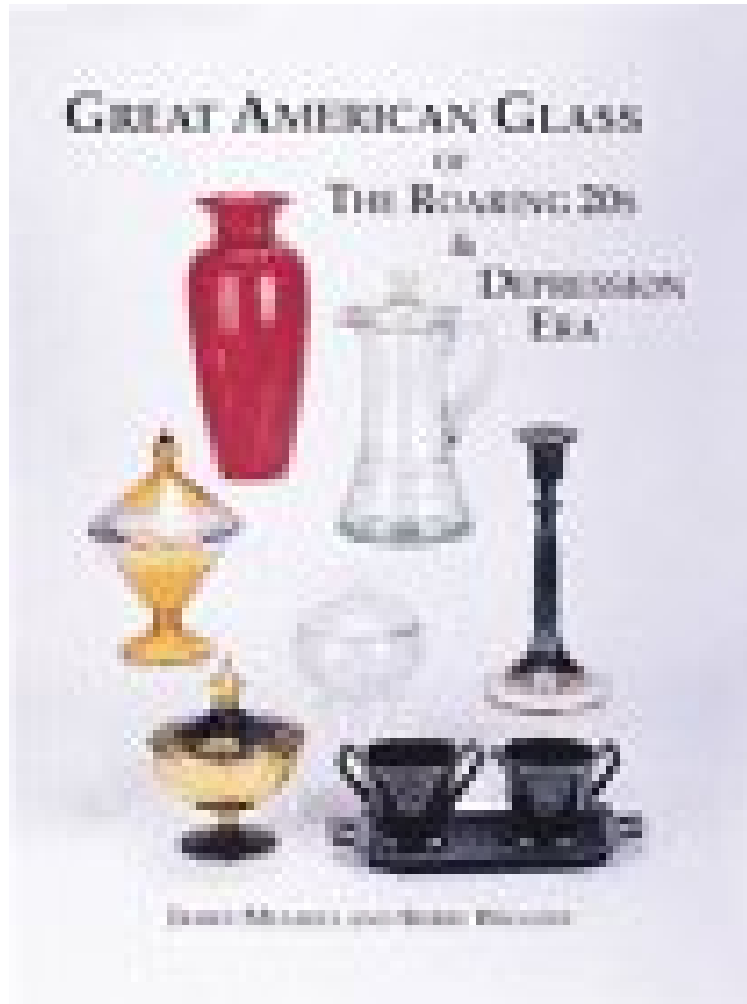


[Free] Great American Glass of the Roaring 20's and Depression Era

## Great American Glass of the Roaring 20's and Depression Era

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**James Measell, Berry Wiggins : Great American Glass of the Roaring 20's and Depression Era** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Great American Glass of the Roaring 20's and Depression Era:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Nice to have on hand. By Dan R. Another book I use for reference. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By beckabootoo Great pictures too! 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Book Review: Great American Glass -- Another perspective By Michael Krumme (I submitted this book review to a now-defunct glass collector's publication in 1998. An edited version was published. This is the original, unexpurgated version of my review.) BOOK REVIEW by Michael Krumme GREAT AMERICAN GLASS of the Roaring 20s and Depression Era by James Measell Berry Wiggins (1998, Antique Publications; 208 pages, 96 in color; \$34.95 paperback/\$44.95 hardbound) I am by nature an optimist. I always try to look for the

