country is seen to be very verdant and teeming with cultivation, irrigation canals besetting the roadway and in places overflowing it. Beside the road are stretches of grass-land overgrown in patches with shrub, the irrigation channels flowing everywhere through with a gurgling noise. Houses, gardens, and walled-in groves of *khambu* or peach-trees are now passed at intervals. The hamlets of Norbu-gang and Ohhu-mik-gang contain respectable-looking dwellings said to be country-residences of the *tungthor* or civil officials of Lhasa. About 8½ miles from Ne-thang the road enters a gravelly plain strewn with stones and rocks, passes through a gap between two rocks, and comes out on sandy reaches formed out of the ever-varying beds of the *Kyi-chhu*, the course of which is sometimes seen half-a-mile to the S.-E., sometimes over a mile off. A mile further on, ascending a mound, the buildings of the Dalai Lama's palace on Potala hill, though 14 miles distant, can be sometimes descried away to the E.; also, to the right or south side of that hill can be seen another hill crowned with the dome of the medical monastery of Ohakpori. This is the first view of Lhasa. Hard by is a gigantic figure of Buddha Shakyathup painted on an upright slab of rock with a wooden roof built over it.

Four miles beyond this point is the large village of *Toixung* with an important-looking stone bridge 180 ft. in length built upon wooden piles and, in places, on stone piers of excellent workmanship. The bridge spans the wide bed and small actual river of the *Thi-chhu*, an affluent of the *Kyi*, and which like the feeder at Ne-thang brings down from the N.-W. the meltings from the mountains lying near *Tengri Nor*. There are many poplars and willows about this place and fields of barley and buckwheat skirt the road after it has traversed the bridge. A mile from the bridge the village of *Shing Dongkar* is reached, some of the houses lining the roadside some lying about 100 yards away amid a clump of trees, the poplars being planted in formal rows. Here are

some good houses and large fields of radishes. Another mile brings to Dongkar or Sa-tsi. Small hills and knolls intervene between the road-track and Lhasa, so that no view of the city is obtainable until one arrives very near to it. A couple of miles eastwards are some houses called Tseri and near by is a sort of park surrounded by a long wall, where are many walnut trees as well as willows. Close beyond this is the slaughter-yard where daily several hundred head of sheep, goats, and yak are killed for consumption in Lhasa, the holy centre of all Northern Buddhism. There is a foul tank near the butchering ground where the carcasses are washed, while the bones and horns are heaped up in mounds by the roadside. Opposite is the butchers' village which is named **TAKBA** (ཅལ་འཕྲུག་ "purity defiled"). The road thence turns N.-E. and in half-a-mile or so Daru, the *sho* or lay-village attached to Daipung Monastery, is arrived at. It lies on the left or north side of the road embedded in trees. Behind it, on a steep hill-slope, also well-timbered, may be seen climbing apparently in all directions the extensive ranges of buildings comprising **DAIPUNG** monastery. The buildings are partly hidden from the roadway, but their extent may be imagined when it is stated that the accommodation there is estimated as for 7,700 *trapa* or inmates. It is a commentary on the practical working of Buddhism in this land, where it is supposed to be of pre-eminent influence, that the butchers' shambles should be pitched at the foot of the mount whereon stands the leading monastic establishment.

A quarter of a mile or less beyond Daipung, on the same side of the road, is a walled-in grove, or *ling-ga*, of poplars and walnuts, in the midst of which is a curious temple painted dark orange surmounted by a brightly-gilded cupola of the concave-sided Chinese shape. This is the **Ne-chihung** temple where the great State Oracle, the **Ne-chihung Chhoikyong**, dwells—he who is consulted on all important occasions and from whose diagnosis each successive **Dalai Lama** seems to be selected.

Miles	Miles	Miles
to	from	from
Lhasa,	Yakog,	last
		stage

0 278 16

LHASA is now in full view, barely four miles distant. We may accordingly conclude this itinerary with Sarat Chandra Das's glowing description of his final approach: "Our way now trended towards the course of the Kyi-chhu, whence I obtained a magnificent view of the renowned city as it now appeared E.N.-E. with the slanting rays of the sun falling on its gilded domes. It was indeed a superb sight, the like of which I never beheld in India Passing by the grove sacred to Nachhung, we entered a marshy flat intersected by numerous water-passages. Several of these I crossed riding. Crowds of people were proceeding towards Lhasa, some on horseback, some on donkeys, and many on foot. Several monks, probably from Dapung, were also proceeding towards the same destination. We now found ourselves in a marsh overgrown with rank grass. This marsh is called Dam-tsho and the grass *dam-tsha*. Channels cut to drain the waters of the marsh flowed to the Kyi-chhu across our way. To the N.N.-E. of this marsh at the foot of some barren hills stood the monastery of Sera. Passing by the Dam-tsho we arrived at the great *maidan* of Lhasa called *Nchu-sing*, which was covered with verdure. The grass was in blossom, which gave the whole the appearance of a carpet variegated with beautiful flowers. Numerous gardens and groves were dotted over it. On our right-hand side we saw an extensive embankment like an accumulation of sand, on the further side of which is situated the great park called Norpu-linga, containing a beautiful palace, while immediately on our left hand was the pasture-land, to the N.-E. of which extended the grove of Kamaitshal. Just as I was entering the city gate called Pargo Kaling I saw the elephant presented to the Dalai Lama by the Rajah of Sikkim. It was past 4 o'clock in the afternoon when we entered the renowned city of Lhasa by the western gateway."

SUMMARY OF ROUTE VIA GYANG-TSE

(to Lhasa in 14 days).

Days from Yatong.	From Jelep Pass	to	Yatong	Miles in each stage.
				6 miles.
1.	"	"	Yatong	34.
2.	"	"	Phari Jong	24.
3.	"	"	Tüna	25.
4.	"	"	Kala-snar	16.
5.	"	"	Samando	18.
6.	"	"	Khangmar	24.
7.	"	"	Gyang-tse	15.
8.	"	"	Gobshi	19.
9.	"	"	Ralung	17.
10.	"	"	Dzara	15.
11.	"	"	Nangar-tse Jong	16.
12.	"	"	Palde Jong	27.
13.	"	"	Dzim-khar	22.
14.	"	"	Ne-thang	16.
	"	"	LHASA	

ROUTE VIA KHANGMAR TRADE-TRACK

(to Lhasa in 12 days.)

5.	From Khangmar	to	Nyiru Dotuk	21.
6.	"	"	Ralung	15.
7.	"	"	Dzara	17.

Darjeeling to Yatong	83 miles.
Yatong to Lhasa <i>via</i> Khangmar trade-track	250 "
Yatong to Lhasa <i>via</i> Gyang-tse	278 "