

Restaurant Ware Collectors Network®

Iconic Establishments

A series of articles about the china used by venues ranging from hotels and restaurants to burger joints and hospitals

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Editing and layout by Phillip Lord

JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT

The man we know as boxer, Jack Dempsey, was born, William Harrison Dempsey, on June 24, 1895, in Manassa, Colorado. Around 1914, early in his boxing career, he fought under the pseudonym "Jack Dempsey" in honor of former middleweight boxer Jack "Nonpareil" Dempsey. He kept the name "Jack" as he moved forward in his career.

The apex of Dempsey's boxing career was on July 4, 1919. On that date, he defeated then World Heavyweight Champion Jess Willard. The win made Dempsey the new World Heavyweight Champion, with all the publicity and bragging rights that attached to the title. Famous American artist, James Montgomery Flagg, captured Dempsey's knock-out blow in a large painting. Dempsey kept his title until a loss to Gene Tunney in 1926. In 1927, rematch with Tunney brought in a record-setting \$2 million gate. Tunney won again and Jack Dempsey retired from boxing.

In 1926 Dempsey and Thomas F. Kearns, (1897-1967) President of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, entered the hotel business together by purchasing the new 153-room Barbara Hotel in Los Angeles. Years earlier, Dempsey had been Kearns' part-time body guard.

In 1935 Jack Dempsey opened his namesake restaurant on the corner of 8th Avenue and 50th Street, in New York City. It was located just across the street from Madison Square Garden. The company was known as Jack Dempsey's Inc, with Jack as president, so there were probably other investors involved.

Buffalo China produced the china service for this restaurant. The 10 3/4" service plate contains a center of the well oval sepia photograph of Jack Dempsey, taken shortly after he became World Heavyweight Champion. This is the same photograph that appeared on the cover of "Self-Defense" boxing magazine.

Seven-inch plates with scalloped yellow rims, contain an oval portrait of Jack Dempsey, along with his signature. These plates are on Buffalo's patented 'Colorido Ware'. The same oval portrait and signature crest was also used on pink 'Rouge Ware' plates.

A "JD" monogram crest, placed at the 2 o'clock position, was used on 7 1/8" plates made by the new Cafe-au-Lait, Lamelle, patented inlay process. These plates were distributed by Nathan Straus & Sons, Inc., and contain "Made Expressly for Jack Dempsey's Restaurant" on the backstamp. A blue border 'Lune Lamelle' version was produced after Nathan Straus merged with Duparquet in 1936. These "JD" crested plates can be seen on the table in a 1935 photograph.

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A search of WorthPoint.com turned up no other shapes that are crested with either the oval portrait or the "JD" monogram, strongly indicating that the other pieces in this service are not crested or backstamped. A Buffalo oval platter, with the same blue border and dark verge pin line, but no crest or backstamp, is on WorthPoint, so this may be part of the rest of the china service.

In 1936, the 200-room Jack Dempsey-Vanderbilt opened at 2009 Collins Avenue in Miami Beach. Around that time, Dempsey invested in the Great Northern Hotel, on W. 56th Street in New York City. The Vanderbilt had a **Jack Dempsey Restaurant** in the front on the ground floor.

Almost all of the advertising materials for his business ventures contain a photo of Jack, adding to, and reinforcing, his famous reputation.

In 1947 the restaurant relocated to the Brill Building at 1619 Broadway, between 49th and 50th Streets, in Times Square. The name was then changed to "Jack Dempsey's Broadway Restaurant". Dempsey partnered with Jack Amiel, owner of Kentucky Derby winner "Count Turf". Mr. Amiel handled the business side, while Mr. Dempsey acted as the host. The new Broadway restaurant contained a racetrack-shape central bar. The James Montgomery Flagg "knock-out" painting filled one wall, and was used on promotional pieces.

Cocktail napkins contain a different version of the "J/D" monogram. But was it used as a crest on china? By 1964 a script version of "JD" was used on menu covers.

On the evening of October 6, 1974, 78-year-old Jack Dempsey sat in his famous restaurant for the last time. He said he was "heartbroken" by the shutdown, the result of a complicated legal battle over the lease. His 10-year-lease, which called for an annual rental of \$65,000, had been challenged by the new owners of the Brill Building, who wanted an annual rental of \$100,000.

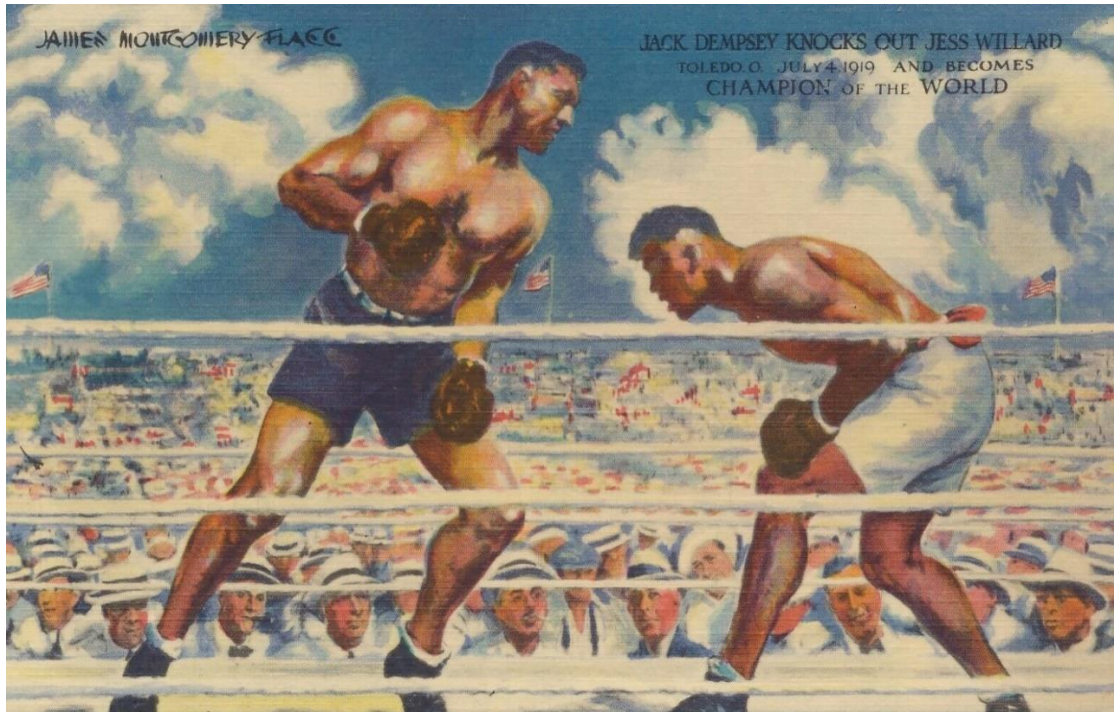
A week before the closing, the famed Flagg painting had been removed and shipped to the Smithsonian in Washington.

