

FLASHBACK!

Lion Match Company Contours *[March 1956 RMS Bulletin - by John Clark]*

A CONTOUR is an outline! Hence in relation to matchcovers, they are the outline of a product, or the merchandise to be advertised. These matches were put on the market by the Lion Match Company in the year 1951, and ever increasing sales have made more and more of this type of cover available to the collector. A fairly representative collection would be around 350 or more different. Collectors are missing abet if they are not collecting these covers! Included in this category are several nice 'Sets' of which Pontiac Motor Co. has the largest, containing probably over 50 covers. These covers are cut to the outline of a Pontiac car front and back. The front cover contains only the front of the car in color, and the back outline contains the dealers name and address, and pertinent advertising of the Pontiac Co. The largest collection known is 45 covers. How many do you have? Other 'set' types are Mack Truck Co. with outline of a bulldog, symbol of the company. The number of these has never been established, however, it is not as plentiful as the Pontiacs. Ten covers being tops in known collections. Gotham Watches, with two different sets, Maneros Famous Steak House, Frisch's "Big Boy", Bower's Envelopes, Republic Trucks, and many others of lesser numbers comprise various 'sets'. There are probably others not even known and yet to come.

Collectors of these coveted covers should take precautions to examine their covers for changes. Manumks, especially, are often changed and many of the covers are identical except for these changes. Other changes appear much as in customary conventional covers. Saddle changes are often made, and many re-issues are passed up because particular attention is not paid to these differences. One 're-issue' especially, that of the Gulfstream Race Course at Hallandale, Florida, had adopted the outline of the 'Derby' hat to symbolize the 'Florida Derby' each year. In time, they will be a much coveted set. They are, in fact, a dated cover, since they bear the date of the Derby.

Upon the inception of these Contour Covers, the manumark of the conventional match was used, 'LION MATCH Co., Inc., N.Y. MADE IN U.S.A. (LIO 48.09), then in the middle of the manufacture of these covers Lion changed to a large CONTOUR then in double line, Matchbook-Lion Match Co. INC./ Made in USA. New York 19, N.Y. Since then there have appeared some 20 odd cities in the manumarks. Too, some of these Contours appear under the 'Feature Match Book Pat. 1,839,845-6/Lion Match Co., (city) some have even appeared from neighboring Canada.

So, collectors, if you have passed up these covers, better pick up now, because it is reasonable to suppose that down thru the years these covers will increase in number. Begin now, check your neighborhood and see how many of these Contours you can come up with. Remember, it takes covers to get covers hence even a couple boxes from your locale will put you in business.

It is also noteworthy that presently some 'Spot Strikers' are coming out in Contour design, so watch for these too. A 'Spot Striker' is a striker located somewhere in the ad, other than in the normal location. These new Contours bear both the Feature and Contour manumarks and some have the mark inside. Same distribution of city names has been noted. It's never too late to start a new category, you can't get 'em all, but you can sure have fun trying!