

excavation very trying and the air laden with haze. As our work proceeded to the south the surroundings grew, if anything, more sombre and lugubrious, in spite of the appearance of still living scrub. The ruins had to be searched for amidst closely packed sand-cones raising their heads covered with tangled masses of tamarisk, dead or living, fully forty feet high or more. Ruins with splintered timber just emerging from the foot of sand-hills and deeply eroded ground on the other side made up a weird picture of solitude. Nowhere did I feel the desolation of the dead oasis so intensely as while wending my way through this maze of mournful tamarisk cones and searching the confined deep hollows between them, the whole shrouded in murky grey mist like a landscape in the world of the dead.

It was almost with a feeling of relief that I emerged at last upon somewhat more open ground towards the southern end of the site. Here the dunes were quite low, tamarisk scrub plentiful, and, as I had noted on the day of my arrival, living Tograks still lingering among the far more numerous dead trees. The half-a-dozen ancient dwellings we could trace scattered in this jungle which still struggled against death, were all roughly built and of no great extent (Fig. 100). Thus a day of steady digging with the men, whom the eager hope of returning to their homes from this arid wilderness urged to extra exertions, sufficed for the clearing of them and the recovery of what modest store of Kharoshthi records they proved to contain.

The frequent appearance of thick layers of sheep-dung within what must have been living quarters was at first sight puzzling. But in the end it became evident that these ruins, long after their abandonment, had been used to shelter flocks grazing the jungle, which had grown up around them while the summer floods still reached this nearest portion of the old site. I wondered how many of the shrivelled old Tograks still alive in their crowns were ancient enough to have seen the flocks once grazing amongst the ruins of this strange Campagna.

The last ruin was not cleared until the morning of October 30th. It was the same modest dwelling from