

I certainly am much interested in your generous offer. Please send me photocopies, to. I'll forward this letter of yours to Dr. Crabtree.
Stanley J. Miller

4805 Centre Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213
January 26, 1968

Mr. Don E. Crabtree
Museum of Man
San Diego, California

Dear Mr. Crabtree:

Your paper with E.L. Davis in the current Science opens a good many useful avenues for investigation -- avenues that non-professionals can explore if they will. In particular, it forces us to reconsider the function of the "classic" burin. It has never been entirely convincing that so much engraving or grooving was done (though the grooving would have been essential in cutting and breaking bone): scarping is something else again.

You may know that John Witthoft, the former Pennsylvania State Anthropologist, now at the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, has been experimenting in this field for a good many years. If you are continuing the work, he may have ideas of use to you -- and you may be able to complement what he has done.

However, my purpose in writing is to call your attention to work by a non-professional, William Fowler, the editor of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society Bulletin. He advances some wild ideas and has a chip-on-the-shoulder attitude -- in part resulting from the doctrinaire pooh-poohing of any idea he advances -- that tends to offset much of his good work. (He had worked out most of the details of the pre-pottery transition between the Archaic and Early Woodland in New England, with its use of statite vessels, long before any professional would admit that there was actually a "Stone ~~XXXXXX~~ Bowl" stage.)

Fowler argued that much woodworking was done by grating green wood with relatively crude and rough igneous stone tools. As you have done, he demonstrated that it would work, and work well and quickly as a means of sawing off saplings, smoothing and shaping them, and grooving them to accept an axe head. Since New England has very little good flint, and that mainly imported from New York and Pennsylvania, he used the igneous and metamorphic rocks that were available there -- and made them serve his purpose. (The textures would be most like your basalt and quartzite.)

As you probably do not have access to a file of the MAS Bulletin, I will be glad to dig out and photocopy any of Fowler's papers that I may have (I lack early issues myself). As he is an excellent artist, his drawings should reproduce well. Or you may want to write him at the Bronson Museum, Attleboro, Massachusetts where -- if his health permits -- he spends most of his time since retirement. If you are interested, please let me know.

Very truly yours,

P. Schuyler Miller
P. Schuyler Miller

CE.7.2.91