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Large Certificate (Laureate's Diploma) for the Stalin Prize 3rd class, awarded in 1950 to Nikolai Butarin.

The document is lavishly decorated, enclosed in a fine-quality leather folio measuring approx. 10" x 14" with gold-plated metallic bas-relief of Lenin and Stalin on the cover above the embossed gold-plated title "To the Laureate of Stalin Prize".

The citation on the page opposite Stalin's portrait states that the Stalin Prize 3rd class is bestowed by decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of 3 March 1950.

The document lists, in the order of importance, seven participants of the project that the prize was awarded for. The list starts with Nikolai Butarin, head of the Sector for Animal Genetics of the Institute of Experimental Biology of the Kazakh SSR Academy of Sciences, followed by six names of the other participants in this project ranging from Deputy Sector Head to the chief sheep herder.

The award was bestowed for "breeding a new breed of fine-fleece sheep, the Kazakh argali-merino". The same page specifies that this particular document was issued to Nikolai Butarin. The bottom of the page bears the seal of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and two signatures: a facsimile signature of Stalin (in his capacity as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, i.e. head of government) as well as a hand-signature of M. Pomaznev, Manager of the Affairs of the Council of Ministers.

The certificate is in very good to excellent condition. The cover of the folio shows minimal wear, mostly minor scuffing to the corners. The binding is sound and the leather remains supple and "healthy", with attractive gloss. The gold inscription "To a Laureate of Stalin Prize" is fully intact and bright. The details of the bas-relief portraits are perfectly preserved. There is no warping that documents of this type often develop over time if stored in overly dry environment. The silk-covered panels on the inside of the cover are nearly pristine.

The document shows mild wear - some bumps and soiling to the paper. Luckily, none of this wear reaches the decorative elements or text, and is not too intrusive to the eye against the large format of the certificate. The document is still very presentable and impressive. Sheets of rice paper were added for protection against further storage wear.

