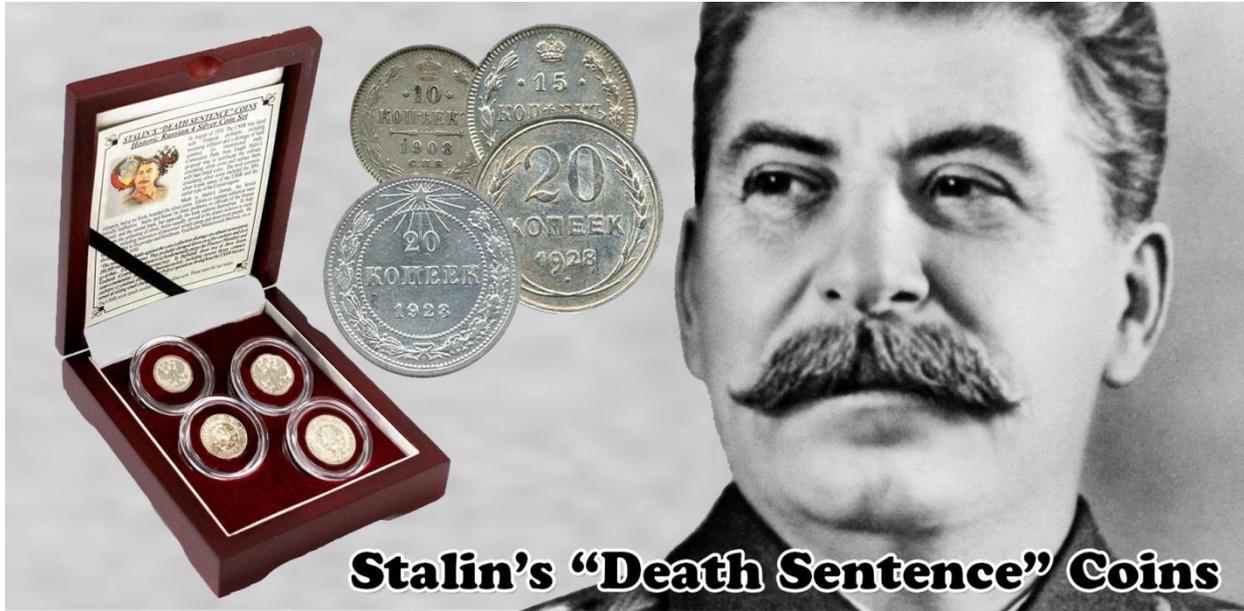


HISTORIC RUSSIAN SILVER COLLECTION



Stalin's "Death Sentence" Coins

Joseph Stalin (1878-1953) is arguably the most prolific mass murderer in history. As many as 30 million people in the former Soviet Union died as a result of his brutality. Historians recently discovered a copy of his orders to execute innocent cashiers to further his goal of confiscating and melting all circulating silver coins. This set of coins includes four that survived.

In 1930, in the midst of an economic crisis, Stalin decided that all hard-currency silver coins in circulation would be replaced by base-metal copper/nickel coins. This met with resistance, as people began to hoard the silver coins, and the bankers responsible for their confiscation were not as successful as Stalin expected. To motivate the collectors, he went to his get-to strategy for problem solving: mass murder.

"The results of the battle against the coin shortage are almost nonexistent," Stalin wrote to his protégé, V.M. Molotov. The agents "probably clamped down on a few cashiers and let it go at that... It is thus important to a) fundamentally purge the Finance [Ministry] and Gosbank (Central Bank) bureaucracy. b) Definitely shoot two or three dozen from these [bureaucracies], including several dozen common cashiers; c) continue [Secret Police] operations throughout the USSR that are aimed at seizing" the silver.

Stalin's cold-blooded strategy worked. These coins are among the few, rare survivors of this period. The Soviets never again issued a circulating silver coin.

COINS:

Tsarist regime, 1867-1917.

Obverse: Crowned double imperial eagle, ribbons on crown; Reverse: Crown above value and date within wreath.

- 10 Kopeks. Weight: 1.79g; ASW: 0.0289; Diameter: 17.4 mm
- 15 Kopeks. Weight: 2.7g; ASW: 0.0434; Diameter: 19.7mm

Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR), 1921-23.

Obverse: Coat of arms; Reverse: Value and date

- 20 kopeks - Weight: 3.6g; ASW: 0.0579; Diameter: 22 mm

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), 1924-30.

Obverse: Revised coat of arms; Reverse: Value and date

- 20 kopeks- Weight: 3.6g; ASW: 0.0579; Diameter: 22mm

Box measures: 4 3/8" X 5 3/8" X 1.25"

Order code: 4RUSSIACNBOX

All coins in each set are protected in an archival capsule and beautifully displayed in a mahogany-like box. The box set is accompanied with a story card, certificate of authenticity, and a black embossed gift box. Image shows typical coins, not to scale, listed from top to bottom, then left to right.