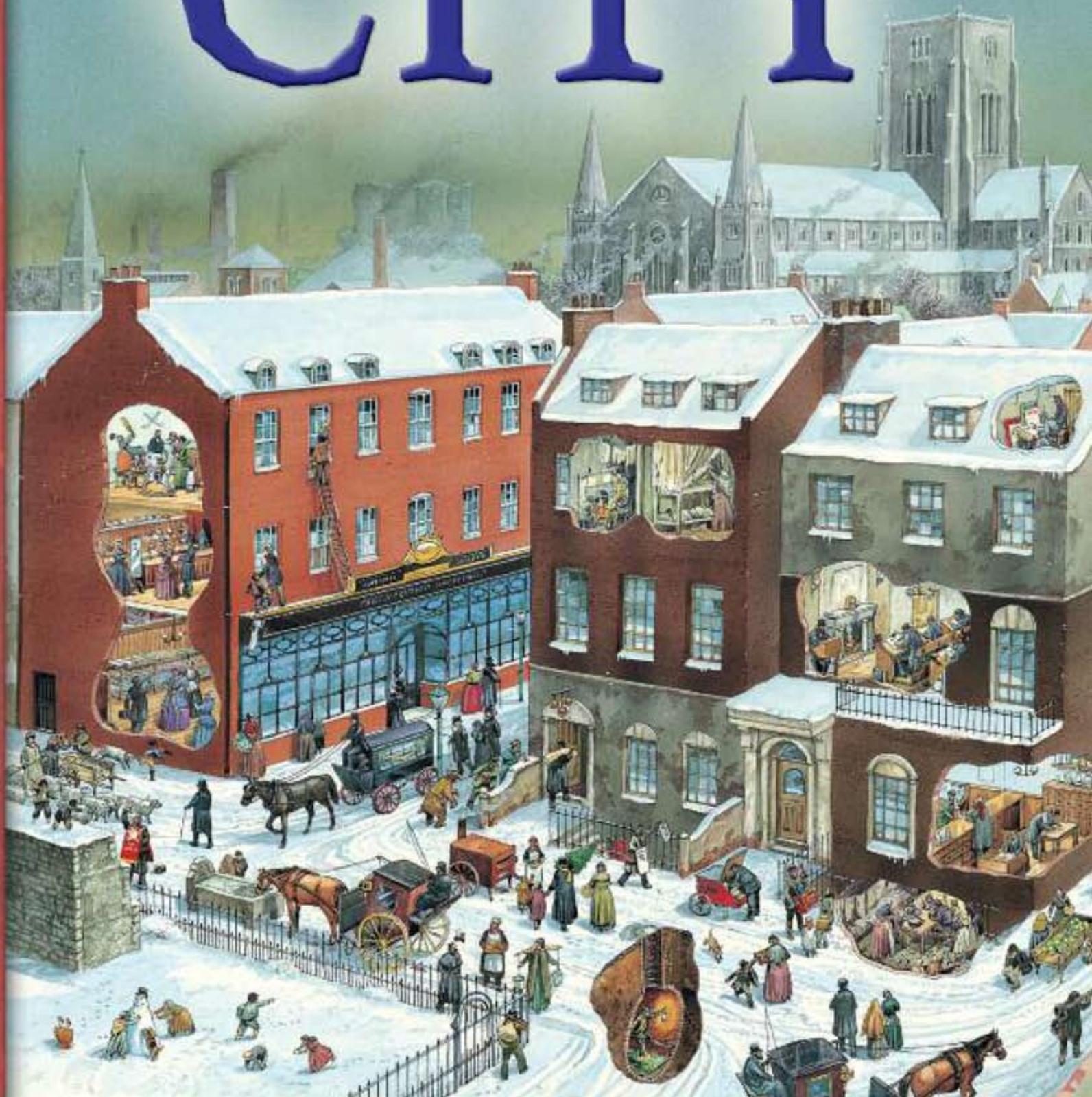


The story of a CITY



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CITY



illustrated by
Peter Dennis

 Orpheus

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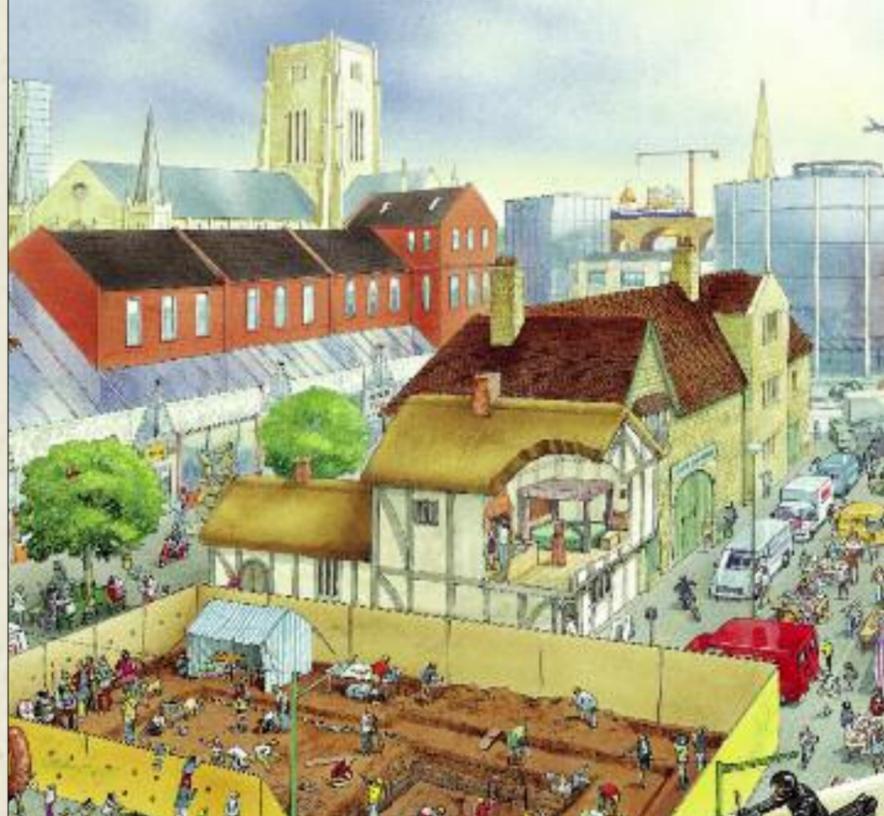
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Look out for the baker. He appears in all of the illustrations. You should be able to identify him from his bright red hair!



A CITY THROUGH TIME

Imagine you are standing on a riverbank somewhere in Europe, thousands of years ago. Some farmers build a small settlement there, taking advantage of the fertile land and plentiful supply of fish in the river. Over the centuries, others find the site favourable, too. It is a good place to build a bridge across the river and a harbour for boats and ships to sail the short distance down to the sea. More and more people come to live in the settlement to make, buy and sell goods. Soon a town grows up, eventually becoming a bustling city . . .

Cities are built up on top of the remains of old settlements. Above a modern underground railway tunnel (seen in this cross-section under the ground, above) are relics of thousands of years of history. Can you spot a mammoth skeleton, the foundations of a Roman building and ashes from a great fire?

