

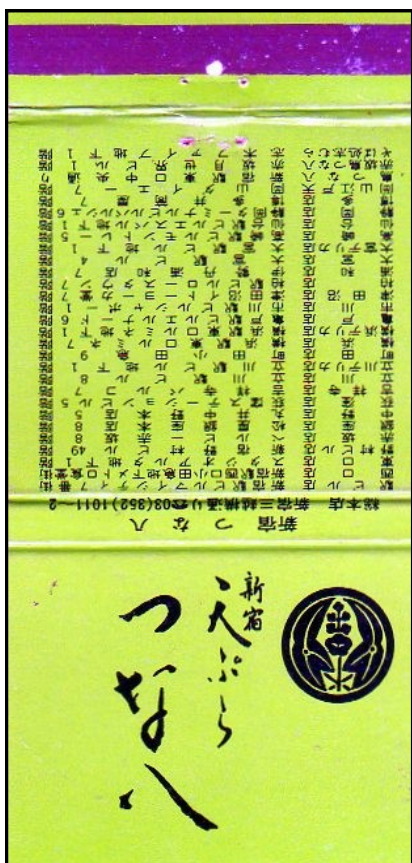
Foreign Covers: Fascinating, Frustrating, and Fun

by
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They're fascinating because they evoke the glamour and grandeur of far away lands. They're educational, too — just the act of determining where such a place is can send you to your atlas or encyclopedia for research. And, they are frustrating, partly because of their odd sizes and also because some of them defy identification.

Let's agree early on that Canadian covers (rightly or wrongly) on not considered "foreign" within the hobby, and, let's recognize that when we (Americans) say "foreign," we really mean "non-US," because when we talk or write to our foreign peers, their covers are not foreign to them! We should also come to some agreement on what makes a cover foreign, then. There are two the two major perspectives to consider.

Normally, if a cover is made and/or distributed in another country, it's considered a foreign cover—but not always. Consider a cover touting Joe's Ford Trucks of Topeka, KS. The cover is made in Japan. Is it counted as foreign? No. How about a Universal cover made here but designed for distribution in Argentina? Is it counted as foreign? Yes. It gets even more complicated, however....How would you classify that Universal cover made here but designed in Spanish for distribution in



Rico? Would it be foreign? It isn't in English, and it's being distributed outside the 50 states that make up the U.S. Or, would you count it as a domestic cover? After all, Puerto Rico is a U.S. possession? Personally, I find the latter argument the more compelling.

OK, how about a cover that advertises McDonald's on the back, but it has those chopstick Japanese characters on the front? Yes, McDonald's is a U.S. firm, but who is the cover made for? It's made for the Japanese, and that makes it a foreign cover. At the same time, those Universal covers made in Belgium for a Times Square restaurant in New York City are not foreign covers. Probably the most common examples of such perplexing covers are the foreign-location covers from the various U.S. chain hotels. What would you do with a U.S.-made Hilton hotel cover for its Tel-Aviv location...or a Sheraton cover from Budapest? There will always be hairs to split in this category, and, as usual, you are the final decision-maker. When trading such covers, however, you have to be aware of whether or not your trader is going to agree with you definitions.

The vast majority of foreign covers that come your way will present you with no such questions, but many will present other challenges—such as figuring out exactly where those covers come from. In order to be successful with these covers, a collector has to be up on languages and geography.

Most of us can tell German from French, Spanish from German, and so on, but how many of us can tell Japanese characters from Chinese characters, Thai from Vietnamese, or Spanish from Portuguese? And, even if we could, there are numerous cases where even that doesn't help. A cover written in German, for example, could come from Germany—or Austria—or Luxembourg—or, in fact, any area that speaks German. That cover that's written in French could be from France—or Belgium—or Morocco or other previous French colonies. Thus, as a practical matter, when it comes to reading foreign text on matchcovers, most of us are reduced to simply looking for key words that we can recognize. And, that almost always means a place name, which gets us into geography.

If you're not up on your geography now, you will be by the time you become a veteran Foreign collector. Sure, when you see 'Berlin' or 'Paris' on covers, you can identify the covers as coming from Germany or France....but [hee hee] where is Christchurch, or Sucre, or Lusaka, or Doha....or...?

Small Town collectors have postal zip code books; Foreign collectors have their atlases! Still, you're eventually going to end up with that little agonizing pile of completely unidentifiable Foreign covers (usually written in Arabic!).

Aside from language and geography, the manufacturer may give you a further hint on the origin of the cover. Here are most of the major foreign manufacturers I've run across. Note that I have had to abbreviate many of the names because they're abnormally long, and that I've omitted the obvious ones, such as Eddy, etc.



