

DUDLEY: PROUD OF THE PAST, POSITIVE FOR THE FUTURE

Victorian Dudley

CHOLERA.

DUDLEY BOARD OF HEALTH,
HARVEST 1854-55, READ IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE
Church-yards at Dudley

Being so full, no one who has died of the
CHOLERA will be permitted to be buried
after 8 P.M. & T. tomorrow is either
of the Burial Grounds at St. Thomas's, or
St. Edmund's, in this Town.
All Persons who die from CHOLERA, must for the future
be buried in the Church-yard at St. Edmund's.

"In no other part of England
and Wales is the work of
human extermination effected
in so short a time as in the
district surrounding Dudley,
and in no other part, even of
that district, is the time so short
as in the parish of Dudley.
So far as the duration of life,

Oakeywell Street, Leach's Property
17 houses. The most unhealthy
tenants complain they cannot
keep themselves clean. They are
obliged to buy water. The
landlords reply that they are
so poor they cannot afford to
supply them water.
Privies and urinal flow into
two open cesspools, with a
large quantity of semi-liquid
night-soil, and then all drains
down by the houses.

Constitution Hill James Smith's Property

An abominable privy, quite
full, adjoining a house
occupied by Charles Cooper,
whose wife is now ill from the
stench, she had all the
symptoms of low fever, and
said "I begin to be poorly
on Saturday, when the smell
came in very bad. I have a
pain in the head and stomach:
no appetite. I tremble, and
cannot hold a limb still. I
break out into a sweats, and
still feel low and faint.
My howells are affected".



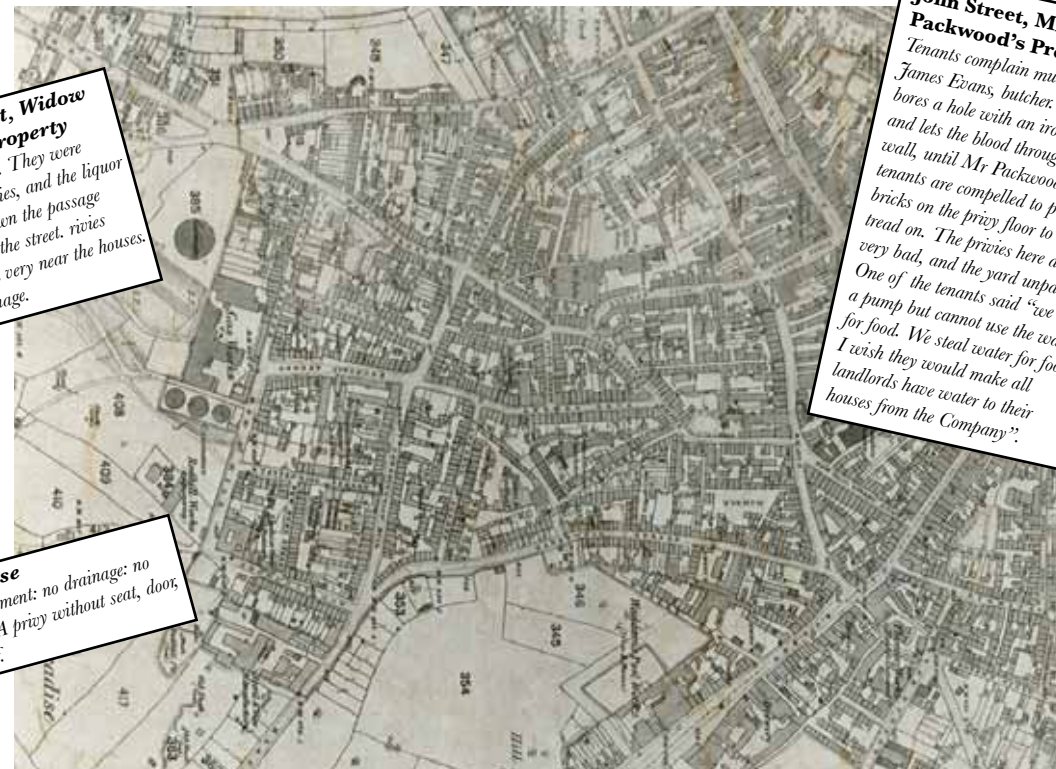
William Lee's 1852 report found that a quarter of Dudley's
adult workers made nails, often in domestic workshops such
as this.

During the Industrial Revolution technological advances, better
communications and easy availability of raw materials propelled
the Black Country into a rapid expansion which created both great
wealth and extreme poverty. Dudley's population rose from 10,000
in 1800, to 30,000 in 1838, to 45,000 in 1865.

What is now the Flood Street car park was once a maze of tightly packed houses, shops, pubs,
and workshops which sprawled over what had been the arable fields of pre-industrial Dudley.
People here were engaged in glassmaking, brick making and leather working but particularly
nail and chain making, and fender, fire-iron, anvil and vice manufacture.
There was much disease and deprivation, as illustrated here by quotations from the 1852 report
of William Lee, a Government Inspector of Health. In his time the average age of death in
Dudley was sixteen years, seven months.
In 1865 Dudley Borough Council was incorporated, carrying out improvements to living
conditions, which culminated in the sweeping away of inadequate housing and transfer of the
people to new model estates such as the Priory and Wrens Nest.

Flood Street, Widow
Round's Property
'Tripe-makers. They were
cleaning bellies, and the liquor
running down the passage
and along the street, rivers
filthy and very near the houses.
No drainage.

Paradise
No pavement; no drainage: no
water. A privy without seat, door,
or roof.



Junction of Flood Street, Dunn Street and
Garden Walk



Dunn Street

Dunn Street, Gabriel Dunn's Property

Bad Pavement: bad
drainage: bad ashpit
without wall: bad
privies. A draw well:
cannot use the water,
except for cleaning.
The privies on Mr
Thomas Steadman's
property drain upon this
yard: the people throw
ashes to soak it up.
The drainage flows
down from all this, and
is a great nuisance
complained of at the
bottom, where it goes
under a house into the
street.



Carved in Elm by Bainbridge
Copnall in 1963 this sculpture
of a man, woman and three
children fittingly overlooks the
Flood Street area from the
footbridge behind you; a
poignant reminder of the
struggles and sense of
community of the families who
once lived and worked here.