

Forestry and Conservation  
Purdue University  
Lafayette, Indiana 47907  
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Professor Don E. Crabtree  
Idaho State University Museum  
Pocatello, Idaho

Dear Professor Crabtree;

I have just read your recent article in Science, "Flaking stone with wooden implements", with much interest. The extent of my knowledge in these matters is scant as I merely am a collector of artifacts I find on the surface. Hence, my comments below must be considered as stemming mainly from ignorance.

First, I would like to offer you a piece of beefwood (Grevillea striata) I collected in Australia. It is about 30" long and about 1" square although part of the length still has bark adhering which reduces the volume of the wood. Perhaps you could get enough from it for a flaker. I will postpay it to you if you like.

I have reread your article several times, but, as lucid as it is, there are still some things I can't visualize for sure. When you use a wooden billet, do you strike the stone on its sharp edge, not flat on its side? What is the platform? The bulge of force?

On page 150, 3rd column, I supposed the wooden pressure flaker would be handled as in Fig. 2 (left), which seems to show that pressure is applied after the flaker is positioned at the right spot on the stone. However, you say that the wood must resist penetration of the lithic material. That sounds to me as if the process is either a hammering or a pressing against the sharp edge in its same plane.

The section on holding confuses me as I try to interpret it from Fig. 2. Before you go to a lot of trouble answering these questions, perhaps I could find the answers in your previous publications cited in References and Notes. If you think they might be helpful in my understanding of the flaking process, I would appreciate any reprints.

Sincerely,

*C. M. Kirpatrick*

C. M. Kirpatrick  
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