

Dec. 7, 1966

Dear Francois:

We both want to thank you so much for the book "Heureuse Pre-histoire" by you and Laurent. This is a masterpiece and you both should not stop with this one edition. We, and our friends, have surely enjoyed it. Thanks also for the drawings of the core and for explaining your technique. Sounds like you had a delightful and rewarding Summer, and such a beautiful valley to work in. I shall never forget our trip and the beauty of Les Eyzies. It delights me to hear you speak of the blade technique being invented as early as Lower Perigordian. Most prefer to believe that all of these things were accidental and raise an eyebrow when I say "conceived" or "invented". Glad you feel the same as I do, for I think this is very important in understanding the early work of man.

I have been trying to write on flakes and cores, but it is difficult to make the meaning clear on such a complicated subject and particularly to those who have not worked stone. I have finished the paper on the Polyhedral cores of Mexico and will send you a copy as soon as it is in print. Also just got an okay from Vance Haynes on my materials chapter, so that should be out soon.

I have been making cores of obsidian by indirect and direct percussion and find the material shatters so easily and I get a lot of broken blades. I shall try your way as it is similar to one of my methods. I'm not very good at removing the top of the core by striking it on another rock, so I make the flat or platform first then make the two ridges to guide the first blades and it looks like a thick biface or a tongue-shaped core. This way I can make the top of the core at right angles to the side of the core. This is good for pressure but hard to handle when using the punch for the punch slips because of the flat angle. But, by holding the heel of the left hand hard against the punch, the blade will come off. It also helps if I remove a little flake on the edge of the core to seat the tip of the punch in the bulb of pressure. In order to remove blades with this method, I use the clamp and an anvil - of lead or a piece of soft stone. It seems to deliver more force to the core and allows the blade to come off easier. It also helps to put some weights on the clamp which is made from the two poles. This presses the core more firmly against the support and the blades will terminate without removing the distal end of the core. I am anxious to try your method for many of the blades that I have seen have the same platform angle that you describe. You are certainly right about flakes and debitage being an important study for there is so much to be learned from flakes and cores. You are most fortunate to be able to see so many cores and to have found that early an occurrence. Sounds real exciting. We had our first snow today, so my outside stone work will be limited but I can still work in my shop, which is heated.

Had just about finished this letter when I received your second letter with the good word that you would be coming to the states in September of next year. I am terribly excited about the prospect of your coming to visit us here at our home and the opportunity to work undisturbed with you. Waited to answer your letter until I could talk with Swanson who was due here last Saturday to give a lecture to our local College. He is delighted that you will consider a lecture at ISU and says to assure you that he will raise the funds somehow to bring you to Idaho. He plans also to talk on the phone with Daugherty to see if we can up the ante by having you lecture there too. In case this works out, I will be most happy to drive you to Pullman, as it is not too far from my home. We have just completed a big new Student Union building at ISU and are happy to say that we now have very nice rooms to offer visiting professors for the day you will be there. September and October are still good months in

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my country with the air just crisp, so we will be able to work outside in an ideal spot I have down near the creek. Also have a big shop we can work in just in case it is too cool. Have an adequate supply of obsidian and will get more of the chalcedony from Nevada which I sent you samples of so we can work both types. Am also saving some of the larger pieces of Iceland obsidian which Junius Birds sent to me so we can make some bigger tools. I do hope that your plans will materialize, for I think we could accomplish a lot if we had some quiet time together. We will hope that Denise can come with you and see our part of the country.

Plan to go to Tucson next month to look at the material at the University of Arizona. Will find out what I can about the ovens that Longacre discovered at Grasshopper. I asked him to write direct to you and give you whatever information he had on this and he may have done this by now.

Do hope that you and your family have a happy holiday and please give them our regards. Evie says thanks for the help on the tapes. Swanson now has them for typing and we all should be getting a copy before long. You will, no doubt, hear from Swanson in the near future about the trip to Idaho.

Sincerely,

Don E. Crabtree