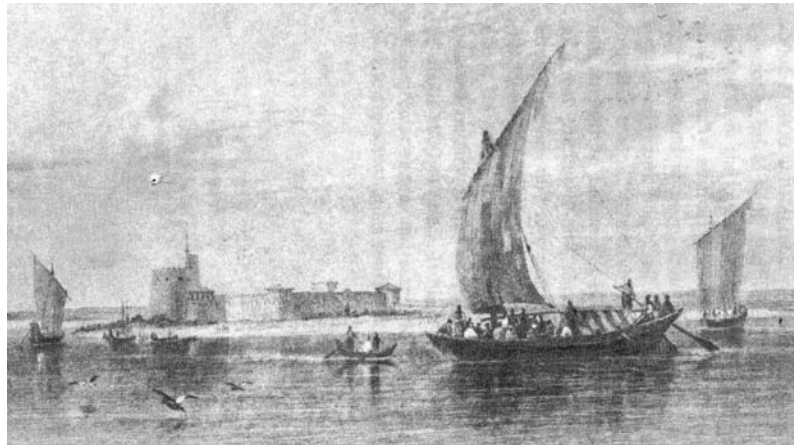


Extracted from *Travels into Bokhara together with a narrative of a voyage on the Indus* by Sir Alexander Burnes originally published in Three Volumes in 1834 and reprinted in 1973 by Oxford University Press in Asia

Alexander Burnes completed his final volume by adding a few pages from Captain Robert Melville Grindlay's personal journal where is found a description of certain parts of the Indus river around Sindree. Burnes also makes use of drawings by Grindlay to illustrate his book some of which have been reproduced below.

Burnes writes: 'I annex the following extract, describing a journey from Lucput in Cutch, to Hydrabad in Sinde, by way of Sindree, from the MS. of Captain R. M. Grindlay, written in the year 1808, when with a mission to the Ameers of Sinde, and which has been kindly furnished to me. It will be seen that the neighbourhood of Sindree, which I have described to be under water, was then dry, and that the fort of Sindree existed at that time, as an outpost of the Cutch Government.'



WE embarked on the creek at Lucput Bunder, which is about three quarters of a mile broad, and runs between east and north, for six or eight miles, when it begins to narrow very much: the shore on each side is a wet marsh, covered with short bushes. In the evening we anchored at the turn of the tide, and at twelve o'clock next day we passed Sindree, which is about thirty miles from Lucput, and dependent on it, with a small garrison of sepoys: it is a small fort, with a few huts outside, and one well: the creek here is about a mile and a quarter broad, and has a ferry across. The travellers who take this route to Sinde are not numerous, and leave no vestige of a road in the light sand, of which the dry part of the Run is composed. The heat of the meridian sun is said to be so intense, that they generally travel in the night. From Sindree, by land, the next stage is about twenty-four miles to Baura, after which the Run ends, and water becomes tolerably plentiful. We passed Sindree, and observed several inferior branches leading through the Run, among which we saw a few straggling men and women; about twenty miles beyond Sindree, we reached Aly Bunder, at eight o'clock at night, and came to anchor close to the mound which confines the fresh water: when the day appeared, we observed it to be a poor mud village, of about fifty huts, and a tower of the same unsubstantial materials. Here we encamped for the purpose of collecting the boats from the freshwater side of the



mound, and not finding a sufficient number, several of those we brought with us were dragged over: this, however, was a work of three days; and, during that time, from the nature of the soil, we were annoyed by the dust in such a manner as would scarcely be believed by those who had not been in a similar situation: the sun was completely obscured by it, an object at the distance of 100 yards was invisible; and the natives moving about were so disguised, that their colour was not distinguishable. The soil of the Run is a mixture of fine sand and the salt deposited by the inundation. This, dried by several months' sun, becomes a most impalpable powder. The Run, which ceases about a line with Aly Bunder, from north-east and north, is covered with aquatic bushes and a few shells: the sand entangled

amongst these bushes forms hillocks of various heights, from five to fifteen feet, according to the size of the bush. It does not appear that any of the side channels lead beyond the Run, or that any of them are navigated by boats, except those which again join the main stream: that by which we came is certainly by far the most considerable. On the 10th we embarked again on the freshwater river, which is there about 400 yards broad, and soon after widens very much, with high sand-hills on the banks, and a few huts with a little cultivation. The river here takes the name of Goonee.

At the distance of about twelve miles from Aly Bunder, the river divides, and soon after becomes so narrow, that our boats, though not large, had difficulty in passing through the large bushes which overhang the bank, and has great appearance of a cut canal, or at least of a channel cleared out and deepened; the banks are irregular in their height, and the land immediately beyond them low, and in several places swampy. We passed the mouth of a creek on the west, said to lead to Tatta, besides several other inferior streams which run through the country, and are cut into a variety of channels, for the purposes of cultivation.

About ten miles beyond Aly Bunder, on the west bank, is Chuttee Thur (or ferry), opposite to which is the mouth of a considerable stream, with a dam across, which we understood to be the Phoran. This was formerly a very large branch of the Indus, and ran past Nusserpoor, which I learn is to the south-east. Many of the inhabitants of that place recollect a remarkable change in the river: the inundation swallowed up a great part of the town, and altered the course of the river, which since then has had much less water in it. The whole of Sinde, from the nature of its soil, is subject to these alterations by the annual floods, many striking instances of which the inhabitants are well acquainted with, particularly that which I have already mentioned, and the great alterations in the branches below Tatta.

