

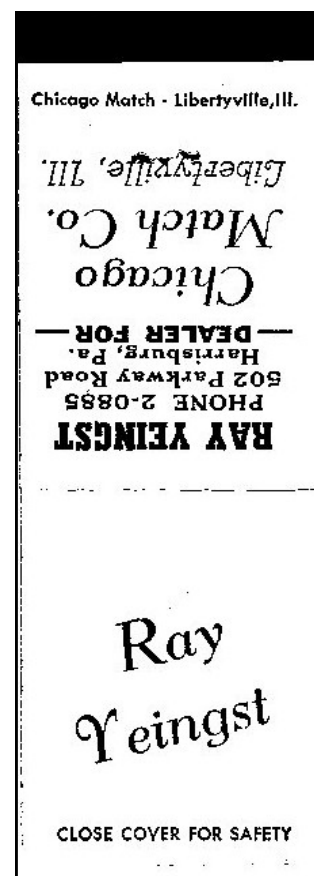
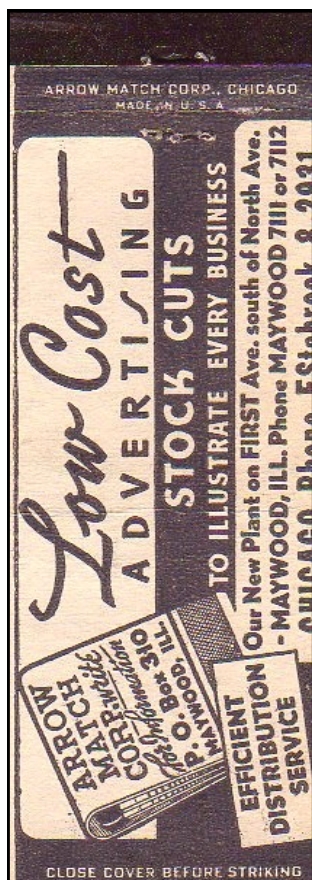
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Match Company Covers

by
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Here's a category that you very rarely see on anyone's list of wants (as a matter of fact, doing some fast checking on my hobby stationery, I don't even have it listed as one of my categories!), and yet I've collected such covers almost since my entrance into the hobby some 26 years ago. I never advertised this want; I just put these covers aside in a box whenever I happened to run across any, and eventually months I finally sat down, sorted them and put them in a couple of albums. I found I had 526! (623 now)

Although there are some fancies to be found here, namely among the Atlas, Maryland, and Universal



types, this is generally a pretty lackluster group of covers if you're only looking for appearance. But, over the years, I've become more and more interested in old covers, match industry history, trademarks, manumarks, and the like, and I find Match Company covers now hold my interest much more so than they did in my novice days of collecting. They not only boldly advertise the industry, itself, but also, in some instances, carry valuable pieces of industry history—trademark names, factory and headquarter locations, founding dates, etc.

So, what exactly are "Match Company" covers? Well, as the covers shown here demonstrate, they're covers that advertise the match company, itself, rather than a customer of the company. And, although I don't have some from every such company, I would assume that they exist for all such companies, not just the giants such as Diamond and Universal. Not surprisingly, I cherish the ones from the older, defunct companies the most—the old Atlas Match Co., General, Gem, Jersey, etc.

Within my own collection, I also include companies that weren't actual manufacturers—those printing and advertising companies that left their marks on the industry and the hobby—such as Kaeser & Blair, Willens & Co., and the like. Such inclusions or exclusions from the category would, of course, be at the discretion of the individual collector.

Using my own collection as a sample (which is the only one I have to go on), I can see just about all sizes: 10s, 12s, 20s, 30s, 40s, Jewels, and boxes. I haven't see a Midget, Perfect 36, or 24-strike in this category, yet, but I'm always looking. As you might guess, these covers are mostly text rather than spiffy graphics, especially on the older covers. There are some Uniglos, Foilites, Pearltones, and Matchoramas from Universal, some Foilite-like and Cameo-like covers from Maryland, and some Foilite-covers from Lion and Eddy....but you probably need to be interested in history to be attracted to this category.

