

Collecting the Northern Hall

Vintage Canadian Content in the Hobby That Defined Our Childhoods

Matt Simpson
November 1, 2025



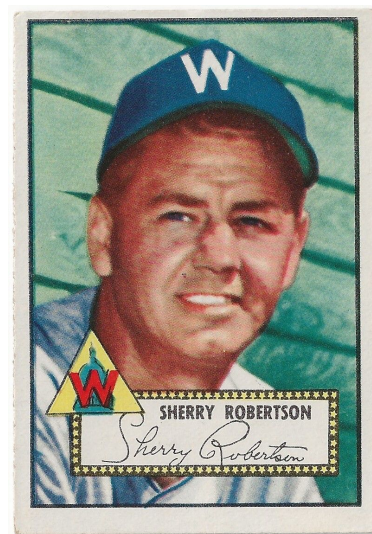
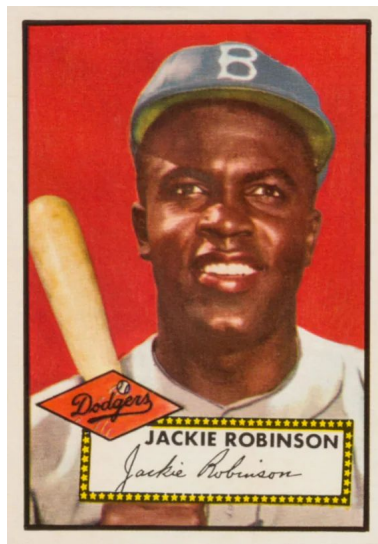
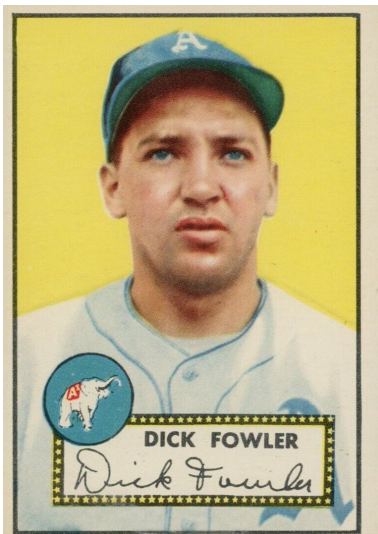


Baseball Card Eras

- Collectors tend to break collections into commonly accepted eras
- While variations exist, most collectors accept and use the following terms:
 - Pre-1900 Cards: 1886 - 1899 (Old Judge, Gypsy Queen, Allen & Ginter, Kimball, Buchner)
 - Pre-War Cards: 1900 - 1945 (American Tobacco, Goudey / World Wide Gum)
 - **Vintage Cards: 1948 - 1979 (Bowman, Leaf, Fleer, Topps, O Pee Chee)**
 - Junk Wax Cards: 1980 - 1994 (Topps, Bowman, O Pee Chee, Leaf, Fleer, Donruss, Upper Deck)
 - Modern Cards: 1995 - today (Topps, Bowman, Panini)

Vintage Baseball Sets

- Discussion of the vintage era usually centres around cards produced in 1952 or after since Topps' 1952 set changed the game and set the standard for 'modern' cards
- Discussion of the vintage era is really a discussion about Topps, who essentially maintained a monopoly on baseball cards until the 1980s after acquiring Bowman in 1956



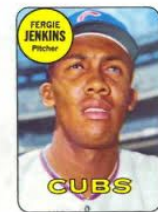
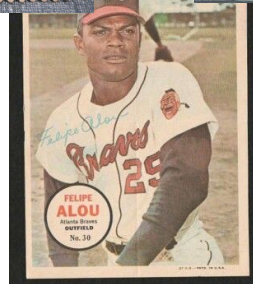
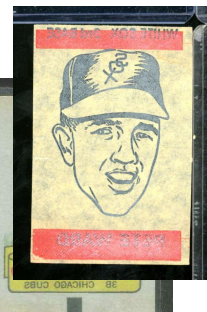
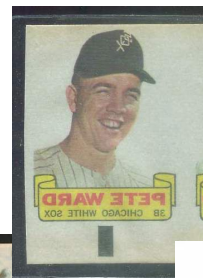
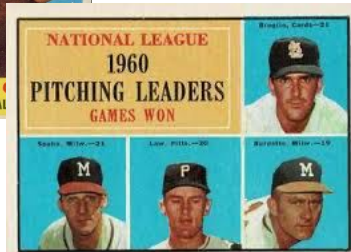
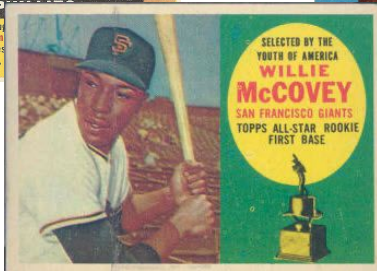
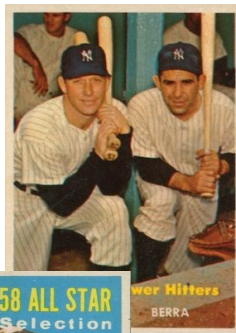
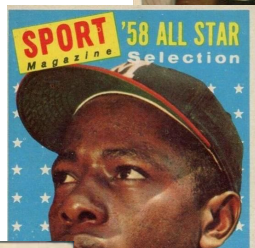
Topps Flagship Innovations Through the Years