William Harrison "Jack" Dempsey died on May 31, 1983.

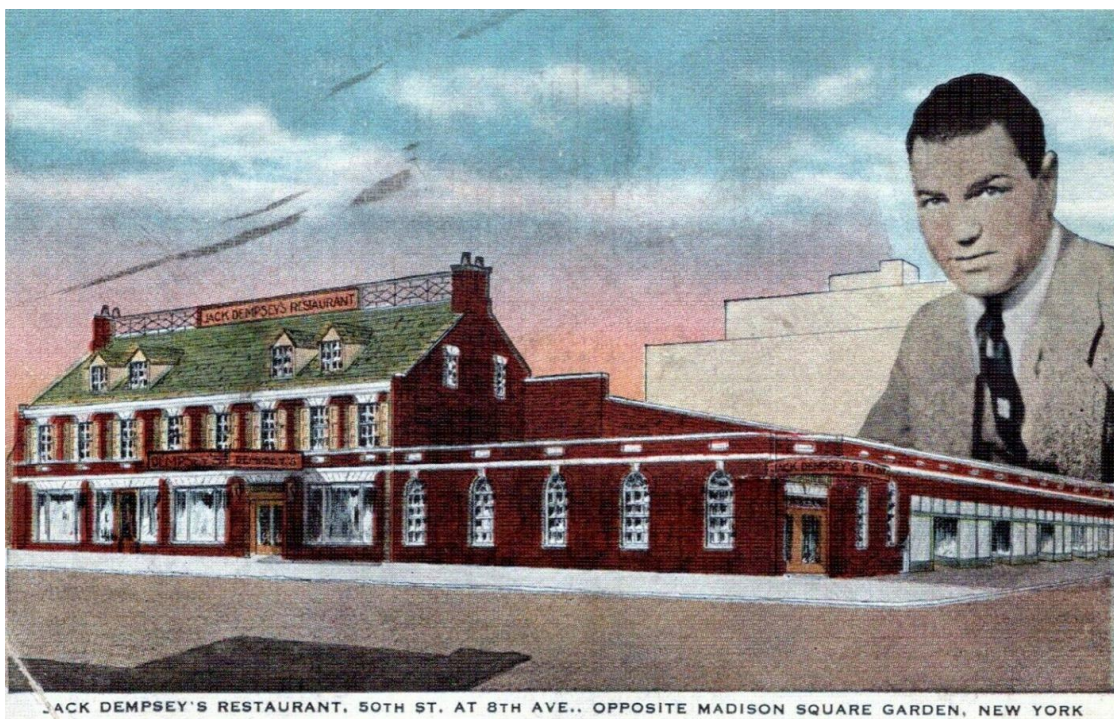
Information resources: New York Times, October 6, 1974; *The Book of Buffalo Pottery*, by Seymour & Violet Altman; BoxRec.com (the boxing database); Historic Images photographs for sale on eBay; 1970s exterior photo by Malco23; CardCow.com; Wikipedia; eBay.com; WorthPoint.com; AOL.com image search; and Google.com image search.

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



A section of the James Montgomery Flagg painting



Jack Dempsey's Restaurant at 50th St & 8th Ave

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Barbara Hotel, Los Angeles, CA



Main Dining Room, JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT, 50th St. at 8th Ave., Opp. Madison Sq. Garden, N. Y. C.

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT

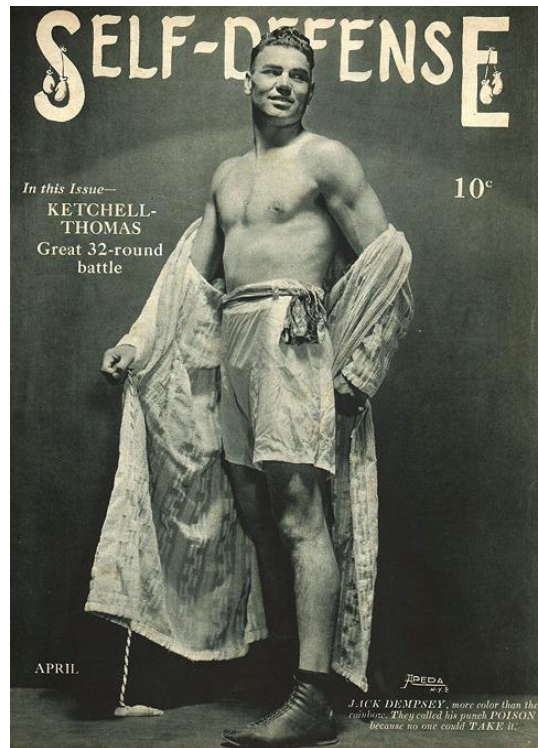


10 3/4" service plate by Buffalo China (above & below)



Iconic Establishments

JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



The same photograph used on the cover of “Self Defense” magazine.



