

Who invented the matchbook?

swipe to learn →

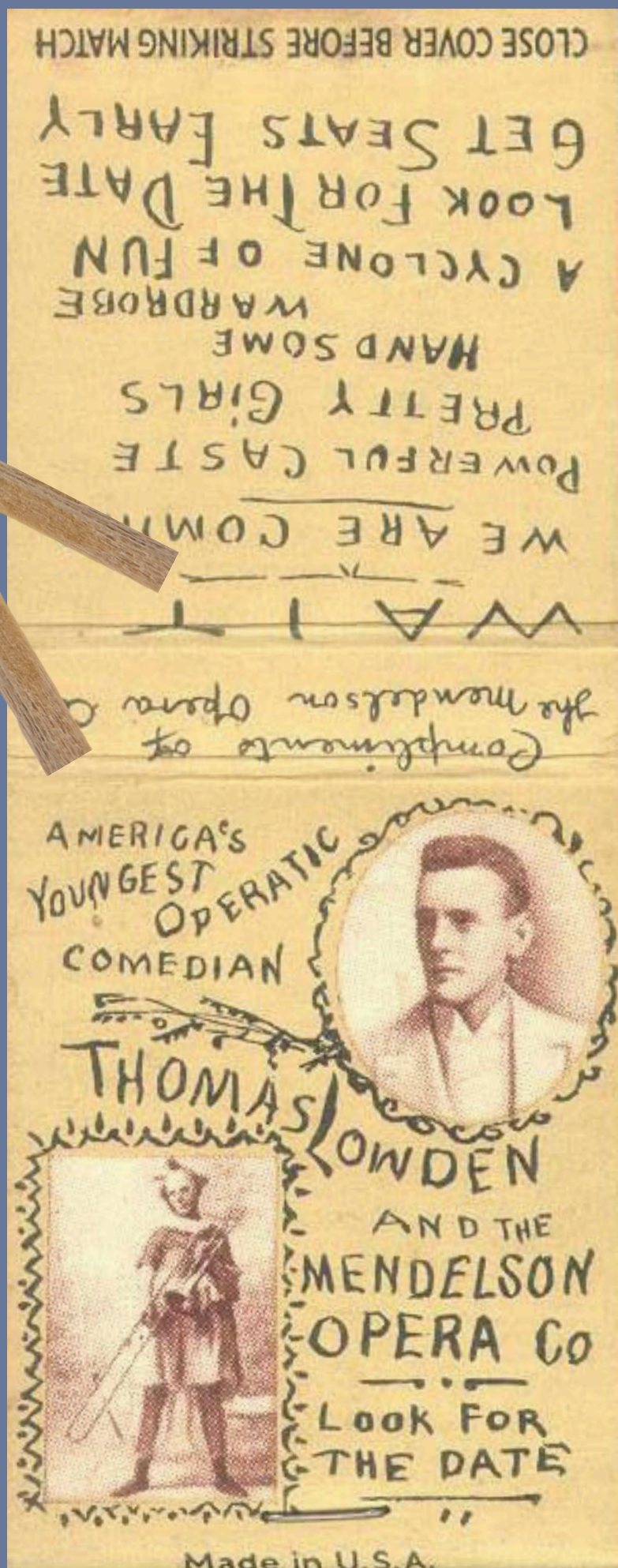


Photo via The Matchcover Vault

Matchbook History



Late 19th Century

- Joshua Pusey, a lawyer from Philadelphia, invents the original matchbook in 1892.
- Diamond Match Company purchases the patent rights for \$4,000.
- A famous early advertising effort is cited as the Mendelson Opera Company purchases hand-printed match covers to promote an upcoming performance.

Early 20th Century

- Another milestone in matchbook history occurs when Pabst Brewing Company orders 10 million custom matchbooks from Diamond Match Company for their brand, thus marking a new mass production era in the American match manufacturing industry.
- H. C. Traute, a Diamond Match Co. salesman, coins the familiar phrase “Close Cover Before Striking.”

*Some of this history has been challenged over the years, mainly in terms of the original inventor and patentor

Matchbook History



Mid 20th Century

- The next generation, commonly known as the “Golden Age,” is characterized by increased matchbook advertising, complex cover artwork, and the emergence of collecting clubs

Late 20th Century

- With the high costs of labor, overseas competition, and invention of disposable lighters, the deflation of the American match industry begins
- The anti-smoking movement also gives way to the decrease in matchbook popularity

Early 21st Century

- A resurgence of matchbook collecting gains traction in society
- Today’s generation of collectors admire the history documented within each cover, from cultural references to advertising strategies

References & cool sources to check out

The Matchcover Vault

Website: <https://matchpro.org/index.html>

Wagner Match

Article: <https://wagnermatch.com/collecting-vintage-matchbooks-and-box-matches/>

The New York Times Magazine

Article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/08/magazine/who-made-that-matchbook.html>