



## Excellent Combat Engineer badge, mid-1940s.

Brass, enamels; measures 45.2 x 37.4 mm; weighs 11.5 g without the screw plate. This extremely hard to find early MTKh version features the top ornament with eight scrolls that are less curved than the more common NKPS version of the badge. Unlike the other MTKh versions, it features a "smooth" surface of the land mine lacking concentric circles around the central "dimple" and a vertical dash in the last letter Ы in the word "Отличный".

In very fine to excellent condition, outstanding for any combat proficiency badge of WW2 era, let alone a rare variety. Its only flaw is a single internal hairline in the red enamel on the center medallion along the handle of the hammer, not breaking the surface and not affecting the integrity of the enamel. The enamel is otherwise perfect, completely free of surface rubbing or scratches, and shows a beautiful luster. The raised details of the wreath and artwork are literally pristine and exceptionally crisp; some of the original gold finish is still visible in their recessed areas. The screw post is full length, approx. 12 mm, and includes the original screw plate maker-marked "MTKh Enamel Factory".

Although this variation is rated 3 out of 5 for rarity in the Airapetyan's reference guide, i.e. same as the NKPS version, our own experience shows that the MTKh version is far more scarce. The more detailed catalog by Khlamkin gives this MTKh version, classified as Type 4, the rarity rating of 4 out of 5. This magnificent piece deserves a special place in the advanced collection of Soviet Excellent Soldier badges.

/Breast Badges of the Red Army, 1941-1945, p. 100, fig. 2/

Item# 45954

**\$270.00**

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