Subsets and Specialty Cards

- Checklists (1956)
- Team Cards (1956)
- Combo Cards (1957)
- All-Star Cards (1958)
- All-Star Rookie Cups (1960)
- League Leaders (1961)

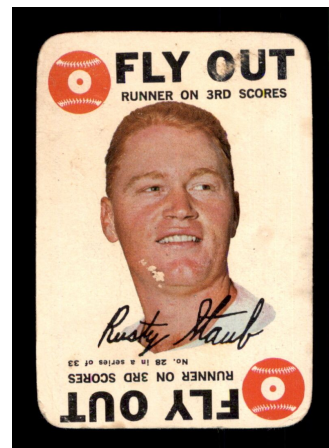
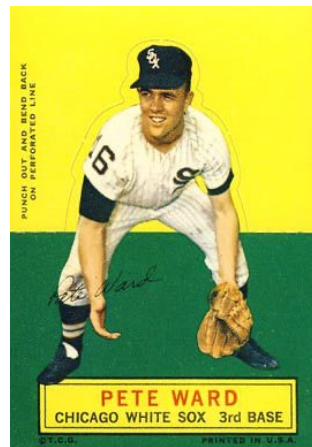
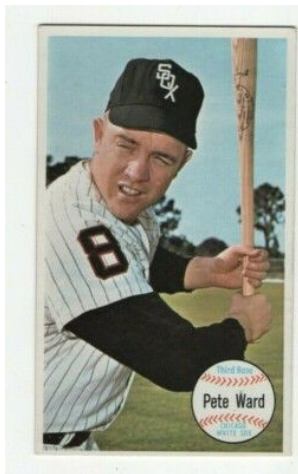
Insert Sets

- Stamps (1961, others)
- Transfers (1965)
- Rub offs (1966)
- Pin Ups (1967)
- Decals (1969)



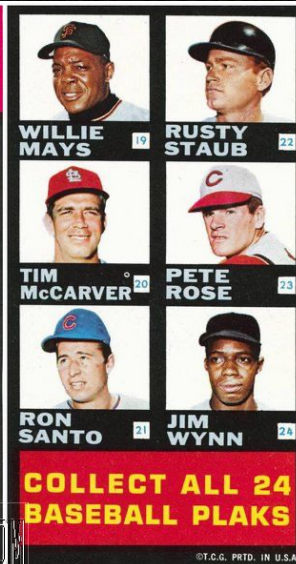
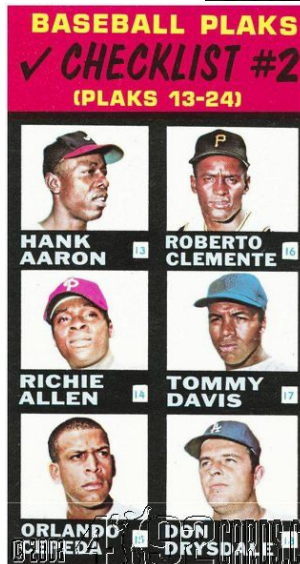
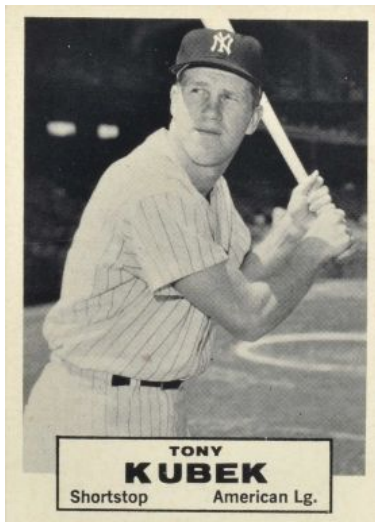
Non-Flagship Topps Sets

- Started in 1955 with Doubleheaders
- 1964 Topps Giants
- 1964 Topps Rookie Banquet
- 1964 Topps Stand-ups
- 1965 Topps Embossed
- 1968 Topps Game
- 1969 and 1974 Deckle Edge
- 1969 - 1971 Topps Super
- 1975 Topps Minis
- 1976 Topps Traded
- Bazooka (1959 - 1968, 1971)



