

Sunday, 31 August 1975



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Dear Don and Evelyn:

While my mind is still full of the last week, so full I can hardly settle down yet and write or talk about all of it coherently, let me send you a report of Vancouver from a single point of view. I know you'll be hearing about the meetings from a variety of people, but I thought I'd try and put together a rather complete report for myself and as some sort of substitute for your not being able to be there yourself.

First of all, it was exciting, exciting, and more so, from my point of view. The group was small enough to be able to mix with a tremendous group of people pretty intensely and yet not get pulled into 5000 different directions, and the array of persons there was tremendous. All age groups and points of reference were represented, and I was amazed when I found out that Von Koenigswald was alive and still talking about Java man! Junius was in rare form, and I finally got to meet Peggy (who is lovely), Marie was feeling good and happy about the China venture, Emmy Lou Davis was her usual wacky self, and I finally got to talk to Hans-Jurgen Muller-Beck. For me, the best part of the whole thing was that the Australians were there, and I finally got a chance to spend hours and hours with Peter White from Sydney and Rhys Jones from Canberra, and that got combined with hours with Brian Hayden from Simon Frazer and Dick Morlan from the National Museum of Canada. Sue Miller also got involved in most of those beer-and-bull sessions, which I think was tremendously good for her. But all of that's not too organized---just a way of starting to say that some of us got a chance to talk about what we are doing with lithic studies, both ethnographic, experimental, and archaeological, and I thought it was one of the most exciting communications I've had in years. I've had a long communication with some of those people for years, and have just sent one of our Idaho undergraduates off to White in Sydney for an MA, but had never had the chance to meet White and Jones before now! I'm sure we were almost offensively loud and raucous to some of the more traditionalists at times, but not enough to really inhibit any communication anywhere in the crowd and still enough so as to ask some constructive questions. Whee--I'm still hi after it all!

The meetings were a bit frustrating in their lack of organization, which was unfortunate. Bryan had been in South America until last week, and apparently just isn't organization-oriented, and the whole thing suffered from that a bit --people who were scheduled for papers didn't show and apparently didn't notify Alan that they would be absent, papers were way too long and weren't cut off, and the sessions got pretty rambling at times. But those were really minor problems compared to what constructive things were going on. There were three really good presentations, I thought--Rhys Jones on the recent material from Australia, Dick Morlan and Rob Bonnicksen on the Old Crow material from the Yukon, and Jim Richardson reading Jim Adovasio's report on the Meadowcroft site from Pittsburgh. The material from the latter, by the way, now is apparently well-dated at 18-20,000 years ago in the lowest level they've gotten down to, with a good flake assemblage of tools, several hearths, and they're not even at the bottom of the rockshelter. A preliminary report on the 1973-4 excavations there was just published in the Sept. 75 Penn. Archaeologist, and I am sure that if you dropped Joel Gunn a note (Dept. Anthro, Univ. Texas, San Antonio) he would see that you got a copy if you haven't already received it. Then I was glad to

