

Acknowledgements

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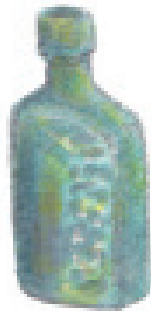
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Glass Liniment Bottles

Liniment was used to soothe common ailments, and could be bought at the General Store, where the townspeople could purchase imported goods such as sugar and molasses.



Brass Scale Piece

This would have been used to measure the weight of goods bought at the General Store.



Clay & Glass Beads

Clay beads were traditionally made by enslaved African women, who probably wore them to represent rites of passage in their lives.



Astrolabe

Astrolabes were tools that helped sailors to navigate their ships so that they were able to trade between colonies and countries.

Regimental Buttons

British soldiers occupied Raritan Landing in 1776, when colonists were fighting for their freedom in the American Revolution.



Ceramic Mug

This mug fragment was one of many found at the site of the Rising Sun Tavern, where travelers could stop for a meal.



Animal Bones

People in Raritan Landing raised cows, pigs, and sheep, as well as caught fish. They also likely had pet dogs.



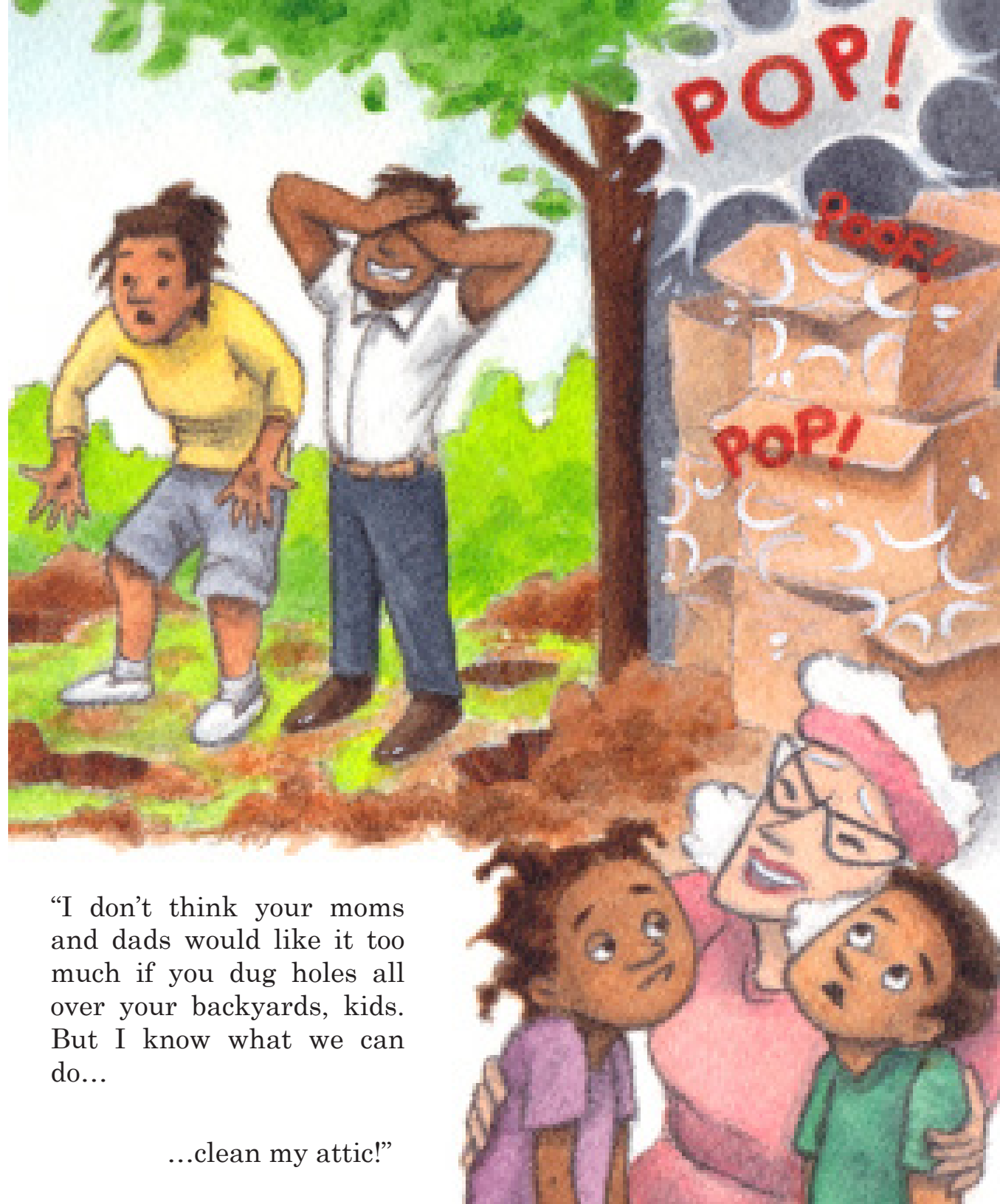
Ceramic Shards

A typical dinner included bread, cheese, and meat. Families sat down to eat with slipware, earthenware, and ceramic dinnerware daily.



Dividers

The discovery of these small tools proved that there were window-making shops behind some of the larger homes at the Landing.



“I don't think your moms and dads would like it too much if you dug holes all over your backyards, kids. But I know what we can do...

...clean my attic!”



“Woah,” said Jack, “I can’t believe we can find so much out about the past from what was under our feet.”

“Hey! Do you think we could dig and solve mysteries in our own backyards?” asked Izzy.

