

Let's Look Inside A STREET THROUGH TIME



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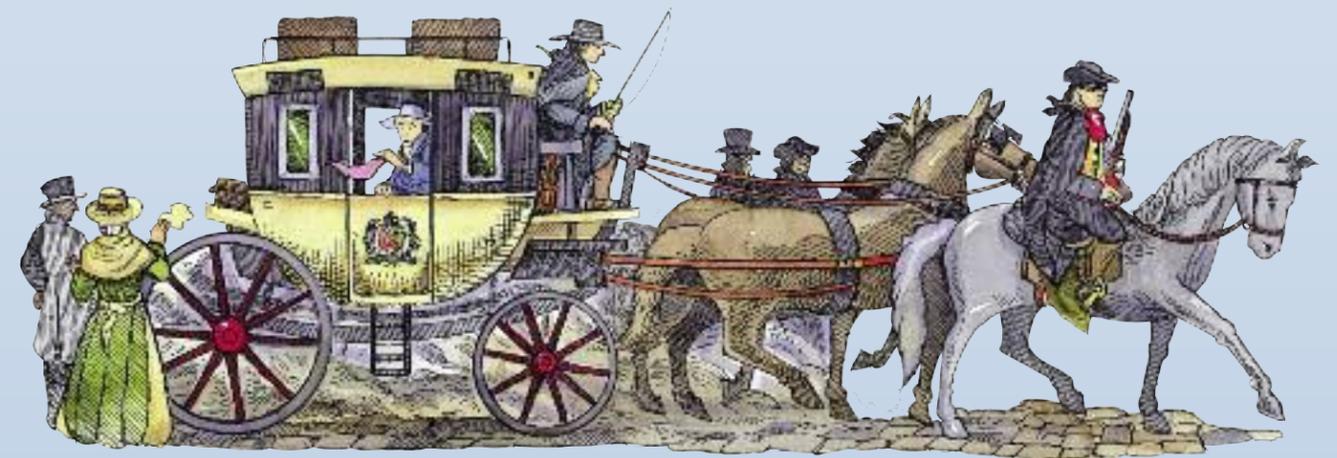
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Illustrated by Brian Lee

 Orpheus

The Middle Ages

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

This is what houses in a street may have looked like during the Middle Ages. From left to right they are: a shop (with workshops on the upper floors), a blacksmith's forge, a rich merchant's house, and an inn. In this book, you can follow the changes that happen in this same street over the next 600 years. Some of the buildings stay the same, while others are knocked down and rebuilt. Note how the way of life of the people who live in them changes completely over the centuries.





Living in the Middle Ages

Many different craftsmen lived and worked in medieval towns. There were bakers, butchers, blacksmiths, carpenters, fletchers (arrow makers), bowyers (bow makers), dyers, potters and many others. A craftsman's workshop (*right*), shop, storeroom and home were all found in the same building.

Craftsmen took on apprentices to help them. They lodged with the craftsman and his family. If, after several years' training, the apprentices proved themselves, they, too, could become master craftsmen and set up their own shops.



The streets were always busy with people, animals and carts. Peasants brought their produce for sale into town using horse-drawn, two-wheeled carts (*above*).

Every medieval town had a blacksmith's forge (*right*). Here, a blacksmith would hammer, bend or cut iron to make tools, weapons, armour, horseshoes and other metal goods. The metal was softened by heating it over a fire until it glowed red, then beaten or bent into shape on an anvil, a metal block.



In the Middle Ages, all craftsmen were members of guilds. These groups of senior craftsmen controlled the working hours and conditions of work of their members. They also checked the quality of their wares, to make sure they were up to standard.



Market day was the busiest day of the week in a medieval 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. The marketplace (*above*) was alive with noises and smells on the morning of market day. Pigs were a nuisance, however. Most townspeople kept them as they were cheap and a good source of food. But they were often let out into the streets to forage.

Most townsfolk struggled to make a living, but some merchants became very wealthy. They lived in grand houses in the centre of the town and employed servants and entertainers (*right*). The merchant owned the whole house,



but might rent a small room at the top of the house for a poor family to live in. Merchants also belonged to guilds. These were separate from craftsmen's guilds. They controlled local trade, by making rules about prices, quality, weights and measures, and general business practices.



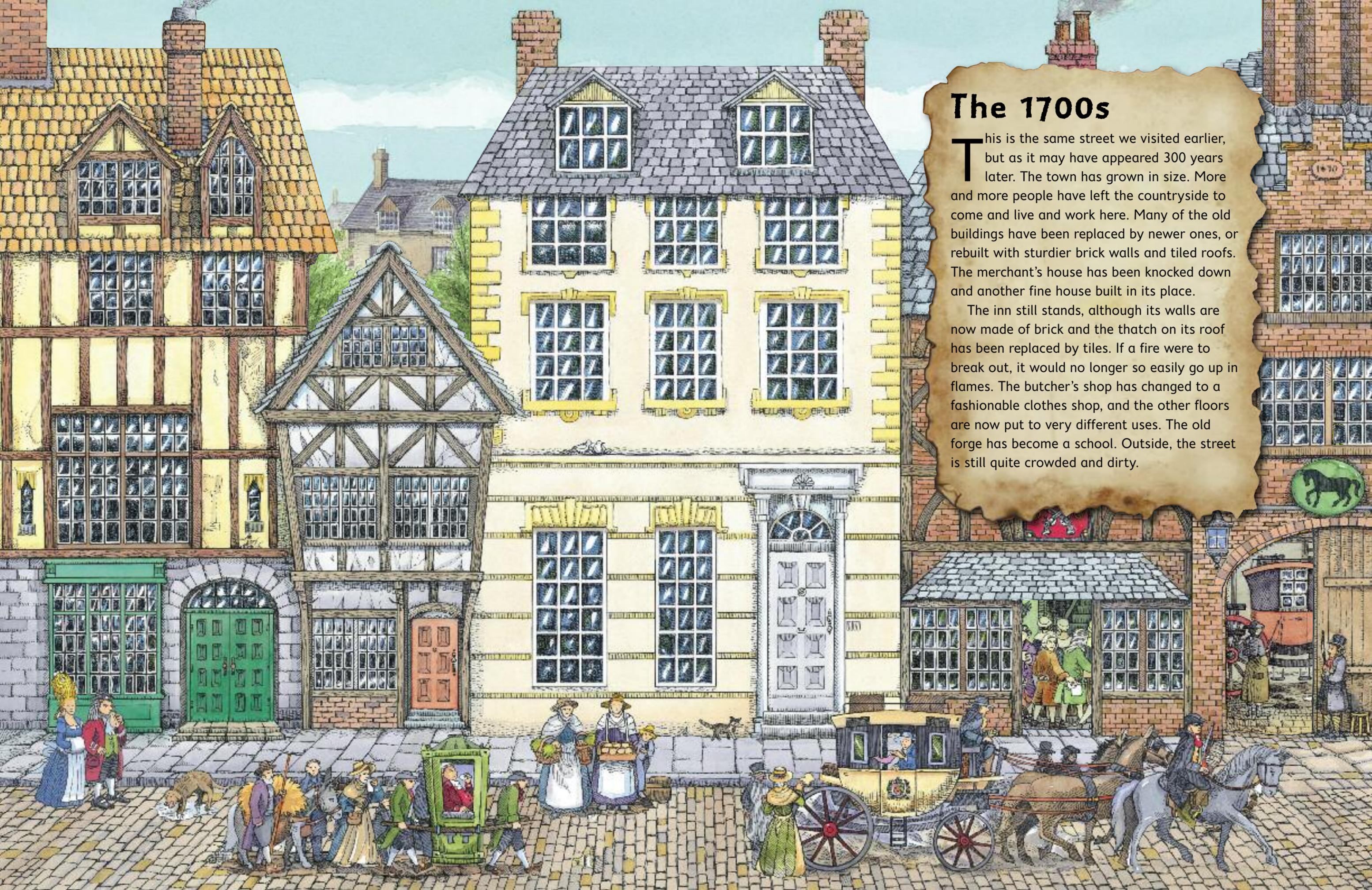
In medieval times, an inn (*left*) was not only a place where people gathered to drink. It also provided food and lodging, as well as stabling and fodder for the travellers' horses.