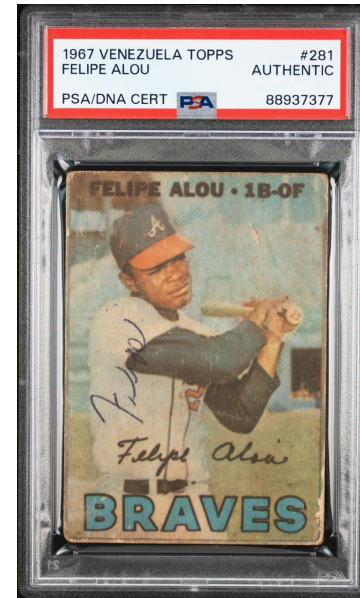
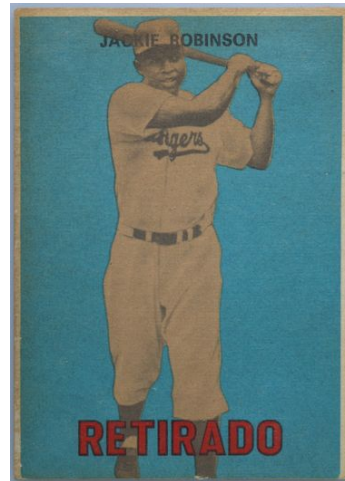
Obscure Topps Sets

- 1961 Topps Dice Game
- 1968 Topps 3D
- 1968 Topps Plaks Checklists
- 1971 Topps Greatest Moments



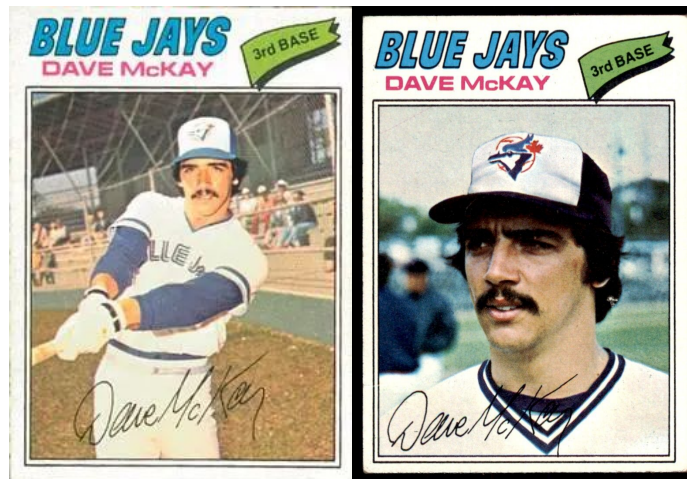
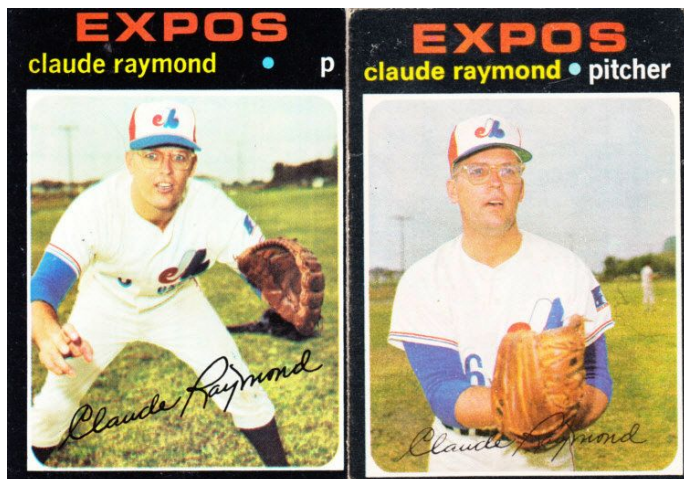
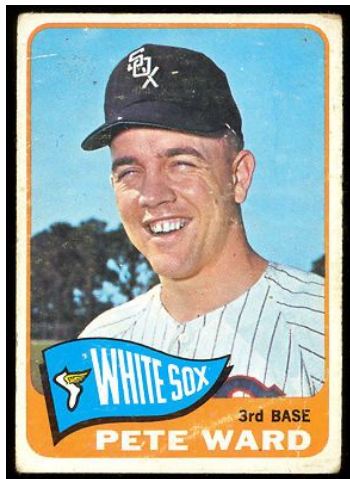
Topps Venezuelan

- Began in 1959 and every even numbered year after that until 1968
- In 1967 Topps' Venezuelan manufacturing partner issued a 'rogue' set featuring players from the Venezuelan Winter League and old time Hall of Famers
- The cards are rare and almost always found in poor condition



