



The Isle of Dogs from Booth's Poverty Map of London

BOOTH, Charles.
 Map A. - Isle of Dogs (1900).

London, 1900. Lithographic map with original hand colour. Sheet 265 x 190mm.

£280

One section (of twenty) of an extended version of the incredibly influential Poverty Map, originally published in Charles Booth's 'Life and Labour of the People in London', a founding text of British sociology. Most of this sheet is taken up with the commercial buildings, with docks, wharfs, warehouses, iron works, 'Manure works' and other factories, but residential streets line the roads of the peninsula. Although the key gives seven colour codes for the degree of wealth of the inhabitants (ranging from black - 'Lowest class', through shades of blue and purple - 'Poor', 'Mixed', 'Fairly Comfortable', to red - 'Well to do' and yellow - 'Wealthy'), there is no sign of the two highest classes. Booth (1840-1916), owner of the Booth Shipping Line, acted in response to an 1886 Pall Mall Gazette article that claimed that 25% of Londoners lived in poverty. Booth regarded this figure as wildly exaggerated, so recruited a team of volunteer researchers to compile an analysis of social conditions based on field visits and interviews with local police, clergy and employers. The first volume of 'Life and Labour' (1889), covering the East End, showed that 35% lived in poverty. The second series, covering the rest of the city (1891) showed that no less than 30 per cent of the city's total population could be classed as poor.



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See HYDE: Victorian Maps of London, 252.

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