positive side of things in life, difficult as that may be sometimes. When reviewing books, however, I feel that I must be candid with readers about a book's merits and shortcomings. I try to be not just candid, but also fair, emphasizing the points where the writer(s) succeeded, but also mentioning where they could have done better. Given the dismaying recent trends in antique and collectible reference book publishing, candid (but fair) criticism is needed now more than ever. Reading GREAT AMERICAN GLASS of the Roaring 20s and Depression Era, I was reminded of the television show of the late 1970s, "Saturday Night Live," and its cast, the "Not Ready for Prime Time Players." This book was definitely not ready for prime time. I find it hard to believe that it got published without a thorough fact-checking. This is puzzling, since Antique Publications of Marietta, Ohio is a generally a reliable publisher of books that are always at least adequate -- and usually very good, if somewhat formulaic. The initial concept was sound: a book containing profiles of glass companies in operation in the 1920s and 1930s, both big and small, and their wares. It succeeds with these introductory profiles, which provide a good historical overview of each of the featured companies. The book also contains many reprints of vintage advertisements and other company memorabilia which are quite interesting. Aside from these, however, the book is fraught with problems, not the least of which is the number of incorrect, dubious, or unsubstantiated attributions. For example, a New Martinsville vase in Evergreen color (Item 256) is attributed to Duncan-Miller. Though Duncan made a similar vase, they never made a dark green color such as this one. Item #261, also attributed to Duncan, looks suspiciously like a Heisey #1202 Panelled Octagon bowl. If records from the National Association of Manufacturers of Pressed and Blown Glassware indeed prove that the pattern known to us as Round Robin was made by Economy Glass Co., as stated, that is surprising news; why not show us the documentation? One knowledgeable Morgantown collector went so far as to state unequivocally that not a single piece shown on page 76 was in fact made by Economy/Morgantown. Even setting aside correct attribution, considering that two other authors have been able to fill entire books with page after page of gorgeous glass made by Morgantown/Economy, it is a mystery why pedestrian pieces like these were selected for photographing here. One chapter that I feel qualified to evaluate is the chapter on Paden City glass. Now, as a collector of Paden City glass since 1978 and a researcher in this area myself, I do not expect an author doing a short "overview" of this company to reveal a huge volume of new facts and information. I do, however, think it is reasonable to expect that authors use readily available knowledge to ensure accuracy. At the very least, they ought to make sure that pattern names and line numbers are correct, and that the glass attributed to Paden City in the photographs is in fact Paden City. Unfortunately, these reasonable expectations were not met in this book. No. 612 is a Depression glass pattern, not the line number for Paden City's #412 Crow's Foot Square pattern. This name and pattern number have been in common use by collectors since at least 1978, when Barnett explained the differences between Crow's Foot Round and Crow's Foot Square in his book, which the authors cite as a reference. Item 767 is attributed to Paden City, but a piece with the identical handle (Item 783) is identified on the very next page as New Martinsville. The three candy dishes shown as Items 772, 773 and 774 are attributed to New Martinsville, but are actually Paden City. This is rather careless, considering each one has an identical finial, and that items in the same pattern as Item 772 are (almost) correctly attributed only a few pages later. I won't bore you with the details, but the line numbers are also incorrect for the Paden City pieces shown as Items 855, 863, 883, and 886. Most importantly, half of the pieces illustrated in the Paden City glass photographs can honestly be said to be the dregs of Paden City's production! Paden City produced dozens of elegantly etched vases, and myriad variety of candleholders, serving pieces, and tableware. Why were ugly pieces like a generic sponge cup photographed, when with a little effort, truly elegant examples could have been shown? Photographs should not only depict glass for identification purposes, but inspire people to collect and preserve glass. If you were completely unfamiliar with Paden City glass, you wouldn't see much of anything in this chapter that would make you think it was worth saving from the recycling bin. Unfortunately, much the same can be said for the other chapters. The glass photographed for the sections on Heisey, Duncan-Miller, Economy, and many others is the most dull, unattractive, ordinary, and sometimes downright ugly bunch of glass ever compiled between two covers, and hardly representative of these companies' best wares. One notable exception are the photographs of Beaumont Glass and the color catalog reprints from West Virginia Glass Specialty Co. They show truly attractive wares, and provide information and identification of glass that has heretofore gone unattributed. But even here, knowledgeable collectors state that it is questionable whether at least half a dozen items illustrated in the Beaumont photographs are correctly attributed to Beaumont. Time and time again when reading this book, I asked myself: who identified this item that way, and why? I'm usually glad to purchase new reference books for my library, but after a perusal of this one, I refused to buy it. In fact, I borrowed a copy in order to evaluate it fully for this review. If we, the collecting public, take the perspective that spending money on something is the equivalent of "dollar voting," then we shouldn't condone or encourage the publication of second-rate books by "voting" for them with our money. If a publisher finds that poorly researched books don't sell, they will publish better ones -- or go out of business. I do not relish the idea of "savaging" other authors' efforts, nor do I get any joy in having to give such negative evaluation of my colleagues' work. In this case, however, there is so little to recommend this book, that I regretfully urge you not to buy it. If you do buy it, do not rely on it. When there are so many errors in a book, it can't help but make us doubt the veracity of even the correct information in it. Sometimes no book at all is better than a bad one. We deserve better.

Great reference book filled with color, black and white photos and vintage catalog illustrations

From the Publisher Imagine two friends antiquing at a local glass show, stopping at every table in their quest for rare 1920s and Depression era memorabilia. At the days end, they come together to tally their finds. One friend has a milk glass covered candy jar decorated and resting on a square base but laments that it isn't mentioned in any reference guides to Depression glass. The other friend reveals an inscrutably plain sandwich tray with a center handle and a foot but remarks that this piece, also, has eluded the Depression glass authors. Disappointed, the two friends leave the show with their mysterious new finds safely tucked away. How could they know the makers of this rare glass before the dawning of a new book entitled Great American Glass? Adding to the historic work of Florence and Weatherman, this book will expand anyones knowledge of U.S. made glassware from the 1920s and 30s. Arranged alphabetically by company name, not only does the book feature the products of over 30 different glassmaking firms, each section discusses patterns, colors and decorations that were prevalent in glassware from this exciting and vivid time. Imagine that! Complete with 1998 price guide.

About the Author James Measell began collecting Greentown glass when he was in graduate school in the late 1960s. His interest in research and his wifes knack for finding rare pieces made them quite a team. He has authored or edited several books on glass and glass history, and written many articles for the Glass Collectors Digest since 1987. A name associated with glass research for many years, Jim continues his book-a-year pace with the release of Great American Glass. Berry Wiggins has co-authored several books pertaining to glass research. His presence has been known in the glass collecting field for many years, as a participant in various glass clubs, an advisor on glass books and a diligent researcher. His specialty is digging through trade journals and factory records, photocopying old advertisements and other historical data to file away for future reference. As a result, his work has produced a wealth of information. His endless curiosity and determination give him the reputation of a solid authority on Depression era glassware.