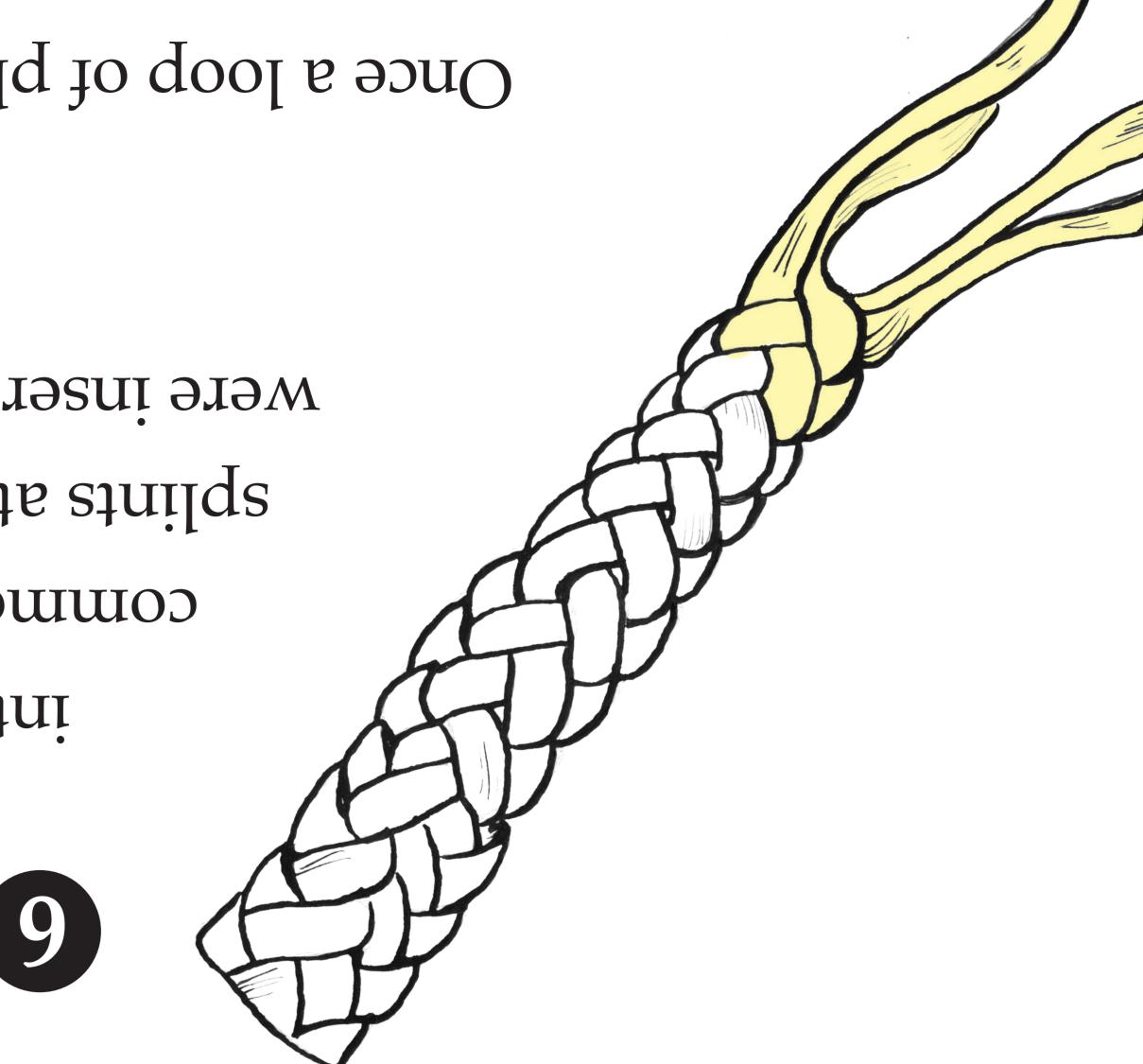
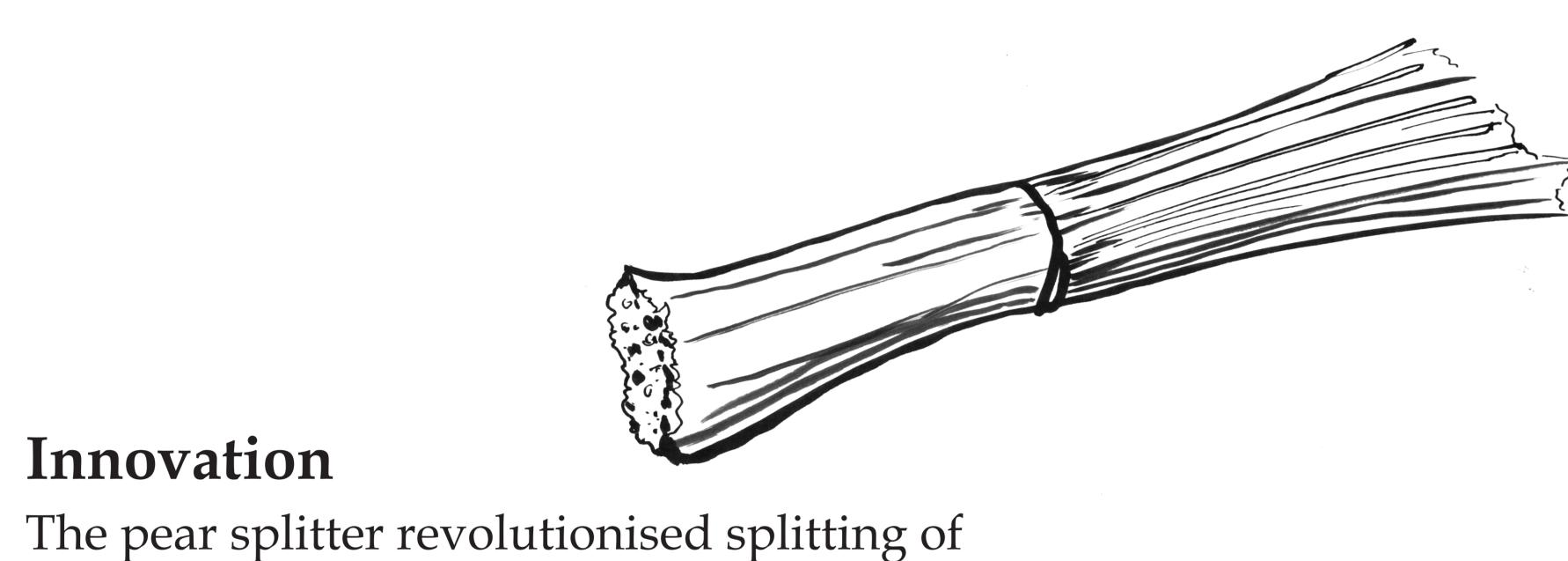
day long. Ila tiald bluow nethita ell age. Plait Schools were formed, ganoy a mort from a young Shildren, both boys and girls,

