

Photo ID #1086 issued on 1 June 1939 to Senior Inspector of the Supply Department of the Moskva-Volga Canal Management Grigoriy Zeltser (Григорий Борисович Зельцер).

In booklet format measuring 3 ¼" x 2 ½", in oilcloth-bound hard cover. The dates on the left page show that the ID was issued for three months only, and was extended twice, also for three months each time. Judging by the patronymic and last name, Zeltser was apparently of Jewish descent.

In good to very good condition. The oilcloth of the cover shows moderate wear, mostly to the spine and corners. Inside, moderate soiling and staining is evident. The bottom edge of the right-side page shows a small tear and missing bits of paper, all contained to the margin. The ID photo is a little underdeveloped but in sharp focus. Most importantly, the printed, handwritten and stamped entries are clear and legible.

The ID was issued in the city of Dmitrov, Moscow Region, the location of DMITLAG, the central forced labor camp into which prisoners had been funneled to be distributed to various construction sites of Stalin's Moskva-Volga Canal. The Moskva-Volga Canal was one of the most publicized of the Soviet 1930's industrial projects, both in USSR and abroad, and also one of the deadliest, comparable perhaps only to the Belomor (White Sea - Baltic) Canal project which completed in 1932 by a workforce of 160,000 prisoner laborers of whom about 25,000 died during its construction. The workforce on the Moskva-Volga Canal project counted about 200,000 Gulag prisoners at any one time. As the Nazis were approaching Moscow in 1941, all the NKVD records pertaining to the prisoners were evacuated from DMITLAG to Ulyanovsk (Lenin's birthplace) but were ordered to be burned right on the wharf there. Local historians estimate the death toll to be between 700,000 to about 1,500,000. To provide a frame of reference, the construction began in 1932 and finished in 1937. For a detailed literary account see Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Archipelago.

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

Item# 46818

**\$125.00**