It is 3000 years ago. A group of farming people have decided to build a settlement on the banks of a river. They have found a place where the ground is firm and dry, a little higher than marshland further upstream. All their needs are close by. Trees in the surrounding forest are cut down for building huts and fences. Flat, fertile land where the trees have already been cleared is good for growing crops and grazing livestock. The settlers hunt animals in the forest, or catch fish and birds.

The settlers work hard. Nearly everything they need they must find or make for themselves. They use bronze, a mixture of copper and tin, to make tools, although wood and stone are still widely used.

The people make offerings to their ancestors, believing that, in return, their harvest will be good and spring will return after winter.

Today their chief greets people from across the river, who arrive to trade their cloth for grain grown by the settlers.

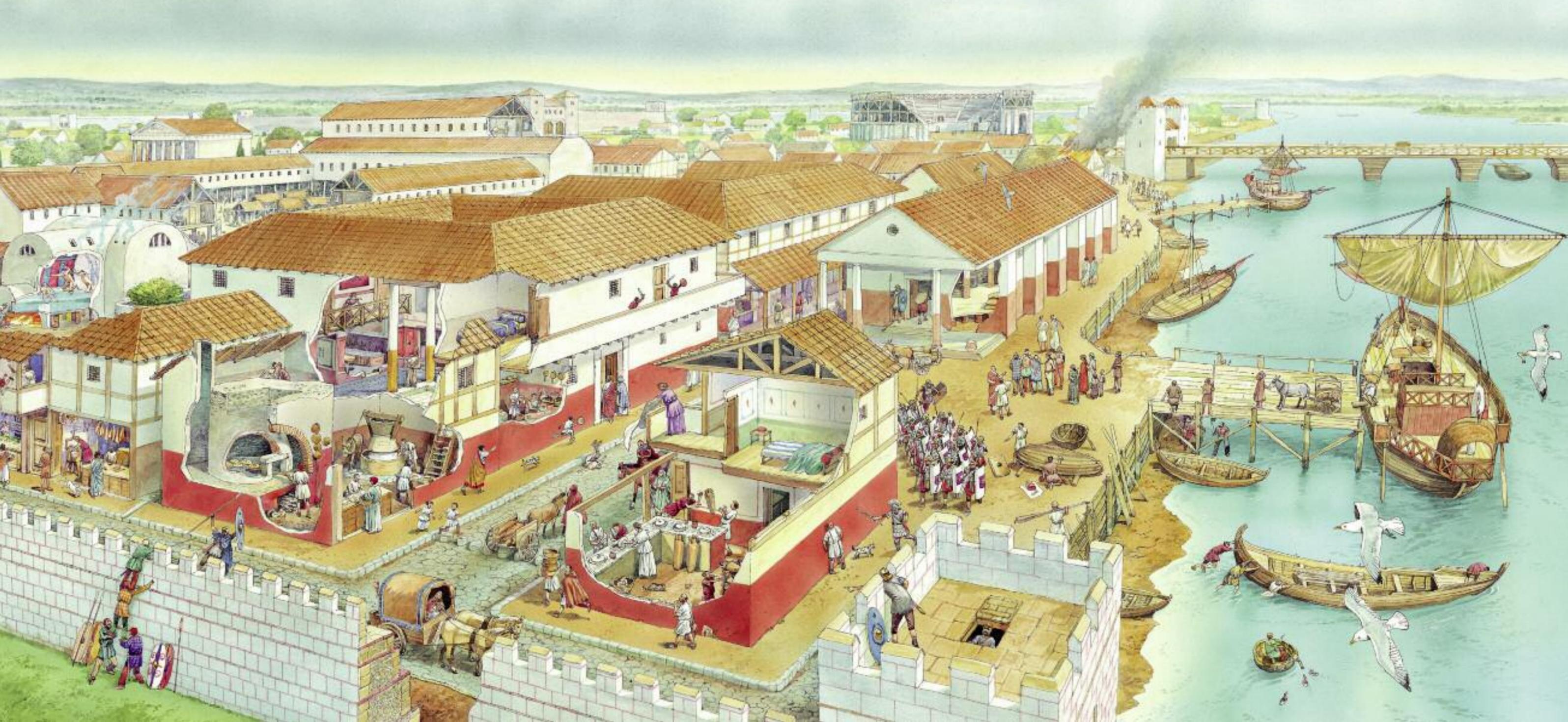


It is the year AD 120. The Romans have arrived. The remains of the farming village are now buried beneath the paved streets and stone buildings of a busy, prosperous town.

As the Roman armies swept across the country, they built fortresses. Here they found the best place to build a bridge across the river. The fortress was built to defend the river crossing.

A town has grown up around the fortress as shopkeepers, craftsmen and merchants arrive to sell their wares to the soldiers.

It soon becomes prosperous from trade. Today, however, a ship arriving at the quayside will load up not with goods but people – slaves for sale. A plot has been hatched by local tribesmen to free them. While some men pretend to scale the walls, a rescue party lies in wait . . .



Five hundred years later, the Romans have left their town. For a while, people carried on living in it even after the soldiers had abandoned the fortress. But with no trade, they fell on hard times. One by one they also left and their houses started to crumble.

A barbarian people from northern Europe have arrived and built a village on the edge of the old town. Many of the Roman buildings, solidly made of stone, remain standing, but the settlers allow them to fall into ruin.

The new village consists of wooden houses with straw thatch roofs. The main building is a large assembly hall.

