

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CANADA

HUMAN HISTORY BRANCH



MUSÉE NATIONAL DU CANADA

DIRECTION DU MUSÉE DE L'HOMME

OUR FILE NO.
NOTRE DOSSIER N°DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
SECRETARIAT D'ÉTATYOUR FILE NO.
VOTRE DOSSIER N°*Ottawa, Canada* Oct. 15, 1965.

Mr. Donald Crabtree,
General Delivery,
Kimberley, Idaho.

Dear Don:

I hope you didn't think I had forgotten your interest in Eskimo flaking tools. I have had all of the specimens in this museum photographed and prints are enclosed. Unfortunately, the photographers did not take profiles and indicated no scale so I have included tracings which shows something of the techniques and materials with which they are made and are life-size.

There are two distinct types as far as I can tell. Those from the Western Arctic around Norton Sound are made in two pieces; are elbow shaped and fit into the hand. I think this is the type you had in mind. They are very comfortable to use and much pressure can be exerted on them. They are made of a variety of material from wood to musk-ox horn and bone. The flaking bit, however, is invariably of ivory. I have not seen any of metal, but our sample is from a restricted area and time (ca. 1886).

The second type is from the Hudson Bay area collected 1907-9. This collection (Comer) was illustrated and discussed in detail by Boas around the same date, B.A.E. I think). It is made in a single piece from caribou antler. They are generally larger than the Alaskan type and are held in a different manner (see drawing encl.). They all have cuts on the shaft to hold a pad of leather in place. Some are now missing this pad. The tips of these specimens are also grosser than on the Alaskan specimens and may have served slightly different purposes. It does not appear that fine retouching could be accomplished with them.

I hope you are able to get some idea from this of how to make one. We do not have casting facilities at our disposal at present or I would have sent you a cast. If you feel you would like one I will see what I can do. I hope you have luck in using them.

Some time if you have an extra fluted point (preferably with the channel flakes struck from it) that you feel you could spare I would appreciate it very much for illustrating fluted point technology in one of the museum displays. Once again I want to say how much I enjoyed our conversations in Boulder and I am looking forward to our next encounter.

Best regards,

George
George F. Mac Donald.

C-7.3.11