

The age in which these builders lived, or the distance of time from the present, is inferred from the age of trees found growing in the mounds, some of which, from their annual rings, are supposed to be four hundred years old. But who were the builders, whence they came, whither they went, or by what means they became extinct, lies in the impenetrable darkness of the past, and is not likely to be known in time. But there is an interest excited in the mind, on seeing these ancient works, a written history of which would highly gratify, if it were authentic, or believed so to be. This interest in us, shows the duty to the future, to record what we know of the past or present, for its edification, as we would that others should have done unto us, even so we should do to those who are to follow us.

As the matter, relative to these mounds, now stands, conjecture alone can answer the inquiries of the antiquarian, which in most cases, is as unsatisfactory as the total darkness in which the history of those times is now enveloped. Some have thought that these mounds were thrown up as monuments over the distinguished dead; and have inferred this from the fact that in *some* of them, relics have been found. But as the most and the largest of them, on examination, are found to contain no such remains, the inference is not well founded. That human bones and *Indian* relics have been found in *some* of them, of late years, is no proof that they were erected for places of interment; for since the whites have been in the country, our modern Indians have been in the habit, more or less, of burying *their* dead in them, and frequently guns, axes, kettles, &c., have been found with the bones,—and sometimes without them—which shows that the interment took place since the whites came to the continent, and the fact that such metallic substances have been found without the bones, shows that if men were buried there at first, *their* bones could not have continued in a state of preservation until this time.

It is worthy of remark, that while in Ohio the most prominent of these tumuli were forts or fortifications, in Wisconsin