The streets of the town were dirty and smelly. Open drain channels ran along the sides or down the middle of the streets. People often threw dirty water out of their windows! The streets were also lively places—particularly on

market days (*below, right*). Jugglers, jesters and even dancing bears entertained the crowds.

As punishment for petty thefts, stocks and pillories were used for public humiliation. The offender was locked in wooden boards and subjected to abuse. He was frequently pelted by rotten fruit. In the stocks, an offender sat with his feet locked in place. In the pillory, he stood locked by the neck and wrists.

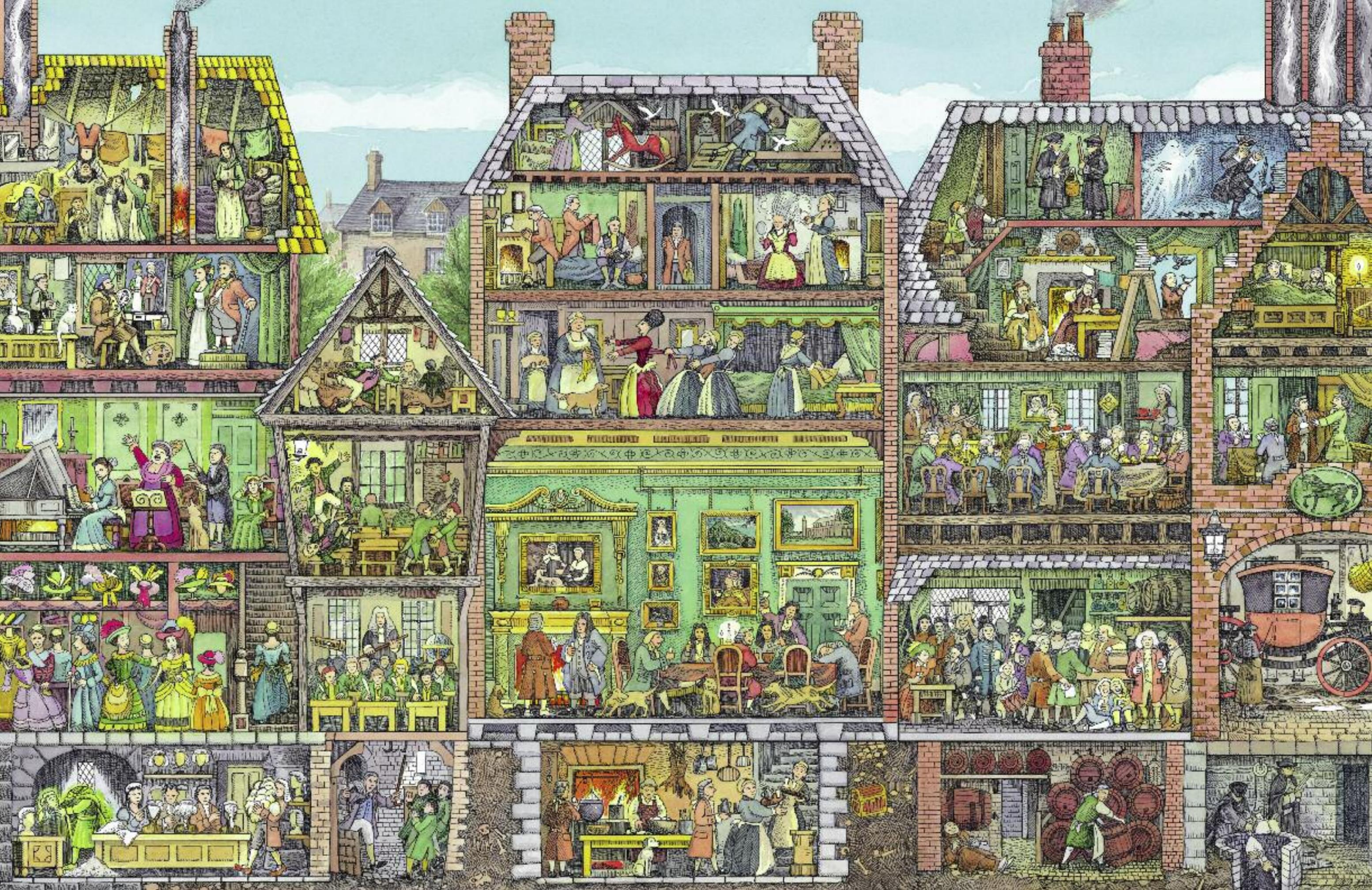




The 1700s

This is the same street we visited earlier, but as it may have appeared 300 years later. The town has grown in size. More and more people have left the countryside to come and live and work here. Many of the old buildings have been replaced by newer ones, or rebuilt with sturdier brick walls and tiled roofs. The merchant's house has been knocked down and another fine house built in its place.

