




Vine tendril black

(burnt)

Reconstruction

Recipe by C. Cennini, c. 1400

Recipe (c. 1400)



Another black is made of the tendrils or young shoots of the vine (1), which are to be burnt, and when burnt, thrown into water, and quenched, and then ground like other black pigments. This colour is very black and transparent (magro), and it is one of the most perfect pigments we have.

Handout instructions

Source

Cennini, Cennino, c. 1400, *Il Libro dell' Arte*. Transcription and translation in: Mary Philadelphia Merrifield, 1844. A Treatise on Painting. Written Bu Cennino Cennini in 1434. And First Published in Italian in 1821, with an Introduction and Notes, by Signor, Tambroni: Containing Practical Directions for Painting in Fresco, Secco, Oil, and Distemper, with the Art of Gilding and Illuminating Manuscripts. London: Edward Lumley. p. 21.

Ingredients & equipment

Vine tendrils
Wooden fire
Water in a bowl

Preparation steps

- (1) Collect vine tendrils
- (2) Light a fire
- (3) Lay the tendrils onto the fire
- (4) Take the burnt tendrils out
- (5) Transfer them directly into water

Date & Place

Ellingshausen (Germany), August 2020.

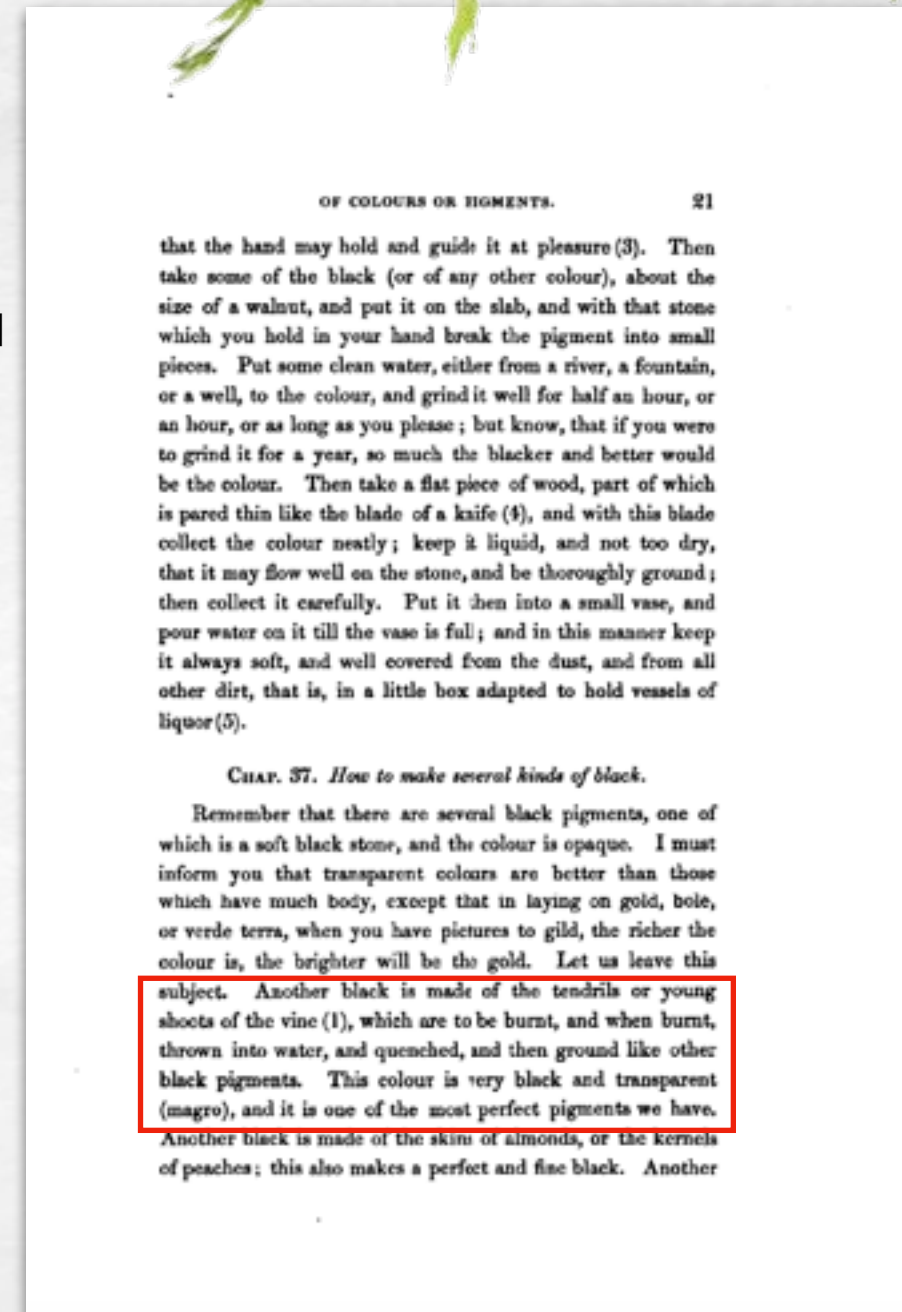


Photo report: step-by-step reconstruction

1. Collect vine vendrils and put them on a fire

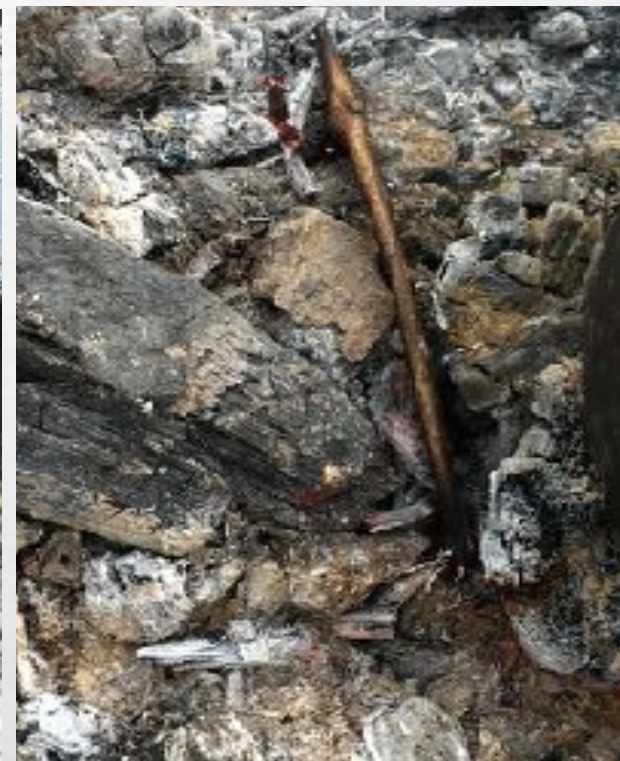
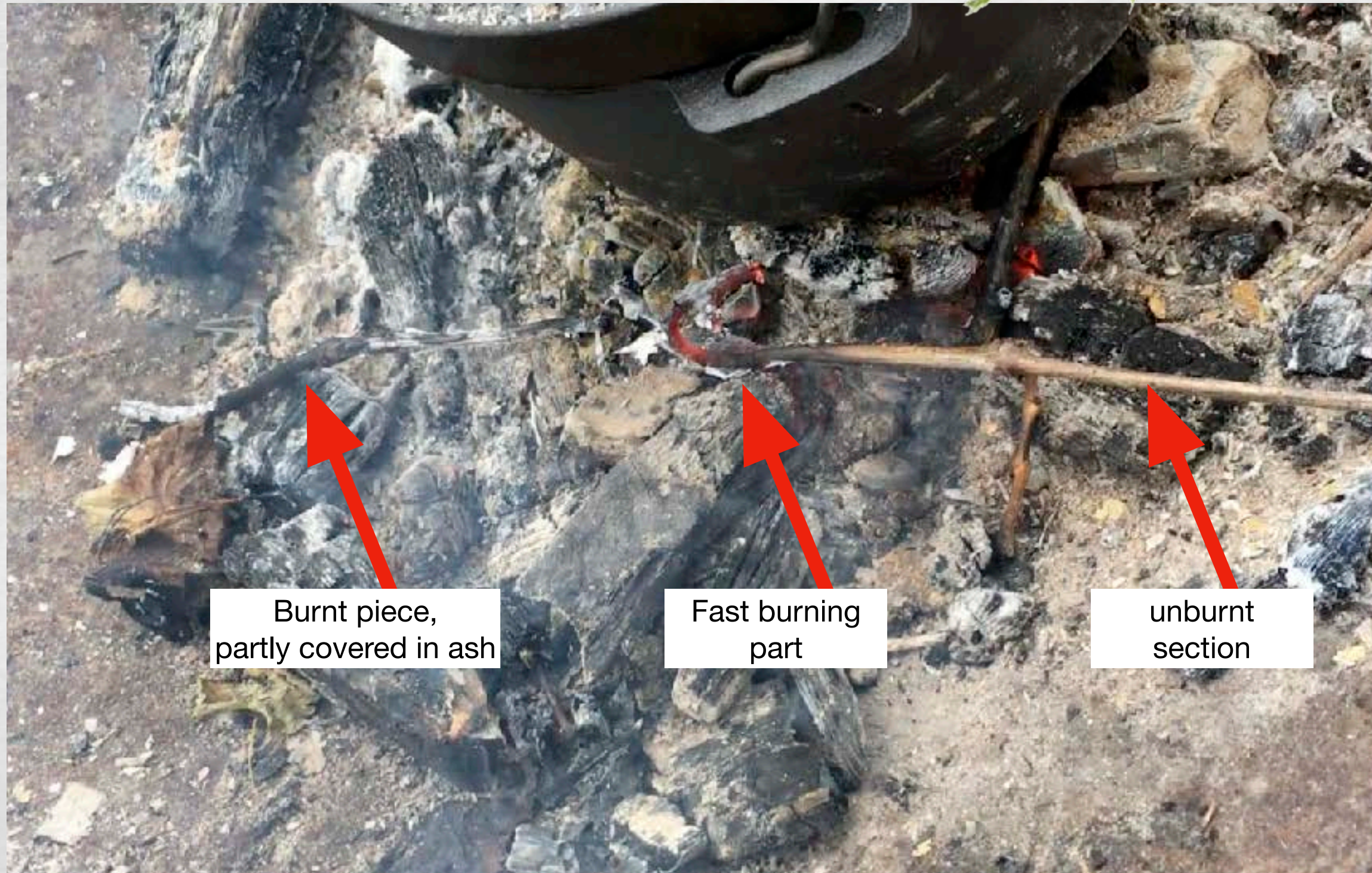


