

Badge of a Graduate of the Alexandrovskoe Military School, 1909-1917.

Brass gilt, enamels. Measures 39.1 mm in height, 39.2 mm in width. Three-piece construction: the white enameled cross has a superimposed red enameled center medallion and superimposed emblem of the school, a pelican feeding its young with its own flesh which symbolizes care for the orphans. The monograms on three of the arms of the cross are of three emperors: Alexander III, Alexander II and Nicholas II. The lower arm shows a cadet's shoulder board. Writing in the white band around the center medallion is "Alexandrovskoe Military School, 1830-1851-1863".

In very fine condition. The white enamel is relatively well preserved. There is just a single penetrating chip at the Alexander II cypher on the lower arm; because of its tiny size and location, it is not very glaring. There is also some surface flaking in the same area and at the lower right point of the arm, as well as hairline fracture at the top of the arm just below the center medallion. Besides that, there are only some tiny hairlines to the white enamel at the base of the top and right arms, practically unnoticeable. The red enamel in the center and the white band around it are completely intact (although the white enamel on the band has some tiny manufacturing imperfections visible only under magnification.) The pelican emblem shows only light wear, its details are well- defined. There are some oxidation blemishes on the reverse but most of the original fire gilt finish is still present. The attachment wires holding the parts of the badge in place are perfectly tight. The screw post is full length, approx. 12 mm. The screw plate is a custom-made replacement. To reiterate, this is an overall very attractive piece with no significant enamel damage - far better preserved than most other contemporary Russian badges of its kind.

The school origins date to the foundation of the Alkesandrinskiy Orphans Institute in 1830. The measure was a direct response to that year's cholera epidemic in Moscow which had orphaned many children of civil servants and military officers. The school was created under the auspices of Alexandra Fedorovna, the wife of Emperor Nicholas I, and it therefore was named after her. From the very beginning, its study program resembled that of junior military academies. During the following twenty years, the girls were transferred to a different location and the school was officially transformed into Alkesandrinskiy Orphan Junior Military School (Cadet Corps). In 1863, the school was closed and Alexandrovskiy Military School was created on its base.

/See Patrikeev and Bojnovich *Badges of Russia* Vol. 1 , p. 48 and Gurkovskiy, *Cadet Corps of the Russian Empire*, Vol. 1, pp. 257-263/.

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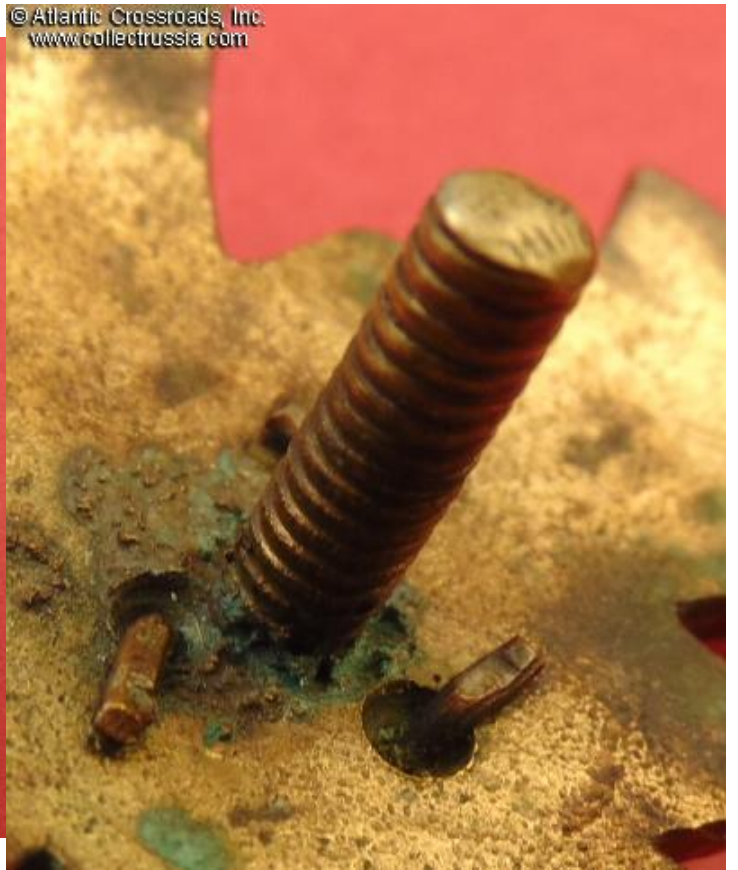
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