

Badge of a Veteran of the 274th Rifle Division, a Participant of the Defense of Zaporozhye, 1981 issue.

In aluminum, paint and lacquer; medallion measures 38.7 mm in width. The inscription reads "To a Participant of the Defense of Zaporozhye, 1941". The raised inscription on the reverse is "274th Rifle Division, 1941-1981". The suspension device shows colors of the flag of Soviet Ukraine. There is a maker mark on the reverse of the suspension. The badge is in excellent condition.

The city of Zaporozhye (now known by its Ukrainian name Zaporizhzhia), is a large industrial city on the Dnieper River in the southeastern part of Ukraine. The German 1st Panzer Group reached it early during the Barbarossa offensive, in mid-August 1941. In response, the Soviet authorities ordered to blow up a section of the huge Dneproges Dam creating a flood which killed scores of soldiers on both sides as well as some tens of thousands civilians. The ruthless action allowed to solidify the defenses and bought time to evacuate valuable machinery from the city's industrial enterprises into the Soviet interior where it would be put to good use in the following months. The defense of Zaporozhye lasted 45 days, a significant achievement considering the dismal situation for the Soviet troops on most other sections of the front at that stage of the war. Zaporozhye would remain under German occupation for the following two years, and it was almost completely devastated during the Nazi retreat from Ukraine.

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