



Cooking-Pot

Date

1800-1850

Primary Maker

Charles Dickens

Medium

Copper

Description

Copper pot stand. The pot was used to cook gruel at Mint Street Workhouse, Borough. The copper from the Mint Street workhouse stood in the corner of the large stone hall where the inmates were fed. It was made of an iron drum for cooking and ladling out the gruel. Around it was a circular brick wall to hold the fire. The copper was donated by the Workhouse Board of Guardians in 1921. The brickwork was damaged when the Cuming Museum was hit by a bomb during the Second World War. The workhouse at Mint Street is thought to have provided

Dickens with the model for the scene in *Oliver Twist* where the starving Oliver 'asks for more'. When Dickens was a boy lodging in nearby Lant Street he passed Mint Street on his way to work. He would have seen the pauper children also leaving to work in nearby workshops and factories. Later as an adult Dickens revisited the area, including the Marshalsea. His journalistic writings show he frequently went on fact finding missions to schools, hospitals, factories, workhouses and slums. It is very likely he would have visited the Mint Street Workhouse.

Dimensions

Object/Work: 760 x 445 mm