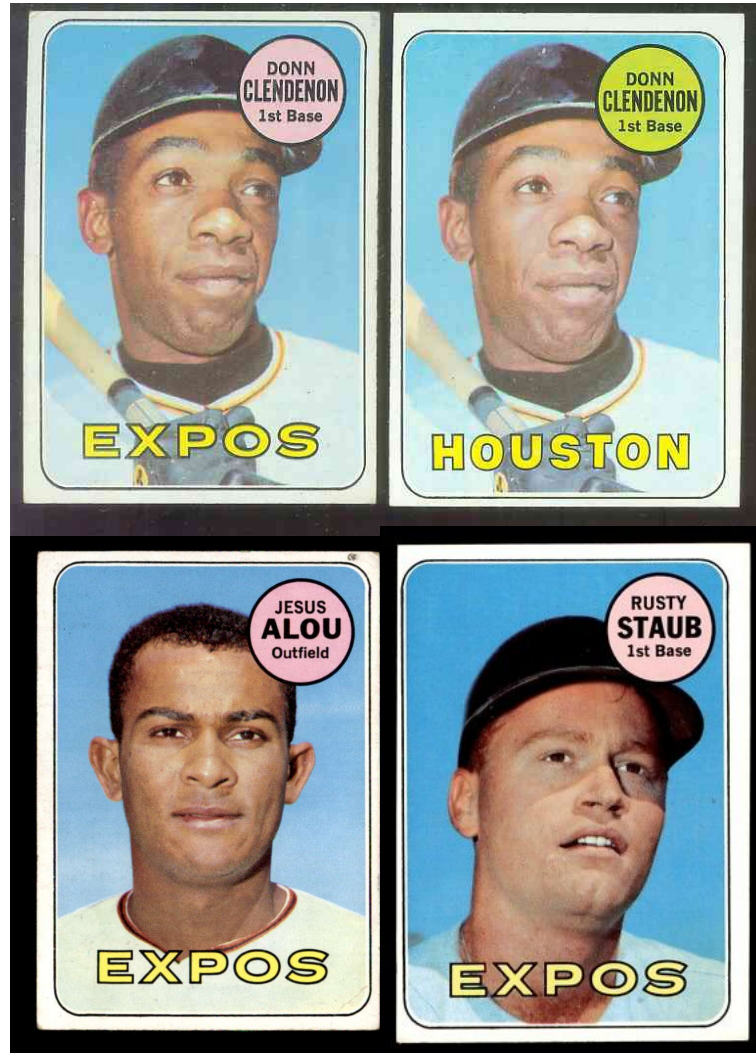
Canadian Vintage Sets: O Pee Chee

- First baseball set released in 1937
- Began producing Topps cards under license in 1965 with smaller sets
- Unique Canadian content began appearing in 1971
- 1977 Blue Jay and Expo sets featured many differences from Topps



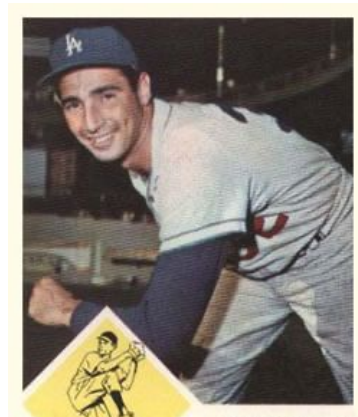
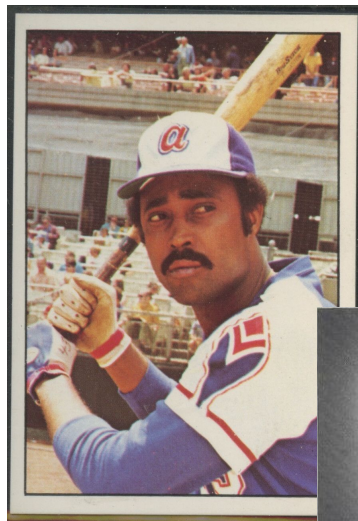
1969 Topps Expos

- The Expos selected Donn Clendenon for their inaugural roster, but traded him to Houston along with Jesus Alou (Felipe's brother) for Rusty Staub
- Clendenon refused to report to Houston, however, so Montreal sent Jack Billingham, Skip Guinn and some cash to Houston instead
- Why Clendenon, who stayed with Montreal has a Houston card, while Alou who was actually traded to Houston does not is a mystery
- To top it off - Staub's Expo card contains an error (Houston is spelled 'Huoston')

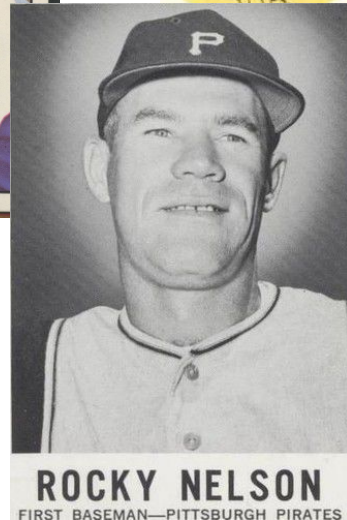


Sets that Challenged Topps' Monopoly

- **1975, 78 SSPC:** The Card Memorabilia Associates (TCMA) were a group of hobbyist that created Sports Stars Publishing Company cards. Distributed cards in Canada under mail order
- **1960 Leaf:** Pack sold with a marble, quite rare
- **1963 Fleer:** Tried to get around Topps' monopoly by selling cards with a cookie instead of gum. Topps took them to court and won



