

One hears about Rome being built on seven hills. Lahore, too, seems to be having a legend of an almost similar nature. Nevertheless, the spots on which the early settlements were conjectured to be found, are well away from the City. These few mounds are old kilns, which people mistake as old settlements of this City, built centuries ago.

No doubt, the original settlements were supposed to have been made on mounds on high ground along the Ravi or its branches within the city limits. For instance, the Citadel, or Gumti Bazaar, or Ichhra, the mounds that one sees in Lahore at the moment, are all outside the walls of the original City and happen to be, as said earlier, old and disused kilns. Some later chroniclers have classed them as brick-kilns, but with the exception of one kiln, which has completely vanished by now, these are disused potter's affairs now

Amongst the mounds, the ones in the Bagh-e-Jinnah and the Zoo seem to have some queer or romantic history attached to them. One would be surprised to learn that more than a century ago the mounds in the Bagh-e-Jinnah were part of the rifle range originally provided for the 1st Punjab Volunteers, which were formed in 1861. The range was situated in the gardens, along the kilns till it was removed to a new location many years later and that too after a certain incident.

Picture 1 This picture was taken of the mound from where the range

The Hanging Gardens of Lahore

Lahore
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SAJID ABBAS traces history of mounds found in the provincial metropolis

turned into pleasant looking hanging gardens, something akin to what one used to perceive about when reading history or tales of Babylon.

Practically, all the mounds or the hanging gardens can be found close to each other, within an area of approximately a kilometre or so in radius. Five in Bagh-e-Jinnah, the former Lawrence Gardens, along its north-west boundary, one in the Zoo, one across the Mall a few hundred metres, in the

Government House estate. One in the estate of the Government Jinnah College for Girls, close to the Ganga Ram Hospital along the Sharey Fatima Jinnah, the old Queens Road and the last one is the well-known Shimla Pahaaree on the Sharey Abdul Hameed bin Badees, the former Empress Road, all eight of them. The ninth, the real brick-kiln is no longer to be seen, replaced by residences, now.

The brick-kiln that is no longer to be found was that known as

Buddhoo ka Aawa on the Grand Trunk Road, close to the Engineering University. This kiln was named after the son of Saddhu, Jehangeer's potter. A legend says that Fakir Abdul Haq, a disciple of Mian Mir, came to the kiln on a cold and wet evening for shelter, but was driven away by the workers and labourers. This annoyed the fakir who cursed them and their kiln. The result was that the kiln cooled down and remained shut thereafter. Nevertheless, most

of it was dismantled around 1850 and its bricks and other material was utilised in building structures put up in those days, perhaps in the cantonment. During the Sikh days, General Avitable had his cantonment and residence there. During the World War-II, parts of the ruins of the Aawa were converted into a training ground for Military Motor Drivers and the place was popularly known as the 'Burma Front'. ■

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The other two sections extended further down along this area, across roads of the garden.

The bullets were, then, noticed to ricochet off the kiln abutments and posed a danger to the traffic and public on the Mall. An emergency took place, one morning, when the

Fatimah can be seen on the left. Some years before Independence, there was a move to build an Amphitheatre in Lahore. Professor G. D. Sondhi of the Government

College, Lahore, and later its Principal was the spirit behind it. The Authorities agreed to provide space for it on the

at its foot. 'Discovered' a decade or two ago, it is supposed to be that of the sister of the holy man buried next to the Superintendent's Office. One can see it in the picture, in the right hand half, behind the tree trunks.

Picture 6 This picture is of the renovated mound in the Government Jinnah College. It used to be a sort of a Public Park more than a dozen years ago. There used to be a large water tank on top of it, which supplied water to the people of Mozang. When the college was built in 1990, the mound was included in the college premises as a recreational area for girls. It is well-looked after now, though the water tank has been removed.

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The other two sections extended further down along this area, across roads of the garden.

Picture 3 This part of the third mound is somewhere near the point where the range ended. When firing practice was in progress, the



then Director of Public Instruction, who cherished his morning walk, narrowly missed meeting his Maker when a stray shot came at him but landed at his feet instead, when he was at a point said to be somewhere near the present Panorama Centre. The ultimate result of the incident was that the rifle range was removed from that place and the mounds turned into green gardens, both in the Bagh-e-Jinnah and the Zoo.

Picture 4 This picture shows



mound and the present popular Open Air Theatre came into existence on the mound.

Picture 5 This picture is of a smaller mound close to the Open Air Theatre and

closer to the Lawrence Road. The mound is more 'open' than the others in the Bagh-e-Jinnah. There is a tomb

to provide space for it on the

a recreational area for girls. It is well-looked after now, though the water tank has been removed.

Picture 7 This is a view of the Simla Hill from the south. The Press Club can be spotted on the far right. Simla Pahaaree has been a recreational park since a long, long time. Perhaps, it was made so right in the

early days of the Raj, for it was on the road from the Railway Station to the Government House, which was frequently used by the Governor while travelling. The railway was the usual mode, for, air travel had not yet seen the day. ■



started. The range consisted of three sections – one of which extended to 300 yards, the second to twice that distance and the third to 800 yards. The targets were said to have been fixed against the old kiln where the lion house can now be found. The shortest of the three sections (300 yards) was almost parallel to the southern boundary of the garden, quite close to Lawrence Road, the firing point being at the foot of the mound where we have the Open Air Theatre today.

Picture 2 This picture of the second mound was taken from a point not far from the firing point.

roads cutting across the longer sections were guarded by pickets. Nevertheless, there were no problems till a more efficient rifle was issued to the Volunteer Corps.

the greenery hiding the Open Air Theatre. It was taken from the corner of the English Rose Garden, which is being re-laid these days. The entrance to the Gulistan-e-