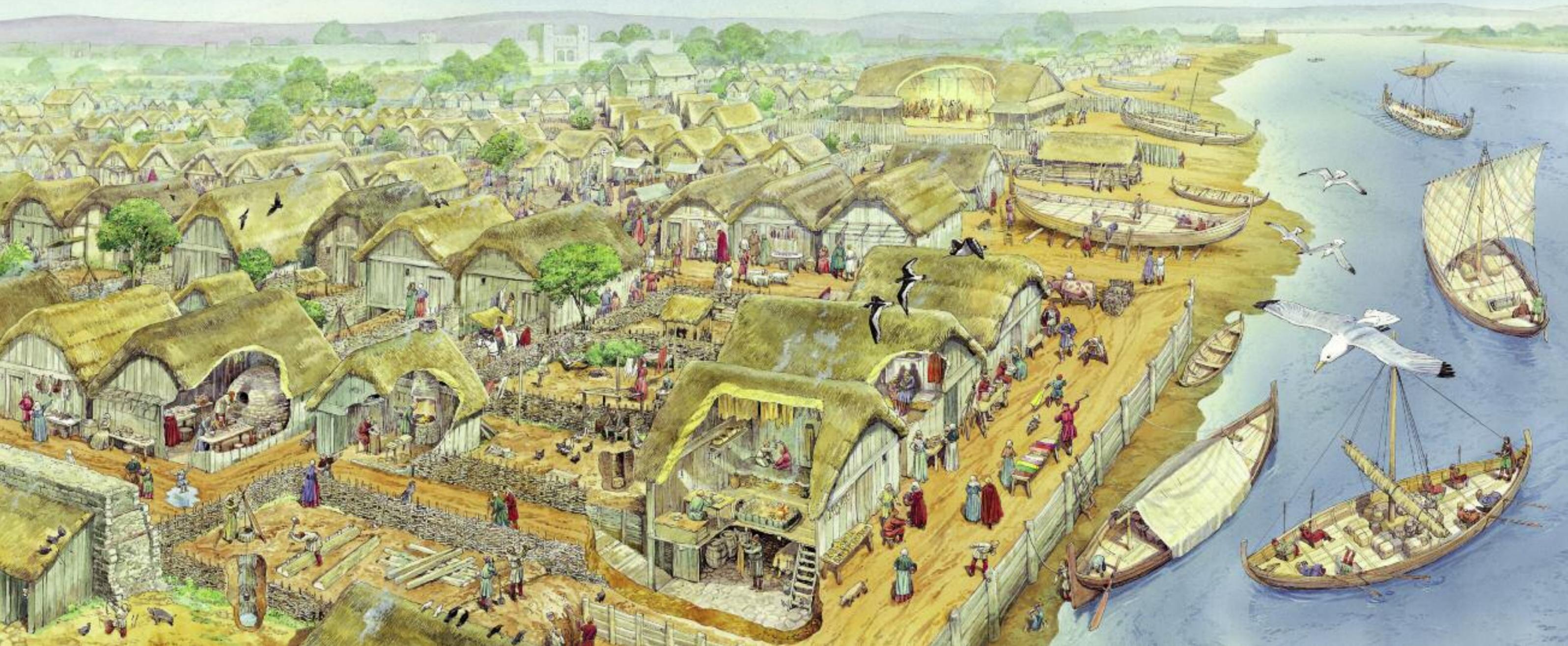
It is a blustery autumn day. Today's market, held in the square near the newly-erected cross, has suffered from the rainy conditions. The baker, blacksmith and other village craftsmen are hard at work indoors. The village thane (chief) watches men attempting to launch their boats.



We have moved on to the year 870. The land now belongs to the Vikings, a people from Scandinavia. Finding this riverside village perfectly positioned as an inland port for their trading ships, they have built a new town where the old farming village once stood.

The Vikings' town is made up of neat rows of cottages with thatched roofs and walls built of wattle and daub (woven branches plastered with mud). Only the stone Roman fortress and the town walls survive.

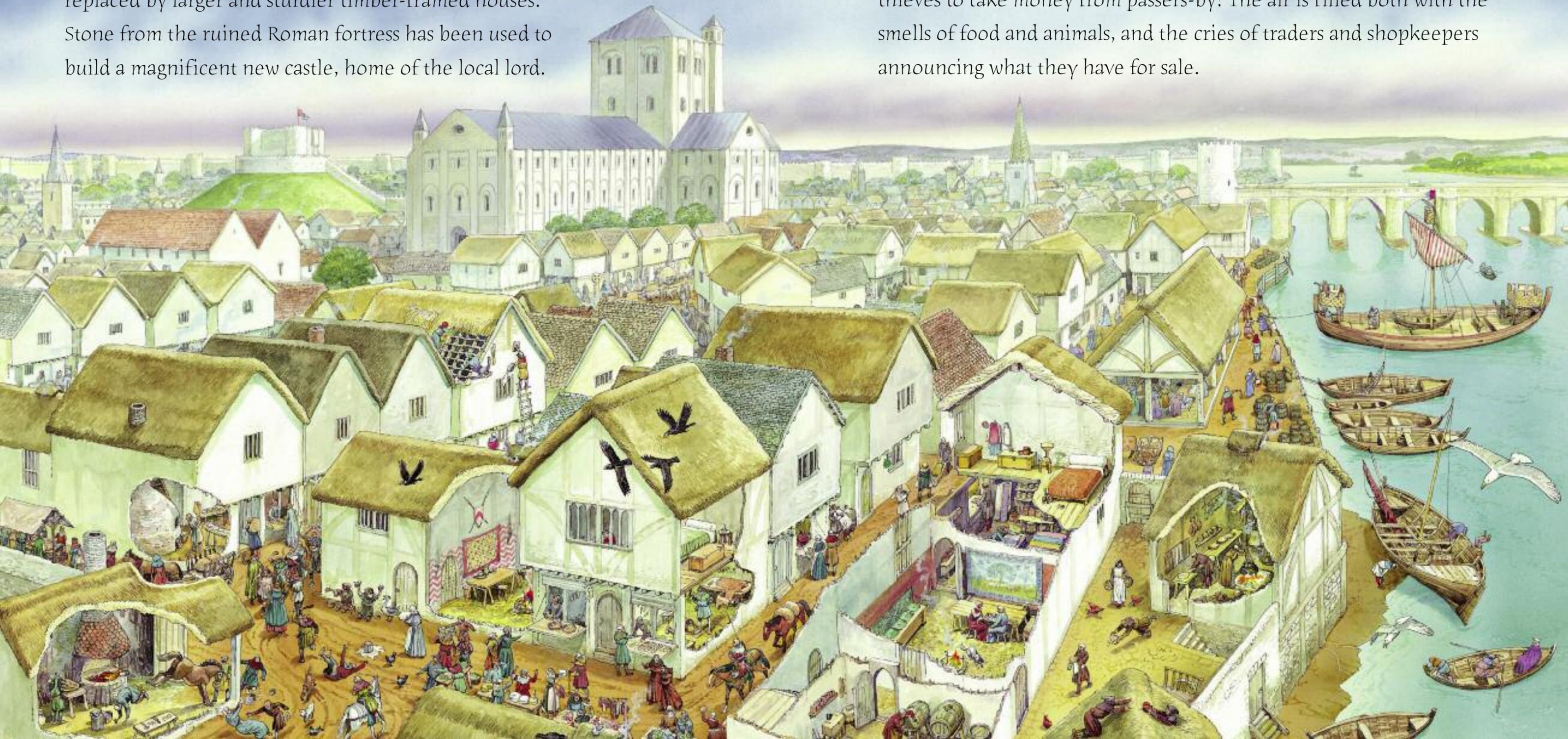
Besides houses and shops, the Viking town is full of workshops where potters, leatherworkers, silk-makers, carpenters metalworkers and boat-builders busy themselves. Ships, wide-bodied versions of the famous Viking longships, set sail for distant lands laden with goods to trade for silk, gold, silver, wine and dyes.



By 1270, the town has become larger and busier. Its favourable position as both a port and a river crossing (there is once more a bridge over the river, now built of stone), has attracted more people to live and work there. The small wattle and daub cottages of Viking times have been replaced by larger and sturdier timber-framed houses. Stone from the ruined Roman fortress has been used to build a magnificent new castle, home of the local lord.

The old Roman walls have been rebuilt to provide extra defences for the town. Towering above the tightly packed townspeople's homes is a huge, new, stone-built cathedral.

