

CLASSIC COLLECTIBLE SOUVENIR

This is an Atlas trademark in fairly large, bold text appearing immediately above the striker. This type of cover first appeared in 1995, and they were around just long enough to get my hopes up. But then, in 1996, they were suddenly abandoned, and that was it! Apparently, Atlas was trying to get a new line going by trying to get customers (and the customers' customers) to buy into matchbooks as collectibles [*Gosh! What an interesting idea!*] and then, looking at the sales figures later on, decided it wasn't successful enough.

Of course, by the mid-1990s, the domestic match industry had already imploded, and the overall market had drastically shrunk, so... Although, looking at the actual covers, all we're really talking about here is just an extra line of text—"CLASSIC COLLECTIBLE SOUVENIR"—so how much of an 'extra' expense was Atlas going to in the first place? I've never noticed any other 'extras' involved with the covers—no special finish, no extra advertising space, etc.

In any event, not surprisingly, then, there weren't many of these covers produced. *But*, surprisingly, every succeeding year a few more seem to be discovered, and the listing has steadily grown until now there are over 200 listed on Judi Wittwer's listing.

Classic Collectible Souvenir covers come in 20s, 30s, and 40s.

I collect these covers. They comprise a nice little category that's at least a little out of the ordinary, and, with that distinctive text line on every covers, they're always easy to spot.

