

April 20, 1968

Dear Francois:

I am so sorry not to have answered your letter of March 21st sooner, but seem to have so much work to do. This, of course, is no excuse as I know your days are much more strenuous than mine. We have just returned from a trip to the University at Reno where I gave a demonstration and reviewed the collections of the Smithsonian survey of the State. They really had some fantastic material. At the lecture, I showed some slides including your making the big artifact. The crowd was really thrilled.

Swanson was here yesterday and stayed overnight in your trailer - it will always be yours for any time you can use it. We told Swanson that there was a possibility that you may come next year and he is really delighted and hopes, as we do, that Denise will also come. If you do come we should allow time to go to Glass Butte where we can just wallow in obsidian.

This Spring, Swanson plans to take some of the crew from ISU and we will all go to Glass Butte and make some movies of the quarry sites and photography the preparation of blanks and preforms. Do wish you could be here to go with us for then we could get you on film doing some of your fine percussion.

Have you tried the new blademaking technique I mentioned in my last letter. Swanson is really excited about it, as it seems to explain the edge ground cobbles which have previously been described in the literature here as being milling stones. If we do further research on this, then these so-called edge ground cobbles may have been a percussion implement and indicate a blade industry in certain sites. Would like to have you do some work on this technique and give me your impression.

When I discovered this technique, I was using a large flat pebble; pushing downward and outward, much as we did when making the Corbiac cores. I had the core on a wooden block and with this technique removed several nice, small bladelets which came off without hinging. So then I slightly rounded the edge of the core and struck with the flat edge of the cobble (about six inches long) with the flat surface just touching the platform. When making the pass, I pushed the flattened pebble into the core and it removes a fine flat blade with a good termination and almost no platform. I have even made a polyhedral core this way. I still need a lot of practice and have only been making single ridged blades. But the method has possibilities. When obsidian is used, the cobble tool should be of fairly soft stone. I do hope that you will find time to try this method as you are so much more accurate at striking than I am. The anvil is most important and seems to lessen the amount of force needed to remove a blade. The detached blades are smooth on the ventral side with little or no undulations.

Titmus found the butt end of an absolutely beautiful Folsom on Timmerman hill (near where we hunted hammerstones on the way to Sun Valley) and said the site seemed to be a workshop. Evelyn and I plan to go up there Tuesday (weather permitting) and survey the site. Will let you know the results.

I haven't forgotten the opal I promised you and hope to get one cut soon. Your paper on the open site is a beautiful piece of work. I do envy you your writing ability. I would be more than pleased to have a copy of *La vermine du Lion*. To answer your question - we did not receive the *Science Fiction*. Swanson said he received a batch of papers from you, but had not reviewed them yet - trying to find someone who can read French. Give our regards to Denise and keep thinking of returning to Idaho.

Sincerely, Don

Ce 21.57