

# Crabtree Idaho / Early man / Artifacts

Self-made men: I've known only a few — I've known many who have been only partially educated --- some by their own choice --- some by the lack of funds --- and of course I've known those born to poverty who've accepted little education except as they became "street-wise".

Self-made men? Are there really any? It's a phrase which needs alteration at least to include women — for certainly many of them have been motivated to effect their own growth and productivity.

Many of us, if not most of us, have been nurtured and herded to the end that we've accepted some goals presented to us by others and, <sup>so we've</sup> more or less devoted our lives to that — as well as accepting the <sup>individual</sup> easy objectives of of family, spouse, family and an identity of social value. <sup>most</sup> Often, I think, this describes our lives almost completely.

Some, family, school <sup>and</sup> religion produces a person with desires to many, have a family and a social identity which recognizes the individual as being good — or very good at something important to, more than just him or her self. Many times this <sup>recognition</sup> has been varied from being a recognition of being ~~good~~ different rather than good at something --- This might be described as being good at being different.

A most exciting way — and a very satisfying way of doing this is to find, <sup>and solve</sup> a problem that no one has solved ~~before~~ before.

Rewards

At ~~any~~ <sup>any</sup> age, each of us seeks rewards: good foods, good friends, good feelings. ~~Certainly, no one seeks the opposite of these and probably we never consider these good things as rewards --- for something we've done or didn't do.~~

We learn that good feelings come from eating good foods, associating with good friends and even undergoing some other exercises. Encountering a problem and solving it is one of these and most remember school for this type of exercise almost to the exclusion of others.

~~The excitement of life on earth with it's first breath of air must be an experience we seek to repeat throughout our lives: not by depriving ourselves of it and then allowing ourselves to breathe - but rather by using our capabilities in new ways: feeding our various appetites.~~ *Exposure to the beauties of S. Idaho?*

However that may be, there are certain people in this world who seem to meet each challenge in their lives with the <sup>fascination</sup> ~~enthusiasm~~ and captivating interest of the new-born. ~~This doesn't mean there is no confusion or there may be confusion and misunderstanding complete or incomplete,~~ <sup>thought</sup> ~~but~~ the <sup>fascination</sup> excitement and captivating interest are undeniable.

For me such person

This "first breath" of life extended to include the vision of "The River of no return", primitive indians and their villages in Idaho's Salmon River wilderness and <sup>sage-cock</sup> travel along the Salmon's bank on rock strewn paths to Leavitt --- and continued with <sup>arriving</sup> the vast <sup>lava</sup> plains surrounding the Snake River <sup>and it's canyon</sup> from Borley to the thousand falls including the primitive Blue Lakes, ~~would be sufficient to excite anyone for life.~~ ~~even without the~~ ~~add~~ to this the beauty of Twin Falls, Shoshone Falls and the miles and miles of Snake River bottoms between 500 foot precipitous black lava walls, trout and water-cress lavishly strewn about therein and populated at one joint by a considerable band of Chinese eeking out a living ~~mining~~ ~~the~~ gold out of the canyon walls.

the tales of

Did Don Crabtree have to find mastadon bones in these creviced walls near the gold miners to get challenged to find out how it was possible to make stone knives capable of tools as prehistoric man did?

How did he come to hope that he might find a ~~speared head embedded in a~~ mastadon bone? ~~answered~~ No. He never found one, but he did find many ways of fashioning stone tools using wood branches, other stones, animal bones, ~~and~~ horns and the knowledge that comes from trying things thousands of times

Don died in November, 1980 D.Sc. (Hon.), Member, Explorer's Club U. of Idaho

U. California  
OSU  
Belize  
Les Eyzies

Summer 1940 - Ohio State Univ. Museum - Don had a few months' appointment to explore the nature of ~~the~~ flint, Indian arrowheads in the vicinity of Mound City, Columbus, Newark, - Taught one class on flint knapping for several of us (Don Scott)

Tixier  
Bordes  
Junius Bird

1971 Sun Valley 11PM TV show tail end credits D.E. Crabtree Res. Assoc.  
Earle Swanson M. So. Mrs. Pocadello. 1972?

Jane Tutmus

The many summer work shops of Crabtree during summers: arizona, B.C.?

Dr.?

Don Crabtree died - (in Idaho Falls) perhaps the first person in thousands of years to be <sup>surgically</sup> operated on with hand made obsidian knives - not surgical scalpels. His death had nothing to do with the surgery - indeed the surgery was complete and healed more than a year before. That Don made the knives himself and <sup>got</sup> his doctor ~~agreed~~ to use them is certainly interesting especially since Don has

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spent most of his life learning the many ways pre-historic man <sup>might have</sup> made such stone implements --- while also making a living at jewelry making, collecting semi precious stones, model operator, expeditor in wartime ship building, farmer, county agent and occasionally getting a job working for some archeologists.

Training? After high school he started college at Long Beach Junior College, couldn't get the courses he wanted <sup>did poorly in</sup> ~~the courses he was required to take~~ <sup>so quit</sup> and went to work in a <sup>nearby</sup> wartime shipyard. Later he worked for the Idaho Power Co., a jeweller, and a lawyer who wanted to collect tons of agate and similar semi-precious stones. <sup>At the suggestion</sup> ~~from all these~~ he learned to weld, work metal, wood, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~stone~~ stone. Indeed stone-working was where he began --- trying to make arrowheads by dropping drops of cold water on hot flint, striking with wooden hammers, other stones --- using materials available to early man always.

