



LowerD1att2

There are re-orders, but no distinction on them. There is no monogram for the denoms on the card, just the blank custom surround. denominations was a separate die inserted in the middle. The re-orders were for all denominations.

Kenny Craig picked these up on ebay a few weeks ago. As usual he sent them out to his friends. Thank you friend. I played it forward with a couple friends. This is the way it should be. Friends helping friends.

This one runs the gambit from Chicago to Guy Lombardo, to murder. to counterfeiting AMEX travelers checks, "Bugs" Moran, and winds up in a legal Las Vegas casino. A pretty good 20 year trip. <g>

Enter our "Friend Of The Hobby:"

Lower Deck

The Lower Deck chips were delivered in 1936 to 316 North Michigan Avenue, an address which was situated in a five story building located near the southern edge of Chicago's Magnificent Mile.

Here's a pic from 1935 looking south over the Michigan Avenue bridge; 316 is visible in the upper left:



LowerD2att2

close-up of same pic:

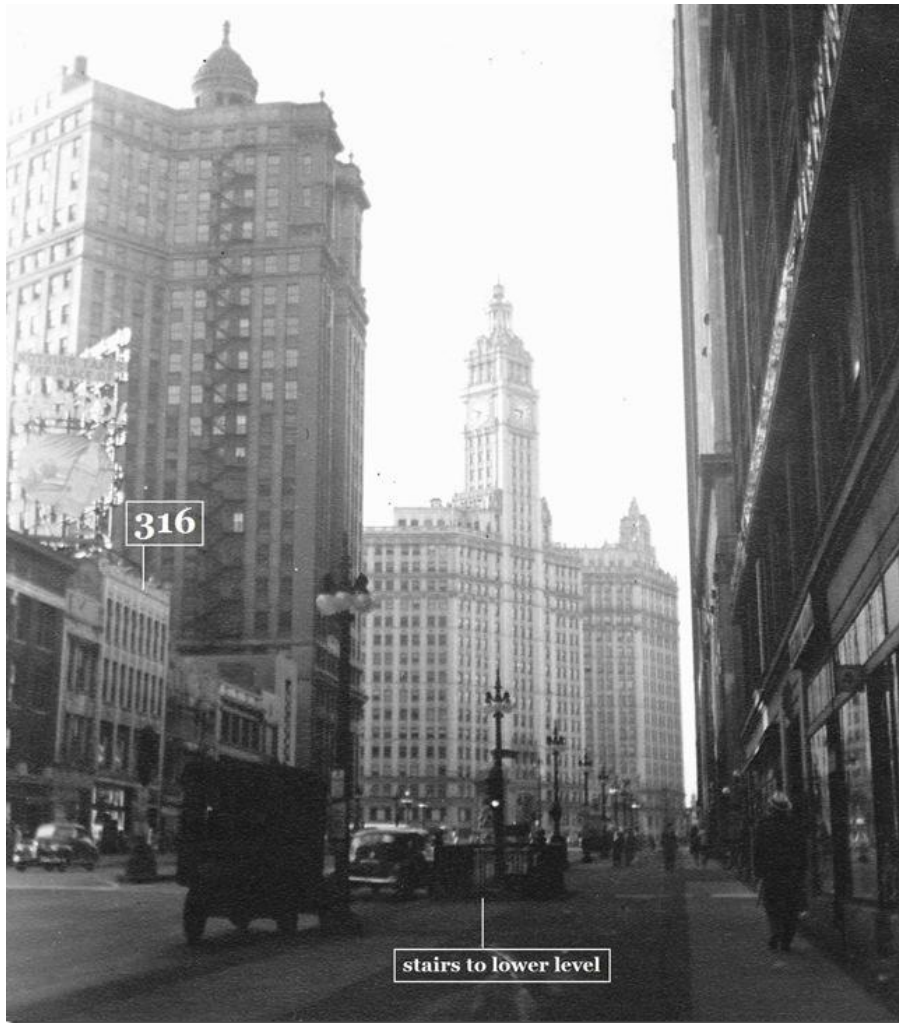


LowerD3att2

The Michigan Avenue bridge is double-decked. Many of the streets around the bridge have an upper and lower level, including the 300 block of Michigan Ave.

