

Early History of Wisconsin*

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History is among the most pleasing and entertaining of human studies. By it we converse and become familiar with men and things of ages long in the past, and live as it were from the beginning of time to the present hour; but we cannot extend our researches into the future. History relates to the past; Prophecy to the future.

History embraces the biography of men and nations; their ups and downs, rise and fall, detailing the incidents which *have* been, the changes which *have* occurred, the improvements which *have* been made, and when known, the *reasons* therefor, which is the *philosophy* of history.

There are, however, many things of interest on the face of the earth, of which we have no history, for the reason that none has reached us, if any was ever written; of such we can only draw inferences of their causes from the effects which lie before us. Such is the case in reference to the ancient Tumuli which abound to an unknown extent in the Western States, but in none of them more numerously than in our own.

Their forms, and the materials of which they are made, clearly indicate the work of human hands, and intelligence and design on the part of the builders. The Forts and fortifications indicate the existence of wars among them, and that the combatants had more or less knowledge of military science. In some of them the existence of something like brick or pottery, indicates some advances in the arts of civilization, much more so than anything found among the aborigines which the Anglo-Saxon race found in the country. But the present race of Indians have no traditions of the people who made these mounds, nor of the design for which they were built.

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