

Graduation Jetton from the Michael Artillery School in St Petersburg.

In silver, gold, and enamel. The circular portion is 23.9 mm in diameter and the entire jetton measures 36 mm from the bottom to the top of the cross on Imperial Crown. There are two hallmarks on the ring: "ED" and "Eduard", Eduard being the full name of the jewelry firm, both in Cyrillic. (Having been made by Eduard, the jetton would have been made c 1890s-1917.) The front is designed to give the viewer the sensation that he is looking down the rifled barrel of an artillery piece. In the center of the barrel is a gold letter "M" with the date "1820", the year of the school's founding. The 'mouth' of the barrel is draped with gold swags of oak and laurel leaves bound together by a gold and enamel bow. Inlaid in blue enamel around the lower part of the barrel is the name of the school. Translated it reads: "M(ichael) Artillery S(chool)". The reverse of the badge bears two crossed cannon barrels and a flaming bomb. Above the circular body of the jetton is a completely three-dimensional rendition of the Imperial Russian Crown in silver gilt.

Excellent condition. The jetton is as it would have first been presented to a graduate, i.e, with no recipient's name engraved either on the open areas on the reverse or on the 4.4mm wide edge. The majority of the blue enamel in the tiny bow on the obverse is slightly chipped but still present. There are only two tiny dings (one on the obverse close to the "M" for Michael, but it did not harm the enamel lettering, and one on the wide edge at a roughly five o'clock when viewed from the reverse). It should be noted that when you touch the crossed cannon insignia, you can detect a slight amount of "play"; apparently the cannons are not soldered to the reverse but are held in place by rivets which have loosened slightly.

While it shares certain basic design elements with the graduation insignia of other Russian academies, the concept of giving the viewer an idea of what it would be like to stare down the barrel of an artillery piece is probably the most novel "conceit" ever employed in the creation of a jetton. This is one of the most striking military school badges that we have ever offered.

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\$2,300.00

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