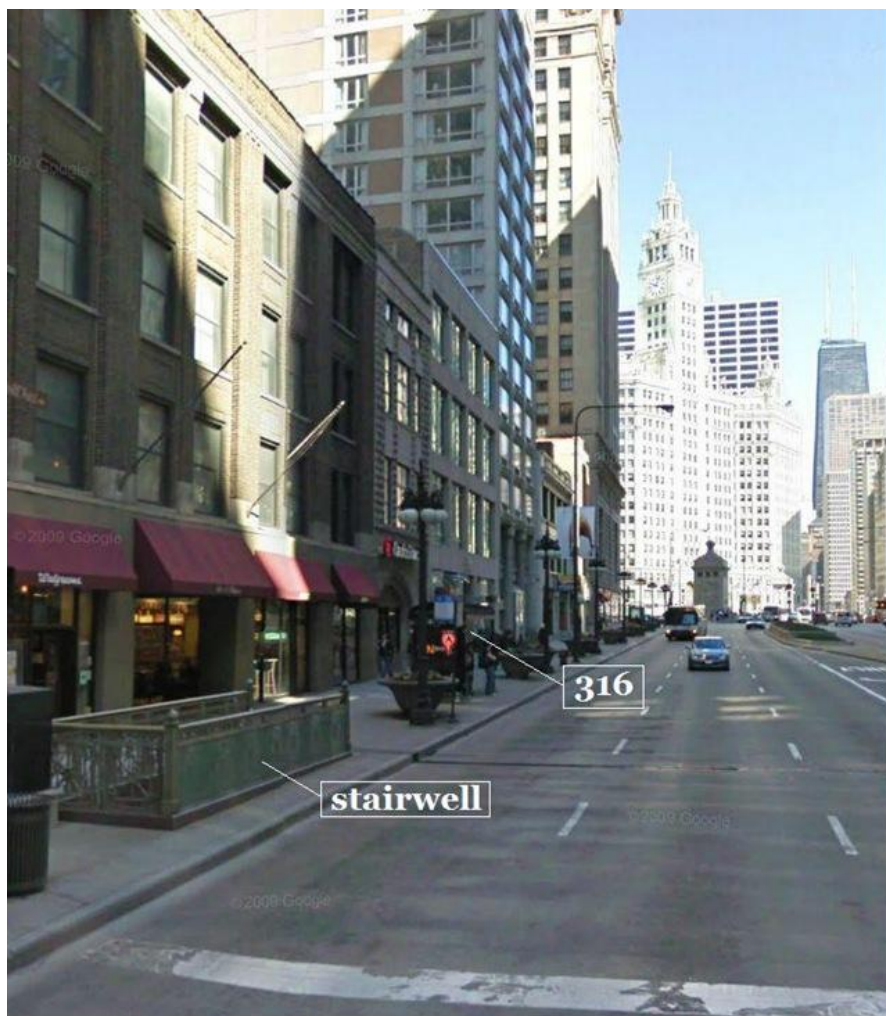
The Lower Deck was located on the lower level or lower deck of 316 (I'm assuming this is the source of the club's name; but with the ship's wheel on the chip it could be a double reference to the lower deck of a ship). Michigan Avenue's lower deck was accessible to pedestrians from several sidewalk stairwells.

pic from 1945 looking north from the odd numbered side of Michigan Avenue:



LowerD4att2

a current view looking north from the even numbered side:



LowerD5att2

looking up from the stairwell in the pic above:



LowerD6att2

To give an idea of what a tavern on the lower deck looks like, here's a couple of current pics from the lower level of Michigan Avenue;

both pics show the Billy Goat Tavern which is located at 430 N. Michigan Avenue:



LowerD7att2



LowerD8att2

My note: Outside of layovers at O'Hare airport. I was only in Chicago 1 time when I was 7 years old. I had no idea some streets had upper and lower decks.

