

been made to restore their former beauty by returning the earth removed from them. This was left where it had been thrown.

At Chetek and at Rice Lake in Barron county, a large number of mounds of the same character have been thus mutilated, and others needlessly destroyed. Visitors to these places cannot but be impressed with the lack of public spirit which has permitted such wanton destructiveness. As an attraction to summer resorters the presence of these works, if they had been protected, would in time have put thousands of dollars into the pockets of residents of these places. On the road between Osceola and St. Croix Falls, in Polk county, many of the finest examples in two large groups of mounds have been mutilated by relic hunters. At Rice lake, in Rusk county, every one of a group of fifty conical mounds had been despoiled by such persons in the course of only two or three days of digging. In many other districts smaller groups and solitary earthworks had been similarly rifled and wrecked.

We should not so greatly regret the injury done to these records of Wisconsin's past if the State or archeological science had in any way benefited by their mutilation. Only the merest shreds of information concerning the nature of their structure, or contents, could be obtained from the various persons who were responsible for their destruction. The valuable information which these monuments might have yielded concerning the burial and other customs of their builders is almost entirely lost. Such materials as they contained have been lost, or destroyed, by their owners or others, or gathered into collections which have since been sold to dealers, or carried away to other states. The expenditure of thousands of dollars cannot restore the valuable information thus lost.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the explorations conducted by the Wisconsin Archeological Society during the year 1912 are very timely. Many of the remains which its field workers succeeded in locating and of which they secured descriptions and photographs are certain to be destroyed within a few years at most.