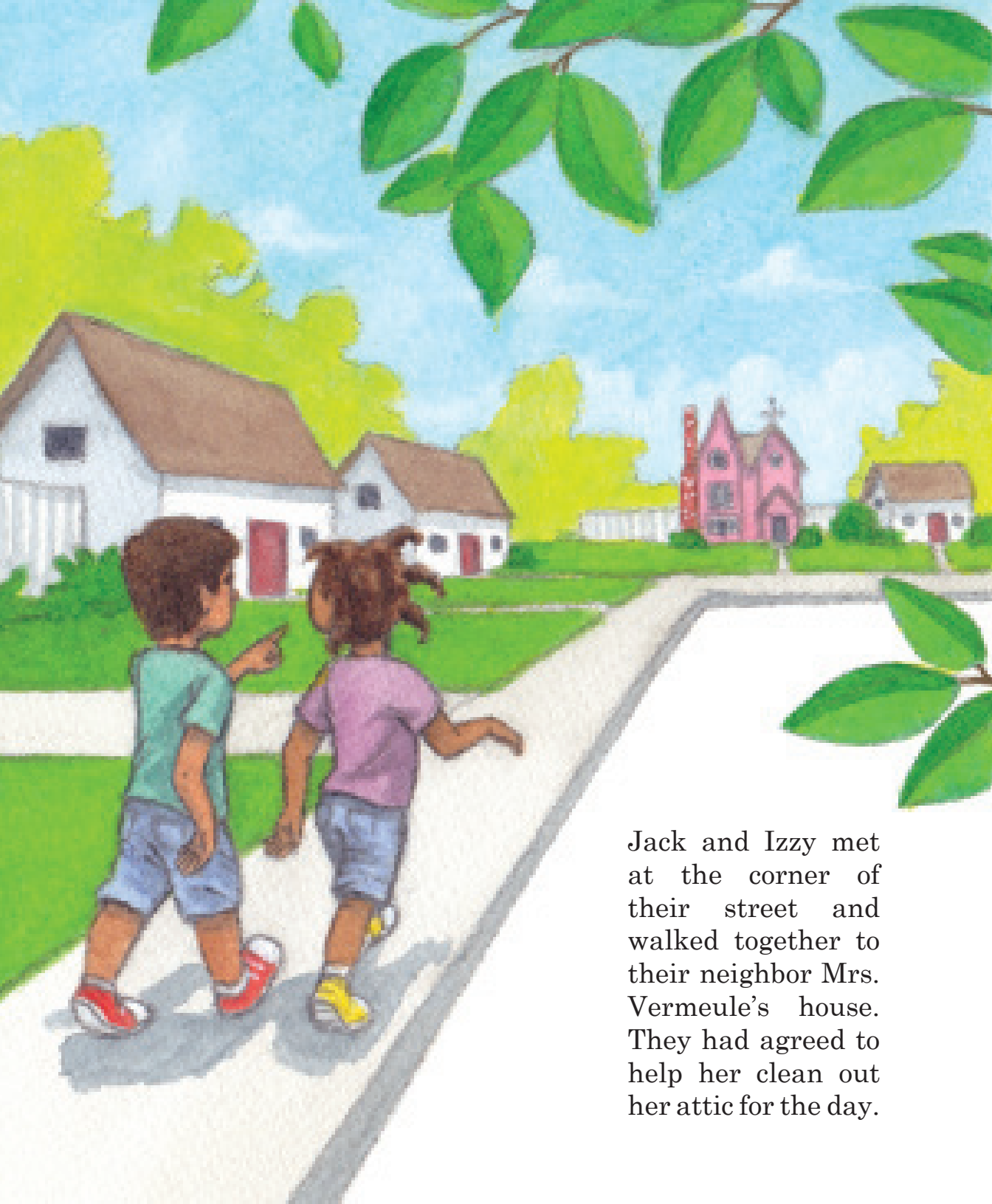
Introduction

Sometimes treasure can be found in unlikely places at unexpected times. Often, when you see discarded nails or ceramic shards (broken pieces), you may not see value in them. To archaeologists and historians, uncovering artifacts like nails and bits of pottery is like opening a window to the past. It is like finding buried treasure.

For the Rutgers Survey Archaeological Office (RASO), Raritan Landing was *their* buried treasure. In 1978, while digging for a sewage line, Middlesex County workers accidentally uncovered artifacts and building foundations that suggested the area was once a town of successful merchants, shopkeepers, artisans, Freeman, farmers, indentured servants, and African slaves. The Raritan River hosted a major trading port in Colonial America, not only between New York and Philadelphia, but Europe and the Caribbean.

Archaeologists were able to piece together the once thriving town of Raritan Landing from the artifacts they discovered, painting a picture of the people who had once called it home.





Jack and Izzy met at the corner of their street and walked together to their neighbor Mrs. Vermeule's house. They had agreed to help her clean out her attic for the day.





Margaret was the only girl in her family. She spent time caring for the farm animals, spinning wool, and practicing needlepoint with her mother. Even though Margaret was happy, she wanted to learn how to read and write like her brothers — sometimes it was hard to be a girl. Her brothers didn't always realize how lucky they were that they had the freedom to own a business, shop, or land one day. She liked needlepoint, but she also loved to watch the ships as they came into the port — it must be so wonderful to sail all over the world! Margaret also loved having tea with her mother because it meant the Delft set was brought out. She always admired the painted blue designs on her cup and saucer as she ate her scones and jam.

