

The Vladimir Lenin Volga-Don Navigable Canal, Large Schematic Map, 1952 Poster.

Measures approx. 35" x 23", published by VOENIZDAT, Military Publishing House, circulation unknown. The poster presents a schematic map of the Volga-Don canal, connecting the two rivers in the place of their closest proximity and connecting the Caspian Sea with the world ocean.

In excellent condition. The paper is very clean. Despite being stored folded in eight for a long time, the fold lines are not frayed, and there is only one tiny separation at the edge along the fold line, far from reaching the map. The text, lines and colors of the map are bright and clear.

The Volga-Don Canal realized the dream of connecting the two rivers, first attempted in XVI C. by the sultan of the Ottoman Empire Selim II. The second practical failed attempt was undertaken by Peter the Great at the end of the XVII C. But war with Sweden began in 1701, and work on the canal was halted. Over thirty other, never launched, projects have been discovered since then.

The first Soviet discussion about the canal dates back to 1918. For all the obvious reasons it was postponed. Ten years later a committee for creation a Volga-Don waterway was established. The final project was approved in 1948. More than 160 villages were relocated, none of the villagers happy about uprooting their families from their ancestral places. They were compensated, but barely. Yet, nobody resisted. Such was the fear of reprisals.

Propaganda touted the powerful earth moving machinery that was supposed to do the lion's share of the heavy lifting. Yet, over 11 thousand GULAG prisoners worked on the preliminary tasks, and by 1951 their number exceeded 59 thousand. And that is not counting from 20-30 to 100 thousand, depending on the source, German, Hungarian and other POWs from Hitler's Axis countries. They were used on the most physically difficult jobs, and their survival rate was low. According to one source, the last 919 POWs were taken off work and readied for repatriation in January 1950.

The United States closely followed the progress of this construction. The Soviet Embassy in Washington remarked in its report for the third quarter of 1952 that "slander about use of forced labor in the USSR" continued to occupy a prominent place in American propaganda.

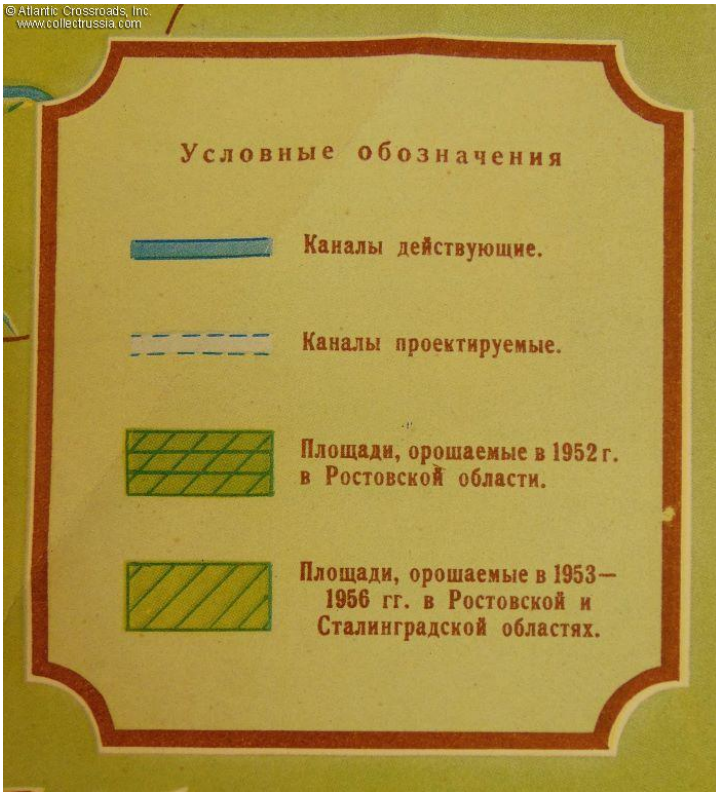
The official ceremony of opening the canal took place on 27 July 1952. Along its 101-km (63 mi) length, it had 13 navigable locks, 3 pumping stations, 13 dams, 7 water release sluices, 2 emergency blocking gates, 8 bridges, ferry crossings, resting places, piers and jetties, and a shore road. Forty-five kilometers of the waterway went across reservoirs. One hundred and sixty villages had vanished from the map, fertile lands had gone under water. Irrigation of arid steppe did not compensate for the losses. Cargo throughput of the canal was low too; most cargo continued to use the established railroad routes.

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

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\$360.00





...оров, крановщи-
...циков, а также инженеров и
...водительность труда.

...массовых грузов — угля, ле
Совет Министров СС
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ВОЕННОЕ ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО ВОЕННОГО МИНИСТЕРСТВА СОЮЗА ССР
Москва — 1952

...пунктами, пристанями и прика
100 километров;
б) Цимлянский гидроузел

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