

## Matchcover Enigmas #6

### Why A Staple?

Almost right from the onset (Pusey's matchbook did not have a staple), matchbooks were held together with staples. It certainly was a working solution. But why not glue rather than a staple?

Matchboxes predated matchbooks by some 50 years, and they were, and still are, held together with glue. Granted, matchbox glue didn't actually have to hold the matches, themselves, but the glue still did an admirable job, and there are certainly modern examples of matchbooks with glued in matchsticks that work equally well (almost all of these glued types are of foreign manufacture). So, why a staple?

From a purely production cost perspective, I (as a woeful layman) would have to assume that glue would have been a cheaper way to go than using a metal staple, and, yet, the domestic industry has always basically used the staple. Even during the war years, when resource shortages abounded, the industry maintained the use of the staple. Indeed, it's always been hobby 'gossip' that metal restrictions during World War II was what caused the demise of the Midget. Why wouldn't the industry have at least switched to glue even then?

Other options for holding the matchbook together come to mind: rivets? I just saw a matchbook pictured in one of the current club bulletins that was held together with a magnet [*unfortunately, I can't find it right now*]. You can probably think of other ways. But....why a staple?