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May 15, 1972

Dr. Tom Hester
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Dear Tom:

Thanks for your interesting letter of May 4th. I just returned from ISU and gave a copy of your letter to Dr. Earl Swanson. Since he is my boss, I will leave any decisions about the bibliography up to him. You have probably heard from him by now. My only concern is that all publications pertinent to lithic technology be made available to students and interested readers.

I am pleased to learn of your continued interest and studies of mesoamerican obsidian. Hope you get in touch with Irwin Rovner and learn of his findings in the Yucatan.

It was good of you to send some samples of the Santa Cruz blades. I was surprised to note that the material is different than the material from Palos Verdes and that it is a carnelian color which is usually the result of thermal alteration. Two of the dark colored blades have been backed in much the same manner as some of the Paleolithic of France. The other darker colored blade has been unifacially flaked to establish a guiding ridge prior to detachment. The two lighter colored blades, trapezoidal in section, bear longitudinal blade scars on the dorsal side. They all appear to have been altered by heating but since there is a polish on all surfaces, we can not be sure. If we had the cores with their original surface - then we could speak with some authority. All of the surfaces seem to have been subjected to attrition of some kind which is peculiar.

I am sending you some blades and cores which was a hurried experiment of detaching blades by pressure - just using a vise (clamp) and hand pressure. The material is heat-treated novaculite from Arkansas, and you will note the texture change of material on the core. In its natural state it is impossible to press off blades, but after alteration it is quite simple.

I am sorry that at this time I can not define the technique of the Santa Cruz blades. If one had a large population of the blades, it would be possible to reconstruct the core and possibly tell more about the applied technique. Using tabular or parallel sided flakes as cores is certainly a different New World blade technique and hope I find time in the near future to work on this.

With best wishes,

Don E. Crabtree

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