The inn still stands, although its walls are now made of brick and the thatch on its roof has been replaced by tiles. If a fire were to break out, it would no longer so easily go up in flames. The butcher's shop has changed to a fashionable clothes shop, and the other floors are now put to very different uses. The old forge has become a school. Outside, the street is still quite crowded and dirty.



Living in the 1700s

During the 1700s, the rich became even richer. Wealthy noblemen and landowners lived in grand houses in the city, while the poor lived in cramped conditions. Whole families might live in small attic rooms at the top of buildings like this one (right). In order to avoid coming across poor people, the well-to-



do would travel through the noisy, filthy streets carried in sedan chairs (left). These could be hailed like taxis.

As trade with different parts of the world—unknown in the Middle Ages—started to grow, cities had become more prosperous. People came to work in the docks or to learn new trades making goods such as cutlery, clothes or shoes. Many people were also employed as servants in rich people's houses. A growing number of people took professional jobs such as lawyers, doctors and bankers.



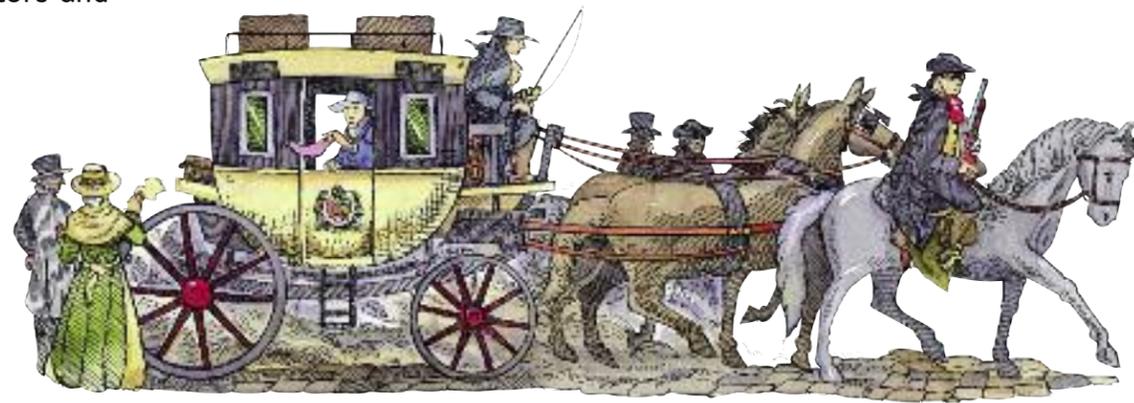
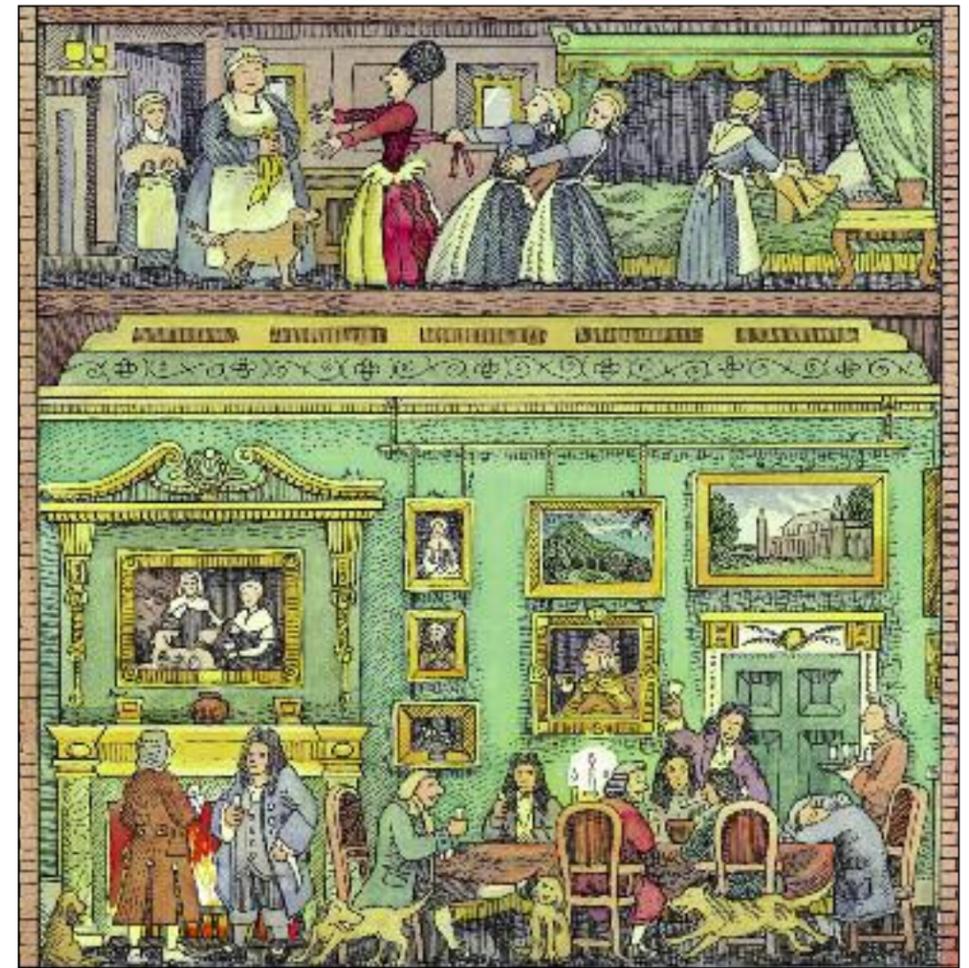
The children of well-off families went to school.

