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Avliyar Battlefield Trophy of Russo-Turkish War of 1877- 1878.

Period presentation piece engraved in Russian "Fragments of Shells and Shrapnel that I found at Avliyar. 20 September 1885."

This 12" tall trophy consists of a 12.5" diameter silver plated copper pedestal, surmounted by an artistic arrangement of seven fragments of exploded artillery shells. The shell fragments are held in position by a framework expertly crafted from silver.

There are no immediately legible markings to the fragments, however, on close inspection each piece is recognizable as a fired shell. Pen in photo is size reference.

Each individual silver piece shows silver hallmarks of the type used in St. Petersburg during the last quarter of XIX Century: "84" with St. Petersburg assay inspection symbol of crossed anchors and scepter. Also show unclear maker marks which may be Cyrillic "NYa" (N. D. Yanichkin Workshop).

The Avliar-Aladja (also spelled Avliyar and Aladzhi) Battle took place in early October 1877 on the Caucasus Front of the Russo-Turkish War. In its course, the Russian Caucasian Corps led by General Loris-Melikov (and overall command of Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich) inflicted a serious defeat upon the Turkish Anatolian Army of Muhtar Pasha. This pivotal battle put an end to Turkish plans of invasion into Russian-controlled territories of Armenia and Georgia, and allowed the Russians to concentrate on the primary strategic front in Bulgaria.

At 8 a.m on 20 September, forces under the command of Shelkovnikian, an Armenian eager to avenge the horrific deprivations suffered by his people at the hands of the Turks, crossed the Naharchi mountains to obtain an advantage of surprise upon the Turks. While their goal was the fortress at Aladzhi, they first had to take Avliyar and Yagni. The ensuing battle was drawn out and bloody. When artillery ran out of shells, clever tactics and a fixed bayonet charge drove the Turks back, clearing the way for further Russian victories.

The exact purpose of this trophy is lost to history, however it is obvious the shell fragments were of great importance to the wealthy individual who collected them and had them mounted in this elaborate way. Perhaps he was a veteran who had braved the artillery fired in this battle, or he wished to make a presentation to a veteran or someone with an important connection to the location or event. Interesting research potential.

Also of interest is this lot of [contemporary documents from the field command](#) of the same war.

In any case it is fascinating to contemplate these well preserved pieces were once shells depleted by barrage after barrage fired in anger during a battle of major significance in Russian history.

Note: this item is large and weighs approximately 20 lbs. Special shipping rates will apply.

Item# 18538

\$9,950.00

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