The Lower Deck appears to have opened sometime in late 1935, early 1936. A place called Marquam's Pub was located on the lower level of 316 Michigan Ave. as late as June 1935; the chips were first ordered in January 1936. I came across several names associated with the operation of the Lower Deck including Louise Stehlin, James McNeff, and Jack Schneider--but one name stood out: Alfred John Quodbach (1889-1978).

pic of Quodbach from 1939:



LowrrD9att2

Quodbach, a Chicago native, became well known in his hometown during the late 1920's, early 1930's as the operator of a very popular night club named the Granada.

Quodbach and the Granada's claim to fame is that they launched the career of legendary big band leader Guy Lombardo.

ad from Jan.1929:

COME OUT AND DANCE TO



GUY LOMBARDO

and His Royal Canadians

Every Night at

GRANADA CAFE

6800 Cottage Grove

Ashton Stevens says: "Lombardo is the
sweetest jazz band this side of heaven."

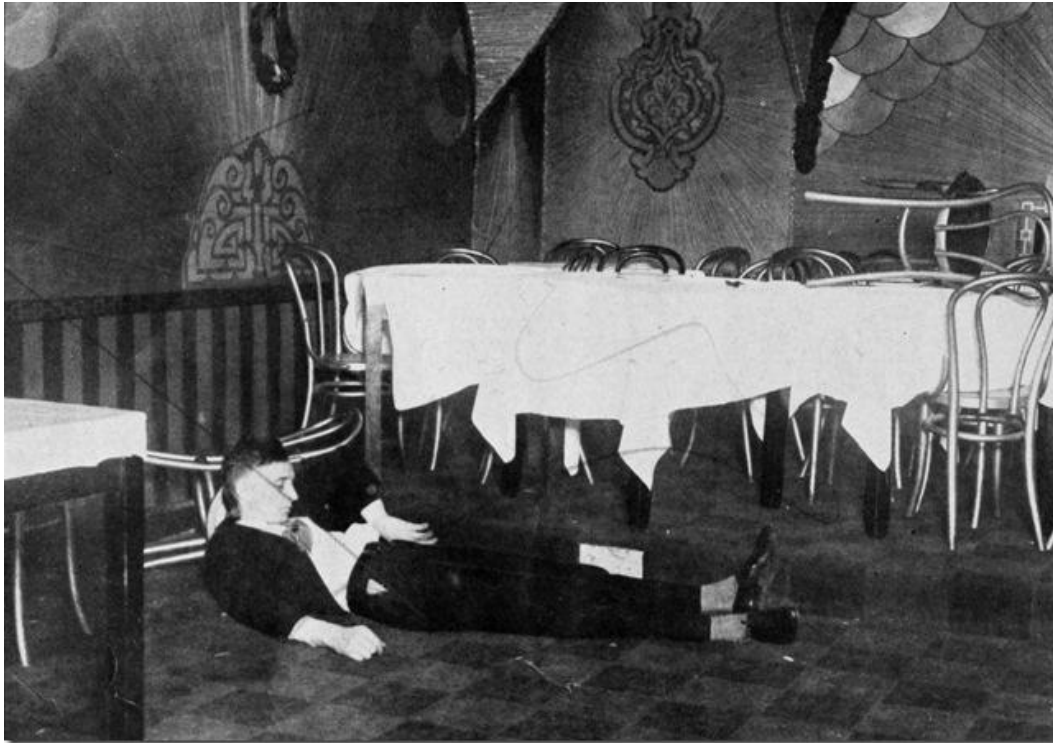
LowerD10att2

Lombardo said that Quodbach's Granada had a regular "gangster clientele" and that Quodbach "knew a lot of the boys" but was not a gangster or racketeer.