The boys went to grammar schools (right). They wrote using quill pens. These were made from goose feathers with sharpened tips. Most girls were taught at home. They learned “accomplishments” such as embroidery and music rather than school subjects. Poor children rarely went to school, although in many towns and cities there were some schools for less well-off children founded by charities.

Rich people lived in elegant houses full of paintings and expensive furniture (right). While poor people had only one set of clothes, the rich had large wardrobes of fine clothes. Men wore long coats with knee-length breeches



(kinds of trousers) and stockings. Underneath their bodices, women wore corsets stiffened by whalebone to narrow their waists. A framework of cane hoops supported the flowing skirt. both men and women wore powdered wigs on formal occasions.



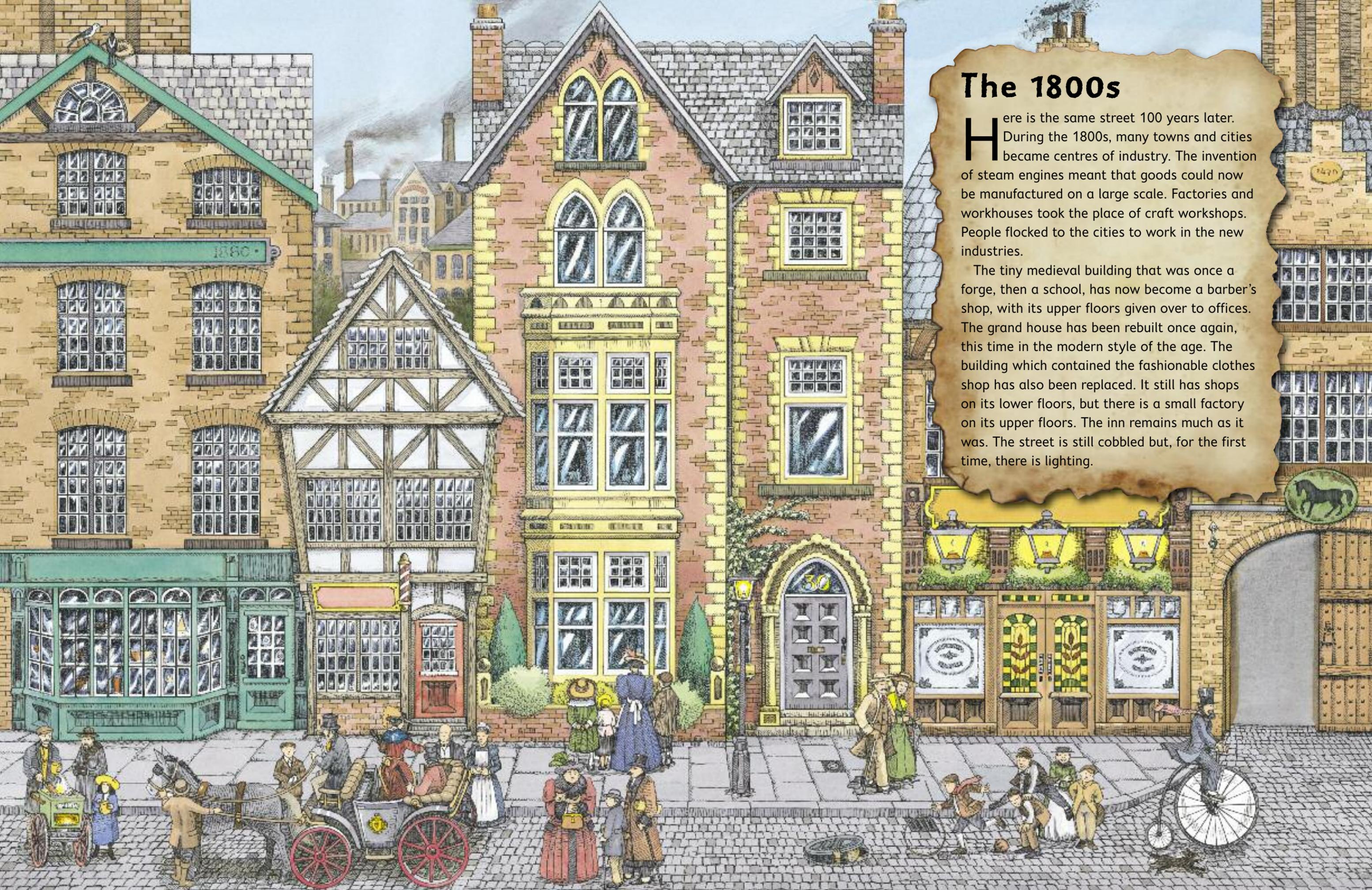
Wealthy people travelled longer distances around town or to different parts of the country by carriage (above). This was a four-wheeled, horse-drawn, private vehicle. It had springs or leather straps for suspension to give a smoother ride over cobblestones or unmade streets. The driver, or coachman, sat on a raised seat at the front.

Whether you rode in a private carriage or stagecoach (public transport), an ambush by highwaymen (left and below right) was always a risk. Highwaymen were armed robbers who stole from road travellers. They wore dark masks and their three-cornered hats pulled low over their brows to conceal their identities. They would wait for a carriage or stagecoach to pass by before galloping out on horseback and forcing the coach to stop. Brandishing their flintlock pistols, they threatened the terrified passengers with their lives. The passengers would quickly empty their purses, hoping for a peaceful end to their ordeal. Some highwaymen, known as “gentlemen of the road” were always polite, while others were cruel murderers. If caught, highwaymen were hung from the gallows.



Poor people had to work hard to survive in a city in the 1700s. Some made a living as craftsmen or shopkeepers. Others worked as porters, needleworkers, coachmen, chair-carriers or street traders (left).

