

MATCHCOVER NEW CLUE IN KILLING OF THREE BOYS...Chicago (INS)—A matchbook cover, found near the spot where the strangled bodies of three Chicago boys were dumped, was studied by crime laboratory technicians today as the latest possible clue in the triple slayings. The matchbook cover bore the names of three bowling alleys—two of which were visited by the boys a few hours before they were killed. (from *Los Angeles Herald & Express*, October 31, 1955)

JOSHUA FOR ONION...New York, N.Y.—A weather-beaten red-brick restaurant in Aspen, Colo., has been singled out for an award by the high priests of American advertising world. Familiar to skiers all over the world, the Red Onion bar and restaurant was awarded the a "Joshua" for distinguished use of match book advertising. Named for Joshua Pusey, inventor of match books, the award is based on effective selling through the medium of well-designed, eye-catching match book covers. (from newspaper clipping cited in *RMS Bulletin*, March 1956). [*Has anyone heard of the "Joshua" before? Anyone know who, exactly, was the sponsor?*]

DIAMOND MATCH HELPS PROMOTE BANK ACCOUNTS FOR NEW-BORNS...Dubbed the "boy-girl" program, the promotion is as simple as it is effective. A bank, for example, obtains a list of births in its area. To the parents of each infant the bank mails a unit of book matches, together with an insert congratulating them on their new arrival. The book matches have either "It's a Girl" or "It's a Boy" on them. The insert also serves as a \$1 coupon to start a new savings account for the baby. (from *RMS Bulletin*, June 1956)

THIEVES STRIKE WITH MATCHBOOK...A matchbook made it possible for thieves to make a haul valued at \$525 from Bill's Esso Station on Pennsylvania Ave., Fairmont, WV. Detective Sgt. L. L. Napple said that the thieves placed a folded matchbook in the door frame slot which held the slide on the lock. This apparently was done before the business closed, thus giving them an unlocked door to enter later. (from *The West Virginian*, April 3, 1956)

MATCHBOOK PINS BLAME IN NICKEL THEFT ON PAIR...A matchbook led to a confession by two men accused of stealing a ton of nickel bars, valued at \$3,500. The men refused to tell where they got the bars until a matchbook bearing the name of the Norbrook Plating Co. was found in the pocket of one of them. A phone check disclosed that the firm had reported a burglary. Confronted, the men confessed. (from *RMS Bulletin*, August 1956)

TV PERSONALITY A COLLECTOR...Harriet Nelson, star of ABC-TV's "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet," collects exotic matchcovers as a hobby. She's been doing it since her traveling and singing days with Ozzie's band two decades ago. (from *RMS Bulletin*, January 1957)

PRINCESS AFLAME AS FIRED-UP HOBBY FANS SEND MATCHES...London (AP) — Buckingham Palace, swamped in a sudden deluge of mailbags full of matches, announced plaintively that a London newspaper columnist must have got it all wrong—Princess Margaret just doesn't collect the beastly things. Columnist Rex North of the Sunday Pictorial started it by reporting the Princess had found the new hobby. (from *Boston Daily Record*, July? 1957)

MATCHBOOK FISHERMAN'S FRIEND...A hand container for carrying your extra hooks is made by cutting slits in an empty matchbook. The striker also serves as a useful sharpener for those dull

In The Real World: II

hooks. (from “Mark Trail’s Outdoor Tips,” newspaper clipping cited in *RMS Bulletin*, August 1957)

MATCHBOOK SAVES CAREER...A big businessman from our town was in a jam. He’d gone to New York the night before a super important business conference. And at 6 A.M. after a round of the clubs he realized he’d lost his briefcase—and all the papers necessary for the meeting. Was he panicked? Not at all. He just reached into his pockets for all the match packets he’d glommed on his night clubbing tour, and patiently called each one until he found the one where he’d left the briefcase. (from Chester, PA, *Evening Bulletin*, October? 1957)

TV PERSONALITY A COLLECTOR?...For a man who gives away real money on TV quiz shows, *Treasure Hunt* emcee Jan Murray probably has the least expensive hobby of any TV star. He collects matchbook covers—and they’re free. Jan picks them up at each place where he entertains or visits. Jan spends much of his spare time cataloging the matchbooks and filing them neatly in albums. (from *TV Guide*, September 1957) [*Jan Murray later reported that the whole thing was a misunderstanding; he was not a collector*]

MATCH BOX COVERS MAY BRING A FORTUNE...London, May 4 (AP)—George Thelwell, a lathe operator, may end up rich thru his hobby of match box covers. He recently took his album to R.L. Cantwell, secretary of the League of Hobbies, and was told that it may bring \$140,000 at auction. Thelwell has 200 covers, some dating back to the 1820s. (from *RMS Bulletin*, July 1958) [*Obviously “match box covers” are not matchbook covers! Labels go back to the 1820s, though*]

MATCHBOOKS BREAK UP MARRIAGES...From a private eye: “On a number of occasions during the past several years of private investigation work, I’ve had many cases where doubting wives have found paper matchbooks from cafes, motels, and hotels in their husband’s pockets....a man can pick up a book of matches without ever having been in the place advertised...Marital misunderstandings crop up frequently enough. Let’s not add the matchbooks as positive evidence of wrong—doing.” (from *Minneapolis-Memorial Star*, July?, 1958)

MATCHCOVERS—NOBODY SAVES THEM ANYMORE...”Matchcovers—nobody saves them anymore to my knowledge. Gone are the days when matchcovers were a prized possession.” (from *Belleville Times-News*, ‘Hey, Sport’ column, July ?, 1959)

BANK’S MATCHBOOKS TRIP THIEF...According to the Mohawk National Bank in Schenectady, NY, its full-length bank check matchbook has led to the arrest of an alleged burglar in Setauket, NY. The matchbook with its distinctive cover was found in the possession of a man suspected of breaking into a Long Island real estate operator’s office. The businessman was given several of the matchbooks by John Halpin, head of the bank’s advertising agency. (from *Schenectady Gazette*, November 12, 1959)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG PRODUCES MATCHBOXES...A Upper Ohio class steamer, the Bertland, was sunk along the Missouri River on April 1, 1865. During 1968-1969, a successful excavation of the cargo was undertaken by the National Park Service. The boat wasn’t under the water, however, because the river had shifted its course. The cargo, under some 24’ of topsoil, clay, silt, and debris, was nearly intact, and it included app. 500 boxes of matches, 48 boxes to a case. The cases read “Telegraph Matches, A. Eichele, St. Louis”. (from *Long Beach bulletin*, April, 1990)