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finally meet some of the people I've been reading about for years and hear the word straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak---Lorenzo on ~~Vaisquilly~~ (Freudian slip!) Tlapacoya, Ruth Simpson on Calico, George Carter on Texas Street, and Junius showed us some of his slides and film from Fell's Cave and the Lake Madden area of Panama. Jorge Espinosa also talked about the El Bosque material from Nicaragua that I am going to be working with for the next month, but I'll talk more about that when I've had a chance to really work with it. The Russians, Mirambell, Empeiraire, ~~NR~~ and Cardich didn't show up (along with Muto and Leonhardy), which was disappointing, but there was a geologist from Venezuela (Petzall) who talked briefly about Taima-Taima, and Alan Bryan had some fascinating comments and pictures from some exciting Brazilian sites. I frankly got an overwhelming impression that many of the people who are looking for earliest "man" and "his" associated tools in the New World really don't understand lithic fractures, production, and damage enough to be able to judge the evidence oftentimes, and that we are still so locked up in almost mystical discussions of projectile point typology that we lose the forest in the trees, but those are good things to evaluate and understand and can really be done only by meeting people and talking to them directly. The real influence of your work and its transmission through your students was apparent in several aspects of the symposium, from specific things like Bonnicksen's applications of ideas of lithic fracture to his work with bone production systems, to Paul Ossa's discussion of Paijan in South America, to some of my questions of various people about the relationship of the available lithic resources to the presence or absence of "crude" toolkits, and White's and my reaction to the concepts of crudity and sophistication in lithic developments over time and space. I hope the papers read at the meetings get out and into print in the next year or so, because much of the data is critical and needs to be available in a concentrated source, but I'm afraid much of what I felt was really critical will never be published---the informal sense of the validity of certain data and irrelevance of others to the problems at hand, and the ability or inability of the various participants (giving papers and discussing) to really understand the materials that they were analyzing. I do wish you could have been there, and don't want to frustrate you even more by talking about the subtle parts of it, but I think you will appreciate knowing that you were definitely there implicitly via your publications and personal communications.

Two specific things came out of the last week that I think you will be interested in. On Wednesday White and I happened to crash a formal luncheon for those giving papers (which we thought was appropriate, since we were the most verbal of the discussants I imagine), and I spent the meal talking to Rainer Protsch about his new anthropology setup at the University in Frankfurt. He was going on and on about all the money he had, and so I asked him if he could subvert some of those tremendous funds to get us a translation of Pfeiffer 1912. And he bought it! I am sending him the specific reference today, and White and I (and anyone else who can help) will see if we can find a university press in this country to print at least a limited edition of the translation once one of Rainer's staff gets it done. Really! I always believe such miracles when I see them accomplished, but knowing Protsch and how he works, and the interest several of us have in the project, I think it will work. I'll try later in the fall to get a publication outlet for it (it doesn't have to be anything fancy), and I think I'll begin by writing to Art Jelinek at Arizona and see what he has to offer. White will be a visiting prof at Berkeley during the second semester this year, and he will be able to check out some publication chances there. One way or another, I think we might be able to get such a volume out and available within the year. Whatever, when

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I do get a translation available, you will be the first to get a copy of it. Any other little gems you have around that need looking into?

Second specific item, I spent last Friday going down to Victoria and took a good close look at the "Scottsbluff" point in the British Columbia Provincial Museum that comes from the Windermere area of the East Kootenay district, southeastern BC. First of all, the outline and flake scar patterning of the point are so similar to the chalcedony point no. 7071 from the Scottsbluff site that they could almost have have been made by the same knapper---it's really marked! Second, tho, the BC point is made of an extremely fine-grained metaquartzite (not a chert as reported) that could have well come from the Harvey Mountain quarry site, and the point was found about 120 mi away in the same major river drainage system. I am going to have to see some more of the BC lithic resource material to even begin to eliminate sources other than Harvey Mountain, but at the moment it sure looks good. Even more than the quarry identification, tho, I am frankly rather stunned by the stylistic similarity of the BC and Nebraska points, and will have to start looking for other things in the region to see where we stand. Kind of exciting.

I should hush up and get started on all the correspondence promised during the last week. As you may gather from this letter, I thought the meetings were tremendous, productive, and only wish you could have been there. But you will next time! I'm off to Baton Rouge next week to spend four weeks illustrating and measuring the El Bosque materials, and hope that by time I get back you're feeling better and are home convalescing. Lots of people said to say hello if I wrote to you, including (via the mails) Sollberger and Payson, and Rob---hi! Hope things level out, and I'll let you know more about the southern stuff when I have some information.

