

Excellent Road Builder badge, probably by the YuKhA factory, circa mid-1940s.

Brass, enamels; 46.8 x 35.4 mm; weighs 13.3 g without the screw plate. This very distinct early version features extremely tall ornament above the center medallion formed by five individual scrolls; these scrolls are not very sharply defined and have flat lower area. Note also the asymmetrical location of the apex of the scrolls - it is skewed to the right, a feature unique to this version of the badge. The center medallion is highly domed. There is a pattern of vertical lines under the red enamel. This early version of the badge is identified as NKPS Factory manufacture by Airapetyan, whereas Khlamkin's catalog Badges of Excellent Servicemen of the Red Army, 1942-1957 classifies it as Type 2 and attributes it to the YuKhA Factory.

In fine to very fine condition. The red enamel on the center medallion has a small repair in approximately 8 to 10 o'clock segment between the hammer, sickle and the outer edge of the red portion of the medallion; the repair with "cold" enamel was done professionally and is almost unnoticeable without the UV "black" light. The rest of the red enamel is intact. The white band has only some rubbing and a few minuscule contact marks, perfect otherwise.

Details are exceptionally well preserved and crisp, including the stonework and trusses of the bridge and the road below. The original gilt finish is clearly visible in recesses of the wreath and bridge. All of the original grey finish on the edge of the shield is still present. The silver finish on the reverse is largely intact. The screw post is full-length, over 11 mm. Comes with period screw plate marked "UPK YuKhA" ("Combined Training and Manufacturing Facility, Jewelry and Arts Workshop"), which may be original to the badge (even though it is considered an NKPS version by Airapetyan).

This is an extremely interesting and uncommon piece despite its imperfect condition.

/Airapetyan, Breast Badges of the Red Army, 1941-1945, p. 123, fig. 3/.

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