



The famous Poverty Map of London

BOOTH, Charles.

Descriptive Map of London Poverty 1889.

London: McMillan & Co., c.1889. Original colour. Four sheets conjoined, total 980 x 1210mm.

£16,000

A very fine example of Charles Booth's famous Poverty map of London, the first sociological plan of the capital. The streets are colour-coded according to the degree of wealth of the inhabitants, ranging from black ('Lowest class. Vicious, semi-criminal'), through shades of blue and purple ('Poor', 'Mixed', 'Fairly Comfortable'), to red ('Well to do') and yellow ('Wealthy'). 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 (including his cousin Beatrice Potter) to compile an analysis of social conditions based on field visits and interviews with local police, clergy and employers. The reception of his survey, published as 'Life and Labour', was such that Booth completed two more surveys, titled the 'Second Series' (1891), and 'Third Series' (1902, covering Religious Influences), with a 'Final Volume' (also 1902) with his conclusions. Over the years Booth's prejudices softened: the keys of later maps had 'Lowest class', dropping the 'Vicious, semi-criminal'.



Altea Gallery Ltd. 35 Saint George St,London W1S 2FN
info@alteagallery.com - www.alteagallery.com
Tel : +44(0) 20 7491 0010

Stock ID :22535