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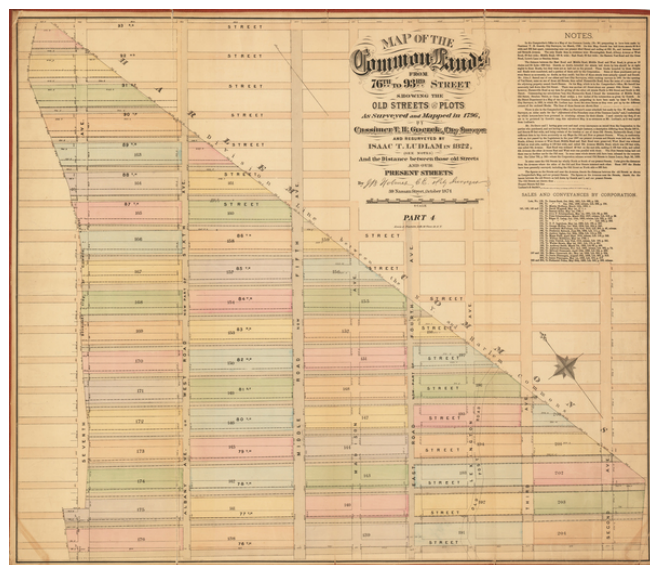
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[Upper East Side - Manhattan -- 79th Street to 93rd Street] Map of the Common Lands from 76th to 93rd Street Showing the Old Streets and Plots As Surveyed and Mapped in 1796, By Cassimer T. H. Goerck, City Surveyor and Resurveyed by Isaac T. Ludlam in 1822 (See Notes) And the Distance between those old Streets and our Present Streets Part 4

Stock#: 61033
Map Maker: Bute Holmes
Date: 1874
Place: New York
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 29 x 27.5 inches
Price: \$ 4,400.00



Description:

Upper East Side - Manhattan (79th Street to 93rd Street)

This is a John Bute Holmes 1874 cadastral map of the Upper East Side neighborhood of Manhattan - the only specific map of this area to appear in the 19th century.

The map depicts the region from Seventh Avenue (or at least where it would be if Central Park hadn't been built) to Second Avenue and from 93rd Street to 76th Street. It includes the area currently occupied by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guggenheim Museum, Cooper Hewitt Design Museum, The Jewish Museum, and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Reservoir.

The bulk of the map is occupied by the northern reaches of the Common Lands, including the boundary between the Common Lands and the village of Harlem. This boundary was a diagonal line approximately from the intersection of today's Second Avenue and 79th Street to what would be the intersection of 92nd Street and Seventh Avenue if Central Park had not been constructed. Also evident are the early planning stages of what would become Park Avenue - some of New York city's most coveted real estate.



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Common Lands

Settlement on Manhattan Island began at the southern tip, where Battery Park is today. One of the easiest indicators for modern-day visitors is the lack of an organized street-grid in this part of the city. Growth farther north on Manhattan Island was slow, particularly in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then, even when people decided they wanted to live outside of the organized settlement, they elected to purchase land along either the Hudson River or the East River so they could easily travel into the city either by boat along the river or one of the two main roads that traveled north up the island. These roads, the Bloomingdale Road (now Broadway), which led up the west side of the island, and the East Post Road, which ran along the island's east side, were built along ancient Native American hunting paths which allowed for easy development. The Common Lands stretched from the intersection of these two roads north in an irregular fashion to Harlem's boundary with the Commons.

These two phenomena created a lack of interest in settling the land in the central part of the island. Traveling there was difficult, and the land either consisted of rocky outcroppings or low-lying overgrown marshland. All of this 'vast wasteland' was thus given to the government of New Amsterdam by the Dutch administrators in 1685 and reaffirmed by the English twice after they acquired the colony. Almost no one bought or rented the land from the colony, and it remained that way until the infancy of the United States, when the government of New York City inherited what had become known as the Common Lands.

At that time, New York City had little tax income, and so leveraged the Common Lands, which the Common Council, the city's governing body, believed could be developed. They contracted Casimir Theodor Goerck, a city surveyor, to survey the Common Lands and divide it into five-acre lots that would then be sold at auction. Goerck, for his part, did the best he could with a massive task. By December 1785, he had laid out a middle street, a rough estimation of today's Fifth Avenue, but almost none of the lots were of equal size. A handful of lots sold the following summer, but not many, most of which were in the extreme southern reaches of the Common Lands near the established city. In 1794, the Common Council again contracted Goerck to survey five-acre lots, but this time he was to also survey a road parallel to and on either side of the middle road. He was also to survey sixty-six-foot-wide east-west streets to allow for easier access. These roads would closely mirror Fourth and Sixth Avenues in the Commissioners plan of about a decade later, as would the east-west streets, although the Commissioners gave almost no credit to Goerck for the inspiration.



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Detailed Condition: