

ordinary sort must have existed, but they have utterly disappeared, and their sites are marked only by low mounds, or by an accumulation of pottery strewn the surface of the ground. Canals, too, must have abounded, but their traces are rare and hard to follow, and it is exceedingly difficult to determine their age.

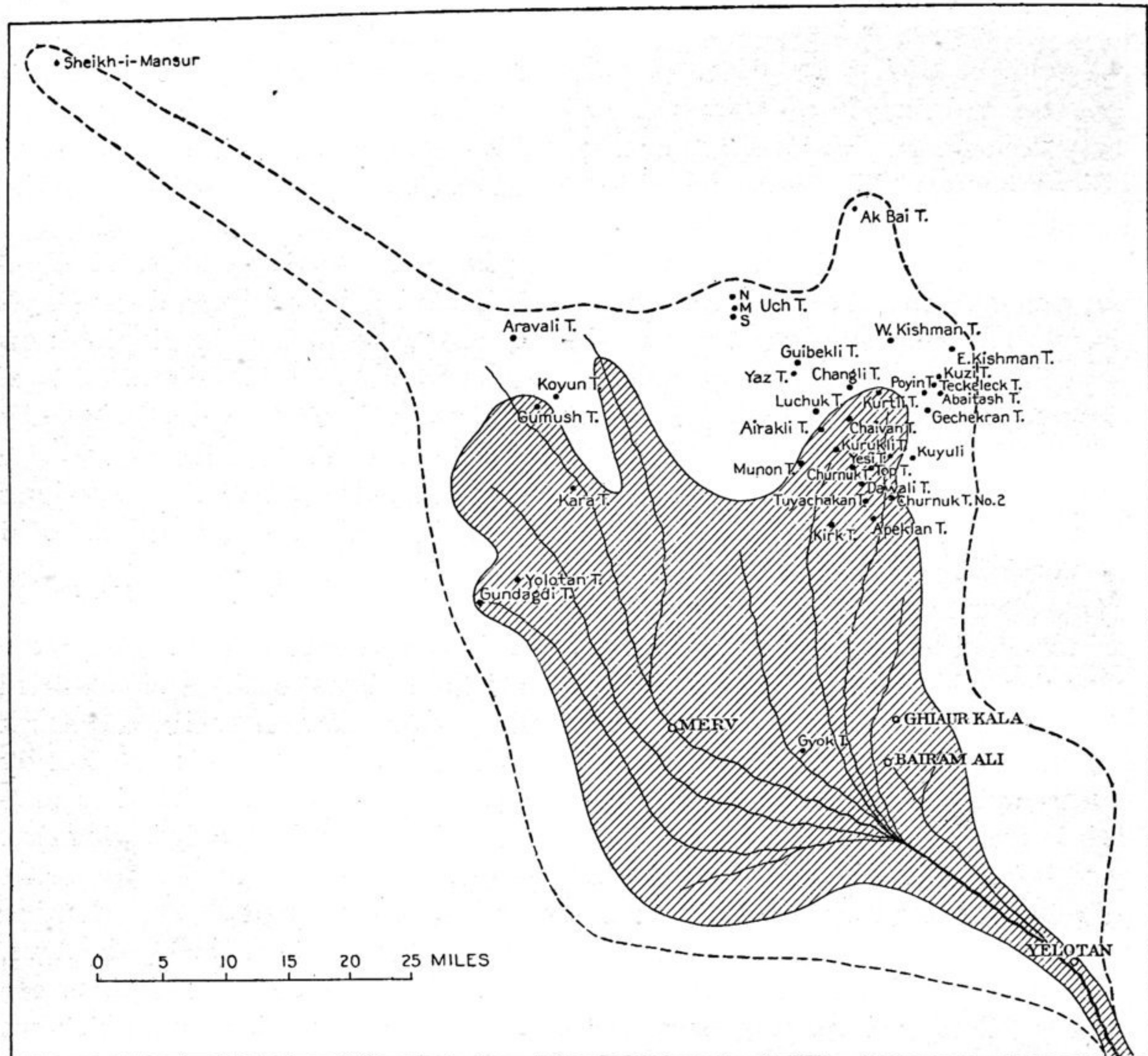


Fig. 430.—Sketch Map of the Merv Oasis.  
T = Tepe = Kurgan.

#### THE KURGANS.

In spite of great diversity the kurgans as a whole are modeled upon a single plan. All have flat tops, all are symmetrical in vertical section, and most are rectangular in plan. They vary greatly in size, however, the heights ranging from 15 to 80 feet, and the diameter from 65 to 480 feet. In age, too, and in the amount of weathering to which they have been subjected, there are equally important differences. The older kurgans, which generally are also the smaller, are so far reduced in size and height that their sides have a slope of only  $15^{\circ}$  or  $20^{\circ}$ , and can be climbed on horseback almost anywhere. The newer ones, on the other