

## A Closer Look At Christmas Covers

Well, it's that time of year again, and you just know that most of the club bulletins are going to be featuring Christmas covers in their December bulletins...so let's see what we can add to the situation.

I collect Christmas; it's one of my favorite categories; and it's certainly one of the most colorful. There are a variety of ways you can look at these covers—singles as opposed to sets and series, stock issues vs. original designs, nationals and store covers contrasted to specific personal and business covers. It's one of those categories that cuts across all the categories. Thus, you'll see Christmas Dated Auto, Christmas Military, Christmas everything!

Each manufacturer had its own stock designs, since they were sure to be good sellers each time the merry season rolled around. Most of the stock designs were issued as 30-strikes, although that's not true prior to the 30-strike really becoming established in the 1950s. Christmas covers, themselves, go back at least to the 1920s, where they can be seen in the Diamond and Lion issues of the era, and it's probable that they go back even before 1920. But, I especially like the large Christmas series from businesses, such as the Holiday Inn and Mellon Bank issues.

Fancies abound! After all, Christmas is a time of sparkling colors, twinkling ornaments, and shiny ribbons, so many, many Christmas covers are Cameos, Signets, Foitites, Uniglos, and color-photo types—real eye-catchers!

They come in all sizes, with 30-strikes probably being the most common. There are relatively few die-cuts that I've come across. And yes, there certainly are Christmas boxes, as well.

