

Binghamton Match Co. Find...c. 1895!

Grant Stiles: “The matches were in boxes with very valuable Americana left to me by my grandmother. I suspect my family picked it up at the World's Columbian Exposition in Buffalo, NY, as it was in those boxes amid hundreds of collectibles from that fair. While going through the boxes of collectibles, my wife found it and almost threw it away. She said, “What do we need matches for?” As a side note, ‘Grandpa Purple’ is Elisha J. Purple. Our family name was notorious during the 1920's and 1930's. Folks back then knew them as The Purple Gang. They were bootleggers and racketeers during the Depression.”

This very early matchbook is stapled and has the striker material applied to the top of the inside cover. Also note that the matches are printed sticks (“Smoke the Tilly”). The saddle reads

BINGHAMTON MATCH CO.
BINGHAMTON, N.Y.

According to hobby lore, the Binghamton Match Co. produced the first machine-made book match (1893), but it cost the company its life. Diamond Match Co. immediately sued on the grounds of patent infringement, and the company soon went out of business. Diamond had purchased the rights to Joshua Pusey's matchbook in 1894 for \$4,000. *A very interesting find...and we're certainly glad Mrs. Stiles didn't throw it out!*

.....As of this writing, the owner has this cover on ebay with an asking price of \$3,299.95

