Badge to a Shock Worker of Ukhta, late 1930s.

In silver-plated brass and enamels; measures 35.4 mm in height (incl. the flagpole) x 24.2 mm in width.A very stark artwork featuring what could be equally a watchtower of a prison camp or a superstructure of a mine, a coal miner's lamp and a train. The red banner has inscription "To a Shock Worker of Ukhta" ("Ударнику Ухтинцу"). The badge was issued for excellent work in the NKVD Ukhto-Pechorskiy Correctional Labor Camp formerly known as SEVLON (Special Purpose Northern Camp). The prisoners of this camp were employed to extract oil, coal and radium in the Ukha River basin of the Komi Autonomous Republic (a vast area in the extreme northeast of the European Russia).

In outstanding, excellent condition - virtually unheard of for this badge. The enamel is essentially pristine having only a couple of microscopic hairlines in the upper left corner of the banner - completely invisible to the naked eye. The gold enamel on the lamp and the white enamel are practically flawless except for the few tiny scuffs (to call them scratches would be an exaggeration; please note that they are hugely enlarged in our photos). The enamel retains all of its magnificent luster. The details are likewise perfect; the silver finish is practically untouched: there is only very slight wear in tiny spots on the raised parts of the locomotive (the star and coupler) and tower.

The silver finish on the reverse is perfect, with attractive dark patina. The screw post is full or near full length, over 10 mm. Includes original screw plate marked "Khu-Met Metizsoyuz. Moscow". Remarkably, the treads on the screw are not worn out and work well with the screw plate - which in and of itself a very uncommon case. This is a superb, impossible to upgrade piece.

/"Avers 8" p. 85, fig. 484/.

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$1,400.00

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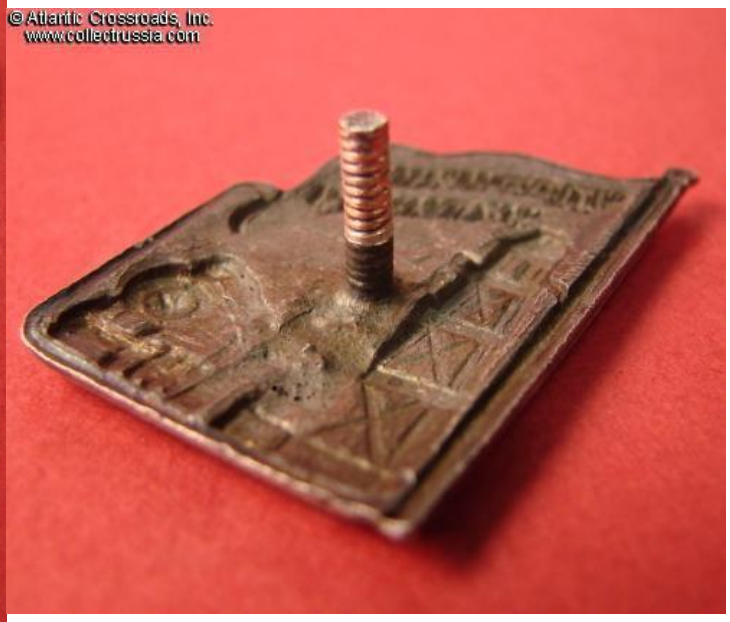
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