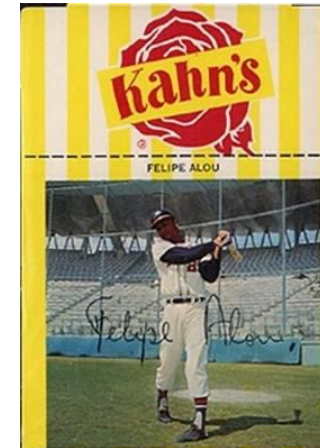
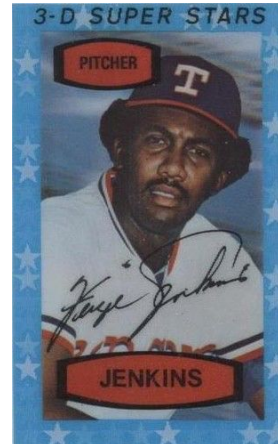
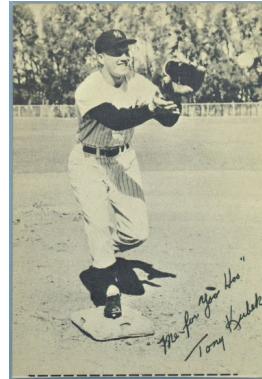
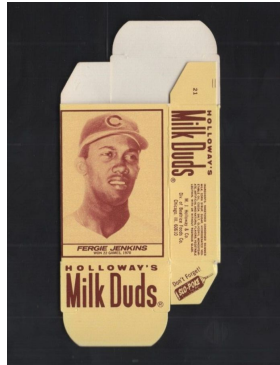
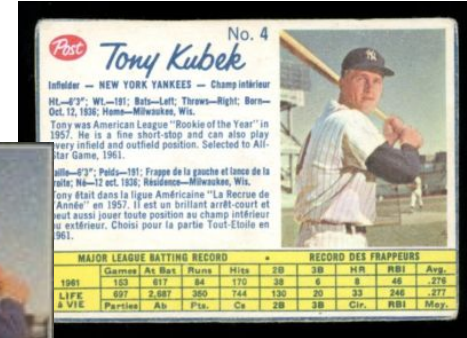
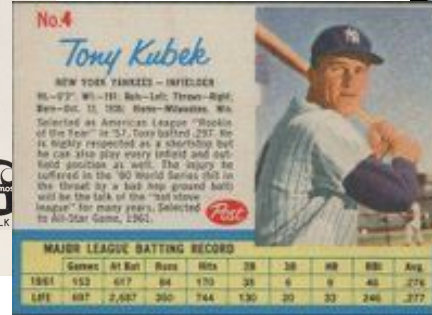
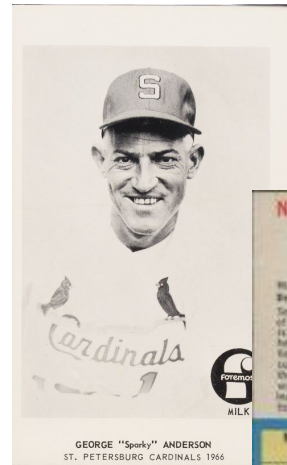
SANDY KOUFAX
Los Angeles Dodgers—Pitcher



ROCKY NELSON
FIRST BASEMAN—PITTSBURGH PIRATES

Food Sets:

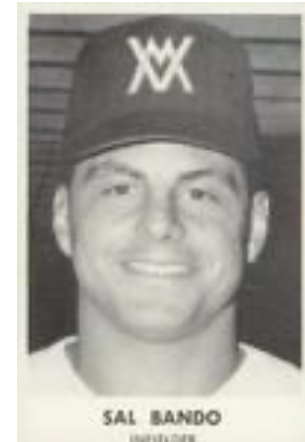
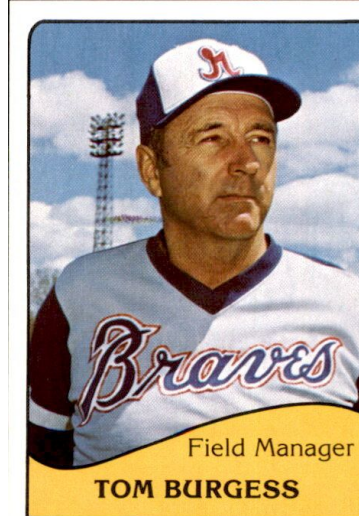
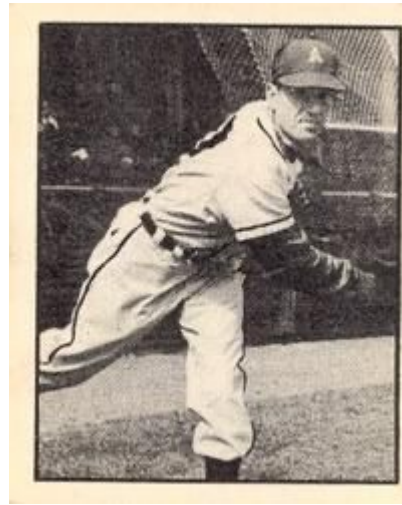
- Post & Post Canadian
- Kellogg's
- Kahn's
- Yoo Hoo
- Foremost Milk
- Milk Duds
- Hostess Cakes