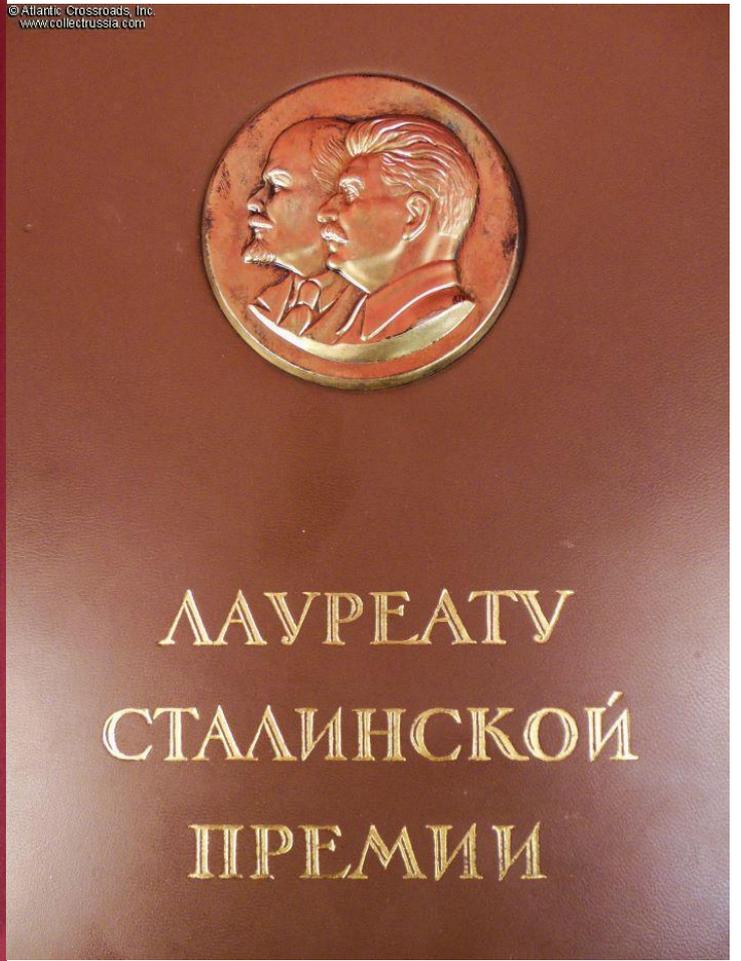
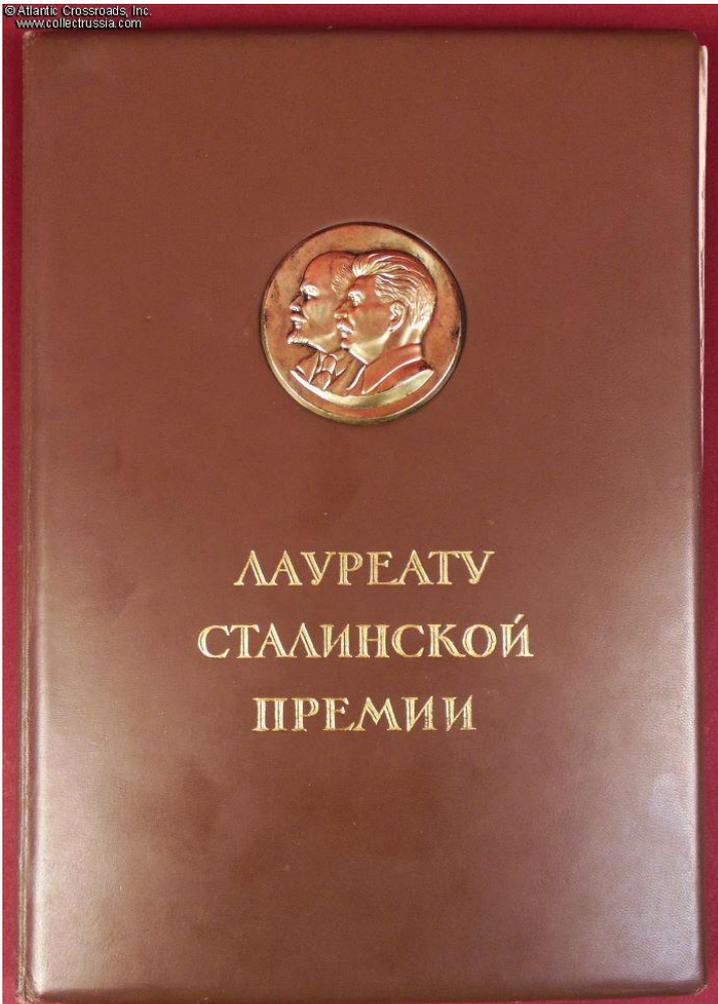
This is indeed a very uncommon Stalin Prize, awarded for a big success in Genetics in 1950 amidst the frenzied anti-genetics campaign spearheaded by Trofim Lysenko and supported by Stalin who shared Lysenko's views based on the ideas of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744 - 1829), a French naturalist.