Seven-inch Buffalo plate with portrait and signature

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Backstamp on seven-inch plate

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Pink version

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



7 1/8" plate with monogram crest

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Backstamp on 7 1/8" plate

Iconic Establishments

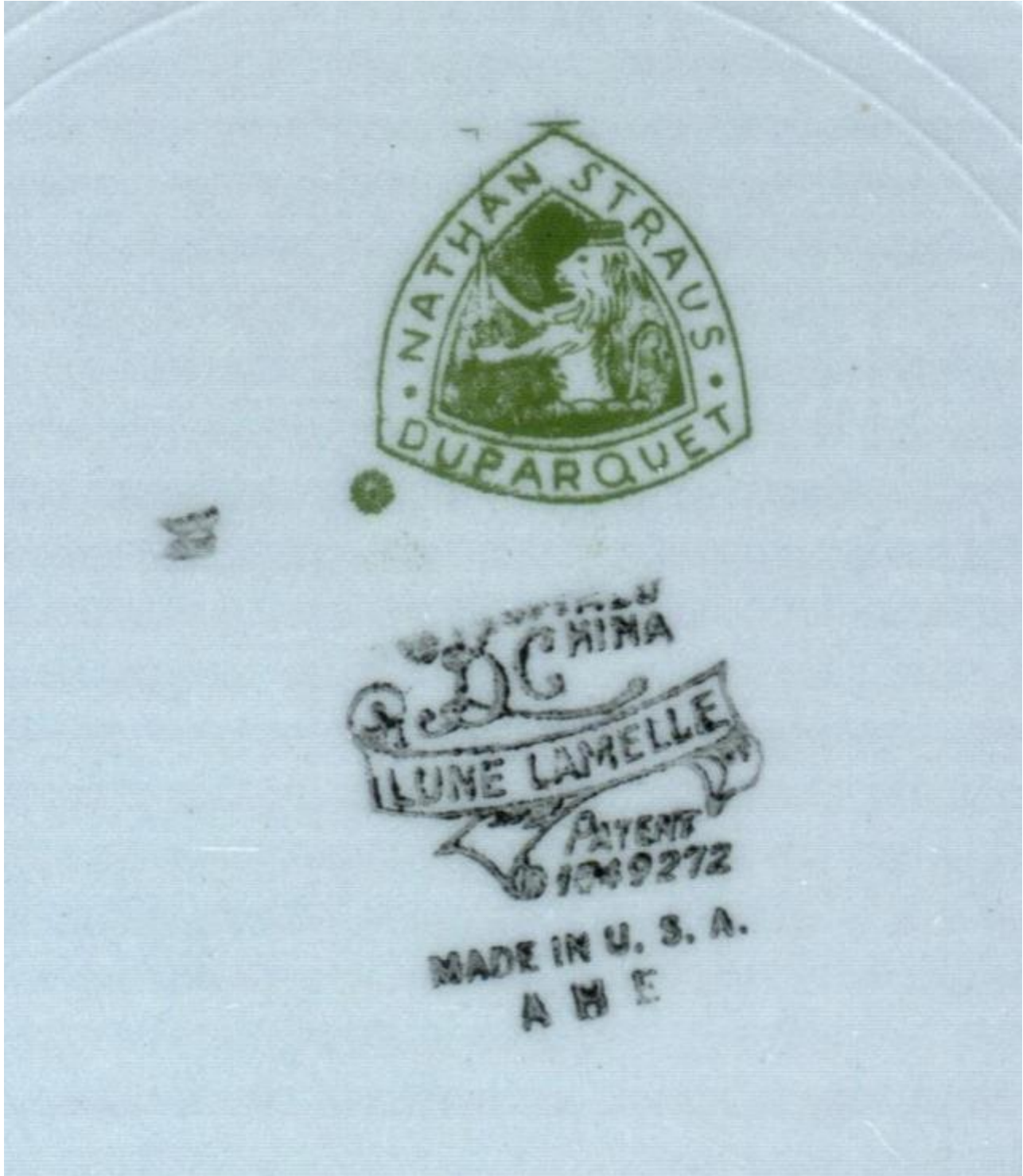
JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Blue border version

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Nathan Straus Duparquet backstamp

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



1935 photograph showing plates on the table

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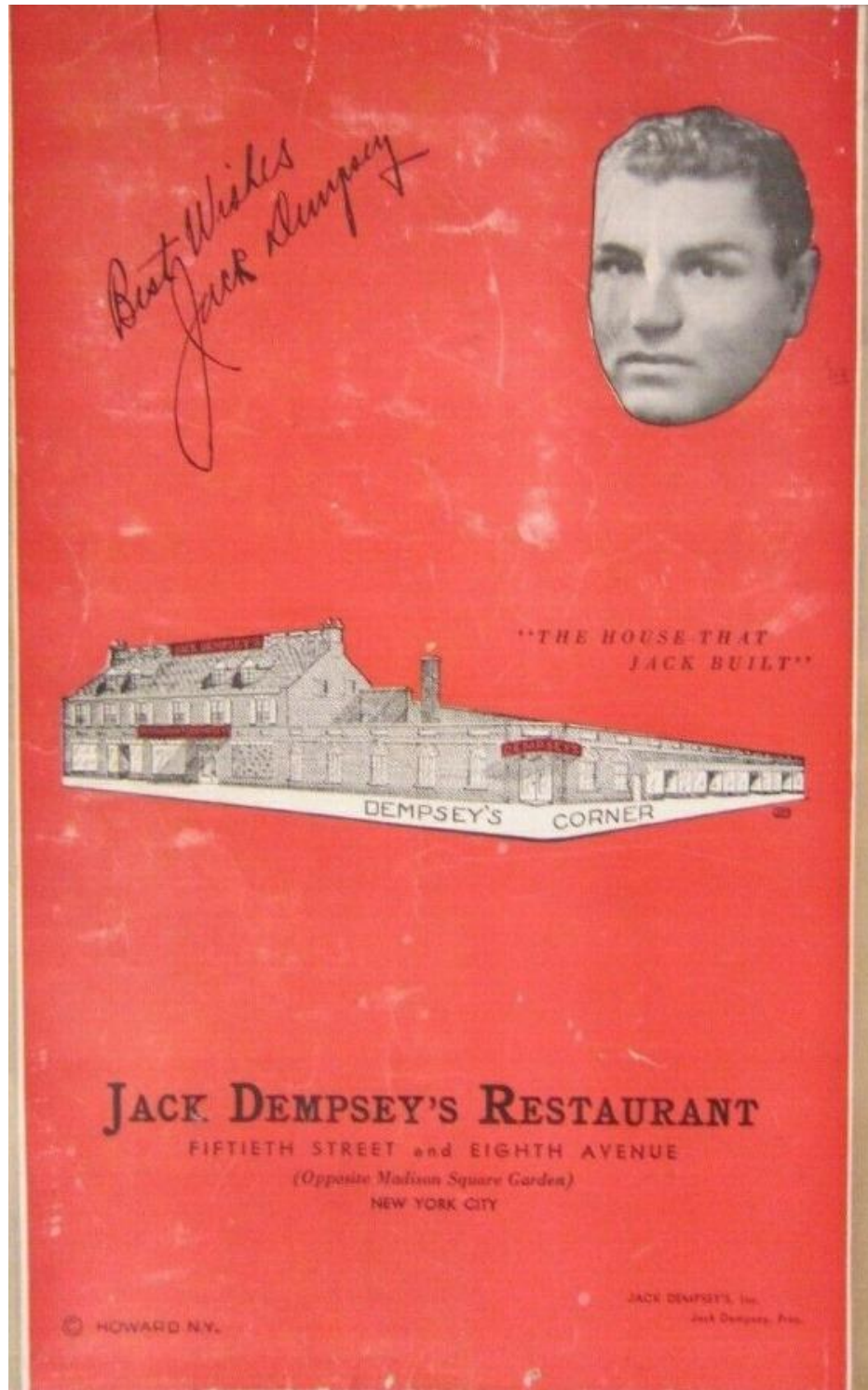
JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Unmarked platter with blue border