Minor League Sets



- 1952 Parkhurst
- TCMA
- Popcorn Cards
- 1964 Chevron / Uniroyal Vancouver Mounties



The Canadian Top 10 'Holy Grail' Vintage Cards



Holy Grail #10



1969 Topps Deckle Edge Rusty Staub

- **Population Stats:** 196 PSA, 20 SGC
- **Last Sale:** US\$7.49 (9/21/25; CSG 3)
- **Record Price:** US\$1,260 (6/23/25; PSA 8)

Why it's special:

- Printed in short supply after Staub was traded to Montreal and Topps replaced the card with Joe Foy to maintain the number of Astros players represented in the set



Holy Grail #9



1968 Topps 3-D Rusty Staub

- **Population Stats:** 65 PSA
- **Last Sale:** US\$3,904 (10/24/2025, PSA 7)
- **Record Value:** US\$11,100 (9/23/2022, PSA 10)

Why it's special:

- Very rare, from test set that was 'experimental'
- Some of Staub's cards also feature an even more rare 'XO-Graph' stamp



Holy Grail #8

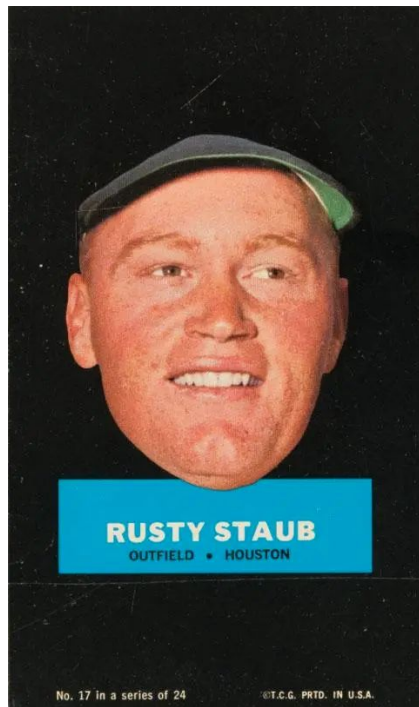


1967 Topps Stand Up Rusty Staub

- **Population Stats:** 1 PSA
- **Last Sale:** US\$1,020 (12/8/2019, PSA Authentic)
- **Record Value:** US\$1,020 (12/8/2019, PSA Authentic)

Why it's special:

- Extremely rare, another 'experimental' set that was never meant to be released to the public



Holy Grail #7

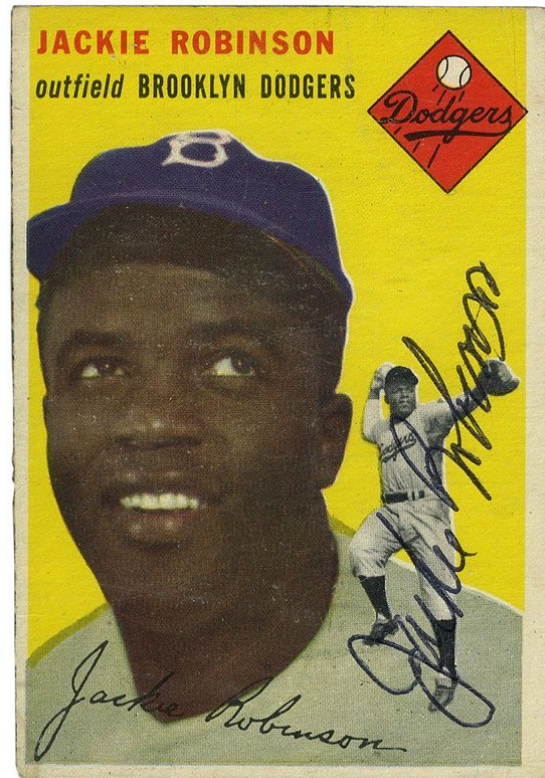


1954 Topps 'Canadian' Jackie Robinson

- **Population Stats:** 49 PSA, 6 SGC
- **Last Sale:** US\$732 (10/2/2025, PSA 2)
- **Record Value:** US\$5,640 (4/24/2022, PSA 5.5)

Why it's special:

