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Esoteric Collector's Baedeker

By RITA REIF

Books on esoteric collectibles seem this year to outnumber by far those on more conventional antiques. The following round-up of some of the best reflects the delight many collectors experience in the exotic or in anything that provokes nostalgia.

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN PEWTER by Charles F. Montgomery. Praeger. 248 pages. $17.50.

Several authoritative studies of American pewter wares already exist. But it would be difficult to find another written with Mr. Montgomery's up-to-date expertise (discoveries of and about pewter are constantly being made); his understanding of the simplest and most sophisticated of collector's queries, and his solid scholarship. It is a joy to study the pewter and britannia wares shown in these excellent photographs, most of which are from the prestigious Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum collection. And the author's personal enthusiasm as a collector infuses these pages with a very special understanding of the metal work and the craftsmen who fabricated these designs.

AMERICAN PIECED QUILTS by Jonathan Holstein. Viking: Studio Book. 94 pages. $5.95.

Just why the pace of quilt-collecting quickened and changed course two years ago, from an interest in stitchery to innovative design, will be apparent after an examination of this volume. For packed into this enviably small format (6½ inches square), which boasts graphically superior layouts, are the same sort of 19th-century and 20th-century quilts that Jonathan Holstein chose when he organized the 1971 "Abstract Design in American Quilts" tional lore most readers never knew or have long forgotten. Collectors of American flags for more than 30 years, the Mastais have written an account laced with government, military and social history. They have found a stunning diversity of such banners. And they have not forgotten the flag's important in folk art, where it was reproduced as weather vanes, on quilts, aprons, women's fans, hats and umbrellas. Jasper Johns, the painter, is represented, too. But the controversial flag appliqués on the seats of blue jeans are purposely omitted—more's the pity.

THE BEER BOOK, AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO AMERICAN BREWERIANA by Will Anderson. Pyne: Scribner's. 199 pages. $17.50.

Most people regard "breweriana" as trash and treat it as such. But to thousands, including the author of this lucid and witty study of beer bottles, caps, cans, openers, coasters, tap knobs, trays, calendars, ash trays and even wooden packing cases, "breweriana" is well worth collecting. (We learn that the going rate at flea markets and gatherings of collectors is, for beer cans, from 25 cents to $7, and for trays, from $2 to $100.) There's just enough history and nostalgia there to slake the thirst for knowledge of a thoroughly absorbing period of development in advertising art and industrial design.

THE COLLECTOR'S GUIDE TO DEPRESSION GLASS by Marian Klamkin. Hawthorn. 225 pages. $13.95.

Remember Shirley Temple cereal bowls and "dish night" at the movies? Both were part of that decade before World War II when the deep blue breakfast dishes were

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WHOEVER YOUR
PROBABLY FIND

CHEVALIER: THE FILMS
MAURICE CHEVALIEF
by Gene Ringgold & D

THE DETECTIVE IN FILM
by William K. Everson

THE FILMS OF BETTE D
by Gene Ringgold . .

THE FILMS OF CAROLE
by Frederick W. Ott .