Today is market day and people come to town to buy and sell their wares. It is also a good opportunity for entertainers, beggars and thieves to take money from passers-by! The air is filled both with the smells of food and animals, and the cries of traders and shopkeepers announcing what they have for sale.

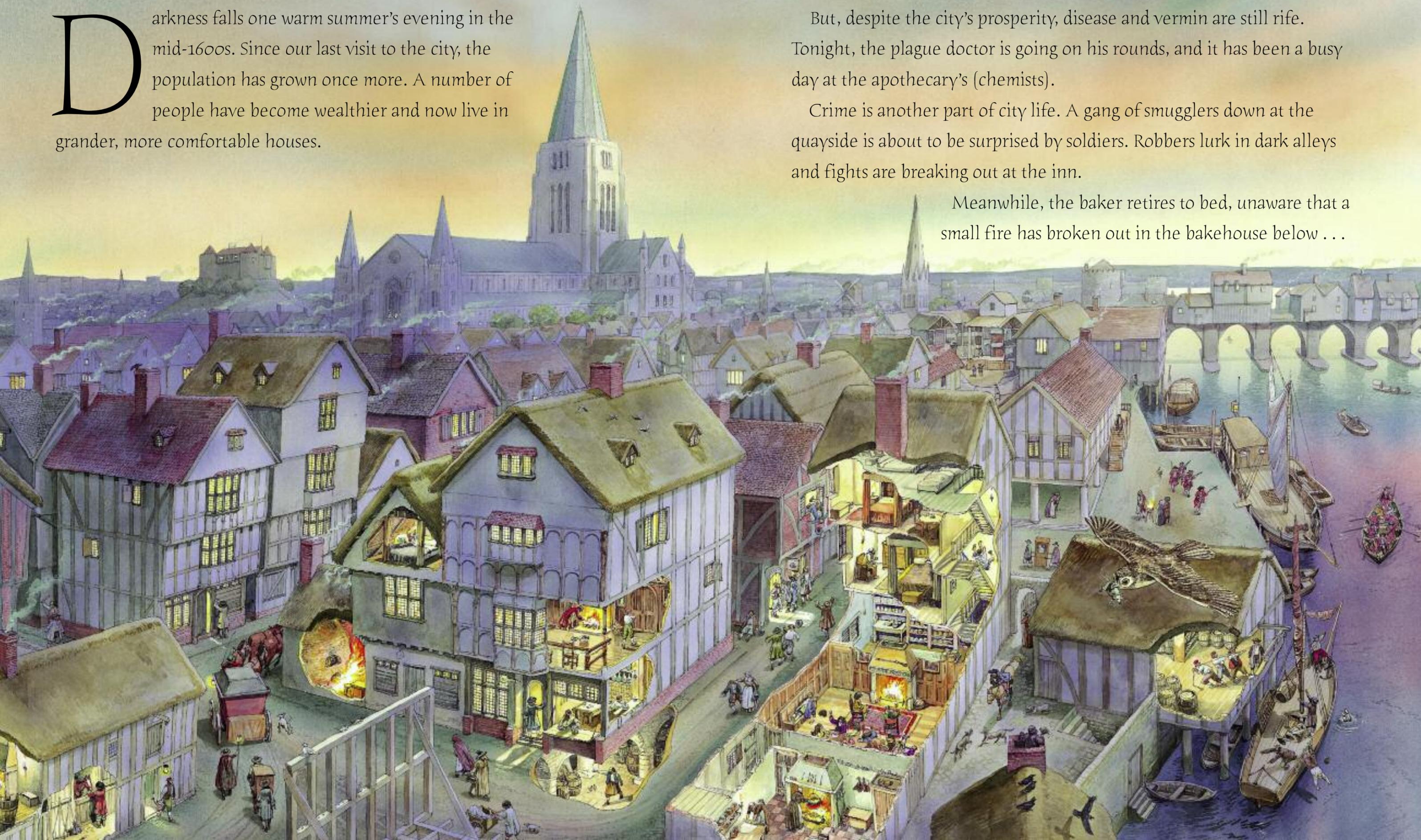


Darkness falls one warm summer's evening in the mid-1600s. Since our last visit to the city, the population has grown once more. A number of people have become wealthier and now live in grander, more comfortable houses.

But, despite the city's prosperity, disease and vermin are still rife. Tonight, the plague doctor is going on his rounds, and it has been a busy day at the apothecary's (chemists).

Crime is another part of city life. A gang of smugglers down at the quayside is about to be surprised by soldiers. Robbers lurk in dark alleys and fights are breaking out at the inn.

Meanwhile, the baker retires to bed, unaware that a small fire has broken out in the bakehouse below . . .



The city is an inferno! Fanned by an eager wind, the fire has quickly consumed the bakehouse and spread to other nearby buildings. With so much dry wood the whole of the city centre is soon alight.

As flames claim their homes, the city's inhabitants gather up their possessions and flee in panic. At the quayside they crowd on to boats.

Others stay and attempt to fight the fire. But there are neither water pumps nor hoses, only buckets or squirting devices. Some try to beat back the flames with brooms. Gunpowder is used to blow up buildings and create spaces between them to stop the fire spreading.

Meanwhile, the baker looks on, aghast.



His wife tries to comfort him, but the baker is beside himself with misery. All around him, the city lies in ruins with only the brick chimneys standing among the charred timbers. Just the walls of a few brick or stone buildings, including the cathedral, have survived.

