

Match Manufacturers:

Manhattan Match Co. (1936-dissolved 1948)

This is a much smaller manufacturer than we have discussed so far, but the name “Manhattan” is one that makes any veteran collector perk up and take notice. Manhattan covers have always been sought after by the paleophillumenists of the hobby. They’re not flashy or slick—and, actually, they’re all pretty boring as far as attractiveness goes—but it’s that manumark name, MANHATTAN MATCH CO., that’s the drawing feature.

Founded by Nat Fruitman, Jesse Markel and Louis Lipset (yet another company set up by the Fruitmans), the company was incorporated in 1938. It was probably already out of business by early 1942, since there doesn’t seem to be any Manhattan WW II Patriotics. No evidence to the contrary, I have always assumed that the company was an early casualty of the material shortages necessitated by World War II. Covers carry either a New York or Elizabeth, NJ, location. As with most of the older types of covers, Manhattan covers come in both a standard length and an earlier “tall” or “extra-large” length which disappeared with the advent of vending machines in the later 1930s (although, paradoxically, I have such an XL cover [shown below] that advertises vending machines!).

Part of the attraction of this category of covers is that almost all the Manhattan covers sport a “Safety First” footer. There are currently 170 different covers listed, but I only have approximately 48.