- Cards 1 - 50 from the 1954 Topps set featured some cards with grey backs that were distributed exclusively in Canada
- The lone Canadian Hall of Famer from this subset is Jackie Robinson



Holy Grail #6

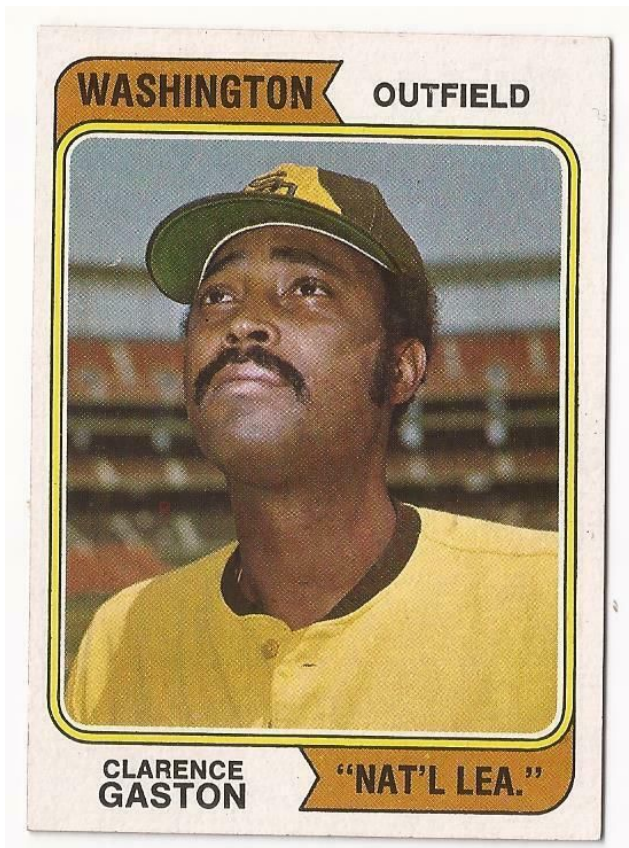


1974 Topps Clarence Gaston "Washington Variation"

- **Population Stats:** 208 PSA, 11 SGC
- **Last Sale:** US\$300 (10/19/2025, PSA 9)
- **Record Value:** US\$850 (11/20/2018, PSA 10)

Why it's special:

- Washington did not have a team in 1974
- Gaston is the lone Canadian Hall of Famer to have a card featuring this error variation



Holy Grail #5

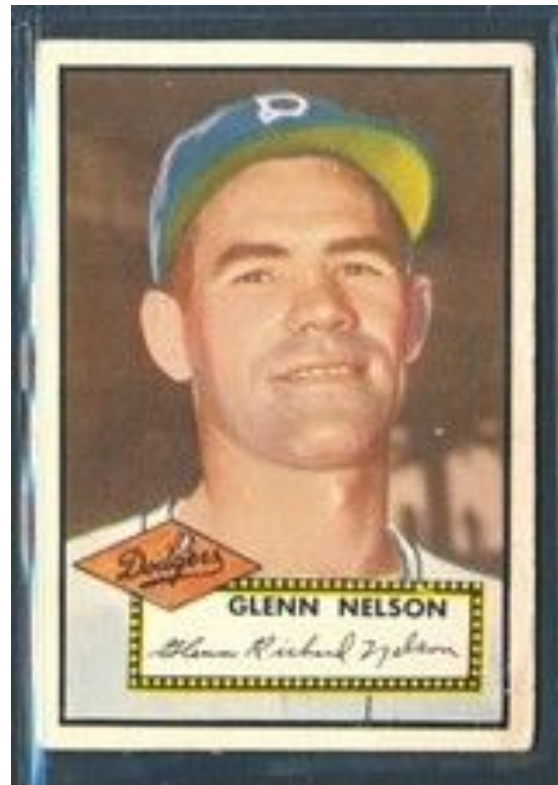


1952 Topps Rocky Nelson

- **Population Stats:** 582 PSA, 103 SGC
- **Last Sale:** US\$2,775 (9/22/2025, PSA 8)
- **Record Value:** US\$11,163 (2/22/2025, PSA 8)

Why it's special:

- High numbered card from Topps' iconic inaugural set
- Most cards from this series were dumped in the Hudson River
- Rookie card of the Canadian Hall of Famer



Holy Grail #4



1952 Parkhurst Tommy Lasorda

- **Population Stats:** 33 PSA, 1 SGC
- **Last Sale:** US\$240 (9/21/2021, PSA 3)
- **Record Value:** US\$550 (8/11/2014, PSA 8)

Why it's special:

- Minor league card from Lasorda's time with the Montreal Royals
- A key card from an important Canadian set



