

Small Categories Series

Book Stores

These days, it's hard for us to imagine, but there was a time when books were worth their weight in gold! Right from the inception of civilization, writing was something only a very few people could do. It took years and years of training...and then there were the materials required—stone tablets, clay tablets, vellum, parchment, paper, inks, quills, etc. Thus, the products of this writing, books, were extremely expensive, through the Middle Ages, through the Renaissance, right up to the end of the 18th century.

Then came the Industrial Revolution, starting in the mid-1700s in England. The Industrial Revolution hooked up energy with machines to produce products much faster and cheaper than the hand-made items could ever be produced. And thus it was with printing. The printing press had been invented by Johannes Guttenberg in 1456, but it was still a hand operated process.

Eventually the printed word became so cheap to produce that we think nothing of reading the daily newspaper or a paperback and then simply throwing it away. Along the way, many people became dedicated readers, voraciously seeking out hitherto undiscovered books to read. Thus, the book store arose—new book stores, used book stores, specialty book stores, rare book stores. And, as with any business endeavor, book stores have issued matchbooks over the years.

So, although I don't recall ever running into any collector who actually had Book Stores as a want area, it's certainly possible as a small category. One good source would be the college campus book stores, but the small, independent stores used to be good sources as well...Happy hunting and...Happy reading!