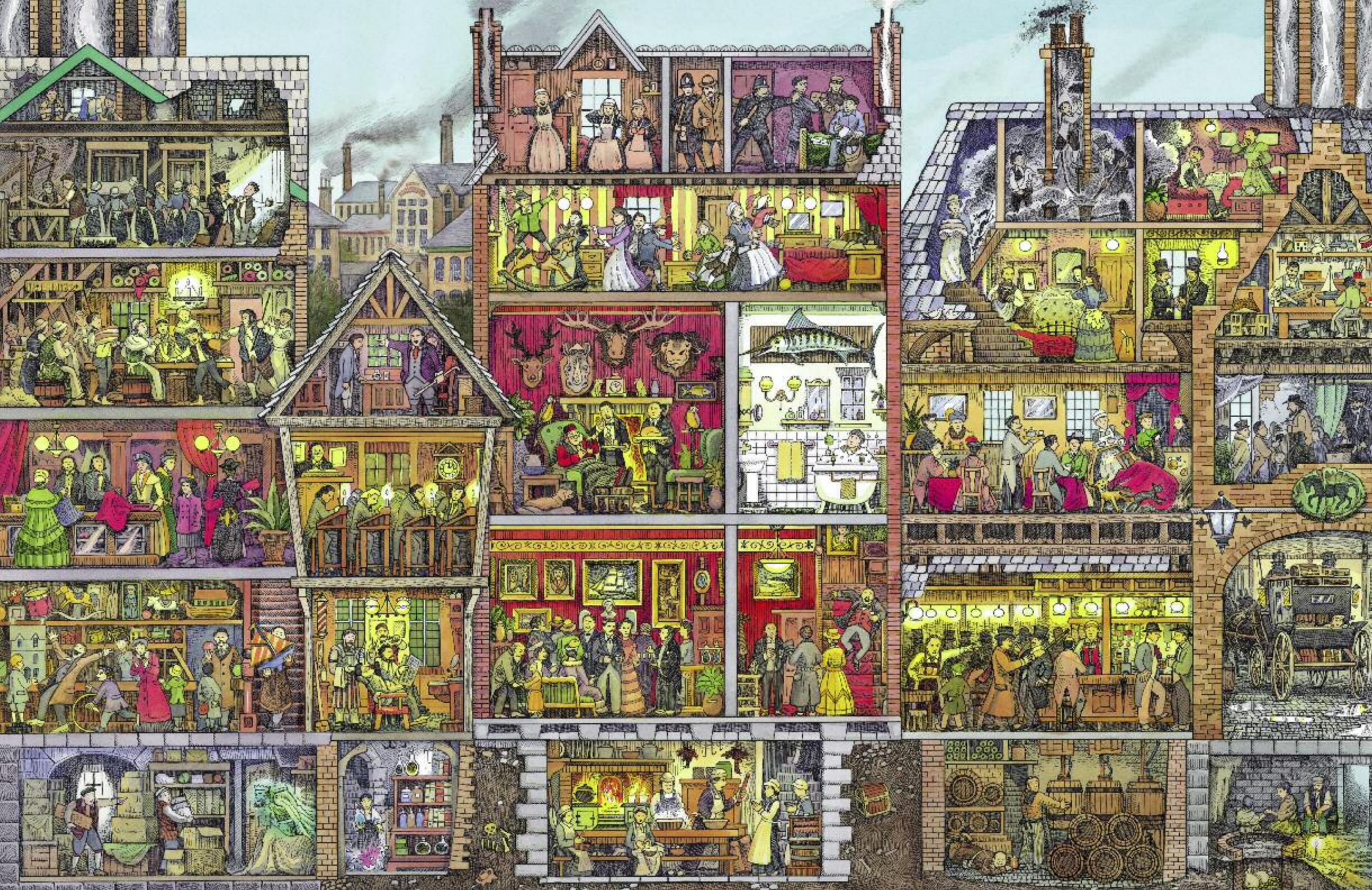




The 1800s

Here is the same street 100 years later. During the 1800s, many towns and cities became centres of industry. The invention of steam engines meant that goods could now be manufactured on a large scale. Factories and workhouses took the place of craft workshops. People flocked to the cities to work in the new industries.

The tiny medieval building that was once a forge, then a school, has now become a barber's shop, with its upper floors given over to offices. The grand house has been rebuilt once again, this time in the modern style of the age. The building which contained the fashionable clothes shop has also been replaced. It still has shops on its lower floors, but there is a small factory on its upper floors. The inn remains much as it was. The street is still cobble but, for the first time, there is lighting.



Living in the 1800s

Many towns grew rapidly into large, bustling cities. Because so many people moved to the cities for work, there were often too few buildings for them to live in. People lived in terrible poverty. Most lived close to their factories, with whole families sharing one or two rooms. There was no running water.



Instead of flushing toilets, many people had to use cesspits,

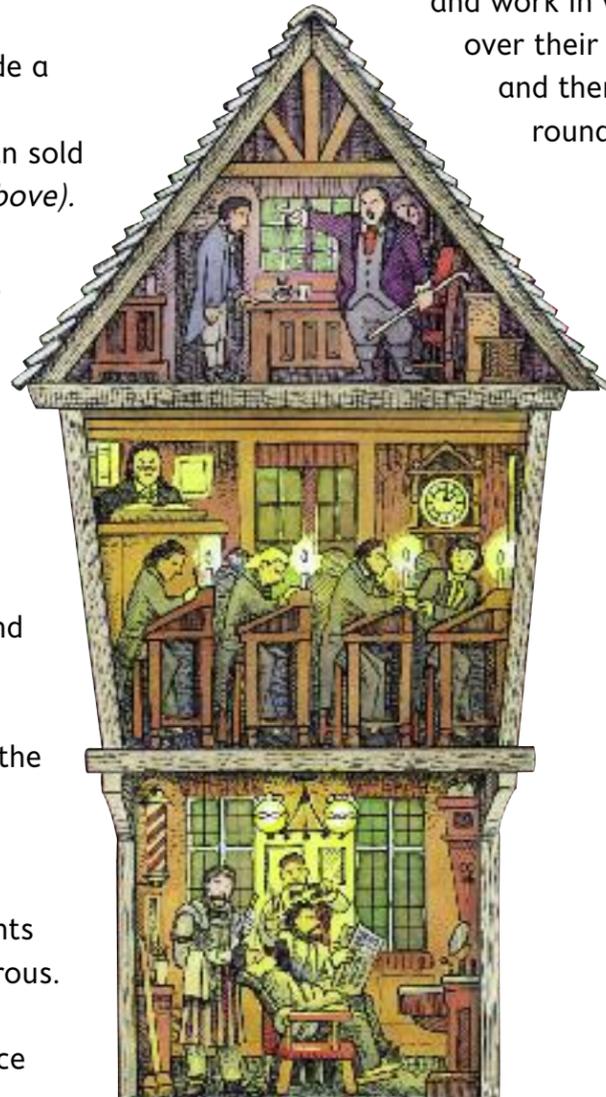
which were emptied infrequently. The children often shared the same beds.