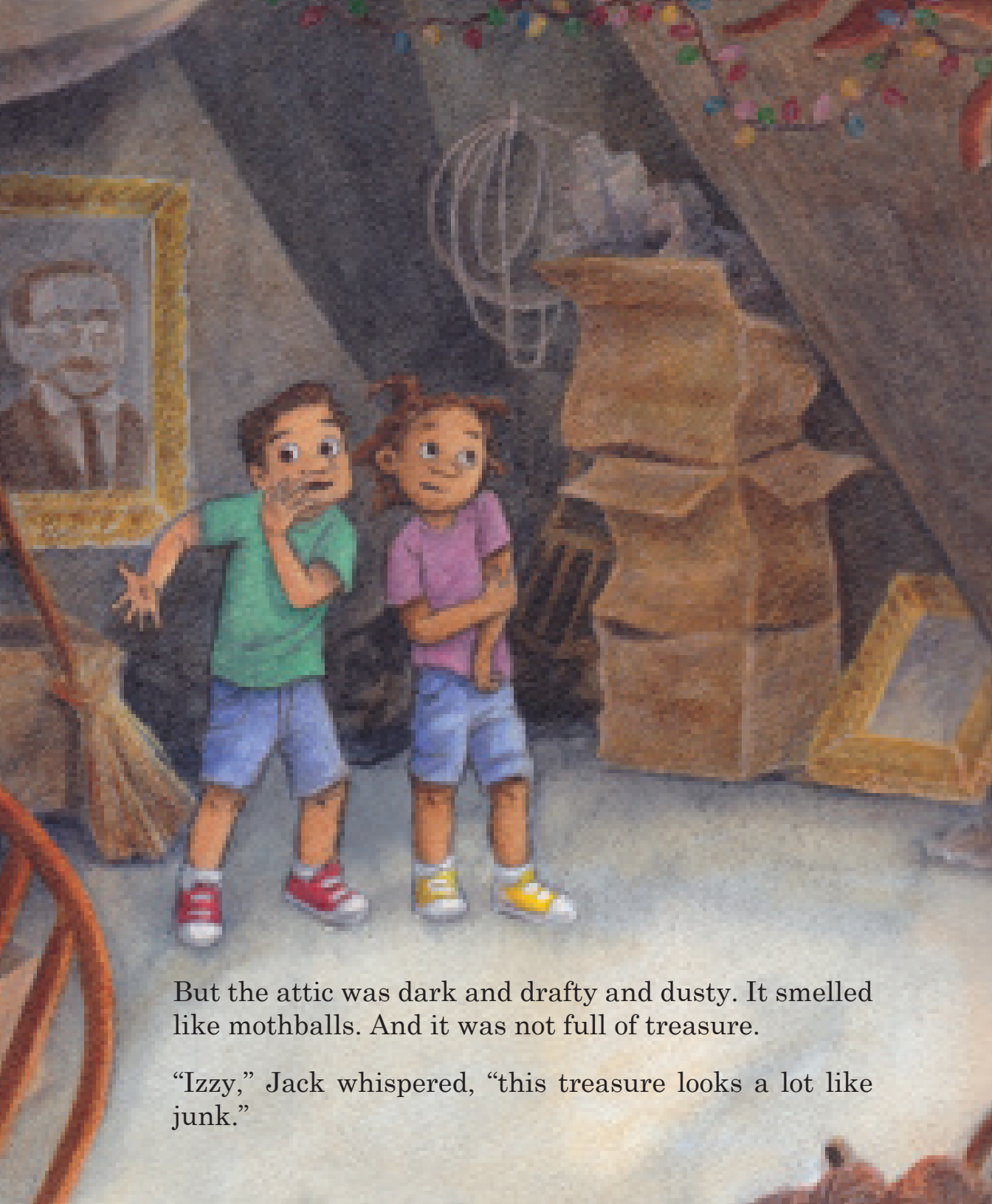


When they arrived, Mrs. Vermeule greeted them at the door, “Thanks for coming to help me today, kids! I’ve wanted to sort out all of my treasures for a long time.”

Jack and Izzy’s eyes lit up. “Treasure!” they thought,



and wondered what kind of adventure they might have that day in Mrs. Vermeule’s attic.



But the attic was dark and drafty and dusty. It smelled like mothballs. And it was not full of treasure.

“Izzy,” Jack whispered, “this treasure looks a lot like junk.”



