

surrounding country, to carry their material from a distance, but to obtain the usual covering of mould for the pair of mounds last mentioned they have bared the smooth underlying rock of its scanty soil, in a well defined circle about the works.

The use of broken gneiss for a building material, to the almost entire exclusion of limestone, is a noticeable feature in the construction of these works, and it is the more remarkable when it is known that the latter could have been procured at much less labour from the immediate Bay shore, where it abounds in the form of debris. This circumstance may perhaps show the migration of the race, and with other characteristics assist in unveiling the customs and philosophy, or superstition, which obtained among them.

From the limited data before us, it would be impossible to determine the positive age of these mounds, but the usual evidences of the antiquity of such works are not wanting here, and will enable us to arrive at a proximate period. The growth of the largest sized forest trees upon the tops of them, (in one instance an oak stump eight feet in circumference, and now seen in a decaying state), place the date of their erection several centuries anterior to the first exploration of the country. It may also be inferred that the Massassaga Indians, who were found by the early French Voyageurs inhabiting the Bay region, were ignorant of the origin of the works, for previous to 1820, and whilst that tribe was still numerous and pagan, they allowed the mounds upon their favorite camping ground to be ransacked with impunity. Neither have the survivors of that tribe, and who were removed in 1830 to Alnwick, near Rice Lake, any known tradition which will assist this enquiry. The Bay of Quinté, and the River Trent, formed parts of a well-known route for war parties to pass to and from the west; and during the French occupation of this country, were frequently used by soldiers, missionaries, and traders to ascend to the Upper Lakes; and yet the writings of that period, in many other particulars so precise, are silent as to rites or ceremonies among the neighbouring Indians, which would have required such works. We must therefore look for information in some other quarter, and, as yet, the facts collected by the various writers of the present day, are expressed in such general terms that we cannot arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. The supposition, however, that a common custom prevailed in very distant parts of the continent, whether in branches of the same tribe or among various races, is no more unreasonable