

Award document for the badge for Excellence in Socialist Competition of the Ministry of Transportation Machinery Construction, issued in March 1951 to L. Nikiforova (Л.С. Никифорова).

Booklet format of the standard 3" x 4" size, hard cover wrapped in red leatherette, with the name of the ministry under the USSR state emblem and "Excellence in Socialist Competition" at the bottom of the cover. The page on the inside of the front cover is the award certificate proper, stating that L.S. Nikiforova, foreman of the Kirov Plant in Leningrad is awarded with the badge for Excellence in Socialist Competition. The seal of the ministry is at bottom left. The certificate is dated 31 March 1951.

The following five pages of the document outline the rules, benefits, and responsibilities related to this award. The benefits included out-of-turn access to the ministry's health resorts and, much more importantly, jumping the 15-20-year-long line of waiting for getting an apartment in one of the ministry's residential buildings.

For benefits of this magnitude, the bearer of the badge of excellence would toe the line religiously, whatever the line might be. Especially since the last item in this list of rules states that the minister can take the badge away for "behavior incompatible with the honored title of the bearer of the Excellence Badge".

In excellent condition. The cover shows just the tiniest bit of scuffing at the head and foot of the spine. The gold paint of the lettering shows a little wear but about 95-97% of it is present and all the words are quite readable. Inside, the glue which holds the page of the certificate is slightly visible through the paper, not reaching the typographical or handwritten text or seal. The first page of the rules has a minor crease to the top corner. The rest of the pages are virtually pristine.

This uncommon award certificate was issued along with the "Excellence in Socialist Competition" badge for a specific area of endeavor, in this case building steam engine locomotives or other heavy equipment for the Soviet railroads. The award was hard to earn and relatively few of these were issued. It is noteworthy that the Kirov Plant in Leningrad (former Putilov Plant) was one of the biggest producers of such machinery in Imperial Russia and later, the Soviet Union. Among its other well-known products were the first Soviet-made farm tractors (a US license), combine harvesters, turrets for battleships, and the first series of famous KV tanks. It is also interesting to see that the recipient was a woman, which is less common for large industrial enterprises.

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