Who knows what ~~leads~~ <sup>driving interest</sup> a person to accept a challenge for life - whatever. Don <sup>was to understand</sup> <sup>to make them</sup> <sup>complete</sup> how prehistoric man made his tools - how many ways he used, and how, in detail, he did fashion <sup>his</sup> tools.

<sup>It's a great tribute that</sup> Numerous archeologists say that Don's Folsom and Clovis points are indistinguishable from the real arrow points, but Don has always countered these statements with such remarks as "I never have been able to duplicate the finest flaking of the arrow's cutting edge."

While learning the skills of stone age man was the basic interest of Don's life, he proved to be equally interested in the modern ramifications of his findings.

Though <sup>learning the</sup> ~~knapping~~ <sup>knapping</sup> arrowheads included developing means of protecting the hands, clothing and the body in general. Don's hands were cut innumerable times. Watching him work you became aware that he had no concern for blood, his blood on the work piece. The reason was that he had long ago found it to be very temporary. Sometime after this, completely taken by his pursuit of how Mayans (and others) made stone knives and even swords of stone, Don concluded that he was being cut by the sharpest blades that could ~~be~~ be made. The blades

he thought, were only "one <sup>atom or</sup> molecule wide" at the edge: nothing could be sharper (or weaker?), and so make less damage in severing the skin. This seemed confirmed by the rapidity with which his cuts healed --- without any noticeable scar.

So convinced of the value of such surgical knives he tried to interest doctors in using them. Sometime in the late 60's at a flint-knapping camp for archeology students from the U. of Arizona a molesting bear was shot by a state trooper who was also a taxidermist. Don persuaded him to use a kit of his hand-made obsidian knives to skin it. The trooper said it normally would take several hours using his steel knives: the obsidian blades accomplished it in less than two hours. The taxidermist, <sup>however,</sup> proved to be near exhaustion <sup>a nervous wreck</sup> because "the cutting was so easy he couldn't tell what <sup>or how deep</sup> he was cutting."

~~Not long before Don died he~~

Though it never seemed to impair Don's activities very much he had learned to live with a tenuous blood condition that varied from non-clothing to dangerously clothing. In his last half dozen years ~~kept him~~ "on a leash" from the hospital and ~~when at home~~ ~~was~~ surrounded by home with more than thirty bottles of medication that he programmed the consumption of. ~~Don~~ About 1975 or 6 he had a very bad clot in his lung and it required ~~that~~ gross surgical entry into the chest with the removal of a rib which leaves almost a full circle scar from upper chest down around under the arm and up the back <sup>and yes,</sup> <sup>finally</sup> most to the clavicle. Don <sup>persuaded</sup> his doctor to use some of his <sup>design</sup> knives for this incision. Need I say that that scar was like a thin <sup>light</sup> pink thread glued to his skin layed between rows of suture wounds ~~looking~~ looking like small rusty buttons? A beautiful <sup>surgical</sup> proof of the value of an ultra sharp, narrow, <sup>knife of</sup> incision that exists in a plane no more than one cell thick.

Long ~~before~~ before this surgery I'd suggested that Don send me a newly <sup>made</sup> knife to compare with a razor blade under 10,000x magnification of the electron microscope.

Get a 10,000 mag. razor blade edge.

Pemung from Orson & Rob Bennickson

As shown by this means the razor blade had ~~an~~ an edge that shaved no angle at all; it was rounded. The obsidian blade had a very decided sharp angle edge with a few spurious chips and cracks apparent in it.

Article 1 - Stone Knife Surgery - by Taxidermist and Surgeon

You're six years old and have grown up in the Salmon River wilderness of Idaho. Doing small chores for a neighbor has been rewarded with ~~payment~~ <sup>amazing</sup> gifts of Indian arrowheads. Friendly Indians tell you "Indians no make arrowheads; coyote make 'em." That's absurd.

<sup>Twenty</sup> ~~Five~~ years later, you <sup>ended your schooling at high school level, learned how to make a living out on the side</sup> have had the experience of having tried to make axes, scrapers, arrowheads out of flint of all kinds and know that it can be done using <sup>a sharpened</sup> an antler horn (prong), tree-branch section of wood, and still other available "tools" such as small boulders. And you've become fascinated by the ~~hope~~ <sup>idea</sup> that you ~~would~~ <sup>would</sup> find a mastodon bone fossil in the debris of the Snake River Canyon with <sup>an arrow or spear</sup> ~~a stone~~ head embedded in it. You also have found out that some Indians have heat-treated their flint and you find that doing that makes it <sup>possible to</sup> ~~tool making easier~~ and capable of producing thinner <sup>or</sup> better shapes with much better control.

The total experience ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> invigorating in spite of a resistance of archeologists to accept <sup>any of</sup> your ideas. ~~and the~~ <sup>then</sup> ~~misfortune~~ <sup>strikes</sup> ~~you~~ of a serious truck-driving accident that <sup>also</sup> results in cancer that is treated successfully by cobalt radiation... all without diminution of the <sup>vigorous and</sup> infectious enthusiasm that has characterized <sup>your</sup> life and work.

Almost a quarter century of activities followed characterized by marriage to a beautiful girl, <sup>working in Peppelen Steel's naval shipyard</sup> farming, <sup>making jewelry - making</sup> working as a country agent, running a motel and <sup>always finding some time for</sup> ~~stone~~ <sup>stone</sup> working. Replication of Clovis and Tolson arrowheads was noted by archeologists as outstanding and the new museum at Idaho State hires you to help put your flintworking knowledge into the archeological literature. Interest in the Mayan civilization leads you into trying to duplicate their skills in making <sup>stone</sup> ~~knives~~ <sup>knives</sup> and which may have led them into surgery - including brain surgery.

