

Walking in the Footsteps of Time – in Margaret Roding

Part 1 – Exciting New Discoveries

Ever since I came to live in Margaret Roding nearly thirty years ago, I have felt a palpable sense of history here. In my imagination I could see the farm workers through the centuries walking to work before dawn and trudging home again in all seasons, from Marks Hall Farm down the lane where I live.

When I discovered our beautiful, little Norman church and realised that our hamlet had been inhabited for over 1000 years, I was charmed. More recently I found out that the river Roding was named after Hroda the Saxon, who lived here in the sixth century, and that his tribe the Hrodingas, dwelled in this fertile area for 500 years. What a special place to live!

I like walking in and around the village and have, since childhood, enjoyed noticing the minutiae of the seasonal changes taking place and collecting small objects of curiosity as I went. I recently picked up two stones which seemed to me both interesting and unusual. I was stunned after having them confirmed by the county archaeologist as worked by human hand and dating to prehistory!

Modern archaeology has been developing by leaps and bounds ever since its birth around 1860, and techniques such as carbon-dating and isotope analysis reveal more and more about those who have inhabited our country since the last Ice Age, nearly twelve thousand years ago. Just holding in my hand an artefact made by someone either living in or travelling through my village perhaps as long ago as 8000BC fills me with wonder and makes me want to know what life and the landscape would have been like here in the Middle Stone Ages.

I started to research what is known and found a treasure-trove of information and some stunning artefacts which led me on my own journey through prehistory.

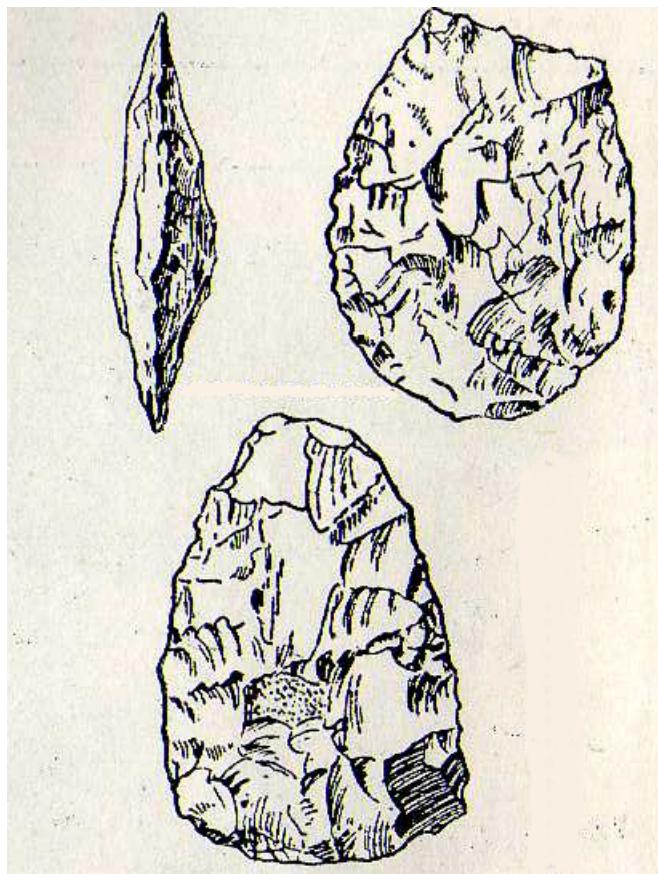
By Marion Polley, Recorder of Uttlesford History for Margaret Roding
(who also drew the images below to illustrate this article)

... Next time: What our ancient village-dwellers were like!

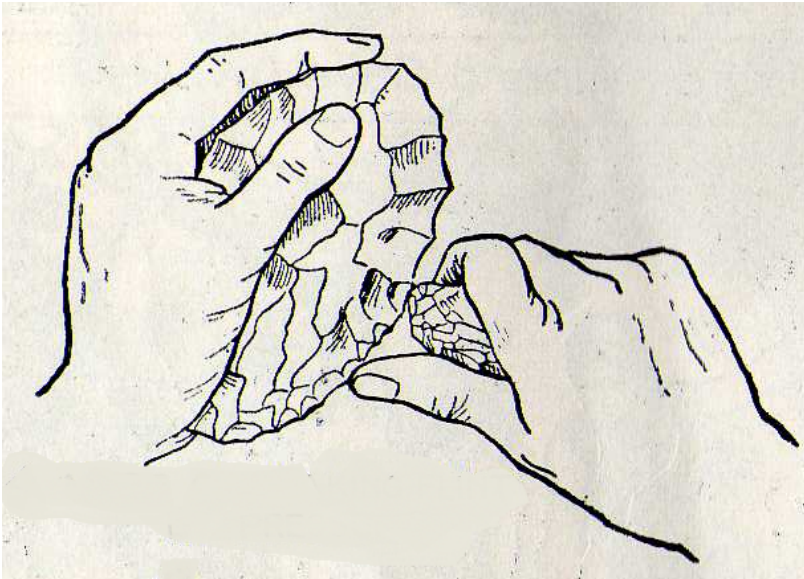
References

A History of Aythorpe Roding by P. Rollason
Home by Francis Pryor

Drawings by C.W. Airne



Hand axes



Flaking a handaxe



early man



Hunting



Making fire



Hut