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**DON'T LET STANDARDS  
SLIP**

In these times when it's at least a little more difficult to acquire covers, I think it's important that we, as collectors in general, not let our standards of what's acceptable in collecting slip.

Occasionally, I'll hear a "Hey! These days, you take what you can get!" or a "I can't afford to be picky anymore!" I inwardly wince, hoping that those philosophies don't take hold in the hobby. Of course, even if they did, collectors with higher standards could meet all current expectations and still have his or her higher standards, but the hobby at large would be hurt. Lower standards never bolster one's standing...Just take a look around you at our society's current rush to mediocrity, and you'll see plenty of examples.

What standards am I talking about within the hobby? Cover standards! Struck covers are not acceptable...Damaged covers are not acceptable...Flats are not acceptable.

Yes, each collector decides what's acceptable in his or her own collection. Yes, most, or even all, of us use the occasional struck or damaged cover as a temporary, hoping that we'll eventually find a better example at some later date. And Yes, there are some areas of exceptions. I don't know of any collector, for example that would throw away a struck Crown or DQ! But the point is that none of these are the norms, nor should they be.