

The Hobby's Loss

It is with sorrow that we report the death, on October 18, 1994, of fellow collector Lester Bernstein. Born December 29, 1907, in New Jersey, Lester served in World War II aboard a destroyer escort. He was an avid collector of coins, guns and political memorabilia, as well as an avid collector of mine lamps. His can only be described as one of the premiere collections in the nation. Having been his guest on several occasions I can attest to the quality of the items Lester collected. He truly enjoyed showing his collection to anyone who expressed an interest.

I first met Lester in 1976 at the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association meet in Friendship, Indiana. Lester was walking around the flea market area wearing a brass Anton oil wick on his ball cap. I asked if he wanted to sell the lamp and he said no, but stated he wanted to buy lamps. He invited me into his motor home where he pulled out a coin sack full of oil wicks and dumped them on the floor. For all the years I knew Lester he continued to carry his duplicate oil wicks in coin sacks. On the first day I met him he invited me to his home to see his collection and I took him up on his offer shortly thereafter. I, for one, will miss Lester and his presence in the collecting community.

Dave Johnson



Lester, with his collection, June 1993. Photo by Bob Guthrie.



More of Lester and his collection, June 1994. Photo by Larry Click