

Columbia University
Field Station
Apartado 1-11
Calama, Chile

August 7, 1970 (I think)

Dear Don & Evelyn; (spelled wrong again - your name is the one name -
write English language which I can never
spell correctly - you'll forgive me, won't you?)

How is the field school going? I was so glad to hear from Karen Stockman that you were leaving it, it indicated to me that Evelyn (right that time?) was feeling better - and I hope even better now. I have a cute card for you, Evelyn, at home in New York, which, obviously, I never got around to sending. Still, I hope you know that I've thought of you very often in the last two months and ^{have} projected very strong wishes for your recovery.

I am finding down here, now that I am working intensively on my collections, how much knowing how to knap flint really means. The experimentation is important but I'm not sure that it is as important as the sophistication with which one ~~sees~~ can view collections after having knapped. One thing that I realized even before this summer was how often core preparation is taken as retouching for tool use. Another thing which I think can't be stressed too much is the fragility of the materials used ~~by~~ for stone tools. After seeing some of my carefully patterned bag retouch, and after seeing, last summer & during the winter, the lovely ~~of~~ chips a flake can acquire just by being stepped on a couple of times ~~or~~ by falling onto a hard rock at the right angle, I now can no longer call anything use retouch. Use wear I still think is possible to see, but I would need a very large collection of tools with almost identical ^{"use"} chipped edges before I would be willing to call it use.

Today I discovered a new knapping-related talent. I started to record my cores and discovered that a lot more than I had thought were exhausted. Before working with stone I never would have thought that most of them were exhausted because they are quite large - up to 7.8 x 6.2 x 2.4 cm in size. Now I can recognize them as exhausted because their remaining angles are too steep to allow further chipping. The cores in this collection span the spectrum - from fine almost conical percussion blade cores to large hunks of rock with one or two desultory flakes knocked off.

I am presently huddled in front of the fireplace, trying to get warm before going to bed. It is winter down here, and the house is not heated. Even though it gets hot outside during the day, the house is built of thick adobe therefore it stays cold inside - I don't think my hands & nose have been warm since I arrived. Ah well, such are the vicissitudes (I can't spell that one, either) of being an archaeologist.

Oh, Guess who is coming to the Field Station next week? Emma Lou Davis! She is at the meetings in Lima as is Mark Cross, who is living here this year, and he is bringing her back here for a week to see his sites. After all Evelyn told me about her last summer, I can't wait to meet her!

Tracy would send his love if he were here, but sniff, he's not. He is in New York until the end of August and then he's going off to all sorts of places. They are putting in new instruments all over the world, and he is going to Alaska, Wreal & Spain. He will be home for a couple of weeks at the beginning of October - between Alaska & Wreal, and then ~~will~~ will be gone until mid-November - double-suff!! I guess I'll survive, but I'm not entirely sure!

I can't wait to see you in November! I should have all sorts of fascinating information about and problems concerning Chilean lithic technology to discuss with Dow, and Evelyn can fill me in on all the latest Archaeological gossip.

My best wishes for a very successful knapping school and all my love to you both,

Lucy (L)