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Opening extract from
**1066 and Before That – History
Poems**

Written by
Brian Moses and Roger Stevens

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ICE AND SNOW

Born into a world of ice and snow
Everywhere you look
Everywhere you go
Ice and snow
More ice, more snow
Born into a world of ice and snow

There is a garden, far, far away
The rumours say, the rumours say
Where the sun always shines
And butterflies play . . .
What are they?
What are they?

Now we stoke the fire
With our dwindling wood
Wrapped up in our deer hides
Eat the last of our food
How I dream of a garden
With no ice and no snow



What does that look like?
Will we ever know?
Ice and snow,
Ice and snow,
We'll never know

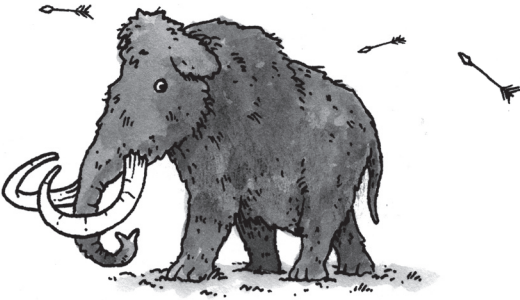
Roger Stevens

There is evidence that when the last great Ice Age happened, the humans that survived lived in an area on Africa's southern coast, the only part of the world that remained habitable. Some people claim that this was the basis for the Garden of Eden story in the Bible. And indeed for similar stories told by other religions and in other civilizations.

TWO MAMMOTH POEMS

1. Why?

Why was a mammoth called a mammoth
and not an 'enormous' or a 'colossal'?
And how did they know what to call it
when they discovered the very first fossil?



2. Fossil

Now, many years from the Ice Age
a fossilized piece of bone
helps us make sense of the mammoth
like an ancient text message in stone.

Greetings
from 1500 BCE!
Srsly.



Brian Moses

*It's a bit of a mystery why creatures
were given their names. How did
scientists and archaeologists know
what to call their discoveries? And,
of course, there's a message in
everything we find from the past.*



WHAT IS THE USE OF THAT?

What's that?

It's a wheel?

What does it do?

It goes round

Round and round

Along the ground.

Well, what is the use of that?

What's that?

It's a clock.

What does it do?

Tells the time.

We've the sun, we've the moon

Got midnight, got noon

Well, what is the use of that?



What's that?

It's writing.

What does it do?

It's exciting.

All these new ideas

It will all end in tears

Now I've had my say, and that's that.

Roger Stevens

The ancient Sumer civilization grew up around the meeting point of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers in Mesopotamia (now known as Iraq) around seven thousand years ago, because of its natural fertility. It is often called the 'cradle of civilization' – and some people say the Sumerians were the world's greatest inventors.

CAVE PAINTING

A mammoth hunt
on a cave wall.

Stick people holding spears,

painted with charcoal,
stained with berries.

A tribe's history
handed down.

And below the hunt
a handprint.

A child, maybe,
reaching up . . .



One thought in his head
to make it clear . . .

'I was here,
I existed,
I lived,
I survived . . .

'And this smudge of paint
on a wall
will say it all.'

Brian Moses

*Handprints and hand stencils were left by cave dwellers of all ages,
including children.*

INVITATION TO A CAVE RAVE

(A found poem)

Uay san grm urgle garumfff
Heffa dargle com dewyda.
Crum volla gan gowda guwalla
em tay unta flappu skewyva.

Garada ugla simso sarra sku
jaavada gu galla em furtle.
Heffu slapta don wolka em fluga
em slata solata dum myrtle.

Hep greer oof flaffa san.



Translation:

Hey, man, can you dig it?
There's a cave rave at ours tonight.
The old folk are off hunting mammoths
and they won't be back before light.

Bring some of that very berry juice
that makes us laugh and sway.
There'll be music on drum and horn
and we'll party till break of day.

Be here, or be nowhere, man.

Brian Moses

THE GOOD OLD STONE AGE DAYS

I don't hold with this new-fangled 'Bronze Age'.
What's it good for, eh?
What's wrong with the good old Stone Age days?

What's wrong with eating woolly mammoths?
Nothing like a good chewy hunk of mammoth's brain.
All this modern eating-vegetables malarkey
And growing grapes for wine.
What's wrong with drinking water
Like we did in the good old Stone Age days?

Why do we have to smelt copper
And alloy it with tin to make bronze vessels?
It will make the gods angry, mark my words.
The potter's wheel? That's just a phase.
Let's drink from hand-fashioned clay pots again
Like we did in the good old Stone Age days.

And all this 'writing' nonsense.
What's wrong with daubing a few pictures on the
cave walls?
What's the point of writing things down?
And don't get me started on building houses!
What's so bad about living in caves?
Why else would the gods make holes in the ground?
So we can live in them, that's why!
Bring back the good old Stone Age days.



No, this so-called Bronze Age is not for me.
Whatever next? Organized warfare?
It will all end in tears.
Mark my words.
Astronomy? Mathematics? Centralized government?
It's just the latest craze.
I say, Bring back the good old Stone Age days.

Roger Stevens