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KA/MAS

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

P.O. Box 138,
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9.6.75.

Don Crabtree Esq.,
Route I Box 210,
Kimberley Idaho 83341,
UNITED STATE AMERICA.

Dear Mr. Crabtree,

I recieved a letter from M/s Barbara Purdy of the University of Florida which mentioned that you had parceled off reprint etc to me - I thank you in advance for this and also for the introduction to prof Purdy.

I did get a xerox copy of your flaking stone with wooden ~~in~~ implements which I found most interesting - I do have some queries about it however. As you have said this is a typical N.W. Australian technique.

However I have never seen any point just made with a wooden flaker.

This was/is used only in the initial thinning of the blank and the scar patterns left are subsequently removed by the Kangaroo bone (ulna) presser.

Incidentally the strong ivory upper incisor of the dugong (*Halicore australis*) and the lower mandible of a small crocodile were also used as flakers.

Perhaps therefore the Palliaike material were not neccessarily flaked with wooden pressers but were flaked using the Kimberley technique i.e. a padded anvil stone rather than holding the stone in the palm of the hand.

A bone or tooth presser need not be any longer than 13-14 cms whereas the wood implement is usually in the vicinity 30 cms (this I feel is a compensating factor for the rapid wearing of the working trip - I have seen them at about 15 cms in length).

Stone is rarely worked nowadays as glass pyrex and porcelain can be flaked far more rapidly also with these materials one does not need all the tools used in working stone - are thick piece of wire or a thin iron rod $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter and about 15 cms long serves at all stages from the coarse flaking to the final serations.

According to informants the extra large points (stone- 15 cms) were often made by two people one holding the piece on the anvil while the other flaked.

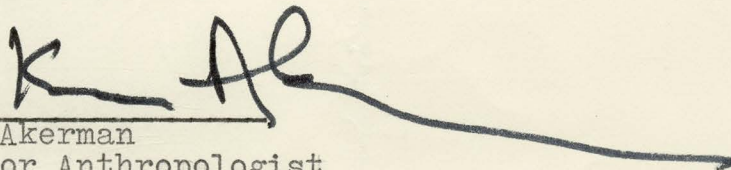
This anvil technique is as you have probably found a bit hazardous - often the flake edge may crumble and you overshoot and drag your wrist over the edge of the blade - I had to have 6 stitches inserted last year after one such accident that just missed slicing my tendous(perhaps another reason also for continually rubbing the edge on sandstone - to blunten it as well as provide pressure plat forms) The technique also means lots of cut finger tips which it appears would be avoided using the ameriudian techniques (is this so?) - the craftsmen here regard cut fingers and wrists occupational hazards and there does not seem to be any attempt to protect oneself.

Incidently bone pressers are rarely found on the sites I have seen - the reason given by aboriginals is that the dogs tend to eat them.

Perhaps this is what happened to the pressers at Palliaike.

Anyway enough - I would like your comments on the above and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by 'A' and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kim Akerman
Senior Anthropologist
Kimberley Region.