walked. vaide and some could plait as they activity. Women would often plait straw Isizos bna solidom a solidos gnitissos and social mas put through the mill again. dace a loop of plait had been completed it

of plait. Mere inserted to continue the length splints at a time, additional splints common to use between 3 and 7 into lengths of 'plait'. It was are then plait - braided, The flattened splints



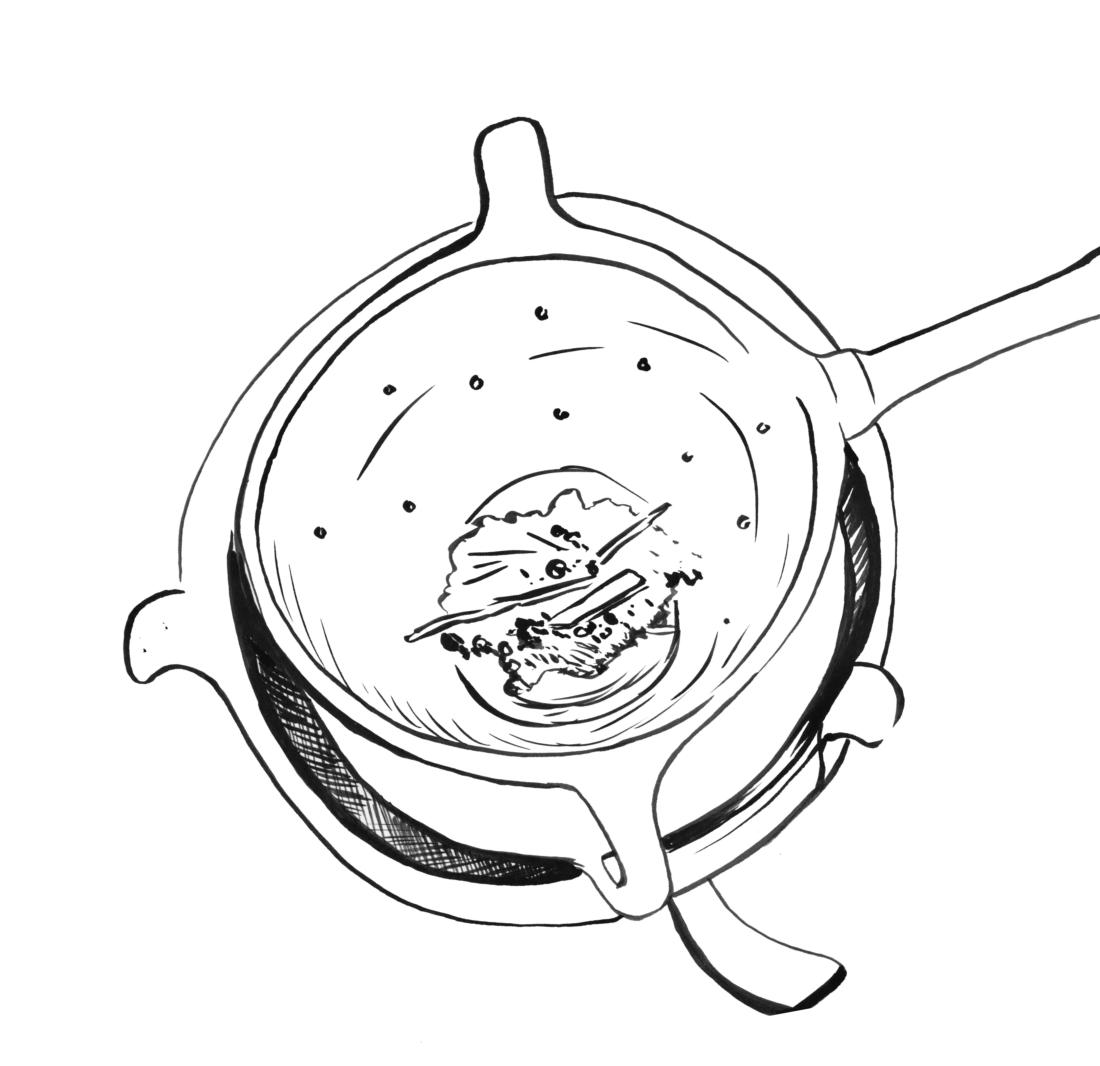




Tinlq 'esibnl ni lash oAW 'uəm bəiyyam yilgung bah nands bah 'the or' noy that you the at,

'əniyspnoftnəH puv əniyswvy8uixəng uI,

beware of those who tried steal their plait: the early 19th century, songs were written telling women to Bundles of straw plait became valuable commodities in



dresses caught fire. badly burned by them as their gnied nemow to seanstani being dry out the straw. There are several them warm as normal fires would kept under women's skirts to keep pots filled with embers. They were Сһадду роғя жеге еагтһеп маге



Politics and Rumours

Male agricultural workers were often jealous of economic freedom of the Straw Plaiters. Men in Parliament were 'worried' by the freedoms of the female Straw Plaiters, it was thought that:

'The moral condition of the lacemakers seems nearly as low as that of the plaiters... chastity is at a sad discount... prostitution is at a high premium'