Factory life was extremely hard (*above*). They were noisy and crowded. There were no toilets. The hours were long. Women and children worked in the factories because their families needed the money. Young boys were even made to climb up chimneys to clean them. The poorest people had to live

and work in workhouses. Although they had a roof over their heads, families were forced to split up and there was never enough food to go round.



Some people made a living as street traders. This man sold roasted chestnuts (*above*). Others offered soup, flowers and matches, or provided services such as knife grinding or shoe polishing.



All kinds of people lived and worked close together in the city. The wealthiest were the professional classes: lawyers, doctors and factory owners. Labourers and servants were the most numerous. In between were the shopkeepers and office workers (*right*).

Railway trains first ran in the 1800s, but people still travelled around city streets in horse-drawn vehicles (*above*). The invention of the bicycle, like this “penny-farthing” (*right*) allowed people to travel under their own propulsion for the first time.



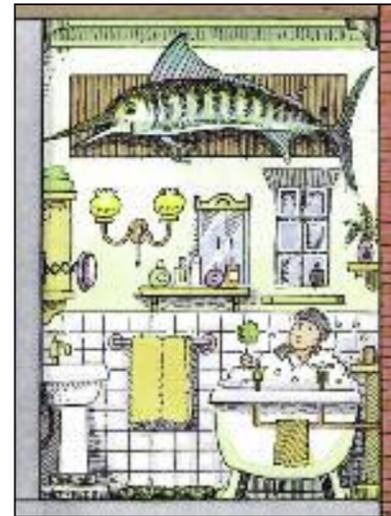
In a well-off 1800s house, the upper floors were taken up by the servants’ quarters and by the children’s nurseries (*right*). The children rarely saw their parents. Instead, they were looked after most of the time by their nanny. She oversaw the children’s meals, washing, lessons and playtime. Children from well-to-do homes had plenty of toys and games. Other children played hoop rolling (*below*) and other games in the street.



Only the houses of wealthy people had bathrooms (*left*). Before that, servants carried a bath tub up to the bedroom and filled it with hot water from downstairs.



The drawing room (*below, right*) was where the well-to-do entertained their guests. Women in fashionable society wore corsets and padding to mould their figures into the ideal shape. They wore frames called crinolines underneath their dresses. Men wore dark suits with waistcoats.



The kitchen (*below*) of a wealthy 19th century home was in the basement. It has a flagstone floor, a large wooden table and a coal-fired iron oven called a range. There was usually a shallow earthenware sink and piped water.



The water was warmed using the heat from the oven. There were no refrigerators so food was placed in “ice safes”, zinc-lined wooden chests containing lumps of ice. The housekeeper bought meat and vegetables from tradesmen who came to call at the kitchen door.



People lived in different parts of the city according to how wealthy they were. Rich people (*right*) had several servants, kept a carriage and wore fine clothes. They lived as far away as possible from factories and poor areas.

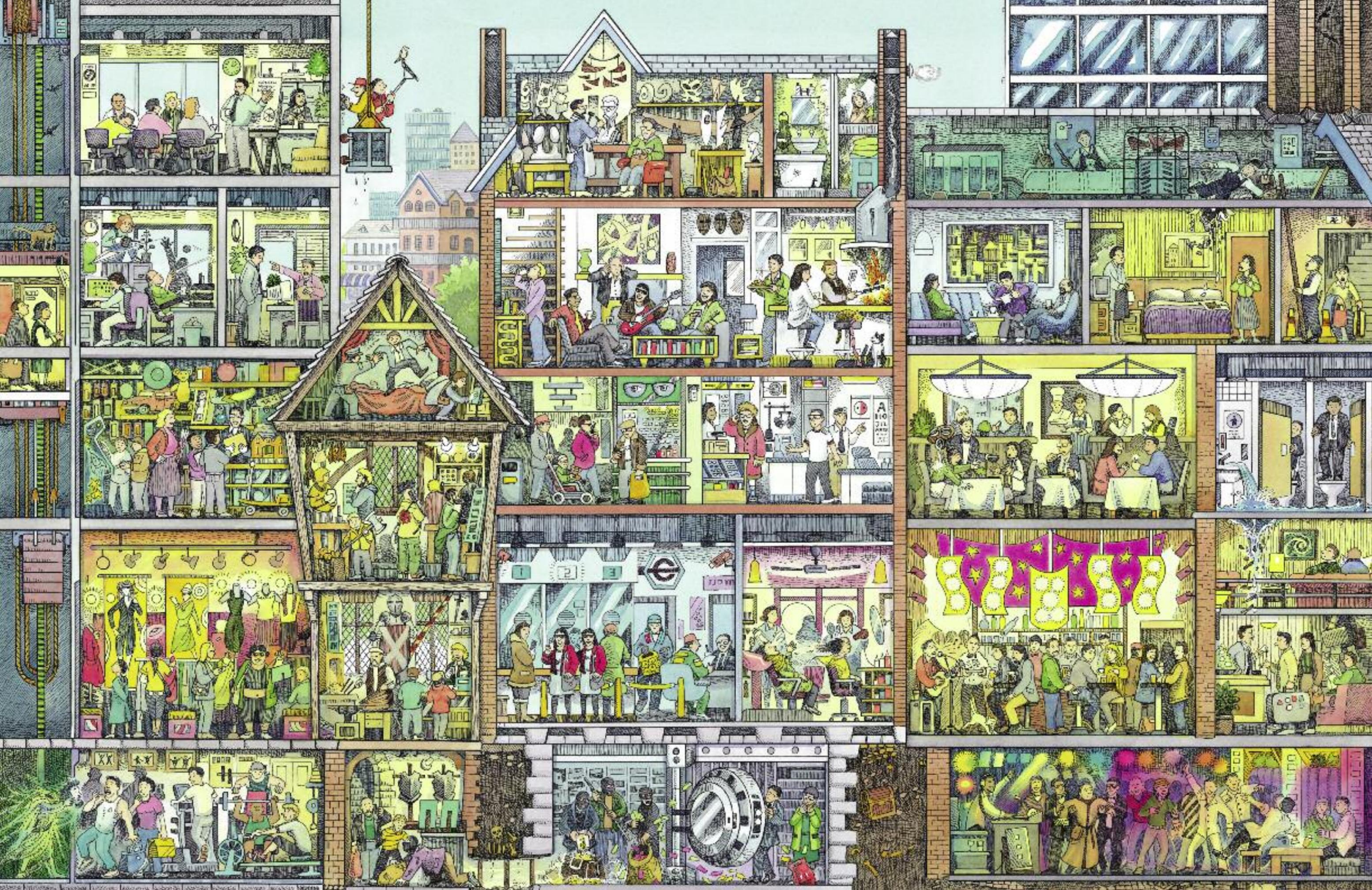


Today

The modern city has high-rise buildings made of steel and glass and fitted with security cameras and satellite dishes. The streets are busy with cars, vans, buses and lorries. People from all backgrounds mingle on the pavements and gather in shops, bars and restaurants. Everywhere, there are bright lights.

