

Cover Corrosion

I had previously voiced concerns that corroded covers I had in albums might ‘infect’ other, perfectly good covers. Well, I was right! I can’t believe, after all the collectors that have been in the hobby, and all the years of collecting that have gone by, that I’m the first one to notice this, but I’m fairly certain that I’ve never seen it stated anywhere. And it *should* definitely be a concern to every collector!

What’s the concern?.....Covers with corroded, discolored, ‘mushy’, etc. strikers *can* ruin other perfectly fine covers in your album! How’s that possible? Are we talking about some type of malevolent, living virus? No, the ‘contagion’ occurs through simple contact, so that the corroded part of one cover in an album may affect that part of the adjacent cover on the opposing page where they touch.

I noticed this recently when I was going through my Bank albums for the first time in several years. All the covers are on slotted pages, and I noticed several different instances where the chemical reaction going on on one cover’s striker had started a similar reaction on the cover it was touching on the opposite album page...and not just striker to striker! I have at least one example where the transferred corruption is on the front panel! It’s wherever the corrosion touches.

Solutions:

1. Cut the striker off! (No, not really...but that’s what they used to do in the ‘old’ days!)
2. Don’t include such damaged covers in your collections (but that’s not practical)
3. Use plastic pages only (except that that’s not necessarily practical for everyone; and it’s not necessarily practical for huge collections)



4. Cover each corroded striker with a strip of plastic (is that really practical?)
5. Insert a paper sheet between the two album pages to prevent the corroded cover touching any other cover (but I’ve found that doesn’t work in the long run, because the paper sheet will eventually become infected, and then you *do* have contact with other covers.
6. Insert a plastic sheet between the two album pages (has to be plastic, not paper) and replace the damaged cover as soon as possible (this seems to be the most realistic solution)

You’ve probably also noticed examples of the corrosion going in the opposite direction—i.e., affecting the slotted page that the damaged cover is *on* (lift the damaged cover out of its slot, and many times you’ll see that portion of the slotted page has become discolored, as well, going through to the other side of the page. I haven’t seen any examples in my own albums, though, where said page deterioration has infected the cover directly behind the originally damaged cover. Still...

There’s nothing you can do about ‘fixing’ the corroded cover, but, hopefully, you can prevent such from going on to damage perfectly good covers.