A brick and tile manufacturer from Burnley, Lancashire, James Duckett, designed this toilet in 1887. Known as a tipper closet or ‘tippler’ it was officially called the ‘Automatic Slop Water Closet’. The toilet has a tipping tank inside the toilet instead of a cistern tank and the water comes from ‘slop’ or waste water from the kitchen or scullery sink.

As toilet designs developed in the nineteenth century a big concern amongst water companies and authorities was the potentially excessive waste of water. From the 1870s many water companies set a limit of 2 gallons of water flush, which influenced the future development of the toilet or ‘water-closet’

During the 1890s and early 1900s the tipper closet was installed in many backyards of working class houses in the midlands and the north, replacing the pail system which had continued despite many places in the south of England adopting the WC system much earlier. However concerns over how hygienic it was did start to arise, especially as the water passing through the toilet didn’t reach the rim or sides so any waste that landed there was not flushed away.
The toilet in the back yard of Brook Street is a “Tipper” toilet from the 1880s. It was shared by the residents of the houses.

This toilet in Brook Street would receive water from the Brew’us above and a drain outside the Brew’us. When the tank was almost full it tipped over, sending a powerful rush of water to flush the toilet.