



# THE YOUNG COLLECTOR

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## GUESS WHAT I FOUND!

In my last article *One Man's Junk is Now My Treasure*, I stressed the importance of looking through unwanted stamps. Well, guess what happened to me....!

Although scavenging had already paid off for me with some nice re-entries and errors, it seems that my lucky streak is not over.

A good friend, knowing that I am always hungry for surplus material, gave me a small container of junk stamps which he did not have the inclination to sift through. As soon as I got home the fun began.

Most of the lot was indeed junk, damaged and not of any significant value. But a small orange specimen caught my eye and I instantly knew what I was dealing with – one of the rarest of all Canadian stamps!



FWS3, front and back I had the good fortune to find the French Version of the 25 cent war savings stamp from 1918 which an expert in revenue stamps, E.S.J. van Dam, lists in his *The Canadian Revenue Stamp Catalogue* as FWS3. It is valued at \$6,500!

Needless to say, my discovery quickly made this stamp one of my favourites and I set out to learn more about this item that depicts a soldier holding a flag in his left hand and, in his right hand, a rifle raised to the sky.

According to Kayle Deveny, this new discovery would be one of only seven known examples. A very rare stamp indeed. He told me the last known example of FWS3 that sold a couple months ago for \$2,000, despite having a tear and a very serious pulled perf.

As you can see, the example I found has a small pulled perf at the upper right and a negligible bend on the left side of the stamp, which does not affect its appearance. There are no other faults. What looks like a thin on the back is only a small part of the remaining hinge. It is mint hinged with full original gum, in fine condition.

The reason for its rarity is due to the historical fact that the First World War was not popular, especially with French Canadians. Very few supported the war effort by purchasing war savings stamps, so only a small number were printed in French.

If the inscriptions on this stamp were in English, instead of French, the stamp, van Dam FWS1, would only be worth \$70.

English-speaking Canadians were generally more supportive of the war and war savings stamps. Thus, they are easier for a collector to obtain.

The use of war saving stamps in Canada, then called thrift stamps, began in World War I.

Issued in 1918, they were widely advertised as a means for Canadians to contribute to the war.

During World War I, there were two values of war savings stamps: 25 cents, and \$5.

Both values exist in both English and French with the French always being rarer.

The public could save up and exchange their 25 cent stamps for a certificate of greater value which could eventually be redeemed.

In 1919, it was still possible to exchange the equivalent number of 25 cent stamps for a \$5 stamp, or certificate, as money was still being raised by the government post-war.

The earlier that one purchased a war savings stamp, the better the return!

In 1940-41, during World War II, there was another determined effort behind war savings and more stamps were printed.



War Savings Stamps poster: English and French Interestingly, the five-dollar stamp was sold for four dollars, but as time progressed, the stamp cost more to buy. The left side of the stamp lists how the rates would go up 1 cent per month. In January 1919, it cost four dollars to buy the stamp, but by December it cost four dollars and eleven cents.

FWS5, Maple Leaves The first new design, FWS5, showed plain numerals surrounded by torches and leaves. There is also a white gum variety on the stamp. The normal gum color is yellow, which makes it scarcer. They were issued in booklet-panes of eight, and are worth a considerable sum in the original booklet-pane format.



FWS6, Spitfire The next stamp issued, FWS6, was also issued in booklet panes of eight and was much more exciting as it featured a spitfire streaking through the sky.



FWS7-14, Se-tenant booklet pane of 8 The last issues, FWS7-14, were comprised of similar scenes including tanks, ships, soldiers, and nurses. These were issued in se-tenant booklet panes of eight which are rather expensive. Therefore, it is much more common to collect the World War II issues as singles.

New designs were also introduced in World War II but the face value of the stamps was still 25 cents.

To collect these stamps used on war savings forms makes a colourful collection, although it is rather costly.

Children were also encouraged to participate in the war effort and there were special war savings forms printed especially for them on which they stuck their stamps.



War Savings Stamps posters These forms had pictures of cartoon characters whose antics in support of the war induced children to purchase them.

I plan on building on my collection of the war savings stamps since I have accidentally

stumbled upon this gem, and have a massive head start with such a quality piece.

My newest find also shows that there are more rare stamps out there waiting to be discovered.

Not only are they hiding in attics and dusty filing cabinets, but also in collections around you. ☒

By the way, if anyone has feedback on my articles, they can contact me at my new email [ajphilatelic@gmail.com](mailto:ajphilatelic@gmail.com) (any e-mails sent to [josepherrone@rpsc.org](mailto:josepherrone@rpsc.org) will be forwarded to my new gmail account). If anybody has suggestions or ideas for future columns, I would appreciate hearing from you.

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