

Excellent Firefighter badge, by the ZKhG, circa mid- to late 1940s.

Brass, enamels; measures 45.3 x 36.8 mm; weighs 16.8 g not including the screw plate. Three-piece construction: the center medallion and the nozzles & torch emblem are separate, superimposed parts attached by wires. This early and very rare version of the badge was produced by the Artistic Engraving Factory (known by the acronym ZKhG). It features domed center medallion, low position of the center medallion, very distinctive top ornament consisting of six scrolls of varied height with wavy upper edge, and characteristically thick sickle in the hammer and sickle emblem. This version is one of the hardest to find among the Excellent Firefighter badges and is consequently rated 5 out of 5 (very rare) in the Airapetyan's reference guide.

In outstanding, excellent condition and should be considered superb for any badge of the "WW2 Combat Proficiency" series. The enamel shows magnificent luster and is essentially perfect, free of even the slightest flaking, rubbing or other flaws. The only signs of wear are a few microscopic contact marks that are completely invisible to the naked eye and not easily found even under a 10x magnification. The nozzles and torch emblem and the wreath likewise show practically no wear, their details are perfect and exceptionally crisp. The fragile dark grey finish on the edge of the shield and top ornament is likewise fully intact. The wires holding the parts of the badge are fully intact and tight. The screw post measures approx. 10 mm in length, probably reduced by a couple of mm for convenience but fully sufficient for proper functionality. Comes with an original screw plate marked " Artistic Engraving Factory ".

/B. Airapetyan, Breast Badges of the Red Army, 1941- 1945, p. 132, fig. 4/.

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