



The famous 'Wonderground' map of London

GILL, Leslie MacDonald.

The Wonderground Map of London Town. The Heart of Britain's Empire Here is Spread Out for Your View. It Shows You Many Stations & Bus Routes Not A Few. You Have Not the Time to Admire it all? Why Not Take a Map Home to Pin on your Wall!

London: Westminster Press, c.1924. Colour lithograph. Sheet 750 x 940mm.

£2,900

A caricature map of central London, west to Hammersmith, north to Camden Town, east to St Katherine's Dock and south to Clapham, which draws its inspiration from Lewis Carroll's 'Alice in Wonderland'. It shows London filled with elevations of underground stations and other important buildings, bizarre vignettes and esoteric references and puns. For example: the Serpentine River hosts a Chinese dragon; a man hangs from Tyburn Tree; and next to Regent's Park Zoo are three verses of William Blake's 'The Tyger'. An armorial depicting a tunnel, surmounted with a white rabbit, with a Latin motto translating as 'Enter or exit with little delay', strengthens the Wonderland comparison. Leslie MacDonald Gill (1884-1947), younger brother of Eric Gill, specialised in graphic design in the Arts and Crafts style. His most important commission was from the Imperial War Graves Commission, designing the script used on Commission headstones and war memorials, including the 'Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme'. He originally drew this map as an advertising poster for London Electric Underground Railway Company in 1914. Such was its success (it is credited with saving the 'Underground' campaign)



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that a commercial version was issued the following year, available to the general public. This updated version appears to date from c.1924, when the British Empire Exhibition opened at Wembley Stadium: a British Lion is shown racing along the Harrow Road. Down Street Underground Station is shown, before its closure in 1932.

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