

February 5, 1978

Dear Don,

Many thanks for your letter of Jan. 3. We had no idea that you had been in the hospital again, and we are very glad you are out now and feeling better. Betsy and I think of you often, and we hope you are well recovered. Keep well...

I am delighted that you got those blade cores from India ok. They really are extraordinary. Betsy and I just made another interesting discovery that you might like to know about. The town of Brandon is not too far from here, so the other day we went over there by train to see what, if anything, was left of the old gunflint knapping tradition. We walked through town, noting numerous houses with walls made of flint cores mortared like bricks (!) and a pub called "The Flintknapper." This seemed like a good place to start, so we went in and bought a 1/2-pint of bitter and asked the publican. Well, one thing led to another, and before long we were at the house of a Mr. Fred Avery, who turns out to be the last gunflint maker in Brandon. He is a professional bricklayer and works at flintknapping on the side, about 1 1/2 hours every day, and he says he produces between 150,000 and 200,000 gunflints each year, mostly for American gun collectors! He is an extremely pleasant bloke, and he took us out in back of his place and showed us how he does it. I had brought along some examples of your work, which he found fascinating. I wish you could have been with us. Fred is very skilled at this rather specialized technique, and watching him at work and hearing him talk about it in his work shed reminded me a lot of our sessions.

CC. 4.4.63.

in back of your place in Kimberley. He does not have your breadth of skills, of course, but he is interested in learning how to do bifacial thinning, pressure, etc. and I shall do my best to show him. I will be visiting him again soon, and I will see about getting him to make a "full kit" (i.e., core, waste flakes, and finished gunflints) for you -- which will arrive one day as another little "care package." I'll send along a set of my notes and stuff, too.

I am tearing along now with the book, and will into a promising research project with Charles McBurney. I'll keep you posted on what I learn out at Brandon. Cheers,
Dick

TO OPEN SLIT HERE

SENDER'S NAME AND ADDRESS (PLEASE SHOW YOUR POSTCODE)

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