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Lithograph: Lena River, 1856

Niemirowski, Leopold



A nineteenth-century lithograph of the Lena River. Spring floods changed the river's shape and altered its course.

Lithograph by Leopold Niemirowski from *Puteshestvie po vostochnoi Sibiri I. Bulychova* ["Bulychov's Travels in Eastern Siberia"], 1856. Image courtesy of The New York Public Library Digital Collections

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A nineteenth-century lithograph of the Lena River. Spring floods changed the river's shape and altered its course. (Lithograph by Leopold Niemirowski. 1856. Public Domain.)

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> In the 1830s, publicist Nikolai Shchukin observed, "Although the town [Yakutsk] lies on the shores of the greatest river in the world, yet in summer and winter the people die of thirst." Shchukin told of how the Lena froze in winter while spring floods filled its channels with sand and altered its shape, directing its waters farther from town. The cleaner waters of the river's fairway were over two kilometers away, and the streams that flowed near Yakutsk were muddy and contaminated with municipal waste. Outbreaks of typhoid and dysentery, spread through dirty water, were frequent.
>
> —Pey-Yi Chu

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