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



1936 menu cover

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT

CRAB MEAT à la MARYLAND with Virginia Ham in Cream (a Southern Delight) \$1.50

8 and CLAMS
25 CHERRYSTONE 40
35 LITTLE NECK 35
SERVED WITH COCKTAIL SAUCE

PEZZERS
of Marinier's Herring 45
ing Salad in Dill . . . 50

TOMATO JUICE 25
SAUERKRAUT JUICE 25
SHRIMP COCKTAIL 65
SEA FOOD COCKTAIL 90
LOBSTER COCKTAIL 1.00
ANTIPASTO 75
FRENCH SARDINES (BOX) 75
HALF CANTALOUPE 40

US DE STRASBOURG 1.00
DOUVRES 1.25 Per Person
ILED SMITHFIELD HAM 50

RELISHES
40 THUMB RISE OLIVES 40
30 CORN OLIVES 30

SOUPS
30 FINE MARQUE PARISHINE 30
30 SPECIAL—CREAM OF MUSHROOMS 40
30 OYSTER STEW 75
75 CONGOMME GOURME 40
30 ONION-BL. BECHAM

meat from the Grill
ION STEAK, BAKED IDAHO POTATO 1.35
SE BIGARADE, WILD RICE, ORANGES. 1.50
Lbs.) DRAWN BUTTER 1.75
BY CHICKEN (weighing 1 1/4 Lbs.) 1.25
JE POTATOES, CURRANT JELLY 1.50
A HEN, CURRANT JELLY 1.95
CKEN (2 1/2 Lbs.) (Half) 1.45
KLOIN, SAUCE PIQUANTE, APPLE
SAUCE, BAKED IDAHO POTATO 1.25
T IDAHO POTATO
(for two) 3.90 (for three) 5.85 (for four) 7.75
2.00
BRIEN POTATOES, FRENCH
FRIED ONIONS 1.25
ED IDAHO POTATO 1.25

Specialties
Suggested by Dempsey
(from 2 to 10 Minutes)

OLD FASHION
HALF
BOILED SPRING
CHICKEN
in its Own Natural Boath
with Hearts of Celery, Onions,
Young Carrots
and
Home Made Noodles
\$1.50
FROG LEGS SAUTE in Butter
Tomato-Provence
Julienne Potatoes \$1.50

Jack's Favorite
OYSTER PAN SAUTÉ
with
Va. Ham on Toast 1.50

Jack's Delight
VIRGINIA HAM AND EGGS
with Cream
Raw Fried Idaho Potatoes
(Just a Little Different) 1.25

BOILED BEEF
in its Own Natural Boath
with Noodles
and Fresh Vegetables
\$1.25

Pennsylvania
MOUNTAIN BROOK TROUT
Saute in Butter w. Almonds
and
Julienne Potatoes 1.50

Genuine
SMITHFIELD VIRGINIA HAM
Glazed
Creamed New Spinach
Currant Jelly Wine Sauce
Bermuda Potatoes 1.50

Jack Dempsey's

Specialties

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(from 2 to 10 Minutes)

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Jack Dempsey's

Dinner Specialties

FILET OF SOLE Maryland, Lobster, Hot
SOFT SHELL CRABS Sauce-Macaroni,
SHAD ROE with Beans-Hot Butter, Potatoes

SKELETON STEAK MINUTE, Celery, Boned
SPAGHETTI with Fresh Macaroni and

VEAL CUTLET BREADED, Hot, Hot
HARICOT OF BABY LAMB in Cream
SWEETBREADS with Fresh Macaroni,
ROAST RABBIT OF SPRING LAMB (Lamb)

Tenderloin SAGOUT a la French or
BROILED QUAIL ON TOAST with Virginia
Fresh Orange

ROAST L. L. SPRING DUCKLING, Virginia
Wine &
BREAST OF GUINEA HEN, Virginia Hot
WHOLE YOUNG FRESH MILK FED CHICKEN

PRIME RIBS OF BEEF, Boned, Glazed
ROAST VERMONT TURKEY, Cranberry

FRESH FISH
FRESH CALIFORNIA ASPARAGUS
FRESH NEW PEAS 40
FRESH STRING BEANS 50
FRESH LIMA BEANS 40
BUTTERED BEETS 40
CAULIFLOWER HOLLANDAISE 60
MACARONI OR SPAGHETTI AU GRATIN 40