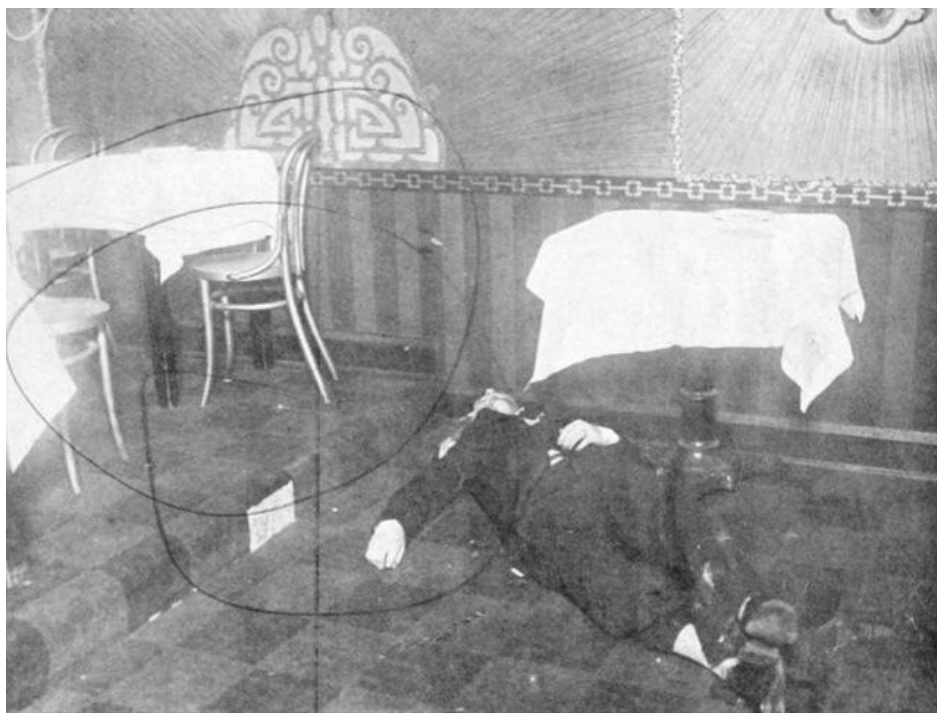
Lombardo's performances at the Granada were broadcast live throughout the country via Chicago radio station WBBM. On the night which straddled December 30 & 31, 1928 Lombardo's

set at the Granada was interrupted by the murder of two men described as south side “gangster leaders of beer and labor racketeering.” Some radio listeners claimed that they heard the shots, but WBBM stated that they weren’t broadcasting live from the Granada at the time (some have described the incident as the first murder ever broadcast live).

Ruining the Granada’s carpet are William “Gunner” McFadden (top) and Hugh “Stubby” McGovern (bottom):



