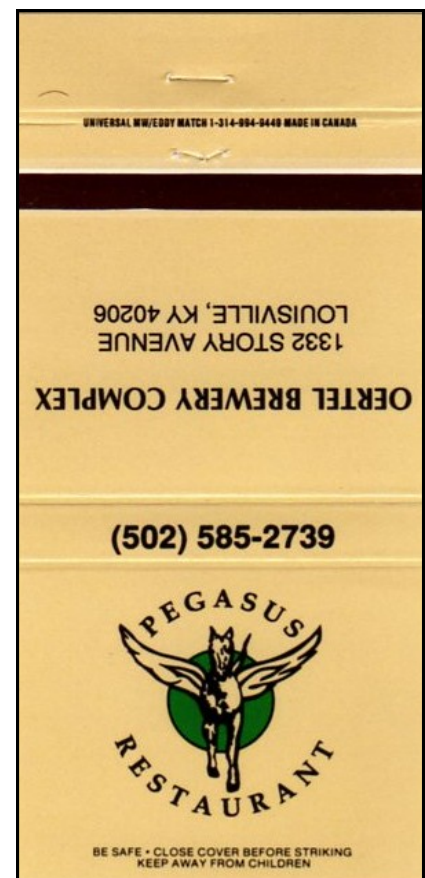
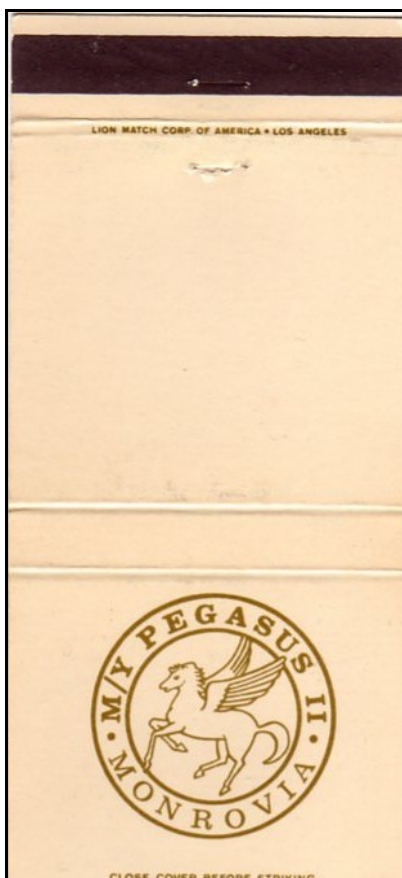
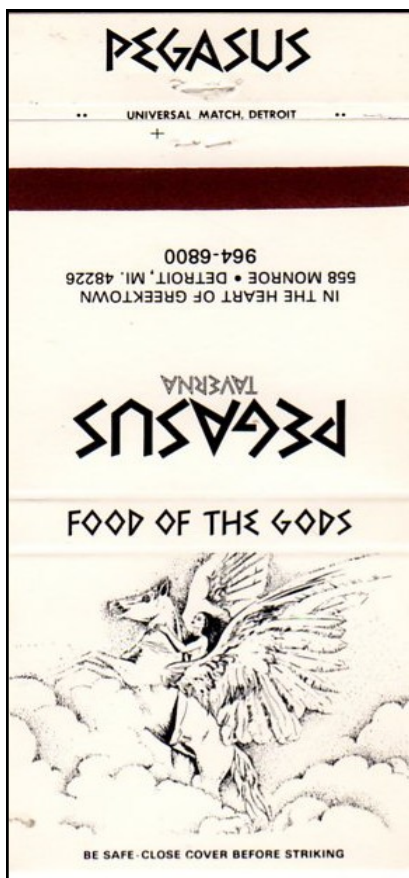


Myths & Tales:

Pegasus was the son of Neptune, and the Gorgon Medusa, sprung by his father's command from the blood of the Medusa's head, which dropped into the sea after her head had been severed by Perseus, and the foam of the sea. He was a horse because Poseidon had been in the shape of a horse at the time of the seduction. Pegasus was raised by the Muses and his hoof marks caused their fountain of inspiration to start flowing.

Pegasus was a jolly and kind horse, always seen as a lighthearted creature, a sort of emissary between Earth and Olympus. He loved to gambol around, sometimes in the heavenly fields, sometimes on the earthly plains, and sometimes skimming over the seas. During a singing contest between the Pierises and the Muses, Mount Helicon swelled in pleasure. On Poseidon's order Pegasus struck the mountain with his hoof to instruct it to return to its normal size. Helicon obeyed, but at the spot where Pegasus struck it, there gushed a spring, the Hippocrene or Horse Spring. It was alleged to have magic power in its waters. If one were to drink water from this spring, one would be gifted with the art of poetry .

He was caught by Bellerophon at the waters of his fountain, and ridden by him when he slew the Chimaera monster. By this time, classical legend had given him wings, and Bellerophon sought by their aid to ascend to heaven but Jupiter, incensed by his boldness, caused an insect to sting the steed, which threw his rider. Bellerophon ignominiously plunged headlong to Earth, where he landed with a terrific crash which blinded him for life. Thereafter, Bellerophon wandered in misery, alone and fleeing the haunts of men. A warning for the presumptuous! Pegasus then rose alone to his permanent place among the stars, becoming the "Thundering Horse of Jove" that carried the divine lightning. The Greeks called the constellation simply Hypos (Horse), and Eratosthenes distinctly asserted that it was



Pegasus!

without wings, and until after middle classical times it generally was so drawn, although loose plumes at the shoulders occasionally were added. Ptolemy mentioned the wings as well recognized in his day; and this continues to the present, for the sky figure is now known as the Winged Horse, - a recurrence of Etruscan, Euphratean, and Hittite ideas, for the wings are clearly represented on a horse's figure on tablets, vases, etc of those civilizations.

The constellation is said to have been created by the early Aryans to represent Asva, the Sun. The figure was considered incomplete, a possible reason for this being given under Aries. Thus it was characterized as, "cut in two," or as if partly hidden in the clouds; the Half-visible Libyan Horse. To the Romans, it was Equus. Jewish legends made it the mighty Nimrod's Horse, "swifter than eagles".

Pegasus appears on coins of Corinth from 500 to 430 BCE, and from 350 to 338 BCE, and 200 years thereafter,- complete and with wings; as well as on coins of Carthage, with the asterisk of the sun, or with the winged disc, and the hooded snakes over its back. It is also shown on a coin of Narbonne as a sectional winged figure, and as a winged horse on a Euphratean gem, with a bull's head, a crescent moon, and three stars in the field. A coin of Panormus, the modern Palermo, has the Horse's head. The Bridled Horse, used for the figurehead on a ship, which would account for the constellation being shown with only the head and forequarters; others have considered it of Egyptian origin, from Pag, "to cease," and Sus, "a vessel", thus symbolizing the cessation of navigation at the change of the Nile flow. From this, Pegasus seems to have been regarded, in those countries at least, as the sky emblem of a ship. In the old work the Des frudion of Troye, we read of "a ship built by Perseus, and named Pegasus, which was likened to a flying horse". [<http://prosites-magicstables.homestead.com/ThePegasusMyth.html>]

