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PDF Generated on: 04/17/2026

Medal for 20th Anniversary of RKKA (Workers and Peasants Red Army), Type 1, 1938 issue.

The medallion is in silver and enamel; the suspension device is in silver-plated brass. The medallion measures 35.9 mm in height (incl. eyelet), 32.2 mm in width; weighs 24.4 g not including the suspension and connecting link. Overall weight with suspension and screw plate is 32.2 g. The suspension measures 31.1 mm in width in its widest portion.

In excellent condition, absolutely superb for any Soviet medal of pre-WW2 issue. The enamel in particular is extremely well preserved, showing a beautiful luster; the enamel has only a few microscopic contact marks that can be found under a 10x loupe but completely invisible without magnification. The silver medallion is free of scratches or bumps, there is merely a single tiny scrape at the edge on the obverse at approx. 9 o'clock and a few minuscule dings on the reverse, all of it barely noticeable. The raised details of the soldier, numerals, and grass on the reverse are perfect and extremely crisp.

The medal comes on Type 1 which is original and complete, including the rectangular back plate with "teeth" to hold the ribbon - a part that is missing on the vast majority of the surviving Type 1 suspensions. Moreover, all four fragile "teeth" on the back plate are still intact - an exceptionally rare case. Note that the original owner removed this part from its original position under the ribbon and placed it above the ribbon to serve as a kind of washer. No doubt, he got frustrated with the flawed original method that did not really reliably hold the ribbon in place, and the ribbon was therefore secured on the reverse with copious amounts of stitching.

The silver finish is still present to varying degrees on all parts of the suspension. The copper screw post is original and full length of over 9.5 mm, and includes original screw plate with raised "Mondvor" mint logo and stamped serial number 1872 (note the extremely low 4- digit number). The ribbon appears to be original to the medal or at least of the period; it remains sound and clean. The connecting link is a replacement (note that its ends were soldered to keep the medal from sliding off.)

This is an outstanding piece: a XX Anniversary of RKKA medal is very hard to find on original Type 1 suspension that is fully complete, as most of the medals were converted at the end of the war to the conventional five-sided suspension. Not to forget, the XX Medal was the first Soviet award medal - the only other decorations instituted in the Soviet Union up to that point were orders or badges - and it was issued to a relatively small number of military cadres. The recipients served in the Red Army practically since its inception, fought in the Civil War, and most importantly, survived the purges of the 1930s!

Item# 42470

\$1,995.00



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