

Match Manufacturers:

Empire Book Match Co. (1920's-1930's)

This is an old company. You know that as soon as you're lucky enough to see one. Almost all are XL's (talls), and I suspect that the few that aren't (such as the first one pictured below) were simply cut short for some reason other than standard sizing.

The company was located in Brooklyn, NY, and was in production during the 1920s-1930s. A good percentage of the covers bear the "EMPIRE QUALITY" footer, making them even more unique and sought after. Of the 21 listed covers, three are dated—1929, 1931, and 1932.

The confusing part here is that there was also an Empire Match Company around at the same time, and that company also used an "EMPIRE QUALITY" footer. This second company was located in Chicago, however. It's possible that the Empire Book Match Company relocated to Chicago, dropping the "Match" from its name, but that's very unlikely. So is the possibility that this very small company actually had *two* widely separated production centers. Thus, I'm opting for the 'two separate companies' theory.

Just another one of the fascinating little mysteries yet to be unraveled in sorting through the maze of bits of information about the history of the match manufacturing industry. Perhaps, someday we'll have it all straightened out!