BOKED 20
BERMUDA 25
MASHED 25
FRENCH FRIED 40
HASHED BROWN 30

LEMON MERINGUE PIE 35
MACARON CUSTARD PIE 35
FRESH GREEN APPLE PIE 35
FRENCH PASTRY 25
PETIT PASTRY 25
DANISH PASTRY 25

FIRST IN SEASON, HALF CANTALOUPE 40
HONEY DEW MELON 45
RAW APPLE OR PEACH 25
HALF GRAPEFRUIT 25
PRESERVED FIGS WITH CREAM 40
SLICED FRESH PINEAPPLE 30

COMPOTE OF FRUIT 50
BAKED ALASKA (Per Person) 1.00
PEACH MELBA 75
CAFE PARFAIT 50
BISCUIT TORTONI 40

MARONIS GLACE 75
MERINGUE GLACE 50

PASTRIES, PIES, PUDDINGS
CHOCOLATE PUDDING 30
RICE PUDDING 20
CUP CUSTARD 25
OLD FASHION STRAWBERRY
SHORTCAKE 50

FRESH (Fresh and Stewed)
STEWED FRESH RHUBARB 40
STEWED FRESH BARTLETT PEACH 40
PRESERVED NECTARINES 40
BAKED GRAPEFRUIT ALASKA 75
BAKED GRAPEFRUIT CINNAMON 40
STEWED PRUNES 30

VANILLA ICE CREAM, CHOCOLATE
SAUCE 50
VANILLA ICE CREAM, CRUSHED
FRESH STRAWBERRIES 50
FRENCH ICE CREAM, VANILLA

ICE CREAM
VANILLA ICE CREAM, CHOCOLATE
SAUCE 50
VANILLA ICE CREAM, CRUSHED
FRESH STRAWBERRIES 50
FRENCH ICE CREAM, VANILLA

BAKED ALASKA (Per Person) 1.00
PEACH MELBA 75
CAFE PARFAIT 50
BISCUIT TORTONI 40

MARONIS GLACE 75
MERINGUE GLACE 50

Jack Dempsey's
CHEF

Recommendations

A Proper Assortment of Food is a Diet
for Your Health and Enjoyment

A PLATTER OF ASSORTED FRESH GARDEN
VEGETABLES CAREFULLY SELECTED PROPERLY
PREPARED UNDER FUNDAMENTAL RULES OF
SCIENTIFIC COOKERY

WITH

FRESH KENNEBEC SALMON STEAK \$1.45

BROOK TROUT SAUTE IN BUTTER,
MEUNIERE \$1.40

GRILLED HAMBURGER STEAK \$1.45

BROILED SADDLE OF BABY LAMB \$1.45

GRILLED CHICK, CHOP
OF YOUNG LAMB
\$1.45

HALF GRILLED MILK-FED
SPRING CHICKEN
\$1.90

BROILED SKELETON STEAK
\$2.75

BROILED TENDERLOIN
STEAK \$2.75

JOHN A. HALLER, JR.

1936 menu- opened

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



1939 photograph of exterior with Madison Square Garden

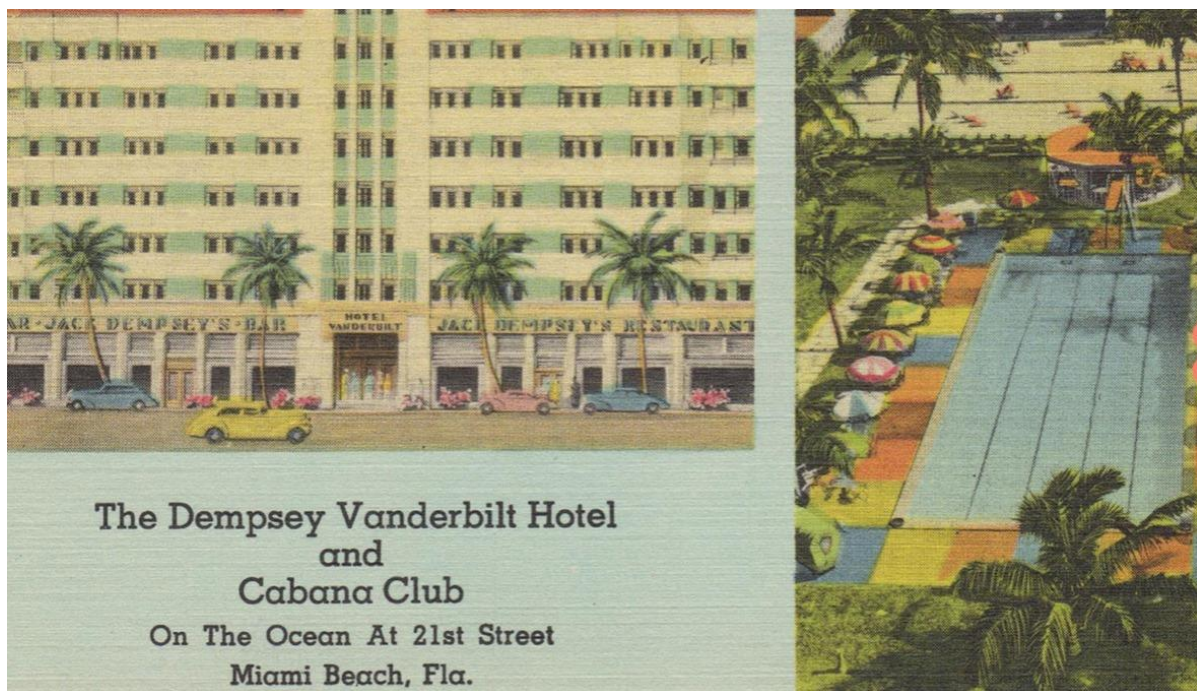
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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Great Northern Hotel