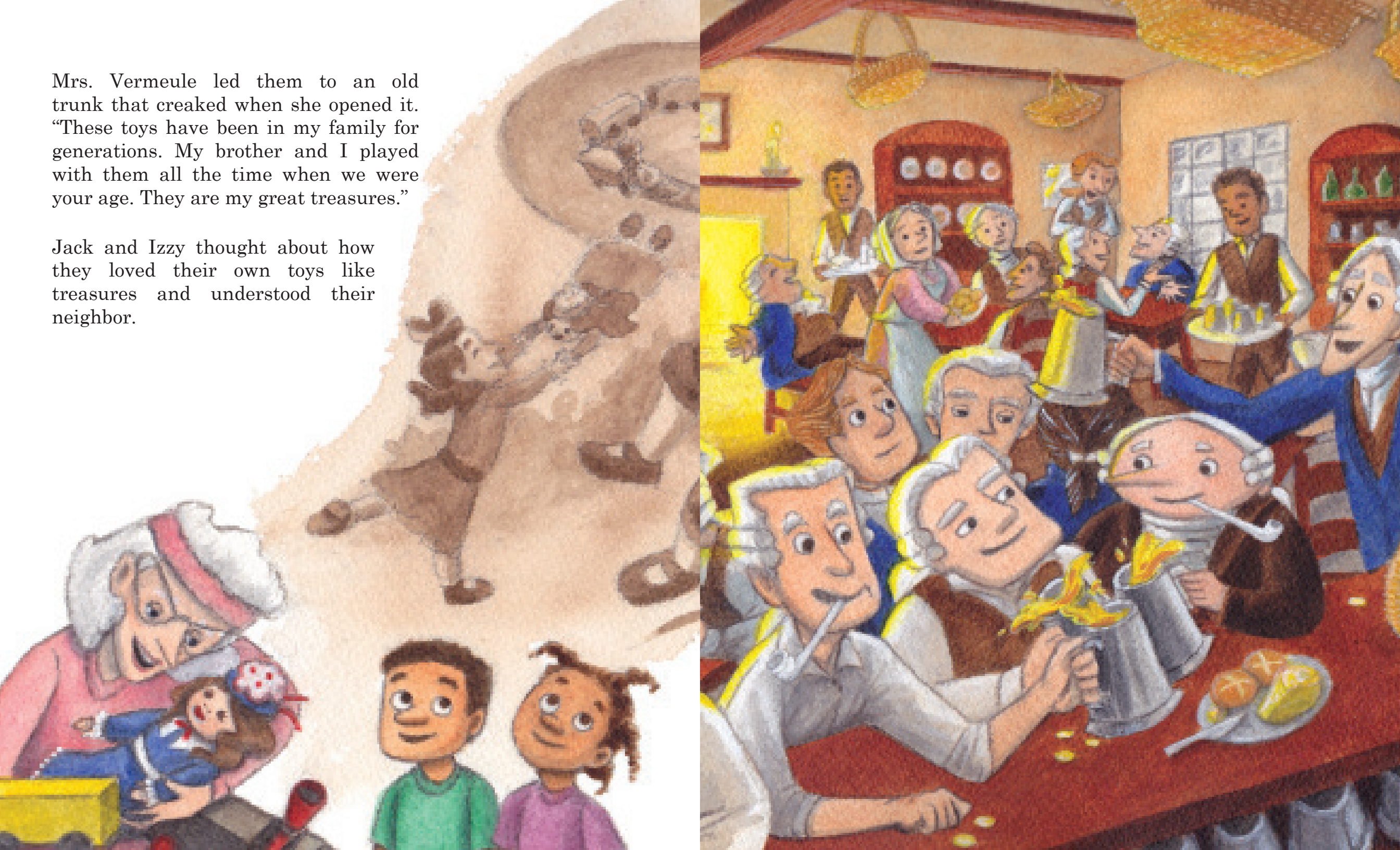


It was a harsh winter in the colonies. As part of the King's 35th Regiment, Jonathan was lucky enough to occupy a house on Landing Lane. There was even a root cellar, a well, and a privy on the plot they had quartered. He and his fellow soldiers were able to warm themselves by the fire and eat decent meals, while the armourer tended to the artillery. To pass the time and try to forget the cold, Jonathan liked to play games and cards. It didn't feel right to take over the home of a family he did not know, but at least he didn't have to freeze in the huts at the encampment on the bluff. Those men weren't lucky enough to have access to kitchens and latrines. Jonathan hoped that they would survive the winter.



Mrs. Vermeule led them to an old trunk that creaked when she opened it. "These toys have been in my family for generations. My brother and I played with them all the time when we were your age. They are my great treasures."

Jack and Izzy thought about how they loved their own toys like treasures and understood their neighbor.



