

A Mound Near Boscobel

By C. K. Dean

This mound, which I opened in the fall of 1858, was located on the very topmost point of the conical, and in most part untimbered bluff, lying about one mile east of the central part of the present city of Boscobel and mostly within the northeast angle of section thirty-five of the town of Boscobel. The mound was about four feet in diameter, circular, and elevated about twenty inches above the stony surface of the crest. Upon excavation, it was found to have been built from the ground up, quite unlike any other aboriginal mound of Wisconsin, of which the Society has record. On removing the outer layer of earth, quite thin, but uniform, a carefully paved layer of thin rock was found, covering the entire surface; this was succeeded by a thin layer of earth, then by another layer of rock, which alternatives continued to the number of four in all. Then was disclosed a rectangular rock enclosure, resting upon the natural surface, about eighteen inches long by twelve inches wide, and six or eight inches deep. This had been capped with a flat rock, which by lapse of time and decay, had become broken, and partially fallen in.

Within this enclosure were found evidences of human cremation, viz.: ashes, coals, and heat stains; and in the center there were the remnants of the sacrifice, indicating the cremation of one large male person, and a female of much smaller size. The skulls were mostly entire, and parts of the larger bones were intact. No implements or archæological specimens whatever were disclosed.

Another peculiarity of this mound was, that, by its location on a site commanding a wide and pleasing view of the Wisconsin River valley, with its charming irregularities of outline, and bold escarpments of the enclosing walls, it indicated a fine esthetic taste on the part of the burying party, not generally accredited to that unknown race.

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