

UNIVERSITÉ DE BORDEAUX I

INSTITUT DU QUATERNAIRE

BATIMENT DE GÉOLOGIE

33405 TALENCE

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POSTE :

TALENCE, LE Sept. 17, 1979

Dear Dr Don!

How glad I am to have news from you, and good news. I just came back last week from Western Australia (Skylab missed me by about 600 kilometers!). Tell the NASA that their aim is lousy! Incidentally, the Australians did NOT appreciate this American gift.

I did not answer sooner your letter of June 16, which probably took a very long time to reach ~~xxx~~ me, since I left for Australia on July 3rd because I found it when I came back. I hope you are still well, and even better.

About the calcaneum, I am not astonished it may have been used as a hammer. Here in Mousterian layers have been found, many times, phalanges of ~~xx~~ oxen or Bison which show traces of contact with stone. They are usually considered as compressors, but I have used them not for flaking, but for retouching, by percussion, side scrapers, etc.

Your Belise sites seem very interesting. Unhappily, I do not think that I may ever be able to see them! I am fixed for Australia for at least some years more, and I do not grow younger (I shall be 60 on December 30). However, as I have proved this summer in the Australian bush, I ~~xxx~~ still can walk! We have found many interesting sites, and done a lot of geology, which is necessary, as nothing was known about the sequence in the Murchison Basin. We have been able to establish the stratigraphy on a surface of about 200 x 100 km, and now we know where we are. The industries go from about 2000 B.P. to may be 30 or 40 000! We hope to get an old date for some samples we have this year.

I do not know when I shall be able to come to the USA again. May be in 1981. I do not expect to come in 1980, but who knows? If I ~~am~~, I certainly will come and see you. Even if air travel becomes bloody expensive (for Australia, the trip is paid by the French government).

As for flintknapping, alas, I have not done anything serious for more than 3 years now! No time, and no good antler left! I did some experimentation last year in Australia with the so-called "silcrete" (blades, bifacial tools). It works all right. This year we found a site where there is plenty of bladelets in silcrete, and nice backed points. Probably not very old.

Well, I have a lot of back work to do. Denise sends her best wishes to you. Bien amicalement,

F. Bordes

P.S. I hope you have got the book now, and have read my letter