Love,

Dutton

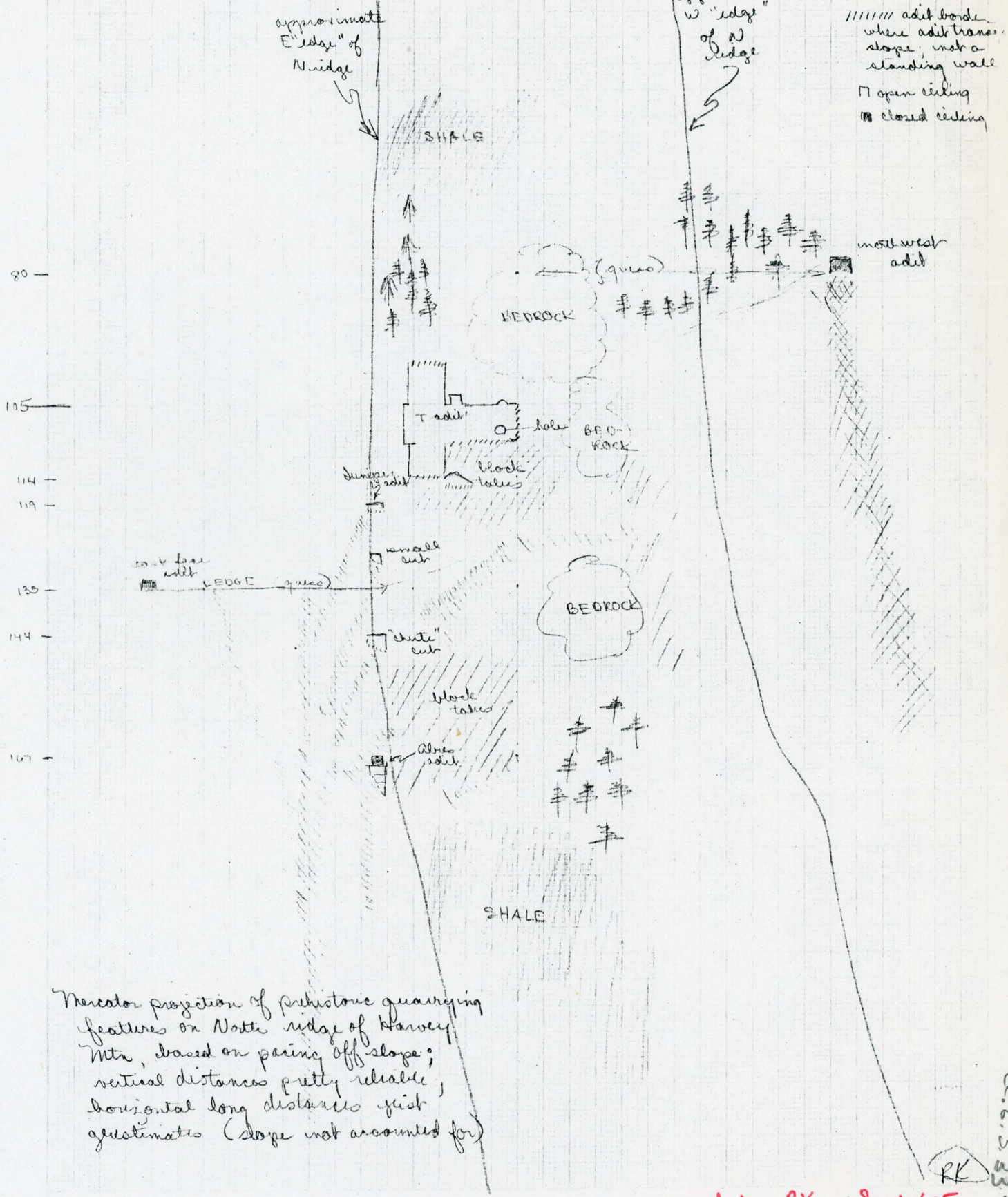
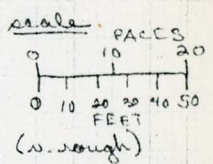
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Harvey Mtn quarry

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Mercator projection of prehistoric quarrying features on North ridge of Harvey Mtn, based on pacing off slope; vertical distances pretty reliable; horizontal long distances just estimates (slope not accounted for)

sent by RK, 1 Sept '75

RK
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