

consequently I was eager to survey the site and the ruins where it is still localized.

Kiz-kurghan proved to be situated on the extreme eastern end of a rugged high spur which descends from the north-west to the river exactly at the entrance of the narrow defile extending from Ghujakbai to Dafdar. The end of the spur as we approached it from the south by the steep river bank, presents an almost isolated rock promontory falling away in nearly perpendicular cliffs on the south and east, and raising its top ridge some 700 feet above the Taghdumbash river. Our subsequent survey showed that equally unscalable rock walls protect it on the north and west towards the narrow and wildly twisting valley known as Kiz-kurghan Jilga.

Only from the south-west a low and narrow neck connects this frowning rock fastness with the spur behind it, and to that I climbed up with Surveyor and Naik under much difficulty. The ascent led over a steep fan of detritus and subsequently through a still more precipitous couloir of rock débris. The young guide accompanying us had never ascended before, superstitious fears keeping Sarikolis in general from visits to the ruins. Plentiful débris of ancient-looking juniper wood, or 'Archa,' strewn on the higher slope gave me an inkling of the construction of the old walls of which we caught glimpses above us. When we had reached the neck, only fifteen to twenty feet across, and clambered up an equally narrow rocky *arête* for some 150 feet, I found my antiquarian surmise verified; for the old walls rising before us (Fig. 35), along what proved to be the west rim of the highest of a series of terraces forming the top of the promontory, showed the curious structural peculiarity of twigs and brushwood embedded in regular layers between courses of sun-dried bricks. A massive bastion some twenty-five feet square barred approach from the neck and narrow crest. But we managed to scramble over its ruined side and to cross along the top of the decayed wall, some sixty feet long, which connected this bastion with the main defences; the crumbled state of the wall and the precipices below made this rather nervous work.