Vanderbilt Hotel, Miami Beach with bar and restaurant flanking entrance

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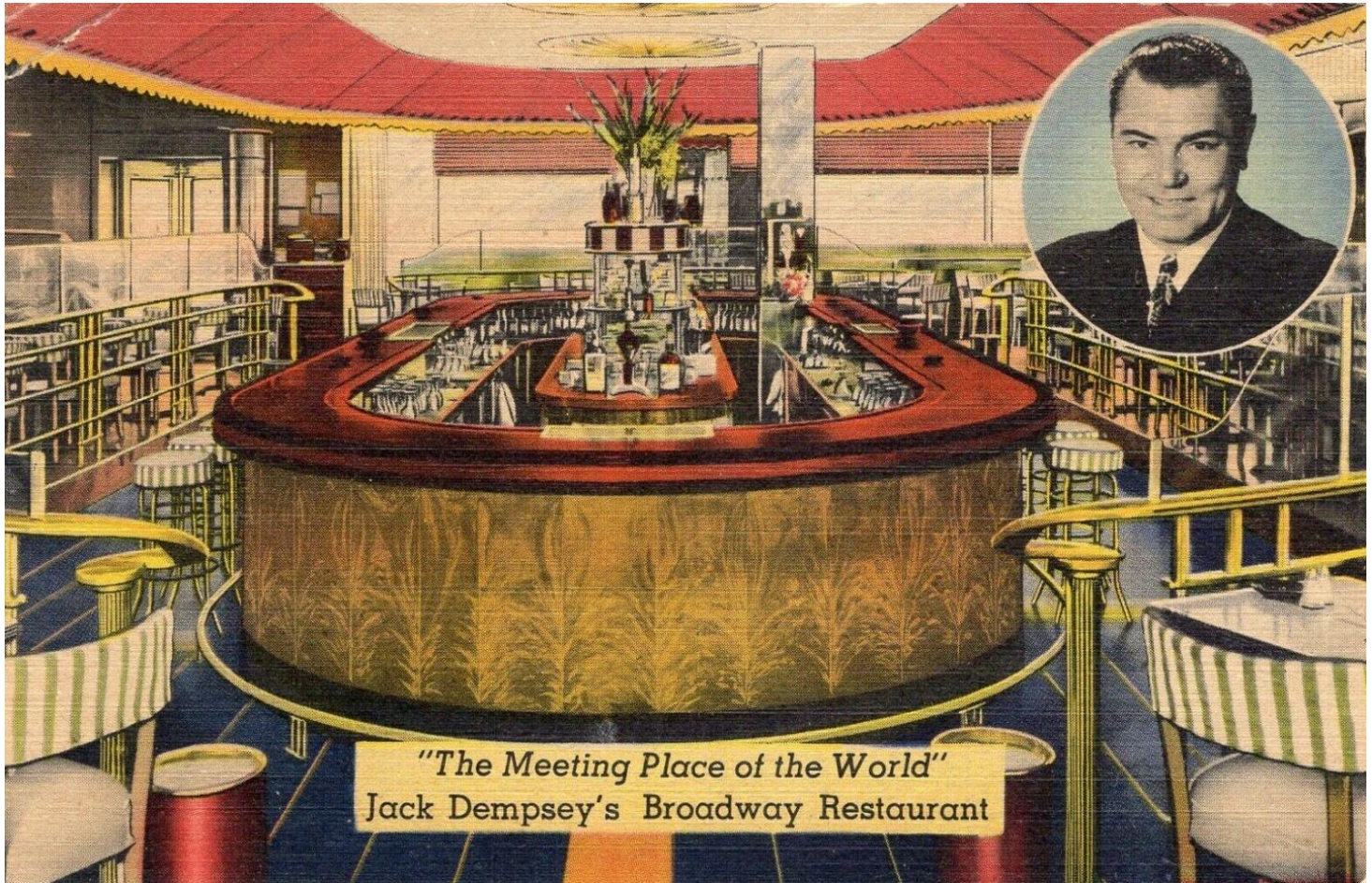


Vanderbilt Hotel matchbook with Jack Dempsey's photo

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Bar in the new Broadway location