LowerD11att2



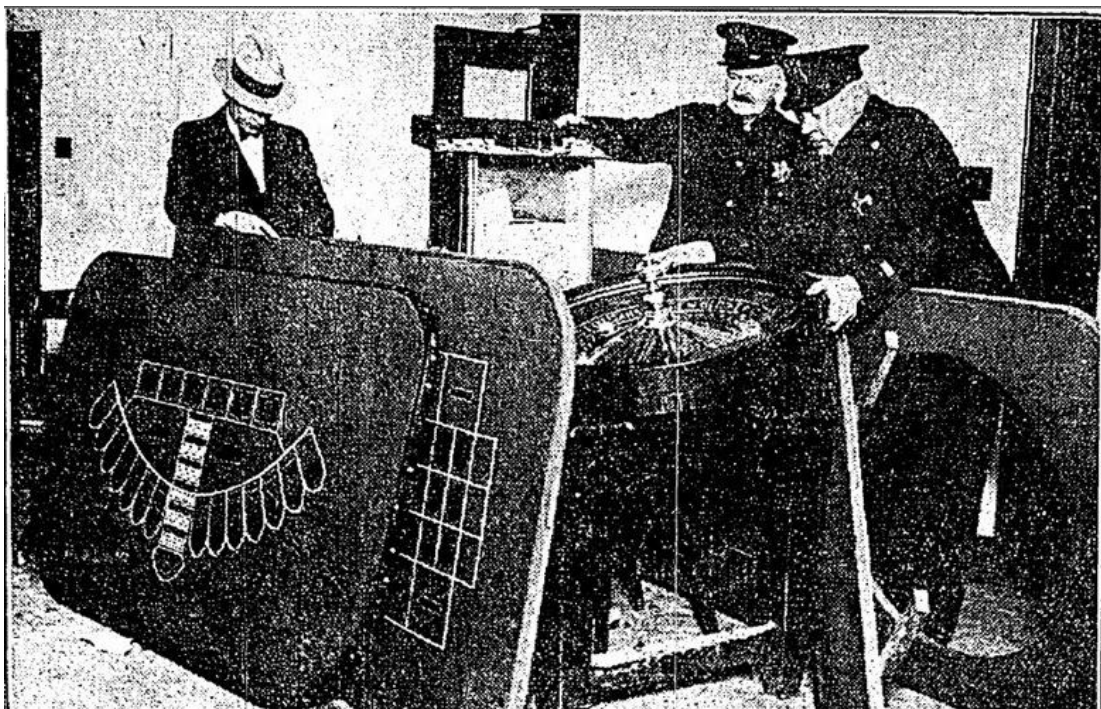
LowerD12

Certainly a New Years Eve that "Mr. New Years Eve" Lombardo never forgot from his days of "auld lang syne".....

Quodbach operated a gaming room above the Granada which was described by the Chicago Tribune in 1928 as "one of the deluxe gambling haunts of Chicago's south side night life."

pic after the Granada was raided in 1928 (got to be some chips out there from this place):

My note: I agree, where are the chips? Maybe when we find them they will have blood stains along with the cigarette burns. <g>



POLICE RAID LUXURIOUS GAMBLING HOUSE IN WOODLAWN DISTRICT.
Gambling paraphernalia seized in place above the Granada cafe at 68th street and Cottage Grove avenue. The equipment confiscated was valued at \$20,000 by the police.

LowerD13

The Granada was destroyed by a fire on January 18th 1934. Over the next two years Quodbach opened a couple of places in Chicago, neither appears to have been very successful.

I was not able to determine if Quodbach was associated with the Lower Deck at the time of the chip orders in early 1936. In late 1936 he opened a club in New York City called Coffee Dan's.

It wasn't successful and Quodbach left NYC owing people money. He then went to Hollywood and in early 1937 opened a place called the Century Club. This also appears to have been short-lived because Quodbach returns home to Chicago and becomes associated with the Lower Deck:

August 19th 1937:

AL QUADBACK is having a lot of fun in the LOWER DECK. 316 N. Michigan ave., a beautiful little gay spot in the 'Loop. He would like to see many of his old friends in the pleasant hideaway, where he promises a warm welcome in spite of the cool atmosphere.

* * *

LowerD14att2

According to a token catalog, at some point Quadbach ordered tokens for the place:

| IKO# | Date | Obverse | Reverse | Description | Town | (123) |
|------|------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|------|-------|
| 3182 | 01-1 | L. PETKOVSEK | GOOD FOR/5¢/AT THE BAR | B 26 12s | | |
| 3183 | 01-1 | AL QUODBACH/316/N. MICHIGAN AVE. | GOOD FOR/5¢/IN TRADE | A 20 R | | |
| 3184 | 01-1 | STREUBER'S/PLACE | GOOD FOR/5¢/IN TRADE | B 22 8 | | |

LowerD15att2

In January 1939 legendary Chicago underworld figure George “Bugs” Moran and a former bootlegger named Frank Parker went on trial for conspiring to forge and pass tens of thousands of dollars worth of American Express travelers checks. The principal witness against Moran and Parker was Emil Van Bever, an attorney who Moran and Parker had brought into their conspiracy (Van Bever had done some legal work for Parker in the past). Van Bever went to the Chicago Police and American Express with news of the conspiracy and they convinced him to pretend to go along with it.

On April 21st 1938 an agitated Parker met with Van Bever; a man in Pittsburgh had just been arrested trying to pass one of the bogus checks. Parker told Van Bever to return to him 150 forged checks which Van Bever had been holding for him. Then, according to Van Bever’s testimony below, Parker had some news for him: he and Bugs Moran think Van Bever is a rat (the tavern referred to below is the Lower Deck):

"Then Parker said: 'George [Moran] and I have just talked and we believe you are the — who tipped this off. If you did it's going to be too bad for you.' I told Parker he was mistaken.