Photo report: step-by-step reconstruction

2. Take the burnt tendrils out of the fire



What did we learn during the reconstruction?

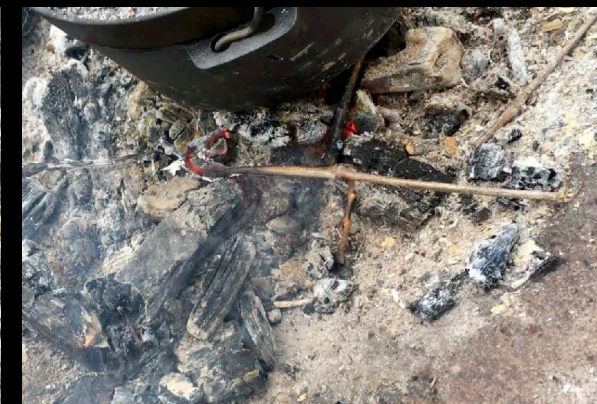
This experiment failed.

Fresh vine tendrils take quite a while until they ignite. After some time during combustion, suddenly the ends of the tendrils start to burn extremely fast, while other parts remain unburnt.

At this point it is difficult to judge when to take the burnt tendrils out of the fire. When attempting to remove them, they directly disintegrate into frail fragments which fall back into the fire.

Also, the fragments are covered in ash which would interfere with the final colour.

➔ Burning larger amounts of tendrils as vine-growers would have at their disposal after pruning might improve the result.





Enjoy your own reconstructions !

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Heritage on paper and related materials

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