

## Order of the Red Banner, Type 1 Variation 1, #153, circa 1932-34.

Silver gilt, enamels. Measures 39.3 mm from the bottom of the wreath to the top of the banner, 35.6 mm in width; weighs 21.4 g without screw plate. Features sharply defined "mirror" reverse repeating the topography of the obverse. Unique to this particular variation, the serial number is engraved in large block numerals in the upper left part of the badge at approximately 10 o'clock position (the subsequent variations of the "Mirror Back" had serial number at the bottom, at 6 o'clock). According to The Order of the Red Banner by Durov & Strekalov, only approximately 170 Red Banners had this feature. These were the first specimens manufactured in 1932 at the Leningrad Mint immediately after the establishment of the all-Union Red Banner award which replaced the obsolete Order of the Red Banner of RSFSR.

Very fine condition. The enamel is well preserved overall: the only clearly noticeable damage is missing enamel on the upper right arm of the center star. The enamel on the banner has minor amount of surface flaking along the edges, mostly at the bottom and nearly unnoticeable to the naked eye, no other damage. The bottom plaque with "СССР" is practically perfect having only microscopic flakes along the edges, completely unnoticeable without magnification. The white enamel on the background is perfect. Details of the wreath, center medallion with hammer & sickle emblem and the torch are extremely well-preserved and crisp, show almost no wear. Some of the original fire gilt finish is still visible in the crevices of the wreath - a very uncommon occurrence for any "Mirror Back": they had notoriously fragile gold plating, completely missing on most specimens that survived to our days.

The screw post is 4.4 mm wide and approx. 11 mm in length measured from its base, has not been reduced. Includes original silver screw plate measuring 32.0-32.1 mm in diameter and weighing 7.2 g. This early version of the screw plate features ring made out of wire with square cross-section which is welded on top of the opening on the inside of the plate (similar to the wire forming the "base" around the screw post of the badge). Screw plates of this kind were used exclusively on Type 1 Red Banners until the introduction of the 28 mm screw plates, whereas the later versions of the 32-mm screw plate had simplified construction.

Condition of this piece is incredible for an award this early and this rare. Note that the only example of the Type 1 Var. 1 shown in the The Order of the Red Banner reference guide by Durov and Strekalov (#7 on p. 118) is in significantly worse shape.

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**\$36,000.00**





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