

**ATLAS  
REMINISCENT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649399369

Atlas Reminiscent by Alfred W. Yeo

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**ALFRED W. YEO**

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The City Marshal  
intervener

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HEAPSIDE a hundred years ago. **A Hundred years ago**

Ah! The world fretted these old shoulders then as it does now, but what a change has come over it. This ancient street: what a strange contrast its thronging traffic presents to the life of the past as the latter is called back to the imagination by the city pageantry which now and again sweeps through. For pageantry, the old street has always been famous. From the days of the great tourna-

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ment when Queen Philippa watched the tilting on its north side, and, owing to the frailty of the staging, was precipitated, as the old chronicler puts it, "with some shame" upon the knights and squires below, down to the recent visit of the President of the French to the Guildhall, history has repeatedly illustrated itself in Chepe by processions and shows. One of the oldest streets in the world, its flow of busy life has for fifteen centuries never ceased, but so far-reaching are the changes which have taken place during the last of these, it is not unlikely that in the Cheapside of a hundred years ago, Queen Philippa would have felt more at home than any modern Londoner. When the founders of the Atlas first opened the office at the corner of King Street, London had scarcely emerged from the age of flam-beaux and link boys, and the cobbled streets were still patrolled by venerable pensioners whose brains were mainly concerned with dodges to avoid the Mohocks, those "kindlers of riot" who worked their wicked will unchecked.

The old prints tell us what the outlook was





*Old Cheapside from the Atlas Corner.*



like from the Atlas corner. Nearly opposite <sup>The Atlas Corner</sup> stood, as it still stands, the house erected by Sir Christopher Wren in 1669, now occupied by Elkingtons the silversmiths but then in possession of Tegg the bookseller, and adjoining it was the Queen's Arms Tavern where Keats the poet at that time lived. Eastward, in the apex of Cornhill and Lombard Street, one could see Bank buildings in front of which the pillory was set up to punish frauds on the Stock Market. Almost next door to the Atlas, near the Mercers Hall, stood the shop till then lately occupied by Alderman Boydell the famous printseller, who used to wash his head at five o'clock every morning at the Ironmonger Lane pump; whilst on the other side of Old Jewry, lying back from the street, there was that grim old lockup the Poultry Compter, with its reminiscences of the slave trade.

In Bank Buildings was Wills' Coffee House, <sup>Founding the Atlas</sup> which was the birthplace of the Atlas Company; it was here that, towards the close of 1807, it was first projected by a group of city merchants and bankers. Though the venture