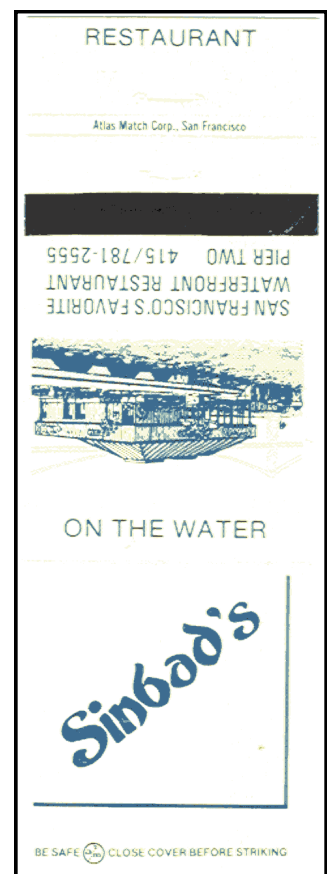
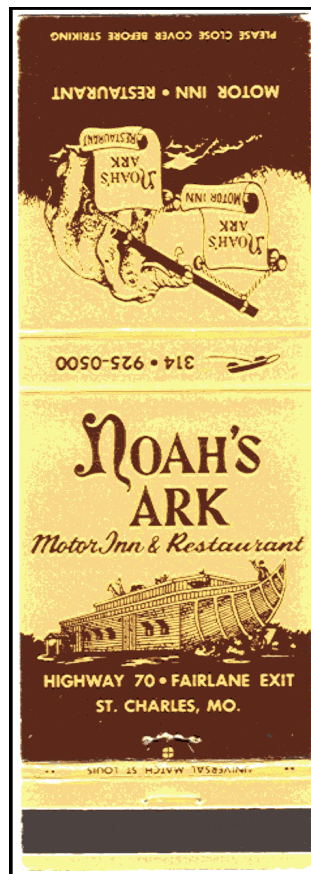
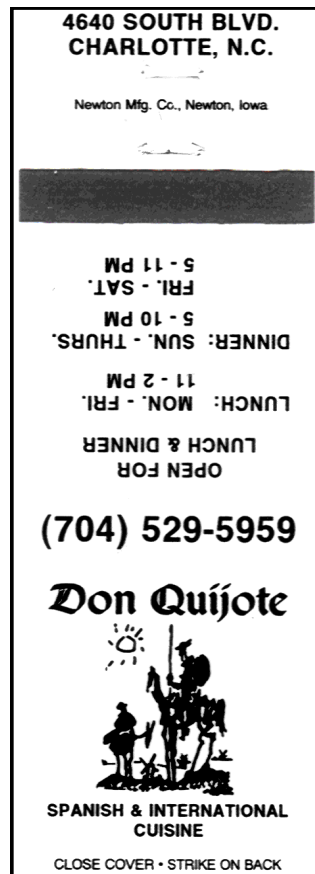
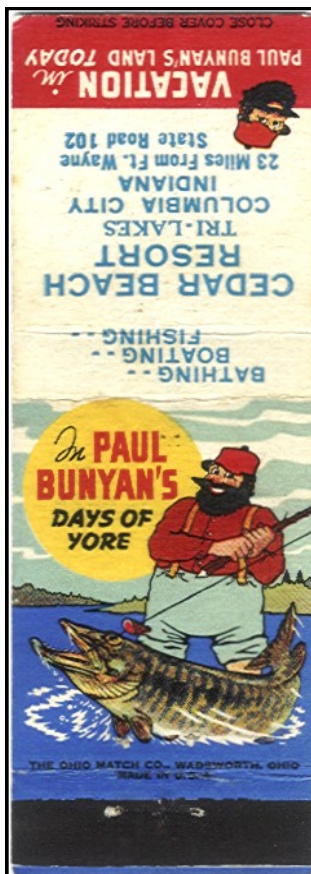
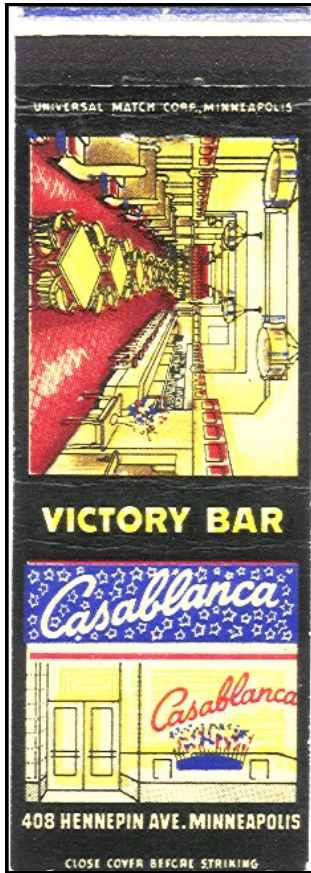


Literary Allusions

Covers such as these are part of my “Literary Characters” collection, in which I also have famous places and things from literature, such as “Sherwood Forest” and “Aladdin's Lamp”, but working on this collection recently is what got me started on thinking about literary allusions in matchcovers.

First, just so we're all starting off together, an “allusion” is a passing reference to something else; thus, I might “allude” to an article in the last issue. But, in literature, an allusion is usually a reference to a famous person, place, or event for the purpose of comparison. Thus, when we see the bad guy get creamed at the end of the story, we might see the author say, “He met his Waterloo”. The thing about literary allusions is that they go right over your head if you're not familiar with the famous person, place, or thing the author has used to make the comparison...because in such allusions, there is no further explanation. You're simply expected to get it. That puts the responsibility on the author to know who his or her audience is going to be and to use only such allusions that the readers will be likely to get.

Well, matchovers have many such allusions, simply because so many businesses have incorporated material from well-know literature into their names. Just look at the “Round Table” Pizza chain, for example, or the “Excalibur” Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. Businesses like catchy names...and



In Matchcovers

it's often an advantage when the name is already familiar to people.

As with all hobby categories, how *you* wish to define the particular parameters here is up to you. For example, for the purposes of this article, I've s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-d my definition to include the 'Casablanca' cover show on the opposite page. That alludes to a movie rather than a book, so some might argue that it's not technically a *literary* allusion...but I plead poetic license!

Anyway, here's yet another fascinating aspect of the material we collect. When you start looking for literary allusions on covers, you'll discover that they're quite common...Gods, goddesses, monsters, heroes and heroines, fabled treasures and mythical lands, and so forth. I *do* set the standard that the allusion here has to be to something fictional, not real. Thus, for example, I include the the 'Dante's' cover to the right because I see the allusion being to *Dante's Inferno* rather than to Dante, the author. Similarly, I have a number of covers from the Hotel Thomas Jefferson. Those covers go into my "Historical Characters" collection rather than my 'Literary Characters' collection because Thomas Jefferson was a real person.

You could have a lot of fun with this category...could you put together all 12 Olympian gods?...All the characters from *Robin Hood*? Think of the displays!