It enabled plaiters to split the straw into a

different number of splints, depending on

what was required by a particular style of

plait. It was invented in Chalfont St Peter, -

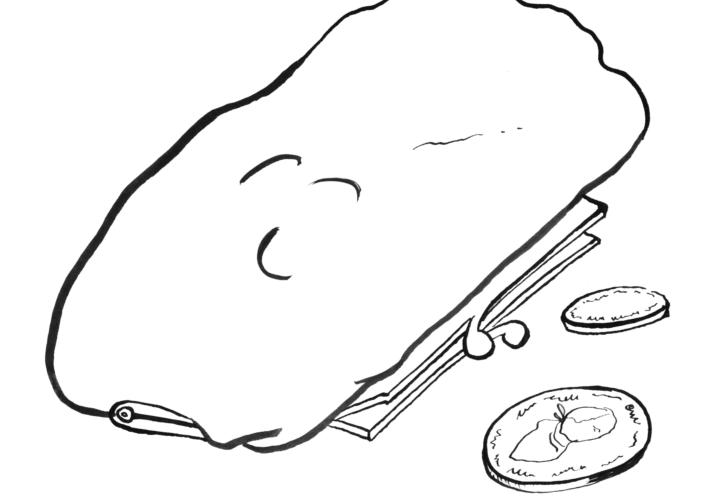
Innovation

near the Museum.



Appearance Straw Plaiters were recognisable from their blistered and cut lips.

To keep the straw moist as they worked, the plaiters would run the bleached, split straw through their mouths, before adding it to the plait.



Money

In the early 1800s women could earn double a man's wages. A good straw plaiter could earn £1. 1s a week - about £35 today, compared to 8 shillings - £13, that a man could earn as an agricultural labourer.

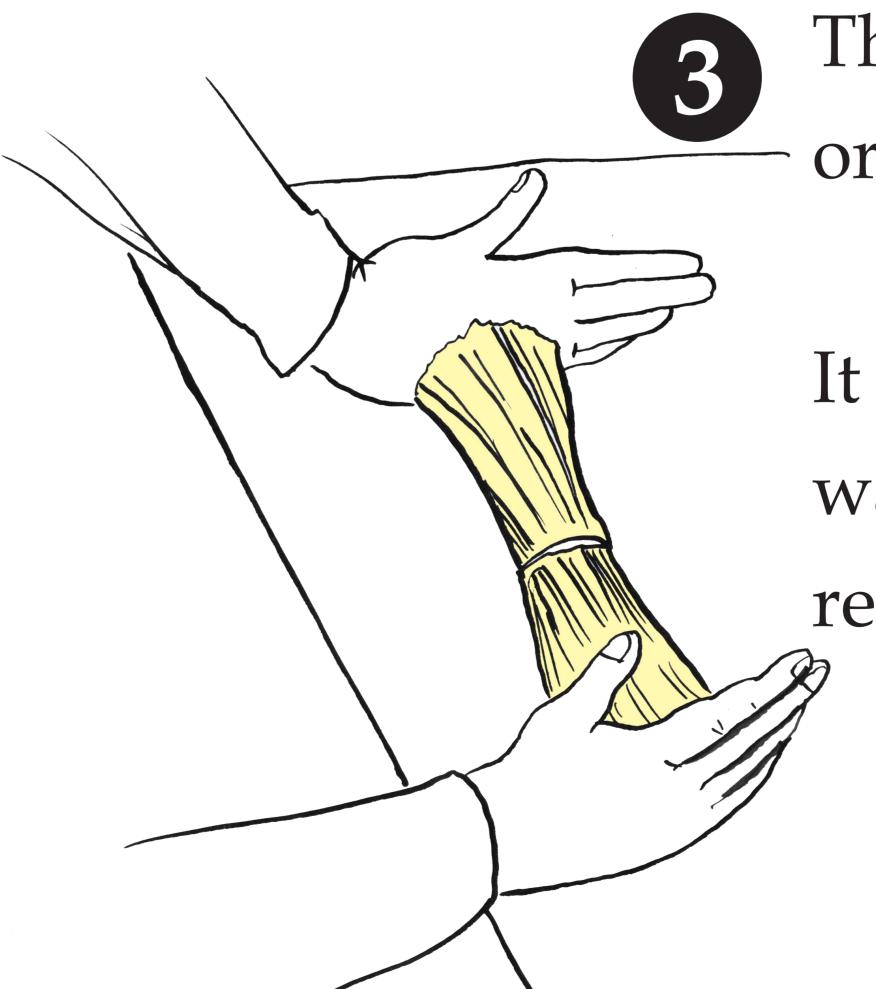
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90

The Chiltern landscape provided the ideal conditions for growing long straw for use in plaiting.



After the farmer had harvested his crop women would collect all the waste straw – this was called 'gleaning'.



The straw was then sorted into lengths, — or cut to make it a regular size.

> It was then kept in a box, often filled with water or bleach, to keep it soft and workable, ready for plaiting.