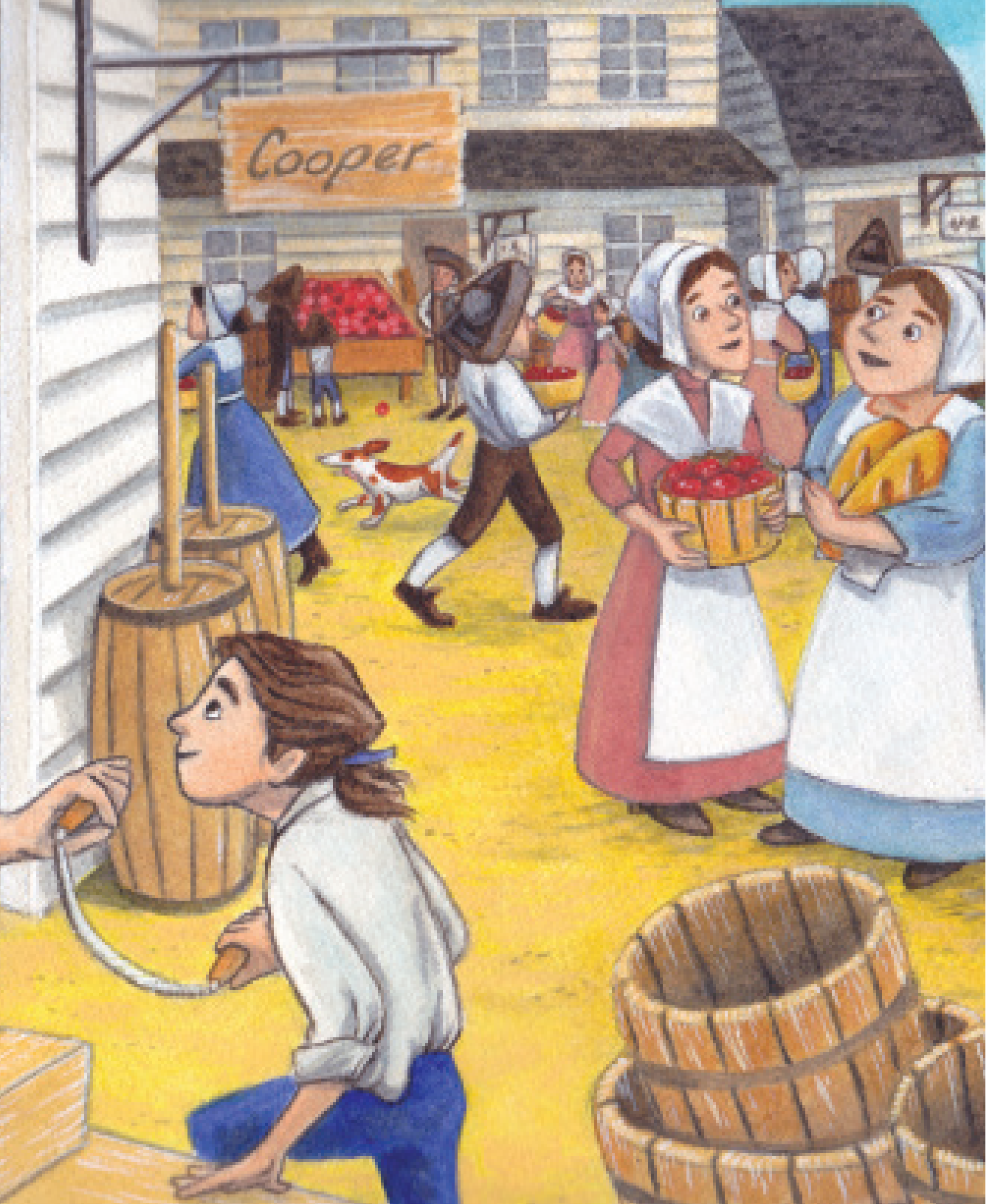


After a long day of loading ships on the wharf, Henry was looking forward to unwinding and eating supper at the Rising Sun Tavern with the other men in town. At the tavern, he could have a game of cards with the blacksmith and the baker, or he could talk over cider with his fellow Freeman from the wharf. He was always happy to swap stories with visitors to the Landing. He went to the town meetings that were held there. Sometimes, he just liked to rest and warm himself by the fire. It was the best way to catch up with neighbors at the end of the day before going home. There was always a seat open and a hearty meal waiting, and Henry liked how, in the tavern, every man was equal, no matter where he worked or how much land he owned.



“If these toys could talk, imagine all of the stories they could tell. They’re older than all of us — almost as old as this town that has been around since before this land was even a country!”

“Really? How old is this town, anyway?” asked Jack.