"We went to a tavern and Parker made a telephone call. He returned and said: 'I just talked to George again. He's on his way down. I don't know how you're going to get out of this — I don't know what George will do.' Moran, however, did not appear.

LowerD16att2

Van Bever testified that Parker visited the Lower Deck's washroom several times while they were waiting for Bugs Moran to show-up.

Find Checks in Hole.

Two days later—on April 23—Van Bever returned to the tavern with express company investigators and Sergt. Walter Paradowski of the detective bureau. He said he found a bundle of the spurious checks hidden in a hole in the wall of the washroom.

LowerD17att2

On January 18th 1939 Quodbach testified in Moran and Parker's defense:

An earlier defense witness was Albert J. Quodbach, former night club and restaurant man. He owned the Lower Deck café, at 316 North Michigan avenue, on the lower level, last year. Van Bever had told of Parker hiding some of the spurious checks in a washroom of the café.

Quodbach denied that this incident ever occurred.

LowerD18att2

pic of Moran (seated left) and Parker (seated right) surrounded by their attorneys at their trial in January 1939:



LowerD19att2

As stated in the article above, by January 1939 Quodbach was no longer the owner of the Lower Deck. I'm not sure how long the Lower Deck stayed in business.

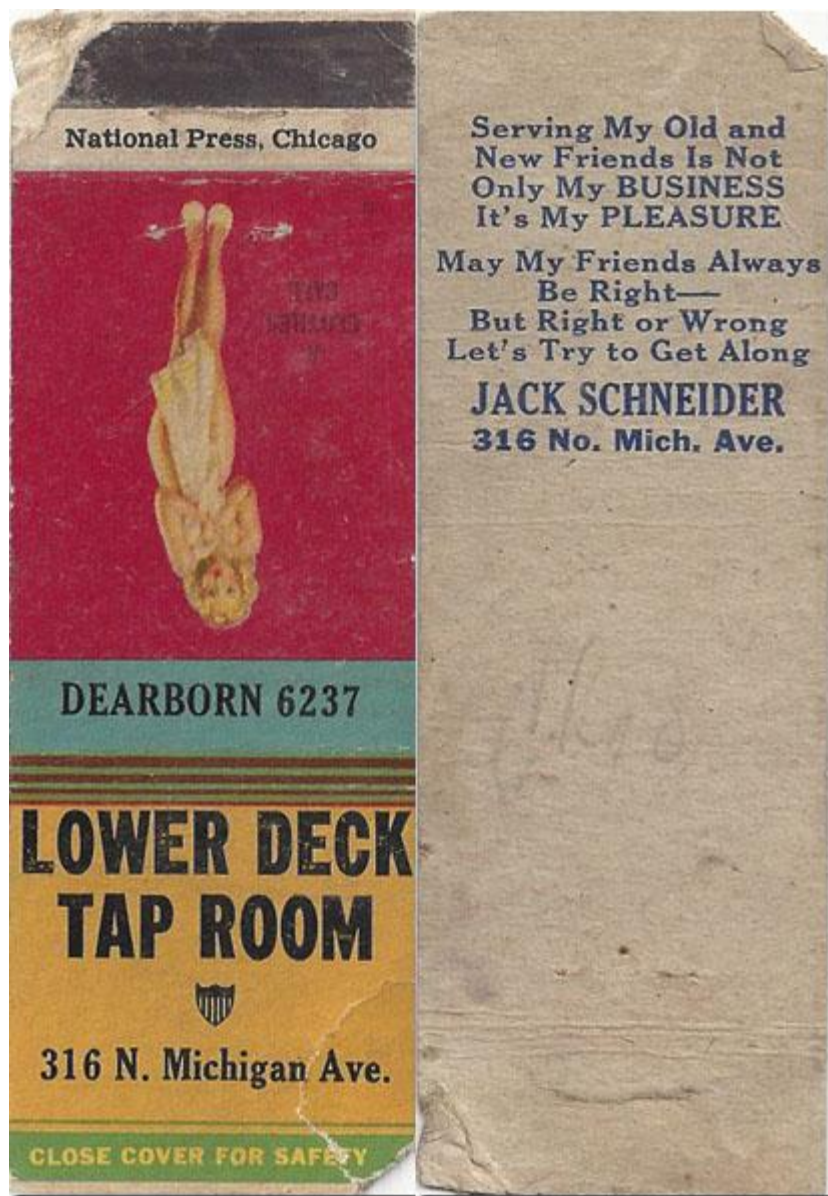
316 North Michigan Avenue was raided in August 1942, but I don't know if it was the Lower Deck at the time of the raid:

