

St. George Cross for Bravery, 3rd class, #316830, circa mid- to late 1917

In white metal; measures 41.3 mm in height including the eyelet, 34.4 mm in width; weighs 9.8 g. Raised Cyrillic letters Б and М ("B" and "M", for Belyi Metall, i.e. "White Metal") to the reverse on the horizontal arms.

In excellent condition. The cross shows practically no wear with the exception of some very light, barely noticeable surface scratches to the vertical arms on the obverse. The raised details of the center medallion are perfect and exceptionally crisp on both sides. The toning is even and attractive throughout.

The cross comes with an original period St. George ribbon folded by a previous owner into the five-sided shape, fitted with a regulation bow, and secured on the back with pieces of tape for a proper collector's display. The ribbon measures 28 mm wide and approx. 25 cm in overall length; the length of the bow is approx. 7 cm. The ribbon and bow show only a minimal amount of wear and remain perfectly sound and clean. The connecting link is a replacement.

The non-silver types of the St. George Cross were introduced by an Imperial decree as a cost-cutting measure in October 1916, but the manufacture did not start until January 1917. The St. Petersburg Mint manufactured a total of 49,500 of the third class in white metal (serial numbers 289151 - 338650). Some of these remained unissued; information on the recipients of many others was subsequently lost in the chaos of the February 1917 revolution, tumultuous Provisional Government regime, and the subsequent Civil War.

No information on the recipient of this particular piece has been found so far. Judging by its likely period of issue, it might have been awarded for bravery in the failed "Kerensky Offensive" of June 1917, the last all-out attempt of the Russian army to turn the strategic situation on the front in its favor. We've been told by an archivist that other St. George Crosses, 3rd cl. with serial numbers in close proximity to this piece were issued to elite Guards units. Although there is no certainty or documentary proof at this time that it was indeed awarded to a guardsman, the identity of the original owner may be revealed at some point in the future considering the ongoing search for serial numbers in the Russian archives. This St. George Cross has a good research potential.

/See V. Durov, [Russian Awards of XVIII - Early XX Century](#), p. 155/.

Item# 41830

\$595.00

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