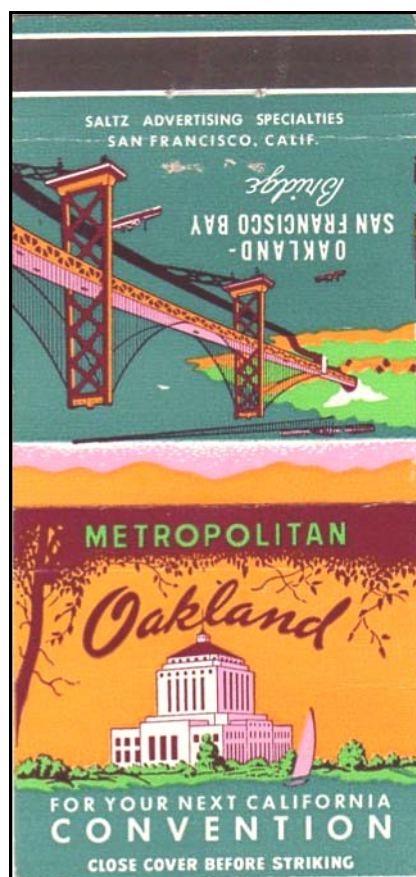


November 2008

# California

by  
Mike Prero

Well, I could give you the usual historical background, interesting facts, and the like...but what's the point? The state's a few billion dollars in the red; it's being run by your typical unscrupulous rascal politician; the big unions are running rampant; we're overrun by illegal aliens; we've legalized gay marriages...and it's raining! Welcome to California!



There aren't many collectors that seriously collect States, or a state, as a serious category, but, in looking at the covers pictured here, it's not that far off-the-wall. Now, there *are* collectors who focus on covers from their own particular pet states. Fred Houk, FL, for example, collects Florida covers with a vengeance. But what I'm talking about here are covers that advertise the *state*, itself, or at least major parts thereof, such as its cities. Thus, you'd not be simply collecting, say, California towns. You'd be looking for covers that actually advertise those towns, such as the covers shown with this article. *[I have a couple of nice 40-strikes that advertise California, but I've opted to show these city covers, instead, but those 'state-advertised' covers certainly exist]*

Such a collection would be fairly small, of course, but it might be fun to see what you could eventually put together. I have what I call a "Cities, States, and Countries" collection just for covers such as these. There are some 20-strikes to be seen, but I think the 30 and 40-strikes are the most attractive, as well as being, apparently, the most attractive, especially the older issues...although just about everything that falls into this category is at least old enough to be of the front-striker variety.

Although some of these covers are issued by private concerns (motels, restaurants, and the like), the major sources are local convention bureaus, chambers of commerce, and state tourist bureaus. Occasionally, there are the covers that celebrate a state's centennial, bicentennial, etc., which would be good additions to a collection like this, but newer such covers are all but non-existent...another casualty of non-smoking campaigns.

Take a look through your dupes, perhaps your Towns, and see what you can come up with. That's the nice part of starting up a new category...you can always find at least some 'starters' among all those dupes that were just gathering dust.