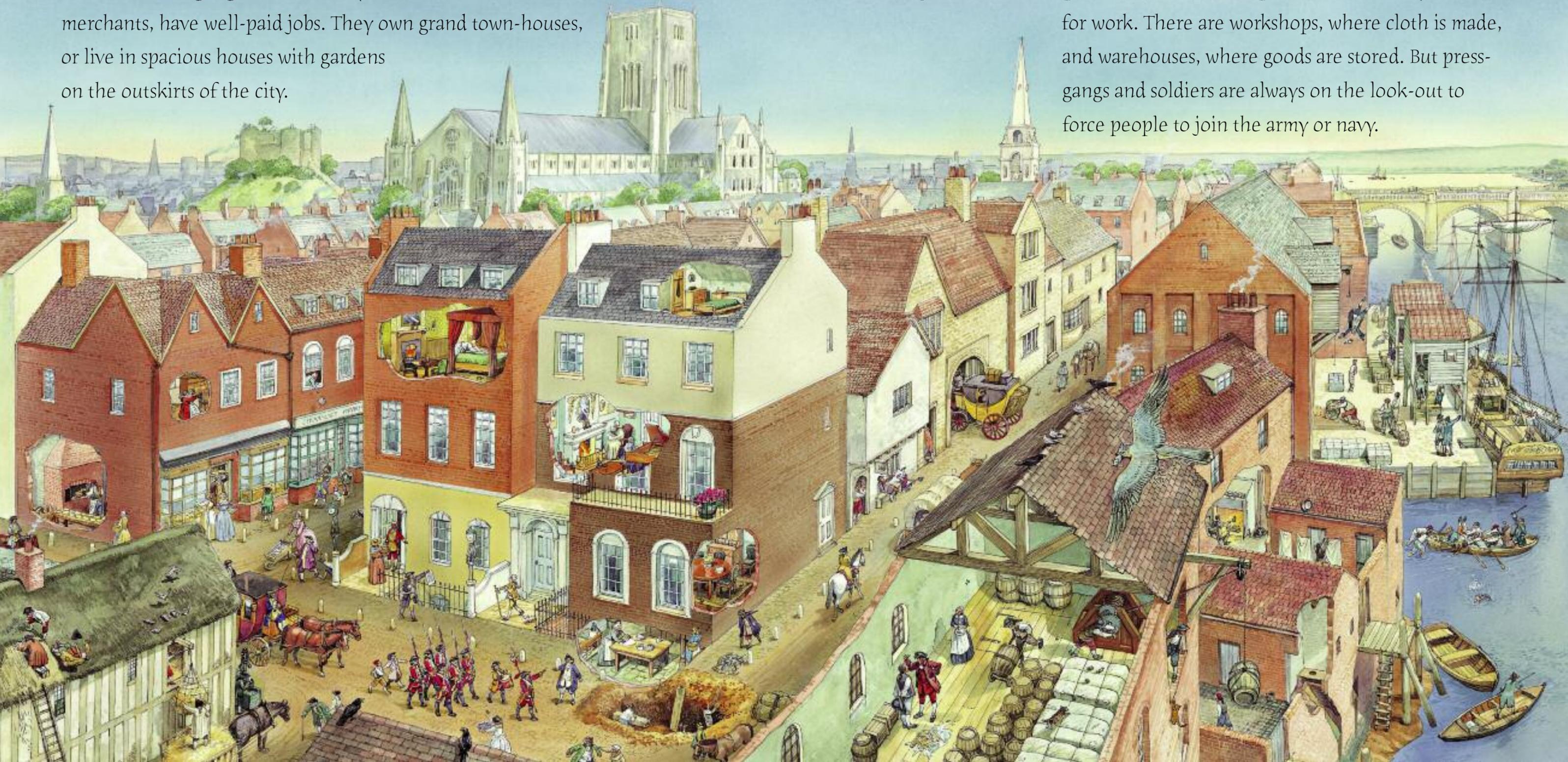
The old bridge was saved from being burnt down by the fire-break. The rain, which eventually put out the fire, has stopped. Gradually, the people of the city return to the smouldering ruins of their old homes and wonder where they will live now.



It is the year 1770. The city has been rebuilt and is, once again, a busy centre of commerce. The streets are wider and the houses are made of brick with tiled roofs. If a fire were to break out again, it is unlikely the whole city would burn down this time.

A number of people, such as lawyers, doctors, bankers and merchants, have well-paid jobs. They own grand town-houses, or live in spacious houses with gardens on the outskirts of the city.

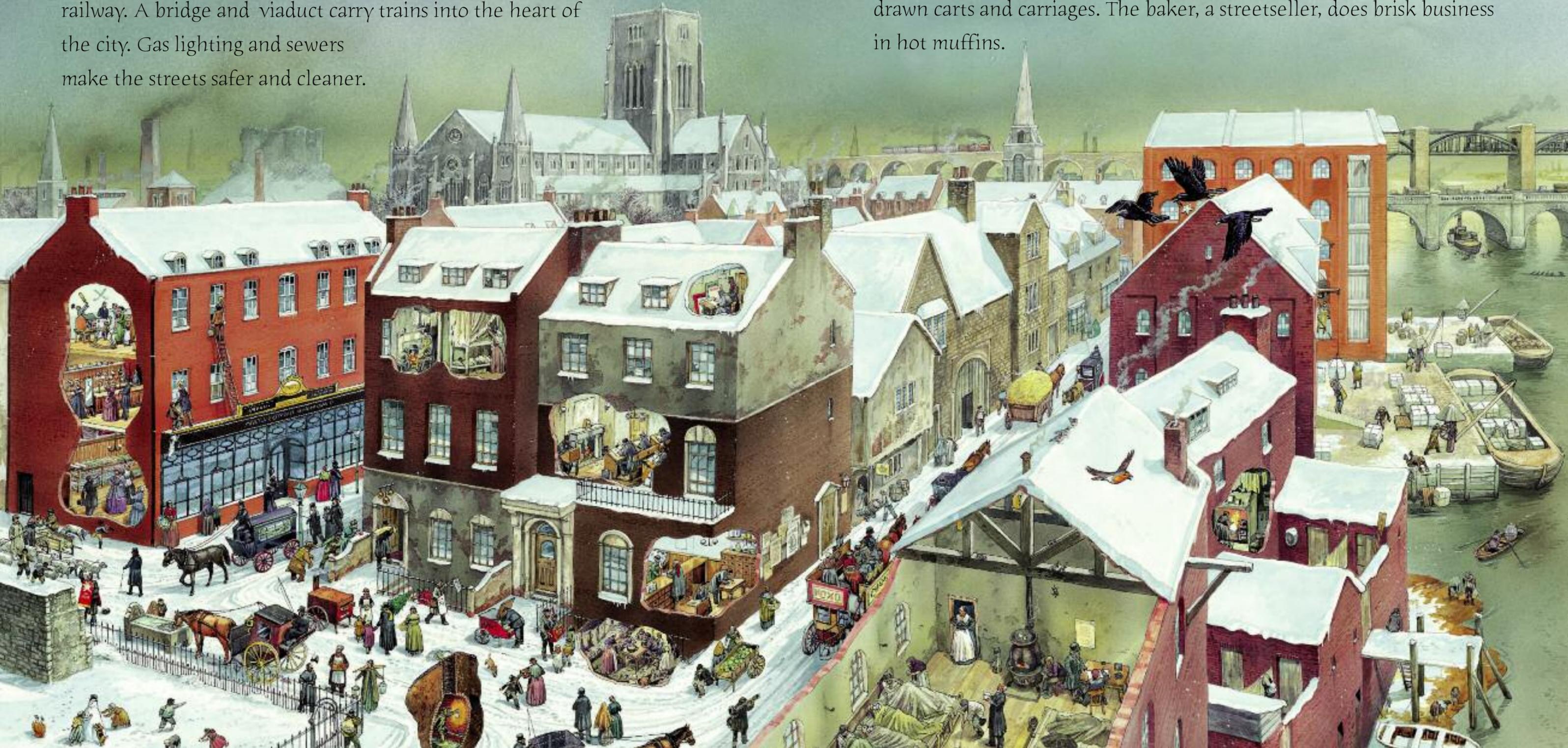
The well-to-do take sedan chairs or carriages to travel through the dirty, crowded streets. Other vehicles on the road are stagecoaches, which bring people from different parts of the country into the city (where they stay in coaching inns). Thieves and pickpockets roam the streets. The presence of nightwatchmen helps to reduce crime. People come to the city to look for work. There are workshops, where cloth is made, and warehouses, where goods are stored. But press-gangs and soldiers are always on the look-out to force people to join the army or navy.



