

area would be capable, in case of a considerable increase in the population and a corresponding development of the canal system, without a thorough expert study of the various factors concerned. It should, however, be noted that the amount of flood water brought down by the Muz-art-daryā and allowed to pass unused over its alluvial fan must be very great. The flood was said to arrive about the last week in May—considerably earlier than the corresponding period in the case of the Khotan rivers—and to spread itself over the whole of the river-bed during June and July. This bed, where we crossed it on our way to Dō-shamba-bāzār, was about a mile wide; but at the time it held only a negligible flow of water, in a channel about 10 feet wide and 2 to 3 inches deep. After the end of May the river was said to become unfordable, and ferry-boats indispensable. I received the impression that, provided increasing pressure of population were to furnish the impetus, and conditions of administration favourable to peaceful development prevailed, the available resources for irrigation would permit of the cultivated area, in any case to the south-west of the river, being extended once more to include the ancient sites I visited in that direction.

We started from Dō-shamba-bāzār, 'of Toksu', on the morning of April 21st, by the track said to be usually followed by caravans destined for Khotan. Having first crossed a belt of marshy steppe, which separates the Toksu tract from that of Yangi-ābād, we continued along the eastern edge of the latter to the southern end of continuous cultivation. Then, having picked up a local guide in the person of Azīz 'Palwān', a 'Tatirchi' or searcher for antiques, we followed the Khotan route to outlying patches of cultivation near Tāhir Hājī's 'Langar' (Map No. 17. B. 2). Proceeding thence for about four miles across a steppe studded with tamarisk-cones, we reached *Kalmak-shahr*, the first ruin reported. It proved to be that of a small circumvallation, built of stamped clay and about a hundred feet across. Its enclosing wall, standing to a height of 14 feet, showed a thickness varying from 13 to 30 feet at the base. The whole of the interior was filled with soft decomposed clay and revealed no trace of structural or other remains affording an indication of date. The distance separating us from our camp, which, owing to mistaken advice, had been sent to the village tract of Shahīdlar, away to the north-west, prevented our visiting two similar small 'Sipils' or circumvallations, which Azīz Palwān referred to as Ziāratlik and Ot-ketkan-shahr and described as situated close together to the southward. The interior of these also was said to be without structural remains.

Small  
ruined  
enclosures  
to SW. of  
*Toksu*.

From *Kalmak-shahr* we followed the Khotan track south-westwards to Dāsh-tūghemen, where a mill is worked by a small stream draining a marsh farther north, which evidently receives the terminal discharge from the Yulduz-bāgh canals. Not far from it we came upon neglected fields belonging to Kūzlek, the southernmost farm of the Yulduz-bāgh canton; and some 300 yards to the west of its last trees we found the badly decayed clay ramparts of an old fortified post known as *Ak-tiken-shahr*, and measuring about 90 yards square. Here, too, no structural remains were traceable in the soft dust filling the interior. Turning northwards we passed through straggling patches of new cultivation, alternating with stretches of unreclaimed scrubby steppe, and finally reached our camp near the southern edge of Shahīdlar in the dark, after a total march of 27 miles.

Outlying  
cultivation  
of Yulduz-  
bāgh.

On the following morning I left our camp where it stood and proceeded to the south in order to visit the site reported under the name of *Tonguz-bāsh*, 'the boar's head'. For nearly four miles the track skirted an almost continuous belt of new cultivation, where fields had been sown in rotation for the last twenty years or so, but dwellings had only recently been erected. The canal irrigating these fields was found farther on to traverse a steppe covered with low tamarisk-cones, and to extend right down to the vicinity of the site, which was reached after 11 miles' march from Shahīdlar. Within a quarter of a mile of the northern wall of the ruined 'town' I noticed an

Visit to  
*Tonguz-  
bāsh*.