

Trucking!

by
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Trucking is part of the umbrella category of “Transportation.” Airlines, Ship Lines, Taxis, Bus Lines, Railroads, etc. are all included when you see “Transportation” as someone’s wants. They’re all collected separately, but use of the term covers a lot of territory quickly, just as “Fancies” covers Uniglos, Cameos, Foilites, Filigrees, and so on.

Trucking, it seems to me, is one of those “connoisseur” categories. It’s always had staying power as an especially sought-after area, but many novices eventually drop it as a want area because of the difficulty in obtaining a sizeable collection. They’re tough to find, very difficult to trade in, and auction prices for such lots are usually prohibitive for most collectors. Thus, successful Trucking enthusiasts tend to fall into two categories—old-timers who started w-a-y back when—and—masochists!

What’s the attraction of this category? Well, Transportation, itself, has always been a popular category, but the Trucking area has a special allure—examples of matchcovers at the height of the Golden Age of the industry—examples of matchcover art at its best. Many have said that the best covers here rival the much-heralded artwork seen in Crown Chinese Restaurant covers. Where art is concerned, there’s no

greater compliment that a hobbyist can pay a cover.



The gems we’re referring to here are the full-length Trucking covers. Although there are a few 40-strike examples, almost all are 20- and 30-strikes, and it’s the 30-strikes that collectors point to first. Most of the

latter are the products of the Lion Match Co. Usually, they carry either a '21 "Feature"... or '30 STICK'... manumark. The detailing is exquisite; the colors are vivid; and, of, course, the fact that most of the trucks pictured on these covers are noticeably antiques doesn't hurt, either.

Judging from my own small collection, most of the full-length 20-strikes with nice art come from the Match Corp., Maryland, Ohio, and Universal match companies, and, again, we're talking about older covers. The newer full-length Trucking covers just don't have that same high level of incomparable art seen on the older covers.

There is also another type of full-length cover to be seen in this category that is very attractive, even if it doesn't have the 'artwork' pointed out previously. This is the full-length color photo cover, also normally in 20- and 30-strike sizes, but there are more qualifying 40-strikes in this sub-category. Universal seems to be the main producer of these, but one certainly can't fail to mention those oh-so-beautiful Lion True Color covers—definitely one of the best color photo types the match industry ever produced.

I don't want to mislead you, though. Most Trucking covers are not of the full-length variety and don't feature eye-catching art or color photos, but there *is* a higher percentage of such covers in this category (maybe it's that 18-wheelers lend themselves more readily to full-length pictures). And, some of the 'regular' covers sport nice artwork, as well, but on a smaller scale. Additionally, there are other features the category offers that may sway you toward adding Trucking to your wants.

Like series? You'll find some good ones in Trucking. Several of the well-known, national companies put out fairly sizeable series (stock covers all the same except for different branch offices or other advertisers). Companies such as Allied Van Lines, Mayflower, and North American, for example, produced series—20-, 30-, and 40-strike sizes. Mayflower even had a Diamond Pocketbox series.

How about sets? Even in my small collection, I can see a at least a few. Allied Van Lines produced a nice set of orange and white 20-strikes with various animals on the back panel, probably in the 1970s. The back panel theme is "No. 1 Specialist" and the three I have are "...in storage!" "...in long distance moving!" and "in local moving!" There are also two different moving agents, here, so I would assume that there are a number of such sets in existence, each with a different addressee. I don't know how many are in a full set, though.

Conjunctives, maybe? There are some Girlies and the like to be seen here, but conjunctive covers always make you stop and make that pain-wracking decision..."Which category am I going to put this cover in?!" If it's an especially nice cover, chances are you only have one, so you have to decide which category gets top priority—not an easy decision when the choice is Girlies and Trucking!

Something a little more exotic, perhaps? H-m-m-m-m....I see some Perfect 36's, at least one Extend n' Ad, not many Fancies—but a few Cameos, a few Filigree-types, etc. I'm sure there are some Midgets, but I have them in my Midget albums.

So, what makes a good-sized collection of these great Trucking covers? It certainly isn't my pitiful 387! (yes, I can imagine someone out there right now, saying, "Well, that's 380 more than I have!"—BUT, I happen to know that Ray Vigeant, CT, has 3, 865!!!!...*disgusting, isn't it?*). I'd say, then, that a "good-sized" collection would run around 1,000 covers....and something like 3,865 would be a goal that we can but hope to achieve...someday!