Seven Arrested in Raids on 3 Suspected Handbooks

Police raided three suspected racing handbooks yesterday. The places raided and those arrested were at 316 North Michigan avenue, Fate Garner and Elmer Kehm; 139 North Clark street, Henry Lasch, Sam Kumin, and Danny Forlano, and 726 South Wabash avenue, Ben Nudelman and Edward Clarke.

LowerD20att2

here's a matchbook from Ed Hertel's collection:



LowerD21att2

Quodbach stayed in Chicago for a few years after leaving the Lower Deck and briefly ran a couple of different places including Colosimo's:

ad from 1941:

7 COURSE \$ 2
DINNER
 with Whole
BABY LOBSTER

Condos Bros. • Ann Howard
YVETTE RUGEL • FRANCES & GREY
 18 Dancing Girls—7 Acts—2 Bands
 4 Shows Nightly • **Al Quodback, Mgr.**

COLOSIMO'S
 2126 South Wabash

LowerD22att2

By 1942 Quodbach had moved to Los Angeles where for several years he operated a place called the Granada Club which was popular with the Hollywood set.

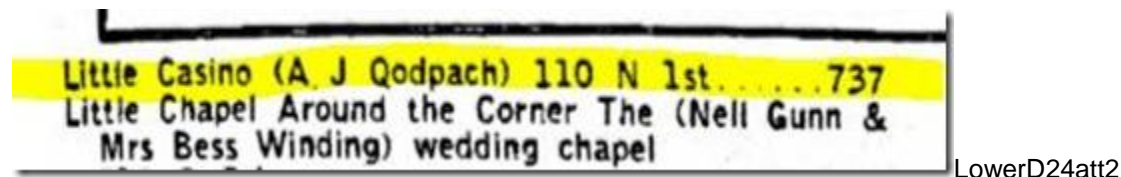
In 1953 Quodbach sought and received a gaming license for the Little Casino in Las Vegas, which opened in 1953 at 110 North 1st ST. During his license hearing the Nevada Tax Commission questioned Quodbach about his Chicago past (article says "Little Club" but it was Little Casino):

Monday the commission granted a probationary permit to Alfred J. Quodbach, former Chicago and Los Angeles cafe and bar operator, for craps, roulette and 21 games at the Little Club, Las Vegas. He was questioned most closely about fires, bankruptcy actions and a gang killing at his Chicago restaurant, and said he had gained gambling experience at Chicago.

LowerD23att2

My note: Before the Nevada Gaming Control Board was commissioned in 1955, the Nevada Tax Commission and the Liquor Licensing Board issued NV gaming licenses. Quodbach more than likely would have not got a license if he had waited 2 years to apply.

1954 Las Vegas city directory (badly misspelled name):



The Chip Guide lists these Little Casino chips:



Quodbach died at Las Vegas in 1978, age 88.

My note: I have the orange H mold \$25 Little Casino chip. I got it back in 1997. Had no idea it was tied to a Chicago illegal club operator.

HUH? Trimble has a Nevada chip? <g>

Actually, not counting Paulson/GPI sample chips, I have 7,080 Nevada chips in my collection. I got my first Nevada chip back in the early 1960's. Martin Miller gave it to me during a poker game. He brought it home from a visit to the Flamingo in Las Vegas. It is a \$5 die cut "Bugsy" chip. I had no idea of its value until I found the CCGTCC in 1995 while working at the Four Queens. One of my early scans. <g>



LowerD26att2