

UNIVERSITÉ
DE BORDEAUX

FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES

LABORATOIRE
DE
PRÉHISTOIRE

73, CHEMIN ROUL
TALENCE (GIRONDE)
TÉL. 92.99.02

Bordeaux, April 28, 1966

Dear Don,

Got your letter of April 24. Glad that you have met my friend Lorenzo. He is a very nice man, even if some U.S. archaeologists look upon him as the devil, because he does not let them do all they want in Mexico!

Here, too much paper work to have time to really work much! However, I did some experiments on flint heating. I got very good results with Grand Pressigny flint heated at 200° C. for 24 hours. The interesting thing is that it did not change very much in aspect, but worked beautifully however! I will have to confirm this result with others samples (it was the only one sample in that batch which came from Pressigny). If this works OK, then perhaps more flints were heat-treated than it seems!

Calcedonious flint from Dordogne is all right treated at 200-230 for 24 hours too. At \approx 300°, they are "overcooked"! Same with Grand Pressigny, which at 300-24 hours is, to my taste, overdone too. Others really need 300° C.

I had an interesting experience. One of my friends, who is a geologist at the ~~Atomic~~ Atomic Energy, found in a kaolin quarry a big (2 x 1,5 m) lump of a siliceous material, very fine, gray. He brought back to me a bit of it. At first look, first rate material. I tried working it by percussion: well, it gives very nice flat flakes, but when you try to make a laurel leaf, no soap! It breaks orthogonally. Too brittle to stand the blows as soon as it is thin. So I tried heating it: 200° for 3 days. Not much change in color or texture. Workable after a fashion, nothing good. Then, I received the "étuve" (~~xxx~~ oven) going up to 330°, and I tried it at 300° C. for 24 hours. And, o boy! what a surprise! It turns a nice transparent pink color, and it is THE material for pressure flaking! So I phoned to my friend: go and get the rest of it! He went, and, hell, some smart man had found out that the stuff (natural) would make beautiful ash-trays and had bought it! However a little block was left, and I will have it next week. I will send you some flakes out of it, so you can try. Meanwhile, I send you today (air mail) some

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small flakes(I have nothing better left),so you can try and make some little arrowheads.

Heat it very slowly to 300° C(take 5 or 6 hours to get at that temperature), leave it at 300° for 24 hours, cool it slowly too. Then try and tell me what you think of it.

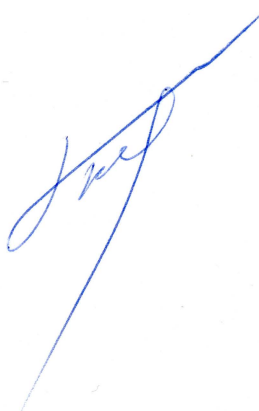
Have you any news of the film we made in Berkeley?

I really do not know when I will be able to come back ~~ix~~ to the States.To be frank,for now the only thing that would really interest me would be to be able to spend 15 days at least with you,without"observers" so we could really work!

Our best to the Crabtrees!

Very sincerely,

F.Bordes



P.S.In the box, 4 untreated flakes,and one treated. Same material.Not very good flakes,but all I have left! But in this material you can get results out of the most unlikely flakes!

I have given your adress to Robert Scholten,an american geologist who works from time to time in Idaho,and is marginally interested in prehistory. He and his wife are wonderful persons.I suppose he will call on you some day.

Cc. 2. 1. 22. 2