The old forge still stands. Today it is a museum of life in the Middle Ages. The blacksmith's tools and anvil are on display. The inn also survives, but has been extensively rebuilt: it is now a wine bar and restaurant. The grand family house has become a bank and hairdressers, with an opticians and apartments on the upper floors. There is still a clothes shop, now on the ground floor of a new office building.



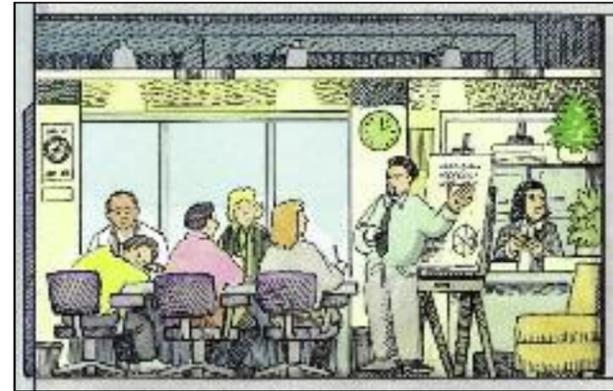


Living and working today

Gone are the old factories and the poverty-stricken, overcrowded homes of the past. Gone, too, are the unpaved, filthy, rubbish-strewn city streets. All those tall factory chimneys belching out foul-smelling smoke have vanished. In their place are shiny office blocks and apartments, smooth-surfaced, clean streets with drains and



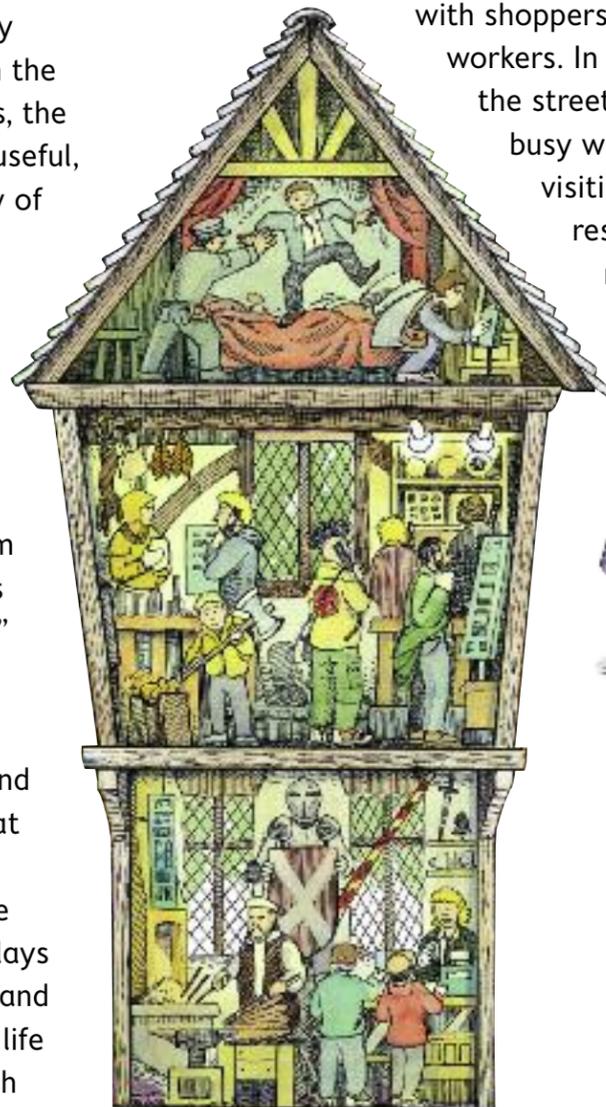
sewers, and gleaming, high-tech factories in industrial parks on the edge of town. Office workers (*above right*) enjoy light, air-conditioned premises. The only noises they hear are the soft whirring of electric fans in their computers, the soft ringing tones of telephones and the conversations of their colleagues.



By day, the city streets are crowded with shoppers and office-workers. In the evenings, the streets are just as busy with people visiting bars, restaurants, nightclubs, cinemas and theatres.



With so many vehicles on the city streets, the bicycle (*above*) is a useful, and often faster way of getting about. Pedal bikes are becoming increasingly popular as a good way of keeping fit. And, at a time when there are grave concerns about emissions from motor vehicles, bikes are seen as a “clean” alternative.



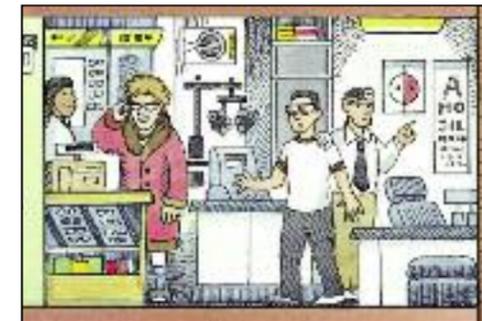
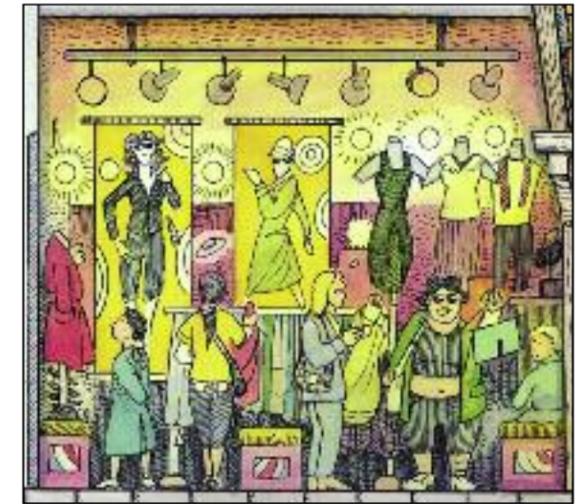
Most towns and cities have at least one museum (*right*). Here visitors can see displays of historical objects and find out about what life was like back through the centuries.