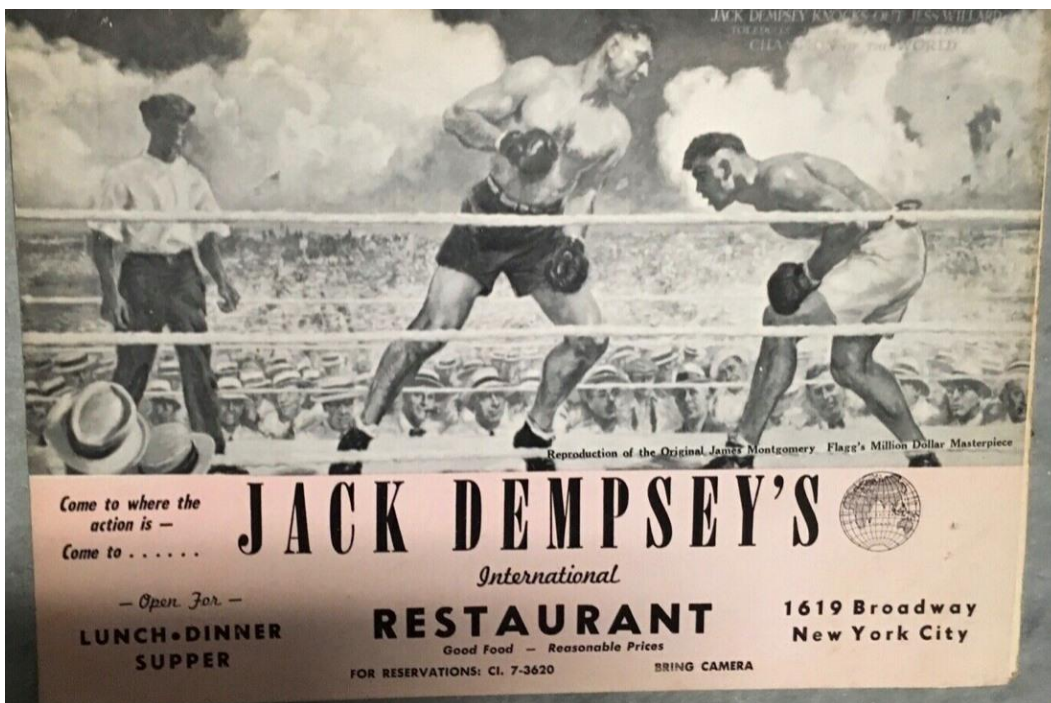
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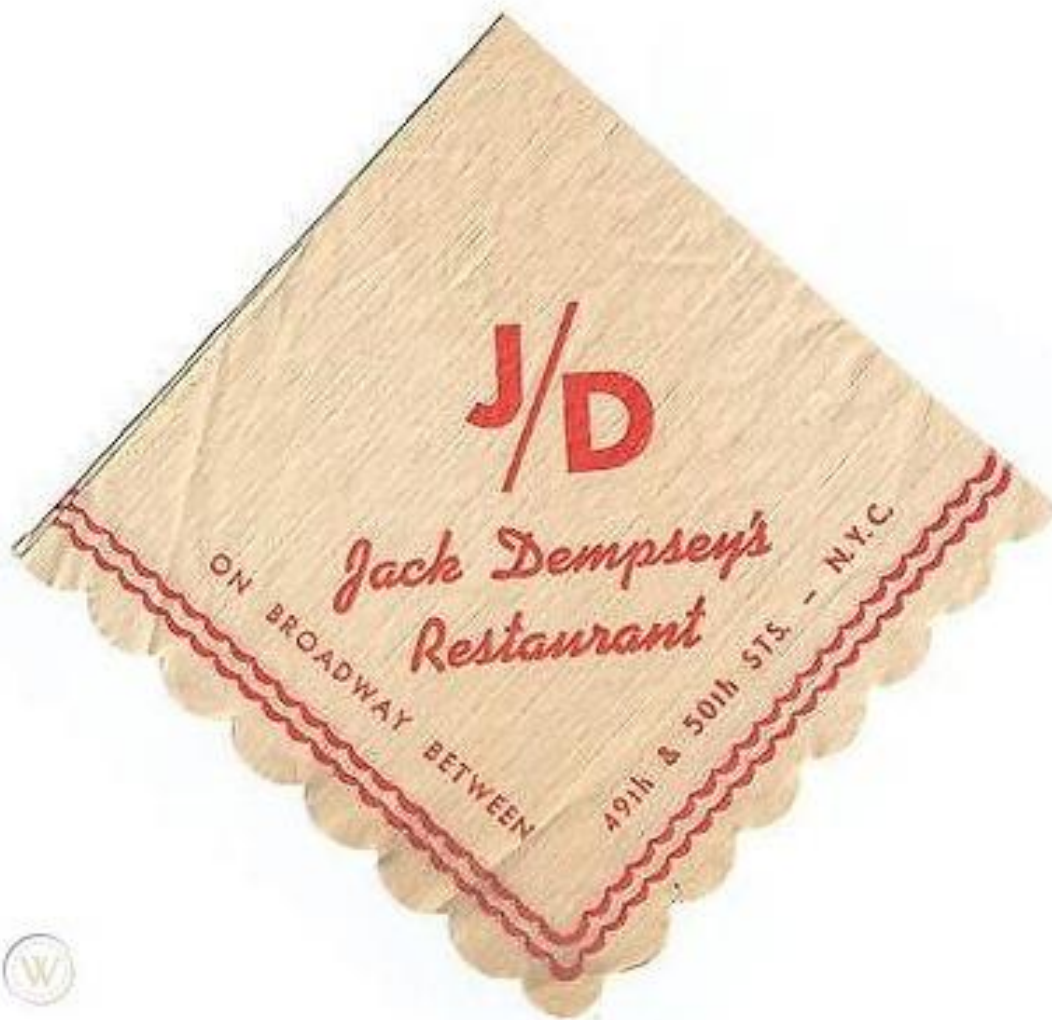
J. M. Flagg painting on wall



