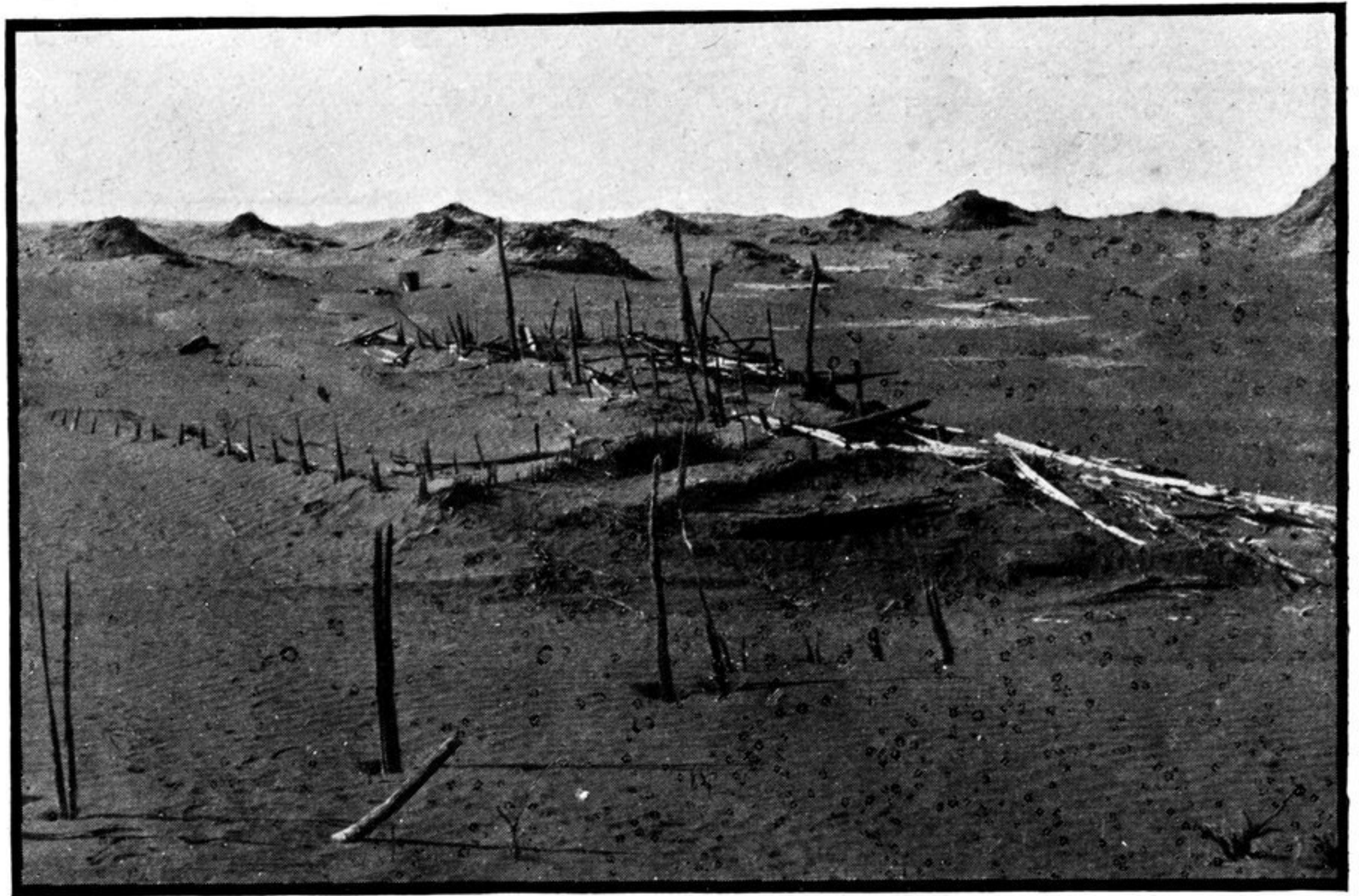


tions of the dustbin that we must ascribe the remarkable state of preservation shown by the great mass of these precious records.

I had ample occasion to console myself with this thought while engaged in the laborious task of clearing this room (N. xv.). As soon as I had realised the peculiar character of its deposits it became a matter of importance to keep accurate record of the relative position in which each object turned up. This would



RUINED DWELLING-PLACE, CONTAINING ANCIENT RUBBISH HEAP (N. XV.), SEEN FROM SOUTH-EAST.

thereafter help to ascertain the chronological order, and possibly the internal connection of the various documents. Accordingly, every inscribed piece had to be carefully tabulated before it was removed and cleaned, no easy task with fingers half benumbed by cold and in the dust which a fresh north-east breeze raised from the dug-up refuse heap. For three long working days I had to inhale its odours, still pungent after so many centuries, and to swallow in liberal doses antique microbes luckily now dead. But