A/S Lendra (Estonian)
Acebo y Cia.? (Cuban)
Adamjee Kajee.. (Burmese)
AMCO (Indian)
Amtorg Trading (Russian)
Aruna Match.. (Indian)
ATF Co. (Finnish)
Baltika (Estonian)
Bengal Safety...(Indian)
Berger McLenn.. (Swedish)
Brilliant Match (Indian)
Bryn & Halden (Norwegian)
Bryn Taendst. (Norwegian)
Burns Philip (Australian)
C. Polli (Italian)
Carmegam (Indian)
Ceylon Match (Sri Lankan)
Cheong Ming (Macau)
Cia.Mex.de Cer.. (Mexican)
Collard & Co. (English)
Comorin Match (Indian)
Comp. Paraguaya
(Paraguayan)
Cueca de Fosf. (Peruvian)
Daito Match (Japanese)
Deutsch-Zund.. (German)
Diamond, Ltd. (English)
E.L. Bell & Co. (Australian)
E.Schwarz & Ko (Estonian)
Ed. Pohl (Estonian)
Elkayos (Singapore)
Esavi India Match (Indian)
Eesti Tultikum. (Estonian)
Etna (Estonian)
Federal Match Co. (Australian)
Finnish Match Co. (Finnish)
Fosf. Columbiana (Columbian)
Fosf. El Varadero (Cuban)
Fosf. Irati (Brazilian)
Fosf. Peruana (Peruvian)
Fosforea Ecuat.. (Ecuadorian)
Fosforera Centr..(Guatemalan)
Great China (Hong Kong)
Guyana Match (Guyana)
Haldens Taend. (Norwegian)
Hanna Match (Australian)
Haydari Match Co. (Indian)
Hind Matches (Indian)

Honduras Fosf.. (Honduran)
Hong Sung Co. (Chinese)
Hung Sang (Chinese)
I Tallinna (Estonian)
IMCO (Indian)
Ind. Andrade-La.. (Brazilian)
Ind. Brasil (Brazilian)
Ind. Brasileira (Brazilian)
J. John Masters (English)
J. Simon & Co. (Cuban)
J. Trumm & Ko (Estonian)
Javaraj Match (Indian)
Jimco (Jordanian)
Jonkoping-Vulcan (Swedish)
Jonkopings We.. (Swedish)
Jonkopins Nya (Swedish)
K.M. Mfg. Co. (Indian)
Kalam (Indonesian)
Kikusui (Japanese)
Kimura Match (Japanese)
Km.K.RM Match (Indian)
Kobe Match (Japanese)
Kurla M.W. (Indian)
Lanka Light Ltd. (Sri Lankan)
Lee San Factory (Chinese)
Lendra (Estonian)
Les Allumettes H.. (Haitian)
Liberty Match (Indian)
Lidkopings Tan..(Swedish)
Lion, Ltd. (South African)
M.Kosaba (Japanese)
M.Musabhuy (Japanese)
M. Naobi (Japanese)
M.S.K. (Japanese)
Macguire & Patt..(Irish)
Maguire, Miller.. (English)
Mahesh Match (Indian)
Man-Koc Match (Hong Kong)
Match Corp. Ltd (Zambian)
Matches Austr.. (Australian)
Matches Ltd. (Australian)
Mauritius (Mauritian)
Max Pohl & Sonne (German)
Mitchell & Co.(Eng./Scotland)
Mohsin Match (Pakistani)
Moreland (English)
N. Martindale (English)
Nippon Match (Japanese)

Nitedals (Norwegian)
Nitedals hjelpes. (Norwegian)
Octavius Hunt (English)
Orient Match (Lahore)
Oriental Match.. (Indan)
Otani Match (Japanese)
P. Eiche (Estonian)
P.T. Java (Java)
Pacific Manufac. (Fijian)
Panomatch (Philippino)
Perry & Co. (English)
Pooranam Matc.. (Indian)
R. Bell & Co. (English)
Raja Matches (Indian)
Ramanathasamy (Indian)
Royal Match (Philippino)
S.J. Moreland (English)
Santa Cruz Match (S. Amer.)
Seanor & Sons (English)
Seburance (German)
Seetharam Mat.. (Indian)
SEITA (French)
Shriro Ltd. (Chinese)
Solo Match Works (Czech.)
SPAR (Czechoslovakian)
Sri Murugan (Indian)
Suhburaj Match (Indian)
Supply Trans. (Indian)
Svenska Tands.. (Swedish)
Tai Tung (Hong Kong)
Tandsticksfabrik (Swedish)
Thomas Gee (English)
Tiagaraj Match.. (Indian)
Tirupati Indust.. (Indian)
Tohoku Match (Japanese)
Toucan Match (Belize)
Toyo Match Co. (Japanese)
Trinidad Match (Trinidad)
Union Match Co. (Engsih)
Vaxio Tandstick. (Swedish)
Vishwanath Mat (Indian)
Vulcan (Swedish)
W.J. Morgan (English)
Wah Kong (Chinese)
Wimco (Indian)
Yuan Ming (Chinese)
Zambia (Zambian)
Zetland-Sydney (Australian)