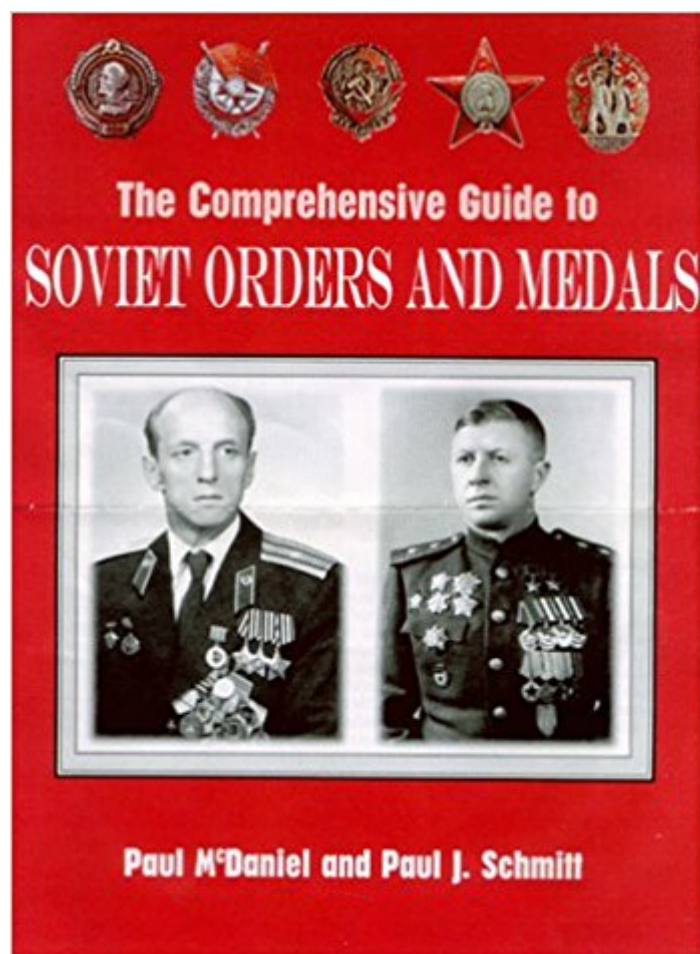


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# The Comprehensive Guide To Soviet Orders And Medals



## Synopsis

This book is the first of its kind, in any language, to catalog by type, variation and serial number, the wide variety of Soviet orders and medals. The book explains not only the history of each award, but the official statutes and regulations governing them, and contains over 630 color and 50 b/w photographs. The obverse and reverse of each type and variation are illustrated, as well as soldiers, sailors and civilians wearing their decorations. Rarity ratings are assigned to each type and variation and there is a separate chapter for the examination of items associated with Soviet orders and medals. There is also a section within each chapter which examines fakes that have been observed by the authors. This reference will be a valuable guide for the Soviet order and medal collector or anyone interested in this unique aspect of Soviet History.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is one of the most important medal books of the decade. Finally, we have an authoritative and complete book on Soviet orders and medals.....This book will absolutely be the "bible" for collectors of Soviet orders and medals, and that is only to be expected. However, it will also open up the field to new collectors as well by giving them information not previously available and by reducing - if not eliminating - the risk of getting stung by bad material. Even if you don't collect Soviet material, I strongly recommend adding this book to your library if for no other reason than because it is so well done, so impressive, and so interesting! -- The Journal of the Orders and Medals Society of America, August-September, 1997