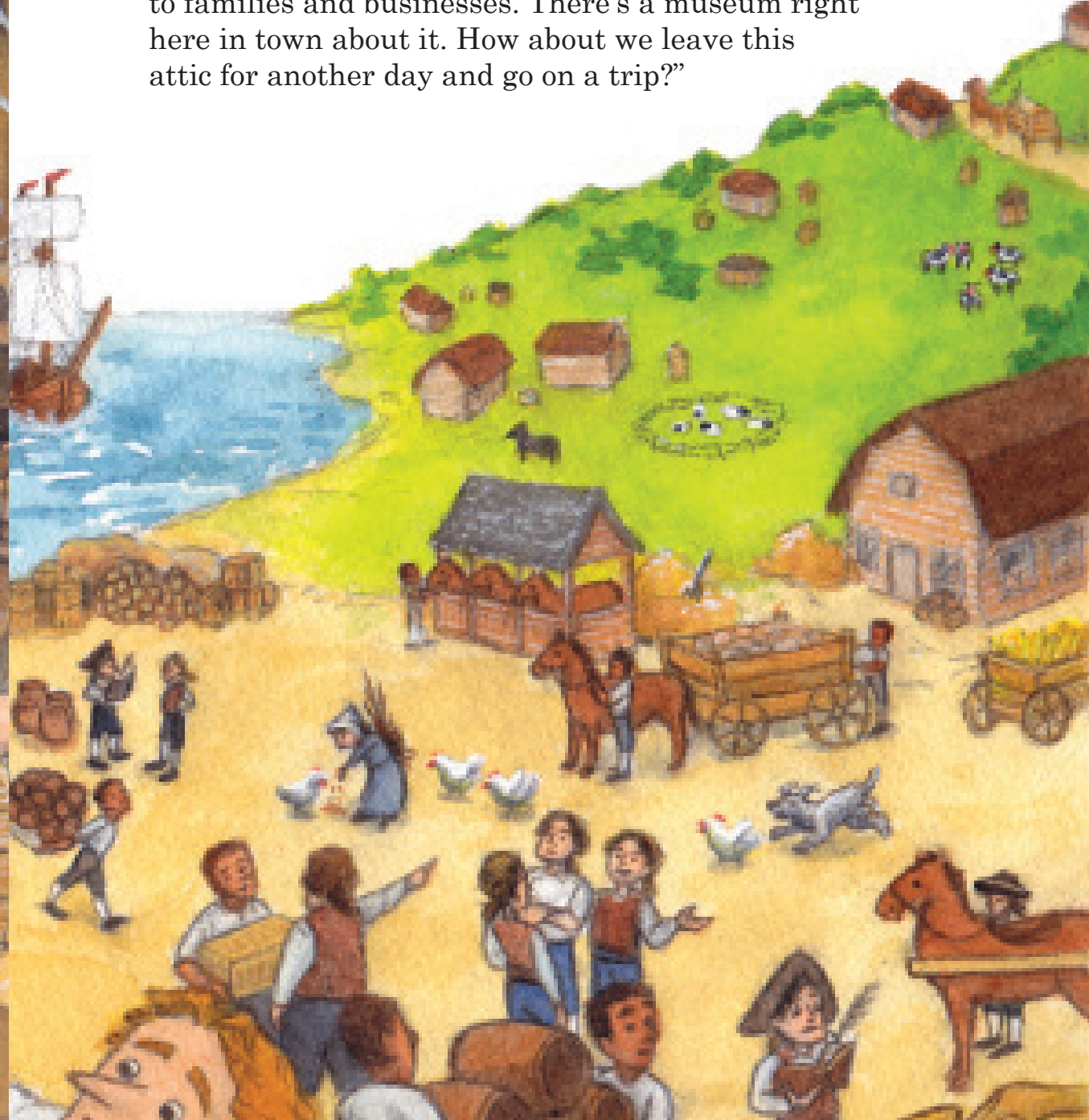




Samuel was a Cooper on Landing Lane. He lived with his family above his workshop. Samuel was glad that he settled at the river port. The area was rich in lumber, and he made a good living making buckets and barrels for all of the shopkeepers, tavern owners, merchants, and farmers who needed to collect and store all of their fruit, cured meat, and dry goods — not to mention imports of rum and molasses! Samuel's shop was located at the corner of the Road Up Raritan (now called River Road) and Landing Lane, right in the heart of town. Coopersmithing was a valuable trade, and he was glad that he was able to teach it to his son.



“Raritan Landing, which we now call Piscataway, has been around for hundreds of years. The Raritan River used to be home to a big port where ships brought food and supplies to families and businesses. There’s a museum right here in town about it. How about we leave this attic for another day and go on a trip?”



When Jack, Izzy, and Mrs. Vermeule arrived at the museum, Mr. Parker, the curator, greeted them and led them to the exhibit.

“Some years ago, when this town was digging to install a pipeline, they discovered buried treasure instead. Small artifacts like nails and coins were found first, but then archaeologists began to unearth the foundations of houses that dated back to before the American Revolution.”

“Archaeologists and historians used the artifacts they found to piece together the world that existed 300 years ago. They were able to learn a lot about how people lived and interacted with each other. Much of what they found is on display here.



If these objects could talk, imagine the stories they could tell!” said Mr. Parker.

“I wonder what stories they *would* tell,” said Jack.