Holy Grail #3

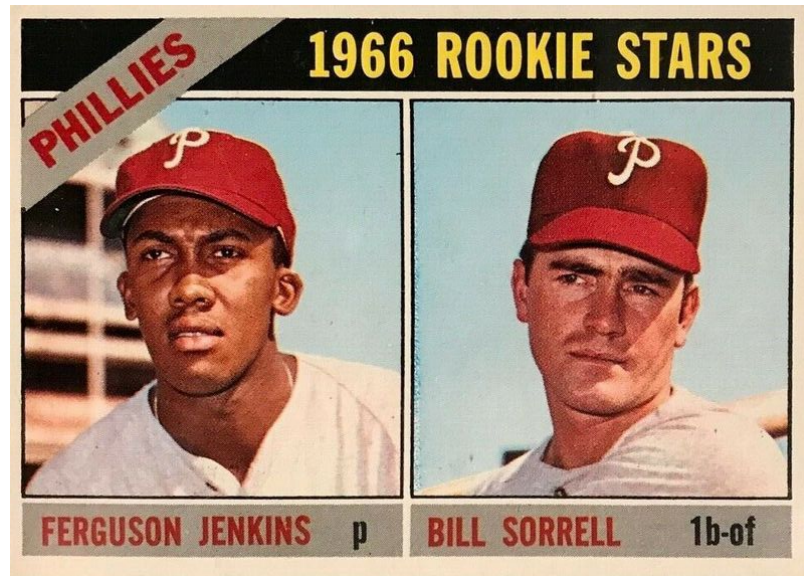


1966 Topps Fergie Jenkins

- **Population Stats:** 3,761 PSA, 1,047 SGC
- **Last Sale:** US\$246 (10/20/2025, PSA 7)
- **Record Value:** US\$37,200 (7/24/2021, PSA 10)

Why it's special:

- Rookie card of the first Canadian to be inducted into the National Hall of Fame
- Sadly, no O Pee Chee version exists



Holy Grail #2

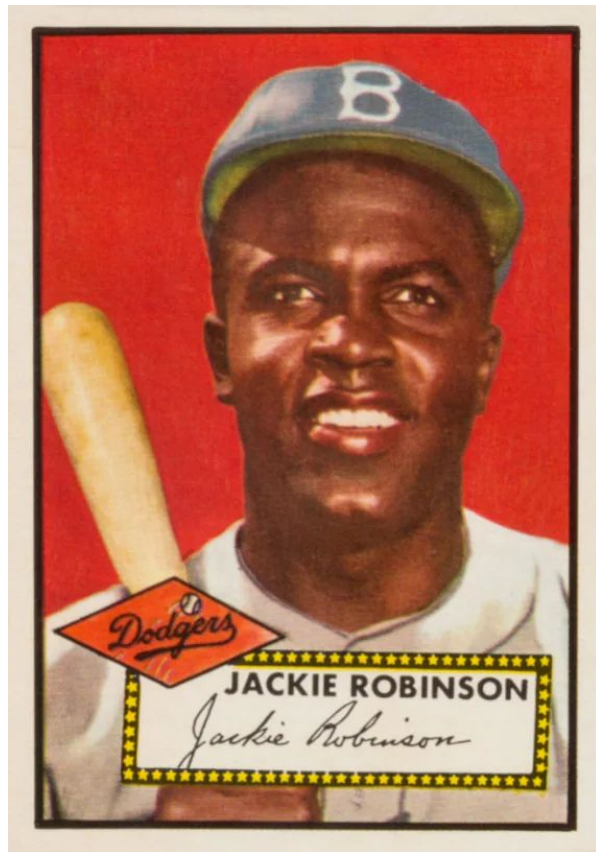


1952 Topps Jackie Robinson

- **Known Population:** 1,528 PSA, 444 SGC
- **Last Sale:** US\$17,400 (9/25/2025, PSA 4)
- **Record Value:** US\$984,000 (3/8/2021, PSA 9)

Why it's special:

- Another high numbered card from Topps' iconic inaugural set
- Most cards from this series were dumped in the Hudson River
- One of Robinson's most iconic cards



Holy Grail #1



1960 Shopsy's George 'Sparky' Anderson

- **Population Stats:** 2 PSA
- **Last Sale:** Never sold at auction
- **Record Auction Price:** Never sold at auction

Why it's special:

- Extremely rare, the first card featuring the Hall of Famer as a Toronto Maple Leaf
- Issued by an iconic Canadian brand



Trivia



1. What were the three Canadian teams featured on Parkhurst's cards in 1952?
2. What was the name of World Wide Gum's 1950 set that featured players from the Montreal Royals and Toronto Maple Leafs?
3. What were the other four teams featured in the set from Q2? Bonus: What was the name of the league?
4. What player played for both inaugural Canadian teams in their inaugural year but managed to have a baseball card on neither team? Hint: he was also one of the first players to receive an All-Star Rookie Cup.
5. What Canadian Hall of Famer has the most Topps flagship cards from the Vintage Era (1952 - 1979)?