The fall of the Iron Curtain allowed the collectors of orders and decorations to buy Soviet "signs of honour" at very reasonable prices (many of us remember what the price of a Red Banner order was in the '70s!). The main problem to collectors was where to obtain informations. Most books were (and still are) written in Russian and the linguistical barrier was another thick "curtain"; more, the defect of Soviet reference books was that any topic was "filtered" through ideology, and who wasn't provided with a big sense of humour wouldn't appreciate them fully. I am one of the lucky ones having no problems at all into reading russian but, when this book was published, I've looked for a copy immediately. All my expectations were fulfilled: this "guide" shows that the authors have a strong background, both historical and social, about the USSR, other than the enthusiasm of the true collectors. After having read it thoroughly, I can say that no "trade secret" was kept, and any useful details and informations were given. Each year, many books on orders and decorations are published, but most are just trying to fill gaps in this branch of the social studies (yes, I can honestly say that phaleristic could really be an aspect of sociology). This book actually fills a gap. It is interesting to know that some collectors from the former Soviet Union already appreciate this work highly. The details about fakes are very interesting, but like any reference about the "problem #1 of collecting", it is outdated in the same moment it comes out of the press. I think that "The Comprehensive Guide", in the future, will be a collection piece itself.

This is the best book on medal collecting out there. Period. Combining detailed, color pictures, specific award criteria and a comprehensive thoroughness it easily outdistances any other medal collectors guide in \*any\* field (Third Reich, British, American, Imperial German (would that there was one even half as good as this)). Only Previtera's "The Iron Time" can match it in quality and "The Iron Time" is limited to investigating one award (The Prussian Iron Cross) so it has a very narrow focus despite it being a five star book in it's own right. Schmitt & McDaniel's book has set a very high bar that any "comprehensive" medal collector's book issued in the future will have a struggle to match. Not only that the publication of this book helps legitimize the collecting of the "evil empire's" awards unlike any other publication from the past. Well worth it's price.

If you have any interest in collecting Soviet orders and medals, this is the only book you'll need. Every other reference on this subject I've read isn't even close to this one in detail, information, history and variants. From the earliest days of the revolution to the fall of the USSR, this book has detailed info for them all. My only complaint is that it's a bit outdated when describing known fakes.

For example, for the Order of Nevsky (probably the one medal who's value is increasing the fastest) the author lists no known fakes of sufficient quality to consider. That may have been true then, but not today. I've seen fake Nevsky's that are completely indistinguishable from the real thing, even when compared side-by-side. If it's worth enough money, someone will fake it.

An excellent reference guide, but NOT comprehensive. The pictures are beautiful, detailed, in colour and comes in plenty - this is necessary for the serious collector. Their grading system (both concerning rarity and different variations) is usefull but NOT comprehensive. If you have travelled in Eastern Europe as a collector, you know much more about rarity and variations than they do. Furthermore, their variation-system is only really usefull if your counterpart has read the book. Say, does The Order of the Red Banner Variation 3, Type 2 means anything to you? Their rarity-system may be helpfull as a guideline - not as a fact. I'm not saying their information is incorrect, it's just that there is a difference between living in Europe and in the US. It's probably a matter of distance and therefore price and rarity. What is really good about this book is the information about the fakes. It's very usefull (and unfortunately VERY brief) but of course outdated the moment you get it. But again, use it as a guide - don't trust everything you read. Remember that your common sense is your most important tool. Conclusion: You will not find a lot of books on this subject in english so I recommend you buy it, while it's still in stock. At present it's the best buy on the market. If you consider buying it, remember to check their Newsletter with the latest updates (and it's allways about 2-3 months delayed) at [Historicalresearch.com](http://Historicalresearch.com)

The Comprehensive Guide to Soviet Orders and Medals is the bestbook on the market so far, and if you are a collector in this field, I strongly recommend you buy it. It's good - very good actually - but it's not comprehensive. McDaniel and Schmitt try to list all known different types and variations, and this is of course, almost impossible. But it's a start. And it's needed. Furthermore they illustrate their descriptions with very detailed pictures - that's excellent! The only problem with this kind of book is lack of information, but I'm sure they are working on it. Especially their information on fakes needs an update. In all case this is a book to buy...

Having been a collector of Soviet militaria since 1993, I have yet to find a more complete, fact-filled book than this one. No other book, including Russian publications, even comes close. Close up photos, front and back, showing every variant of every Soviet order or medal make this "the" book for collectors. Photos and tips on how to spot fakes are provided throughout, as well. It's expensive

and can be difficult to find, but well worth it.

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