



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
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## **(Viele Water Map) Sanitary & Topographical Map of the City and Island of New York [bound in:] Report of the Council of Hygiene and Public Health of the Citizens Association of New York Upon the Sanitary Condition of the City [and with map:] Sanitary and Social Chart of the Fourth Ward of the City of New York**

**Stock#:** 101301  
**Map Maker:** Viele / Citizens' Association of  
New York  
  
**Date:** 1865  
**Place:** New York  
**Color:** Color  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 6.5 x 9.5 inches  
  
**Price:** \$ 17,500.00



### **Description:**

#### ***Mapping the Health of Manhattan***

#### ***Egbert Viele's Famous New York City Water Map***

A rare and important color lithograph map of Manhattan fully exhibiting Egbert Viele's novel cartographic methodology, accompanying a pioneering and profusely illustrated report on the sanitary conditions of New York City: *Report of the Council of Hygiene and Public Health of the Citizens Association of New York Upon the Sanitary Condition of the City.*

The text stands as the first comprehensive report on sanitation and public health conditions of the city. It is based on a months-long investigation of "fever-nests and insalubrious quarters" across the city, to assess hygiene standards in relation to diseases such as smallpox and typhoid. Rapid population growth, overcrowded apartment buildings, dirty streets and poor sanitation standards had all played a role in New York's dreadful public health situation.

The map superimposes Manhattan's original topography and hydrography on the city's mid-19th-century street grid. The purpose of this approach was to improve the sewers of New York and thereby reduce the chance of epidemics. Viele's theory on the transmission of disease was formed during his firsthand witnessing of an outbreak that devastated a military camp in Laredo, Texas.

Viele produced a few years after John Snow made his famous map of the Broad Street cholera outbreak in



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London (1854)

I. N. Phelps Stokes includes an interesting entry on this map in his exhaustive work, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909*:

*This map, in so far as it relates to portions of the island already built upon, was compiled from old maps filed among the city records. For those portions which were then undeveloped new surveys were made. The map was compiled primarily from a sanitary point of view - to indicate the old water-courses and swamp land that existed before the development of the island, and which existed beneath the surface.*

An article published in the *New York Herald* of November 3, 1865, shows the impact of Viele's pioneering public health-related cartography at the time:

*General Egbert L. Viele has published a very interesting work, together with a valuable map, showing the topography and hydrology of the city of New York, and defining the healthy and unhealthy sections of the metropolis. It will prove of great value to persons about purchasing residences and building sites upon which to erect the same. This map shows the water courses, streams, meadows, marshes, ponds, ditches, canals, &c., that existed and now exist upon the site upon which New York is built. General Viele asserts the remarkable fact that when the cholera, yellow fever, intermittent, typhoid and other fevers, fever and ague and all similar complaints have prevailed in the city they have been most general and virulent within or near the lines of these water course districts.*

David Rumsey says of the map:

*The map shows all the original water courses of Manhattan Island, with the street grid superimposed on top. Also, three different kinds of land are shown: Marsh, Made Land, and Meadow. Sewer lines are indicated. A very beautiful full color map occasioned by a not so beautiful subject. In 1874 Viele reissued the map in larger format as the Topographical Atlas of the City of New York.*

A second folding map, by E. R. Pulling, M.D. is also notable:

*Sanitary and Social Chart of the Fourth Ward of the City of New-York to Accompany a Report of the*



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*4th Sanitary Inspection District.*

This map indicates various uses of structures in a large section of what is now the financial district of lower Manhattan. In addition to private dwellings, business offices and churches there were shanties, stables, tenant houses, privies (including "privies in extremely offensive condition"), sailor's boarding houses, liquor stores and drinking places, and the like. Houses where typhus or typhoid fever had occurred are marked on the map.

#### ***Council of Hygiene and Public Health***

In 1864 the Council of Hygiene and Public Health undertook a street-by-street sanitary inspection of the city. This survey showed that thousands of New Yorkers were living in conditions of utter degradation. The publication of these findings in the present extensive illustrated report, along with an impending threat of Asiatic cholera, were decisive factors that allowed reformers to push a bill through the New York State Legislature creating a new Metropolitan Board of Health. This new government department, the forerunner of the present Department of Health, became the model for many other American cities in creating their own local health departments.

The captions for some of the illustrations in the report, many of which are engravings after photographs, give a flavor of the content:

- *A Tenant House Cul-De-Sac*
- *A Perpetual Fever-Nest*
- *Floor-Plan of a Fever-Nest near the Central Park*
- *A Chart illustrating the Encroachment of Nuisances upon Populous Uptown Districts [including slaughter houses, stables, hog pens, and a varnish factory]*
- *Map illustrating the Hydrography, Drainage and Sewerage, and the Medical Topography of the Third Ward*
- *Chart of a Crowded Mass of Tenant Houses of Vandewater Street*
- *View of a Public School and Adjacent Slaughter-Pen*
- *Sixth Street Multi-Level Cattle Market*

A foundational document for the history of public health in America.

#### **Rarity**



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The complete report with both folding maps and all the plates is very rare in the market, especially when in such nice condition.

**Detailed Condition:**

Octavo. Original pebbled cloth, expertly rebacked with original backstrip laid down. With large folding map of Manhattan. The large map has a printed correction to the title which reads: "Prepared for the Council of Hygiene and Public Health" pasted over the original text: "Prepared for the Council of Health & Public Hygiene." cxliii, 360 pages. Two folding color lithograph maps. Profusely illustrated with many additional in-text maps, plans, charts and engravings. Including index. Complete. Generally a very clean example. Inscribed on front flyleaf: "Dr. Ballard, Health Officer, London, from the Council of Hygiene, E. Harris, M.D. Secretary, New York, May 8th, 1865."