A hundred years later, the industrial age has arrived. The city has expanded hugely as more and more people have come from the countryside to work in the factories. With the invention of the steam engine (which provides the power used by the factories' machines) has come the railway. A bridge and viaduct carry trains into the heart of the city. Gas lighting and sewers make the streets safer and cleaner.

The old riverside warehouse is now a lodging house for people who have moved to the city. Poverty and overcrowding have become problems as too many people need to find somewhere to live.

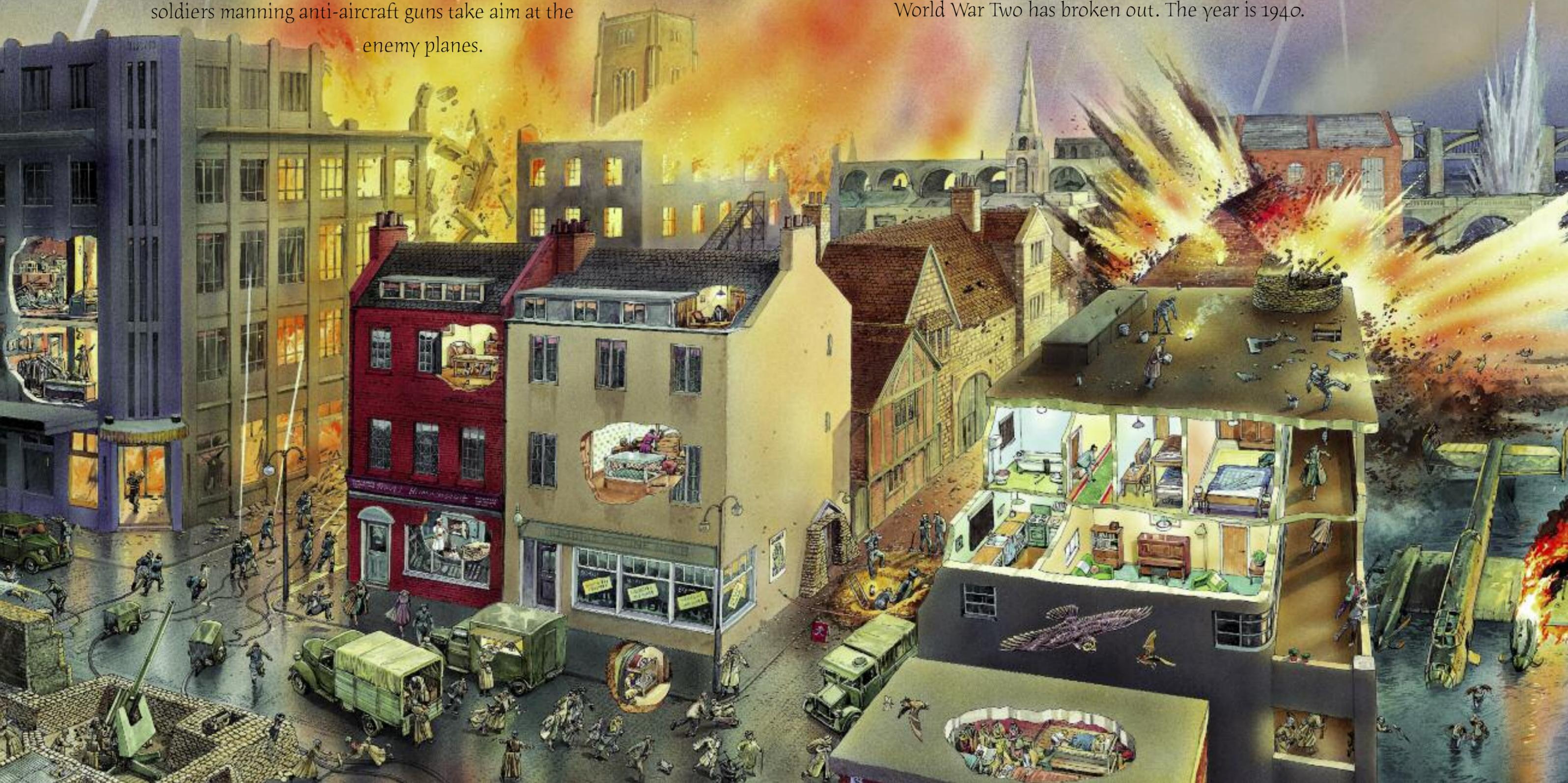
The quayside is now used by barges, bringing goods from the seaports. On this winter's day, the cobbled streets are full of horse-drawn carts and carriages. The baker, a streetseller, does brisk business in hot muffins.



The city is under attack from the air. As air-raid sirens shriek their warnings, people dash to find underground shelters. Soon planes appear in the skies overhead and drop bombs on the city. Powerful search beams flit across the night sky as soldiers manning anti-aircraft guns take aim at the enemy planes.

Several bombs crash down. Some explode and destroy buildings. Others are fire-bombs, which cause a number of fires to break out. Firefighters rush to the scene with their hoses. Ambulances stand by to take injured people to hospital.

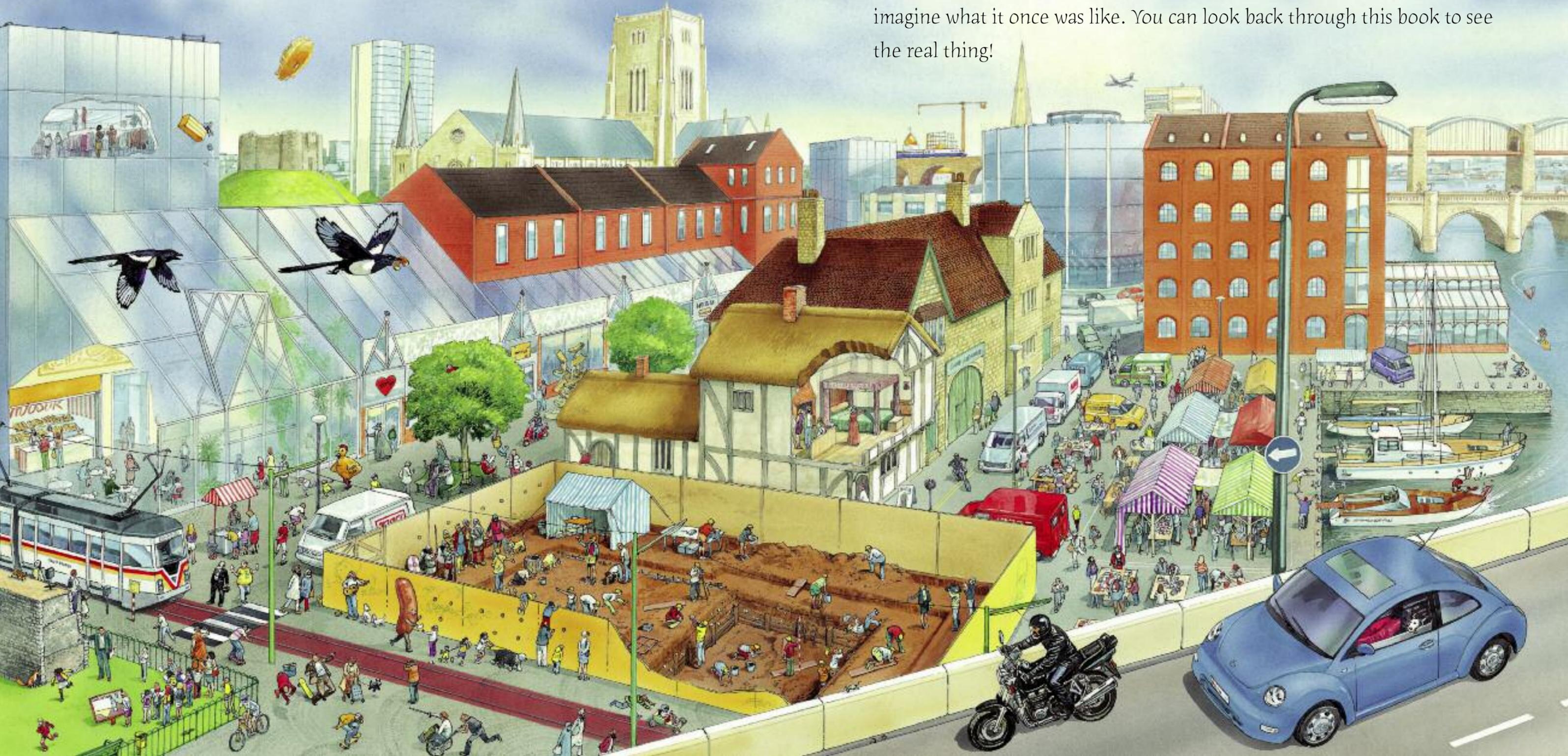
World War Two has broken out. The year is 1940.



