

## Gems From Gem Match Company

I suppose many collectors would look at these covers and yawn. As with most of the small, old manufacturers, the covers aren't visually attractive. They're...*bland*.

The Gem Match Company started up c. 1935 in Chicago (Chicago seemed to have a real attraction for match manufacturers; it can boast having had more such companies than any other city in North America...perhaps even the world!)

There was an earlier Gem Match Co., but this company is no relation. The records indicate that *our* Gem Match Co. was dissolved in 1938, but I have a cover dated 1940 and a company brochure dated 1944, so there must have been a reorganization somewhere in that murky time period. In any event, the company didn't make it through World War II, yet another casualty of the war.

So, why are these 'gems'? Well, and here comes my favorite hobby word, they're *old!* But there are tons of *old* covers, and most of them are looked upon as run-of-the-mill. What's different about these?...Good question! I have no idea!

As near as I can discern, Gem Match Co. is just one of those old, small companies that earlier collectors latched onto as one which had issued what became semi-rare covers (which they certainly did). It's in the same category as King Midas, Jersey, and Manhattan, for example. All old, small companies with otherwise blank covers, but they're at least semi-rare covers. So Gem, along with the other examples, has become one of the legendary companies in the hobby, so your eyebrows raise when coming across one. When you've found a Gem...You've found a 'gem'!



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