Postcard featuring J. M. Flagg painting

Iconic Establishments

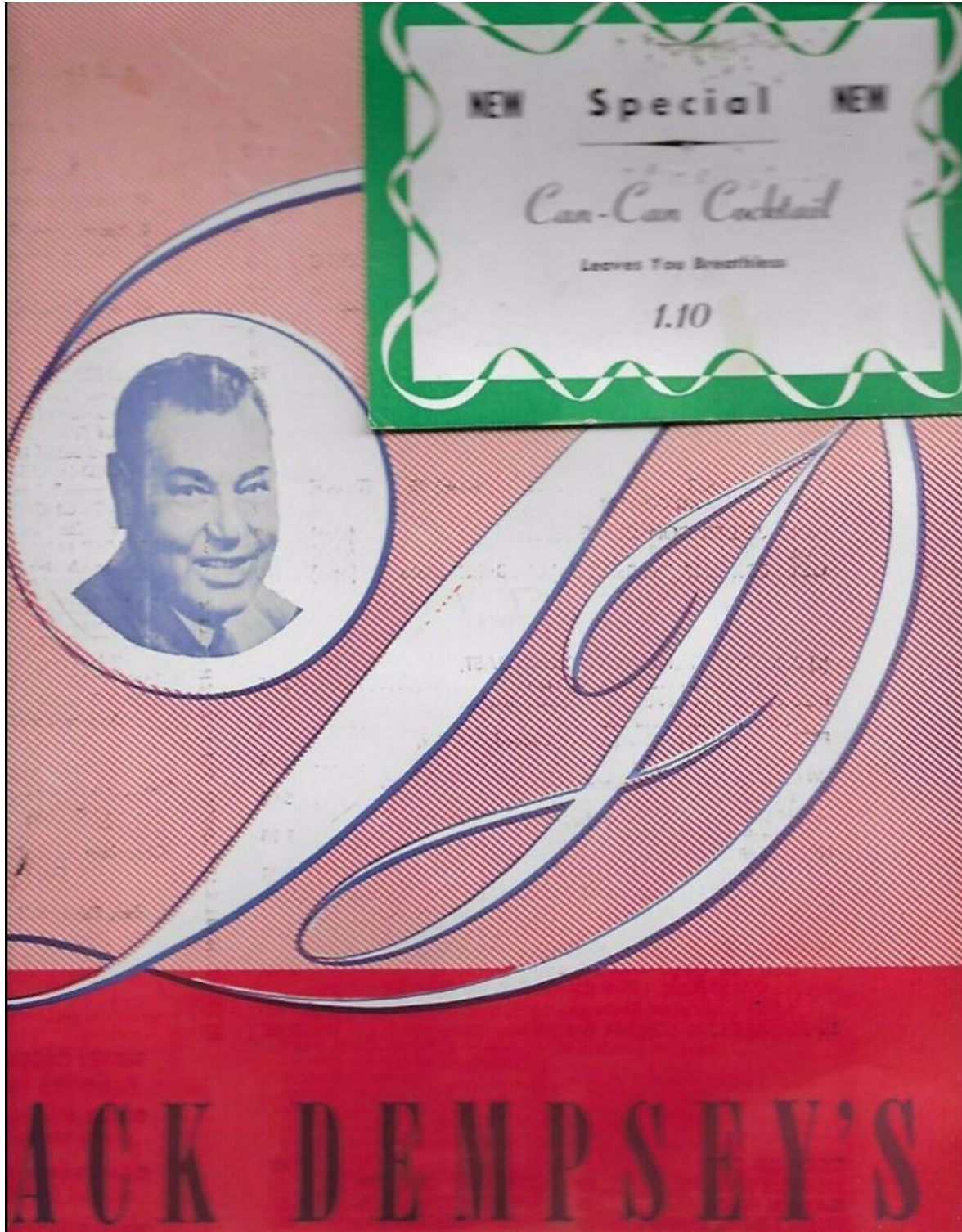
JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



1940s era napkin

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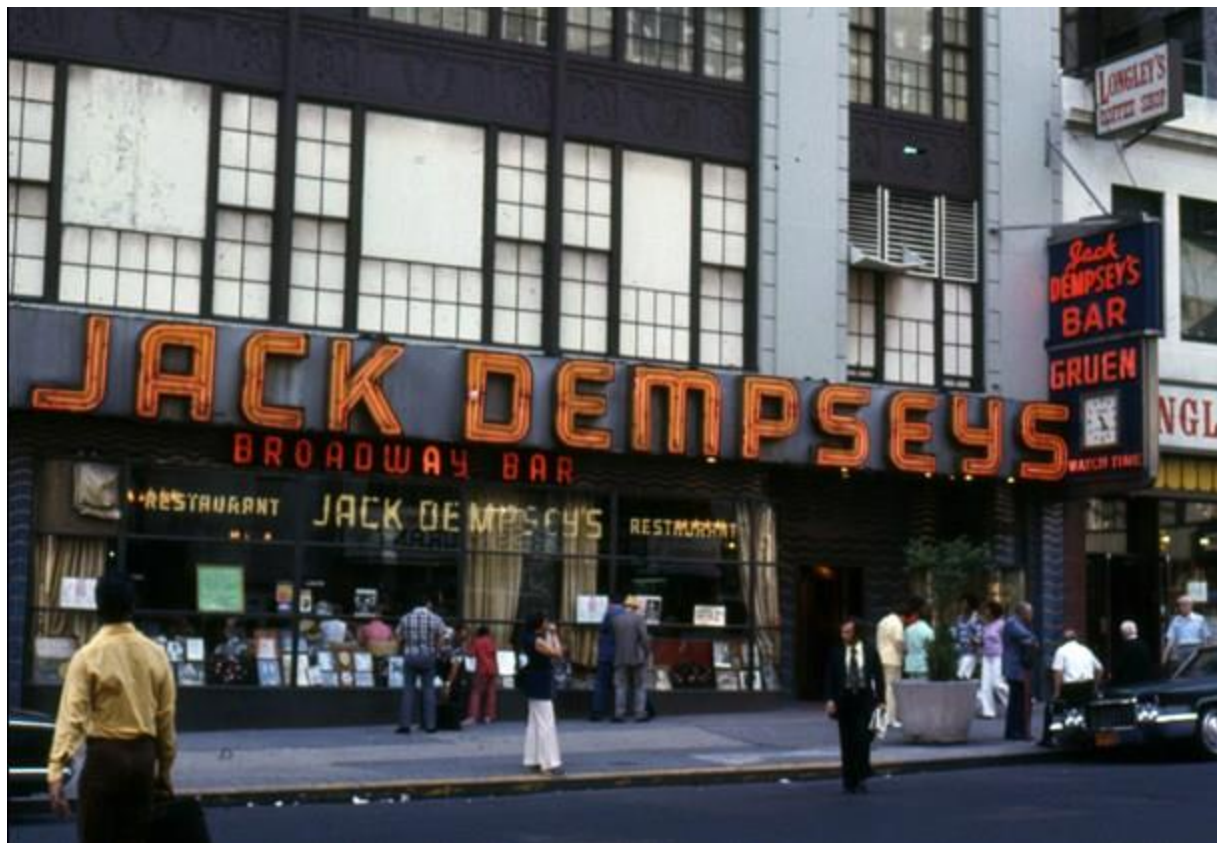
JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



1964 menu cover with script "JD" logo

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



Broadway exterior in 1970s

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JACK DEMPSEY'S RESTAURANT



(NY4) NEW YORK, Oct. 7--ALONE AT THE END--One-time heavyweight boxing champion Jack Dempsey sits alone Sunday night in the restaurant that bears his name before its doors were closed were the last time. A rent increase and changes in the neighborhood and the lifestyle of its clientele were blamed for the closure of the restaurant. (AP Wirephoto) (as20008stf-rfs) 1974

Jack Dempsey in his restaurant on closing night