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WW1 Jetton Commemorating Grand Duke Nikolay (Nicholas) Nikolaevich, 1915 issue.

In brass; measures 35.8 mm in height (incl. eyelet), 27.2 mm in width. Obverse features bas-relief portrait of Grand Duke Nikolay at the pinnacle of his career, with the neck badge of the Order of St. George (2nd cl.) The reverse has raised inscription "His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Nikolay Nikolaevich. In Memory of the Great War, 1916 - 1915". Marked in raised lettering "Kuchkin Factory, Moscow" in the lower right.

The jetton is in excellent condition, completely free of noticeable dings, scratches or other damage. There is only very mild wear to the high points of the bas-relief; the details of the portrait are extremely well preserved. The reverse is practically pristine, with beautifully crisp artwork and lettering. There is attractive even toning to the brass, while good amount of the original "gilt" luster is clearly visible in recessed areas on both sides, especially the reverse.

Grand Duke Nikolay Nikolaevich Romanov was a grandson of Emperor Nicholas I. He fought in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, commanded all Imperial Guards units from 1905-14, and in the first year of WW1 served as Commander in Chief of the Russian Army. Although under his overall command the Russian Army suffered a catastrophic defeat in East Prussia in the first weeks of the war, it acquitted itself well in achieving victory over Austro-Hungarian troops in Galicia. In March 1915, Grand Duke Nikolay reached pinnacle of his glory with the capture of the Austrian fortress of Przemysl and was awarded Order of St. George 2nd cl.

The jetton was probably issued in mid-1915, before further Russian defeats led to Nicholas II replacing Grand Duke Nikolay as Commander in Chief. Grand Duke was transferred to command the Russian Caucasian Front (army group) and after the abdication of Nicholas II in 1917, very briefly served as Commander in Chief again, really as a figurehead rather than true military leader. During the Civil War, he escaped to Italy and then moved to France. In 1922, when the Civil War was all but over, he was briefly proclaimed the Emperor of Russia, and later was a nominal leader of the Russian Army in Exile. In the late years of his life, he apparently did not play active role in politics - which did not stop Soviet OGPU from plotting to kidnap him. Of course WW1 jettons featuring Grand Duke Nikolay are quite scarce compared with those depicting Emperor Nicholas II or far more popular General Brusilov.

Please note, penny in our photo is for size reference.

Item# 33700

\$110.00