The city suffered great damage during the war, but afterwards many parts of it were rebuilt. Now there are many new buildings. Cars, and trams take people across the city, while some streets are reserved for pedestrians only. Speedboats and yachts are moored along the old quayside.

Of course, many old buildings dating from far back in the city's history still remain standing. They include the castle, the cathedral and a small house in the city centre that survived the Great Fire. It is now a museum.

Archaeologists are working on a site. They have dug down beneath the ground and discovered remains of the old Viking town. They can only imagine what it once was like. You can look back through this book to see the real thing!



EUROPE THROUGH THE AGES

The story of the city is also the story of the people who lived in this part of Europe for 3000 years. The earliest settlers lived in farming villages, led by chieftains. As time went on, some became craftworkers.

The Romans had, by the second century AD, built up a mighty empire across most of Europe. Wherever the Romans went they brought their way of life with them. They constructed buildings, bridges and roads, some of which still survive today. Roman towns had centrally heated houses, and public baths with hot water.

After many years of Roman rule, Europe in the 400s fell into turmoil. Barbarian tribes from outside the Roman Empire, including the Huns, Goths, Vandals and Visigoths, now swept westwards, attacking Rome and its empire. As the Roman Empire collapsed, new barbarian kingdoms emerged.

The Vikings were a seafaring people from the Scandinavian countries of northern Europe. Between about 750 and 1100, they raided and looted many parts of Europe. They also settled in a number of lands, including England, France and Russia.

The time in history lasting from the 1000s to the 1400s is called the Middle Ages. Most people lived farming the land, but a few small towns grew larger and more important. They were places where markets were held and where craftsmen worked.

As towns grew into cities, they became centres not only for trade and business but also for arts, culture and learning.

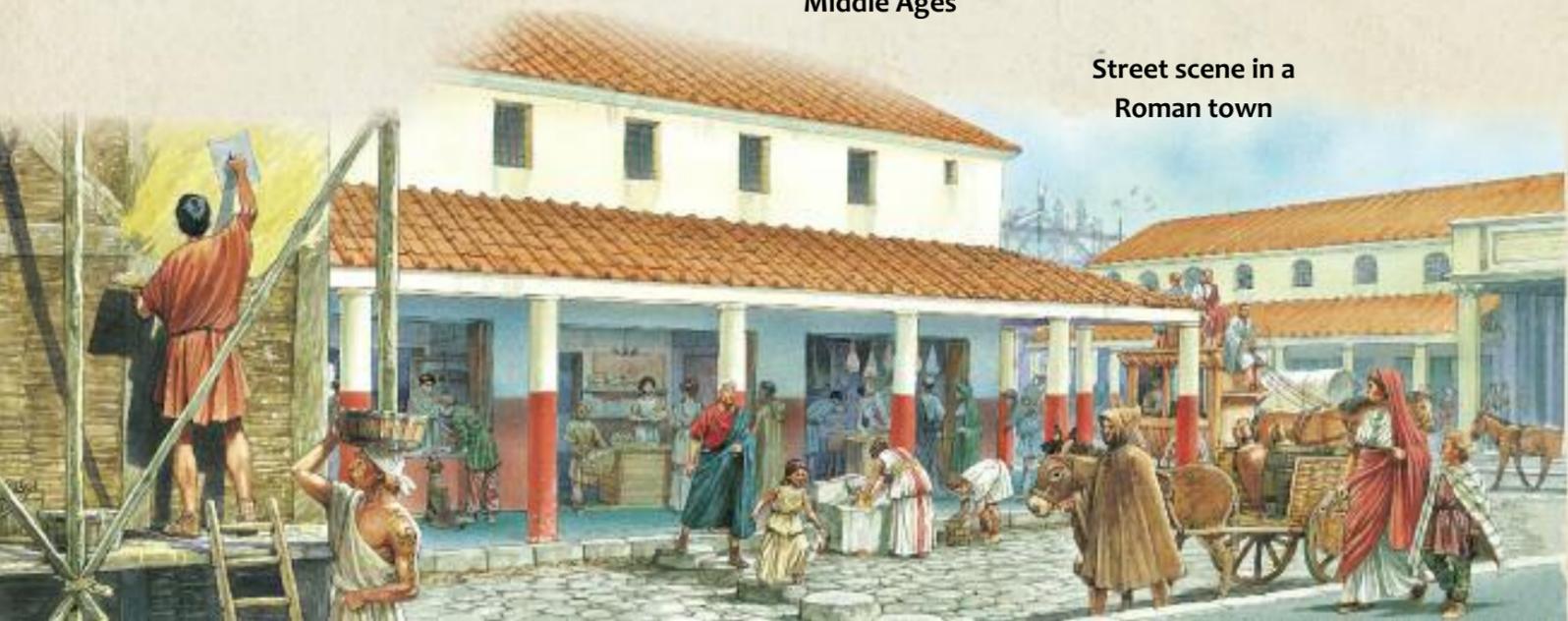


Viking farmers



Townspeople from the Middle Ages

Street scene in a Roman town



17th century townspeople

Although crowded, unhealthy and dangerous, the city was the place to be for fashion, theatre and entertainments.

Manufacturing industries were set up in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. At the same time, the rich got richer and the poor became poorer. They all lived close together in cities. The well-to-do wore fine clothes and mixed in fashionable society. Some of the poor turned to crime or excessive drinking.



