

"Defeat of the German Troops at Gumbinen", 1914 lithograph.

Measures 16 1/2" x 22". The right margin has publisher's information near the bottom "Lithograph by I. D. Sytin Partnership, Moscow."

The text reads in the bottom is as follows: "The fierce battle in East Prussia which went on from 4-7 August culminated in the brilliant victory of the Russian troops on the shores of the Rominte River. Our army went over to a rapid offensive. The German forces comprised one hundred thousand men with 384 cannon. On 7 August, the Gumbinen was taken after a furious battle despite the desperate German fire coming from the Zeesker Hill. On 9th August, the Germans were dislodged from the Zeesker Hill and pushed to the Angerapp River. On the right flank the Germans were thrown back to the Pregel River. The enemy retreated in disorder leaving to us many field guns and prisoners. The Germans requested a truce to pick up the wounded but were denied. Our cavalry is currently in pursuit of the retreating enemy". With the exception of a few weeks of limited public displays of patriotism during the 300th Anniversary of the House of Romanov in 1913, the universal discouragement that followed the defeat of the Russian armed forces in the 1905 war with Japan hung over the Russian population like the proverbial "wet blanket." As a result, the immediate rush to the colors to enlist to fight for Tsar and Motherland in August of 1914 came as a considerable surprise to everyone.

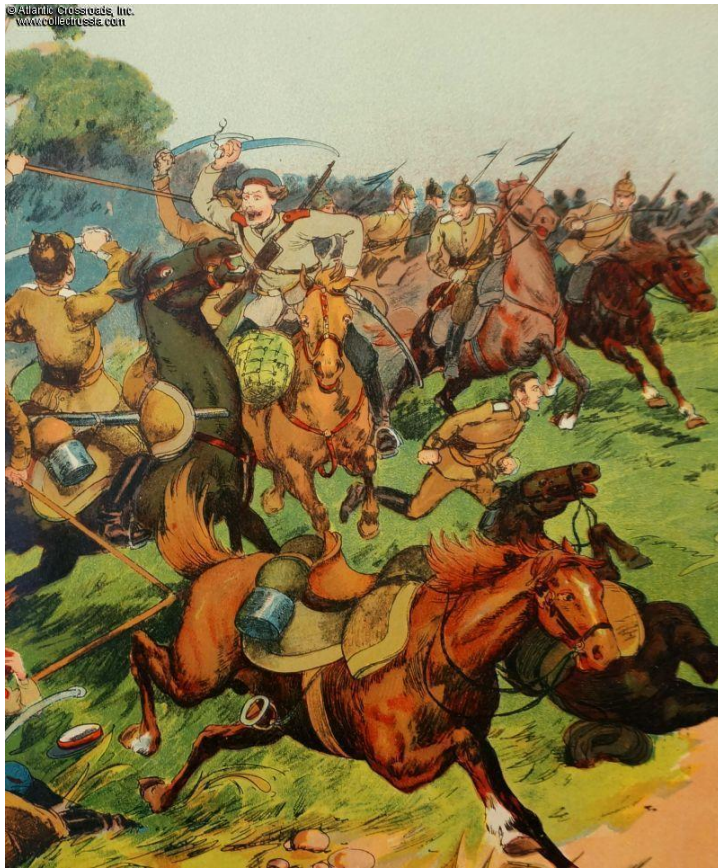
In a country where literacy was not universal, the production, distribution and posting of colorful prints like this with easy to understand imagery was the handiest way to remind the basically illiterate masses about the "nature" of their enemies as well as "what they were fighting for." When this particular poster was in print, the optimism was running equally high among both the Russian population and army's high command. The battle of Gumbinen was an early Russian victory, but it was soon followed by disasters at Tannenberg and Masurian Lakes. The humiliating defeat suffered in the East Prussian campaign however was not a crushing blow to the Russian morale because it was mediated by the roughly simultaneous, impressive success against Austria-Hungary.

Very good to excellent condition with fresh colors; there is a minor discoloration in the upper margin and couple of tiny tears on bottom edge, none of which is really detractive. There are pencil marks and small ink stamp to the verso, probably by the original WW1 era retailer.

Item# 29207

\$250.00





ЛИТОГРАФИЯ Т-ВА И. Д. СЫТИНА. МОСКВА.

№ 6.

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было отказано. Наша