

Canadian Military

by
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When you consider that Canada's military forces have, historically, only been a fraction of what the US has maintained, collectors will find it pleasantly surprising to see that the category of Canadian Military is almost as varied as our own US Military category--Army, Air Force, Navy--there is a wealth of covers to be had here. And, even though they're not traditionally counted as part of the Military category, Canada also has its own

Military fraternal organizations, as well as its own set of Canadian Navy Ships.

With all due respect to our Canadian collectors, Canadian covers have traditionally been bland and unattractive, but not so Canadian Military. They're colorful, picturesque, and full of history (my favorite topic). Many of our Military covers have logos; many Canadian Military have crests. I'm especially enamored with the World War II issues, but they're *all* good to me.

This category really has a lot to offer. First, there's the mystique of foreign covers (and, despite the hobby's tradition to the contrary, Canada *is* a foreign country, although, I grant, the least foreign of them all). Then, there's the beauty of the crests and the attractiveness of the other graphics and color combinations. Finally, there's that taste of history--you can see it immediately in the covers: the planes, the tanks, the ships, the slogans.



Although Canada is the second largest country in the world (by size), historically it's population has always been relatively small and so has its armed forces (and, of course, for the last 65+ years, it's existed under the protection of the US military umbrella, as well as being associated with Britain). And, don't forget that it shares with the US the longest 'friendly' border in the world. So, with no need for a huge military, Canadian Military isn't anywhere near as big a category as US Military.

Thus, you won't encounter the thousands of covers in this category that you would find in the American counterpart, and, at least on this side of the border, you won't often see Canadian Military covers too often to begin with. In fact, I've seen Canadian Navy Ships more often...and *that's* a fairly tough category.

They're there though, but they're not easy to obtain. I've had this category for years, and I only have a few hundred, myself. What I've managed to come across, though, has only whetted my appetite for more! Particular favorites of mine are the World War II 30-strike issues with black and white photos of military equipment. All the ones I've seen have "Censored" over them. I assume that means the photo has been cleared as not showing any vital information that might have been of use to the other side. I don't recall seeing any of those in any other size besides 30s. The older Canadian 30-strikes, by the way are slightly taller and wider than our domestic 30-strikes. Consequently, they play havoc with 30-strike cut slotted pages.

As an additional attraction, the older covers in this category all have the Canadian excise tax stamp, which I and other collectors even collect as a separate category. There's a chart somewhere (*Sierra-Diablo Bulletin*, Sep. 2011) that gives the years for the various excise tax stamp denominations, so, on these, you can even date each cover to within a certain span of years. I currently have about 350 Canadian Military, although there must be significantly more than that. No listing that I know of.