In the past, many people had very large families. They accepted that some of their children would die of

disease or malnutrition. They relied on the children to work and bring in extra wages to the household. Nowadays, in many parts of the world, standards of health care, hygiene and nutrition are much higher so far fewer children die young. People use birth control and raise much smaller families.

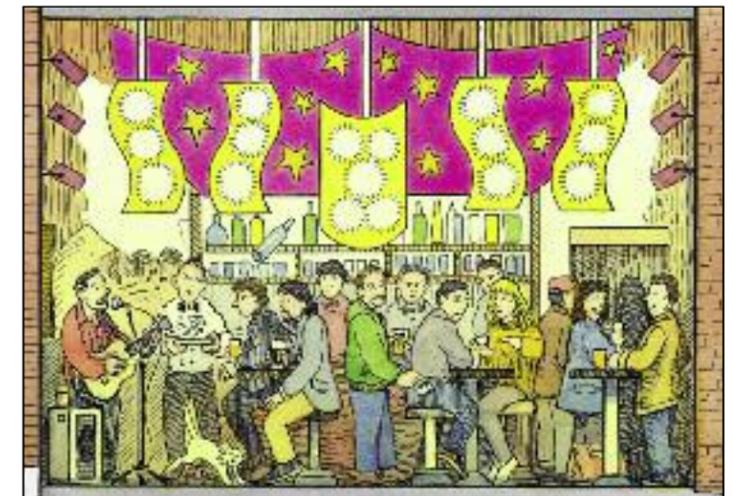
Ever since the 1700s, people have enjoyed wearing the fashionable clothes of the day. Then, fashions were only for the rich. Today, everyone can follow the latest styles. Hundreds of years ago, clothes were made in the same building as the shop itself, often from materials produced locally. Later, they were made in nearby factories. Today, clothes are often manufactured in distant parts of the world, from where they are shipped thousands of kilometres to the shops in our local high streets.



People have always suffered from various ailments: illness, injury, poor eyesight, toothache, etc. Nowadays, modern medicine and technology come to our aid. For example, there is an optician's (*left*) in every town. Here we can have our eyesight checked and new lenses made.



Electricity is an essential feature of modern living. Without it, there would be no telephones, televisions or computers. Refrigerators, toasters, and air conditioning would no longer function. The bright lights and amplified music that make bars and clubs (*right*) such popular places would disappear. We would even have to walk up flights of stairs in high-rise buildings, since both escalators and lifts (*left*) are powered by electricity.



Electric cables are laid under the streets of every town (they occasionally need maintenance, *below right*). The cables link homes, shops and offices to power stations where electricity is generated. The more electricity is used, the more fossil fuels (gas, oil or coal) are needed to fire the power stations. There are fears that burning fossil fuels on a large scale is a major cause of global warming.



Glossary

Apartment A room or rooms, usually on one floor of a building, used for living in.

Apprentice Someone who works for a skilled craftsman over several years to learn a trade.

Birth control A method used deliberately to prevent pregnancy.

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

Cesspit A covered container or pit used for collecting sewage or waste.



Charity An organization set up to provide help or money to those in need.



Cobblestones Rounded stones used for paving.

Corset An cloth undergarment stiffened with whalebone. Corsets were tightly laced up at the back to squeeze the wearer's waist.

Emissions A substance, liquid or gas that is given off. Emissions of carbon dioxide from motor vehicles and power stations are thought to contribute to **global warming**.



Flagstone Slabs of hard rock with smooth surfaces that are used for paving.

Fodder Feed for livestock.

Forage To search for food.

Forge A place where metal is worked by heating and hammering.



Global warming The gradual rise in the average temperature of the Earth. Most scientists believe this is due to an excess of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the result of burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas.

High-tech The most advanced technology currently available.



Gallows A wooden structure with a post and crossbeam used for hanging criminals.

Global warming The gradual rise in the average temperature of the Earth. Most scientists believe this is due to an excess of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the result of burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas.

Hygiene Clean or healthy practices.

Industry The extraction of raw materials, such as minerals or crops, **manufacturing**, such as cars or televisions, and the provision of services, such as transport or banking.



Malnutrition The lack of adequate nourishment that results from insufficient food or a poor diet.

Manufacturing The making of products, usually on a large scale using machinery, in factories.

Medieval Of the Middle Ages.



Merchant Someone who buys and sells goods for profit.

Rent To grant someone the right to live or work in a building in exchange for payments.

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



Stagecoach A large, four-wheeled, horse-drawn vehicle used to carry passengers on regular routes between towns and cities.

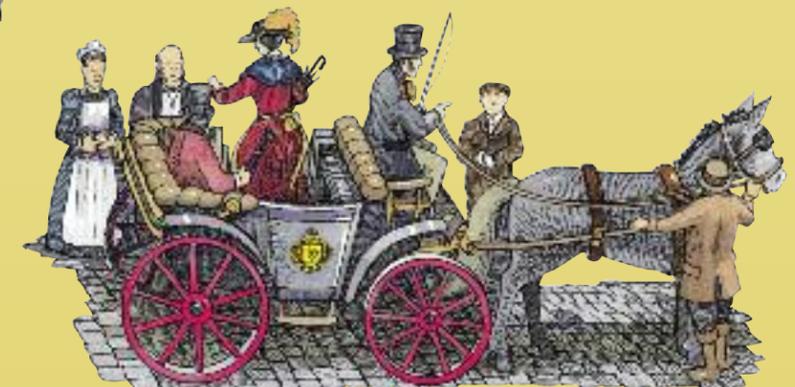
Thatch Straw or reeds used to make roofs.



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

Warehouse A large building where goods for sale are kept.

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



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