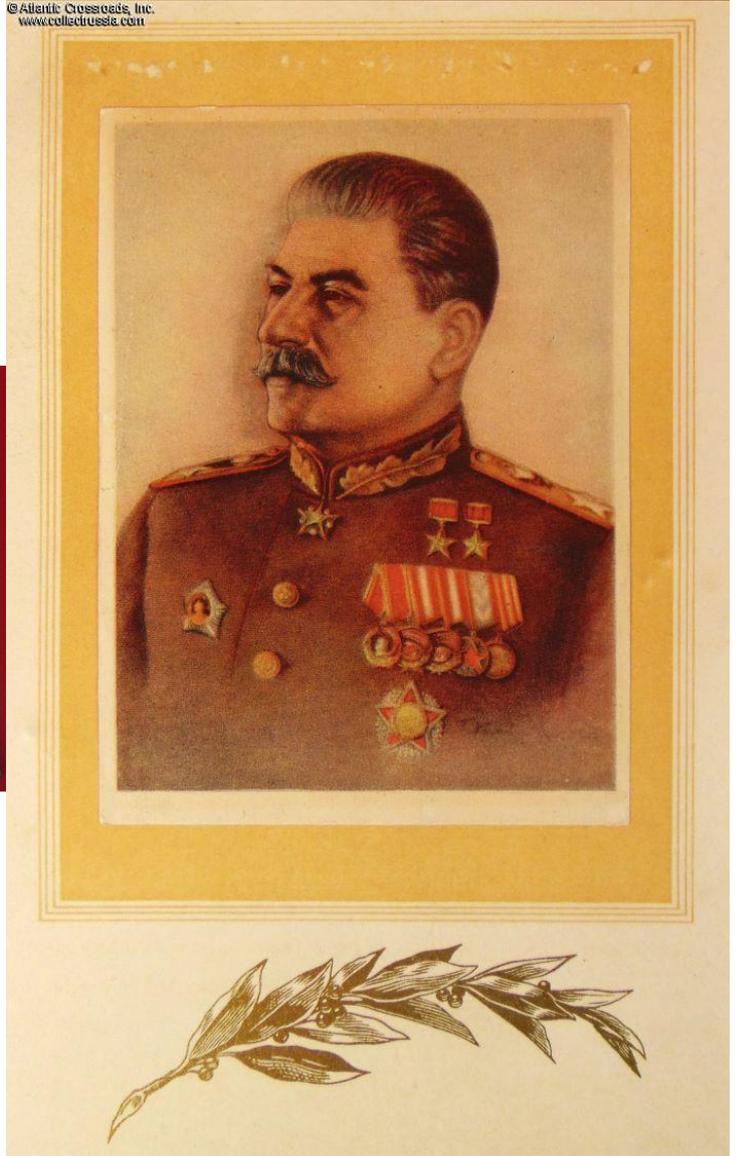
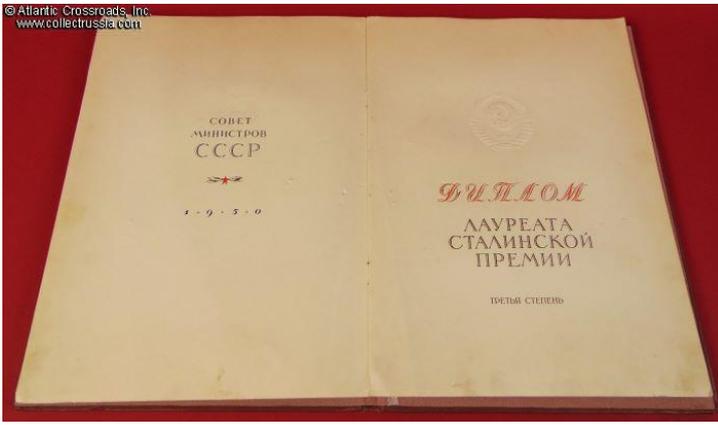
The award was issued two years after the infamous session of the VASKhNIL (Russian abbreviation for All-Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences) in which Genetics was officially labeled as a false science. From that moment on, a geneticist became prey to persecution, arrests and imprisonment. Over 100 geneticists were fired, some sent to GULAG. The most outstanding and influential geneticist Nikolai Vavilov was sentenced to death based on nothing but Lysenko's made-up false accusations. His death sentence was commuted to 20 years of prison where he died three years later, officially from pellagra. All genetic research was halted. The Dark Ages for Genetics lasted until after Khrushchev was replaced at the helm of the country in 1964. (Khrushchev was a wholehearted supporter of Lysenko's ideas). But even then, Lysenko was just swept under the rug of Soviet politics and science as an embarrassment, any open criticism of him a reminder of the mistakes of the top Soviet leadership.

Please note that the pen in our photo is for size reference.

Item# 42006

\$1,400.00







ПОСТАНОВЛЕНИЕМ СОВЕТА
МИНИСТРОВ СОЮЗА ССР,
ОТ 3-го МАРТА 1950 ГОДА,
ПРИСУЖДЕНА СТАЛИНСКАЯ ПРЕМИЯ
ТРЕТЬЕЙ СТЕПЕНИ

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Совета Министров
Союза ССР

Управляющий Делами
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