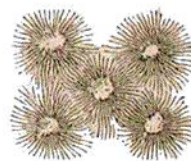


After forming our encampment near by (which was surrounded by *Seringias* in full blossom), and giving Lieutenant Budd and Mr. Eld orders, Mr. Anderson and myself, with six men, set off for the Bute Prairie, with shovels and picks. We reached the place about five o'clock, through a rain which had wet the bushes and undergrowth so much, that in passing through the Indian trails, we were completely drenched. These bushes consisted principally of *Rubus* and *Alder*. On our route we passed several beautiful and secluded prairies, of excellent soil, and covered with many flowers. The men began their digging early in the morning. These mounds have been formed by scraping the surface earth together in a heap. The soil, therefore, is very rich, and they have a rank growth of vegetation on them. Much of this rich earth or mould must have been brought from a distance. The regularity of their construction and shape, as well as the space over which they are scattered, are surprising. Although I could obtain no direct information respecting them, I was one day told that the medicine-man gathered his herbs from them, to make the decoctions with which he effects his cures.

Although all tradition concerning them may be lost, yet the custom of these medicine-men may have survived, and taking into consideration the influence they have had and still have over the tribes, it is possible that their predecessors might have had something to do with the formation of these monuments. They certainly are not places of burial. They bear the marks of savage labour, and are such an undertaking as would have required the united efforts of a whole tribe.

The hole, which was dug directly in the centre, was about four feet in diameter. At a depth of about six feet was found a kind of pavement of round stones, laid on the subsoil of red gravel. No articles of any description were discovered in the mounds, which seemed to be grouped in fives, as in the figure annexed. Although there is a general resemblance among them, they evidently have been constructed successively, and at intervals of several years. I heard it suggested that they had been formed by water-courses, but this I view as impossible, for they are situated on a level prairie, and are at least a thousand in number.



Observations for latitude and longitude were obtained here, but the weather did not permit me to get angles on Mount Rainier, as I was desirous of doing. The next day I parted with my friend, Mr. Anderson, who desired to return to Nisqually, while we returned to the falls. The ride was more disagreeable than we had before found it, and I felt heartily glad to get back to the surveying parties.