Rich and poor people of the 18th century

By the late 19th century, all kinds of people lived in the city. Labourers and servants were the most numerous. They lived in cramped, decaying houses, known as slums. Shop- and office-workers formed a lower middle class, while lawyers, doctors and factory owners made up an upper middle class. People lived in different areas of the city according to their wealth.



Upper middle class and working class families of the 19th century of the 18th century

By the middle of the 20th century, many more people lived in cities than in the country. More and more people moved to larger houses further away from the city centre. From there they could travel into the city (commute) by train, tram or bus.

By the beginning of the 21st century, most of the old factories and the poverty-stricken, overcrowded homes were a thing of the past. So, too, were the unpaved, filthy, rubbish-strewn city streets and factory chimneys belching



1940s couple



2000s people

out smoke. In their place have come shiny office blocks and apartments, clean streets with drains and sewers, and gleaming, high-tech factories in industrial parks on the edge of town.

GLOSSARY

Apothecary A member of the medical profession who kept a shop for drugs and medicines.

Archaeologist A person who studies human life in the past, using the evidence from finds buried in the ground or under the sea.

Barge A flat-bottomed boat used for carrying goods on rivers or canals.

Blacksmith A person who makes or shapes iron objects, using heat to melt or soften the metal.

Cathedral A church which houses the bishop's seat (the cathedra). Bishops are important leaders of the Christian Church and cathedrals are the main churches in a Christian country.



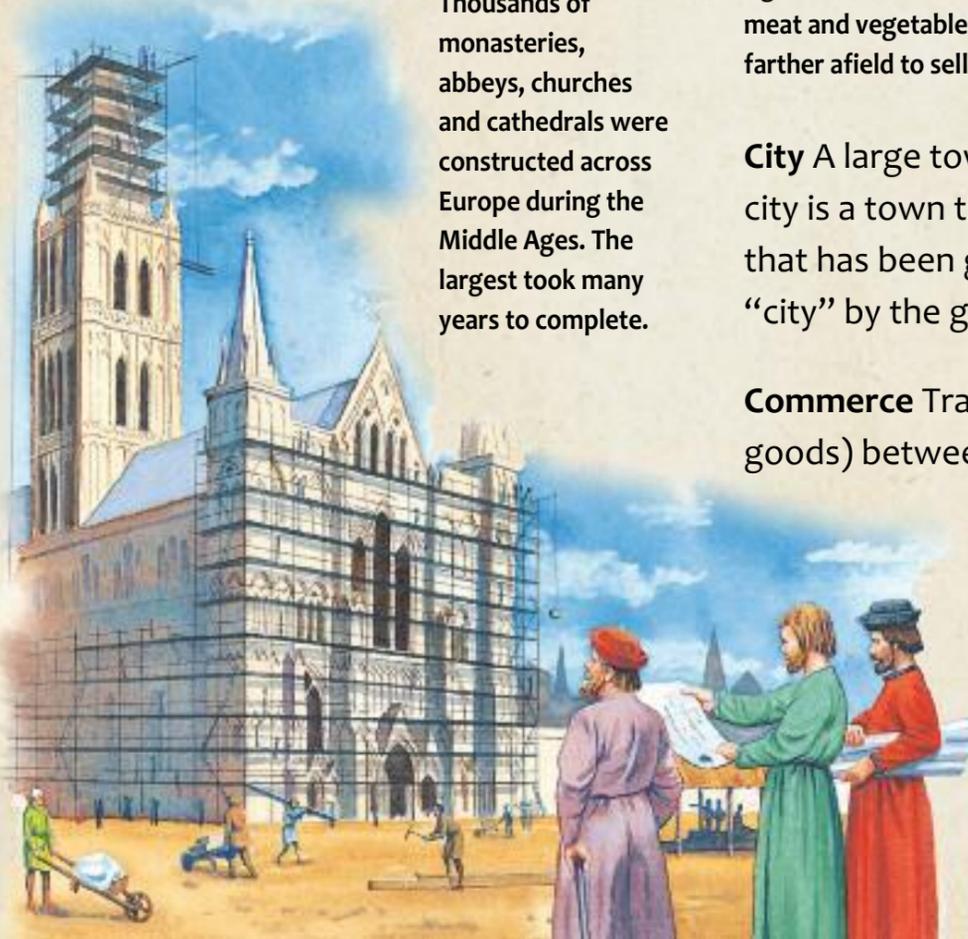
Market day was the busiest day of the week in a Middle Ages town. Local farmers came to town to sell their meat and vegetables, while merchants came from farther afield to sell their fine cloth and other wares.

City A large town. In some countries, a city is a town that has a cathedral, or one that has been given the official title of "city" by the government or monarch.

Commerce Trade (buying and selling of goods) between nations or individuals.

Culture The artistic life of a place and its people. An artist is someone who uses his or her skill to produce works of beauty or imagination.

Thousands of monasteries, abbeys, churches and cathedrals were constructed across Europe during the Middle Ages. The largest took many years to complete.



GREAT FIRE

The Great Fire of London broke out on 2nd September 1666. Seven-eighths of the city, including 13,000 houses and 87 churches, was destroyed.

It started at a baker's shop and continued until firefighters finally succeeded in putting it out five days later. Many Londoners refused to allow their houses to be pulled down to create fire-breaks, making it easier for the fire to spread. Although many town dwellings were built of wood and crowded closely together in narrow streets, there was no fire service. This fire squirt (above) was the only means to fight fires.

Fortress A place that has been fortified against attack, usually by building high or thick walls, ditches and other defences.

Manufacturing industry The making of goods on a large scale using machines in factories.



People lived in fear of a disease called the plague for hundreds of years. Carried by fleas that lived on black rats, plague swept Europe in the 14th century, reducing the population by a third in some places. Because many townspeople lived in closely-packed houses, the disease could spread easily.

Merchant Someone who makes a living out of buying and selling goods.

Nightwatchman A person who keeps watch, rather like a policeman.

Press-gang A group of sailors who had the power to force men to join the navy.

Quayside A place for the loading and unloading of boats and ships.

Sedan chair A covered chair for a single person carried on two poles.

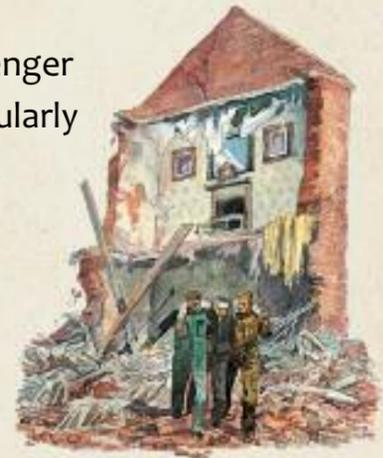
Sewer An underground channel into which waste from drains and streets runs.

Stagecoach A passenger coach that runs regularly from place to place.

Vermin A general name for animals, such as rats or cockroaches, that are pests or cause disease.

Warehouse A place where goods for sale are kept.

Wattle and daub A way of building in which wattle-work (woven branches) is plastered with mud.



Many cities in Europe were damaged or destroyed as a result of bombing by aircraft during World War II. Air-raid shelters were built to protect city-dwellers.

