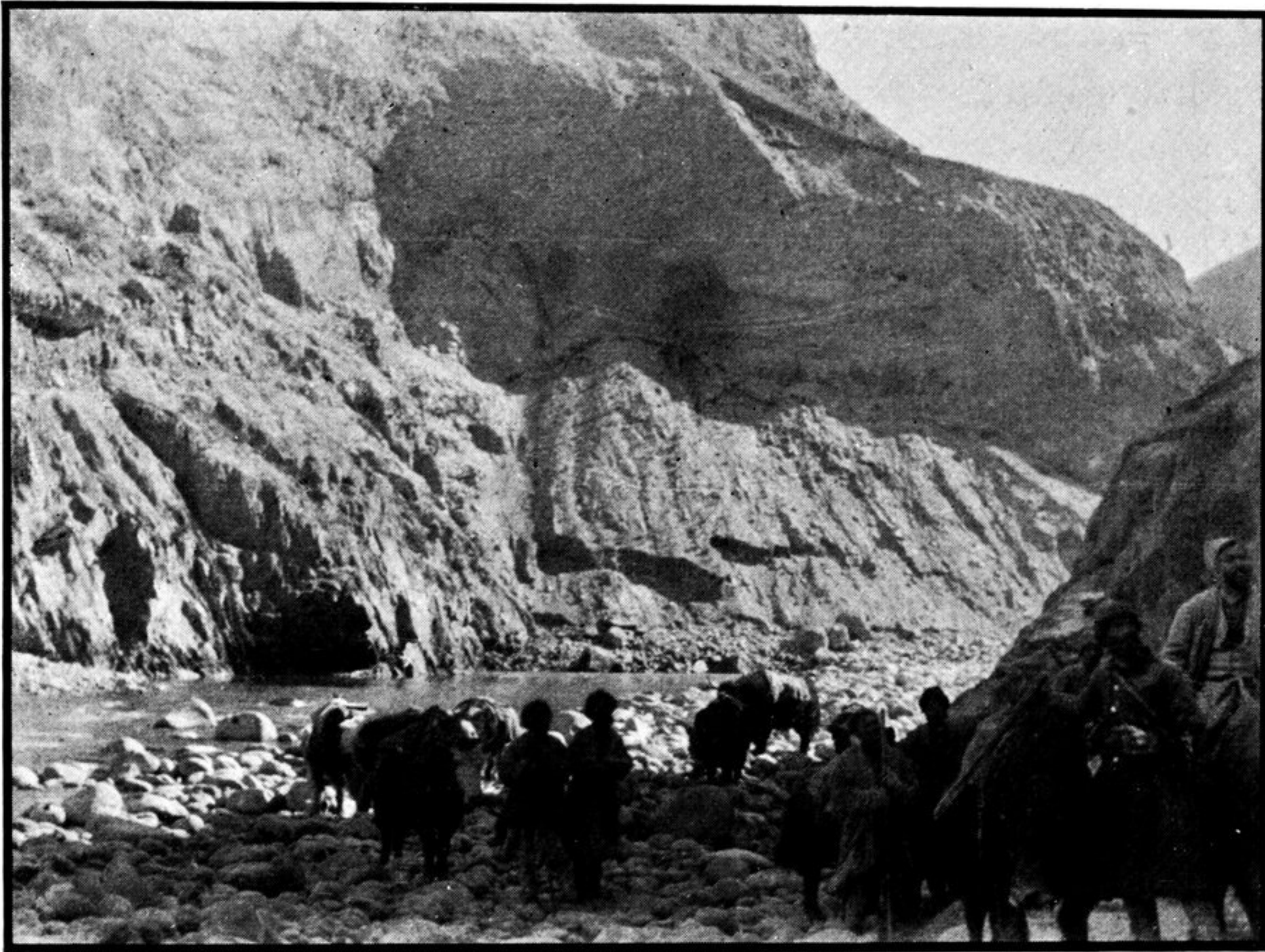


we ascended by the path we had come before it became bitterly cold, and the wind was piercing. Winter had already set in for these regions.

For the return to Karanghu-tagh I chose the route through the Omsha Valley, into which we crossed without much difficulty over the ridge of Soghak-Öghil, at an elevation of about 11,500 feet. At the central hamlet of Omsha I found two



YAKS CARRYING BAGGAGE IN YURUNG-KASH GORGE, NEAR KARANGHU-TAGH.

low mud-built houses among a few fields of oats and some troglodyte shepherds' dwellings. The weather cleared in the afternoon, and I felt grateful for the warming rays of the sun before he set behind the mountains. The valley of Omsha, though scarcely a quarter of a mile broad, looked quite spacious and inviting after the awful gorge of the main river. Notwithstanding the elevation of about 10,000 feet, oats are said to