

The consequent difficulty of maintaining communication along this portion of the river bank deserves to be specially noted; for it precludes the idea that demonstrations by large numbers of troops, such as Arrian and Curtius relate to have been repeatedly made from Alexander's camp, could have taken place here. Yet Cunningham's location of this camp at Jalālpur would presume this. For the same reason it would have been impossible to find room here for the force under Meleager, which we are told was posted by Alexander half-way between his camp and his selected crossing-place, if these had really been Jalālpur and Dilāwar, respectively, as Cunningham assumed.

At Jalālpur, on the other hand, all physical features are in the closest agreement with the facts recorded about Alexander's crossing-place.<sup>9</sup> There is the headland overlooking the river at a distinct bend; there is the ravine of the Kandar Kas between Jalālpur town and the point where the spur turns off sharply from the river; there are still plenty of such trees and bushes as the arid climatic conditions of the present day permit of, growing on the slopes east of Jalālpur and to the south of the town towards the river bank; and, what deserves to be specially noted, there is a large island stretching down from opposite Jalālpur between the Halkiwānī and the present main bed farther south.

Where the winding bed of the Kandar Kas debouches to the north-east of Jalālpur it is overlooked on either side by bold hillocks rising to 300 feet (Fig. 4, Skeleton Map 1). At its nearest bends there adjoin stretches of fairly level ground now under cultivation. Thus the bed here corresponds exactly to the *praealta fossa*, or deep ravine, which Curtius mentions as lying not far from the river bank and 'capable of hiding not only foot-soldiers but also men with horses'. There are large groves of trees and bushes growing on the ground which separates the town from the river bed. This wooded ground would thus admirably serve to screen preparations for an intended crossing, a point referred to in Arrian's description.<sup>10</sup>

The Halkiwānī bed, where we rode across it on November 26th, close to the wide sandy mouth of the Kandar Kas was partially dry, and about 55 yards wide.

<sup>9</sup> This close agreement of the physical features had been correctly noted already by Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone when he reached Jalālpur in July, 1809, returning from Peshawar across the Salt Range. Referring to its hills he says: 'They came to the edge of the river which, being also divided by islands, presents exactly the appearance one expects from the accounts of the ancients. So precisely does Quintus Curtius's description of the scene of Poros's battle correspond with the part of the Hydaspes where we crossed that several

gentlemen of the mission, who read the passage on the spot, were persuaded that it referred to the very place before their eyes.' See Elphinstone, *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul and its Dependencies, in Persia, Tartary and India, &c.*, revised edition, 1842, i. p. 109.

Here, too, we note the true eye for topography of that great administrator and student of geography of whom it was not in vain said that 'he could look through the mountains'.

<sup>10</sup> See above, p. 12.