

The American Museum of Natural History

Central Park West at 79th Street New York, New York 10024 (212) 873-1300

Dear Don. This is the letter I mentioned when we were on the phone - now it has little points but here it is. Hope by now that you continue to overcome the troubles that developed on your trip. All is well here except the days are too short. as ever Jimmie



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

September 26, 1972

Professor Richard Gould
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Department of Anthropology
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Dear Dick,

You, Don and J.P. have said about all that is needed. The work and observations of H. and K. should merit a better presentation. It leaves me feeling that all that they are really concerned with is in trying to make you look the fool and that they expect one to take their word rather than real evidence. Such things are unfortunate for all concerned even if it is never published. They will bear resentment for a long time and while that may not matter to you, it is not good to live with. They should see your material and methods and you theirs.

When looking for wear-gloss on edges I have noted that it shows more clearly if a little finger grease or oil is on the edge. Also that a little such grease can give the impression of wear gloss. Do the soft woods they mention have more resin or oil than the hard woods? In other words is the gloss they refer to actually a mechanical polish or is it an effect due to oil, wax or resin? This question is well to keep in mind, and we should all clean what seems like glossed edges with xylene or some similar solvent during examination.

In checking the unretouched edges of thousands of basalt and quartzite flakes in Peru and Chile, I found that ones fingers could detect wear smoothing more quickly by touch than one could by vision except in those cases where wear was very pronounced. Naturally, there must be a point where touch is inadequate and where wear cannot be detected that way. Magnification should reveal some of these but there will be many on which equally well-equipped observers will have differing opinions.

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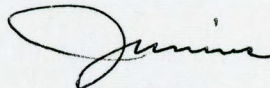
Recently I noted something I had missed before. When using a quartzite flake as a saw, a flake with an acute angle edge, bits of the material broke off and lodged in the cut. The result is an edge abraided far more than one on a flake of tougher, finer-grained material used for the same job. A perfectly obvious thing yet I had missed it by not having tried cutting with a grainy quartzite using a sawing motion.

Am delighted to have that Mormon prayer. It reads as if the fellow had a premonition of what has happened. The wording should have appealed to the Almighty and he should have heeded it.

Am sorry to have missed being with you in California. At least we did see Betsy here. As to Panama, our departure date for there depends on the weather, either the end of December or the start of January. We have lots of room at camp and hope you can manage it for as long as possible. Will keep you posted.

The lady who found the first fluted point at Lake Madden, Ruth Stuhl, has just gone to Honolulu for vacation. She has been out to our camp many times and can tell you all the details. Gave her your name but she is shy and independent so may not call.

As ever,



Junius Bird

JB/lg

copy to Don