

Elegant stocking fillers, bedtime reads and last-minute inspiration

Thence to a



☞ If reason were needed to give more books this festive season, then it would surely be **Leslie Geddes-Brown's Books Do Furnish a Room** (Merrell, £24.95; H&G price £25, inc p&p; call 01235-465013).

beauty, region by region – the layout is clear and accessible, resulting in a worthy reference book to dip into again and again. The suggested walks will no doubt prove useful over Christmas and new year. ☞ For the cat-lover, social historian or bibliophile, **Horace Walpole's Cat**, by Christopher Frayling (Thames & Hudson, £14.95; H&G price £12.95, 389977, and quote 'H&G offer'), part of the Design series, looks at one of the most versatile artist designers working in Britain today. Indeed, many will be familiar, unknowingly, with his work: he is the creator of the 100-metre-long mural at Charing Cross underground station, and has produced numerous designs for stamps, as well as for National Trust posters. This is a neat little book, illustrated with beautiful colour reproductions. In the subject's words: 'My work has taught me that if any boundaries between art and design indeed exist, they are porous – one can see through them in either direction, almost without noticing.'

into eighteenth century and charts the life of his dear friend,



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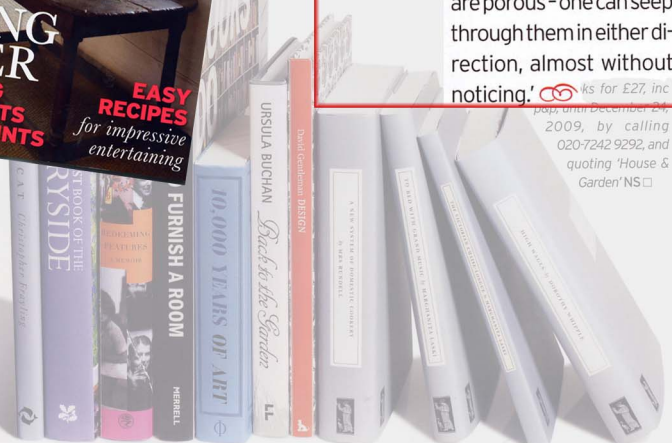
modern theme: **Brian Webb's and Peyton Skipwith's David Gentleman** (Antique Collectors' Club, £12.50; H&G price £10, inc p&p; call 01394-

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the date on which the days begin to lengthen: a wonderful comfort in the dark days of winter. ☞ On a rather larger scale, **The National Trust Book of the Countryside** (National Trust Books, £30; H&G price £25, inc p&p; call 0870-787 1613, and quote 'CH1246') is an attractive, informative guide to the British countryside. Divided into two parts – first, the 'flavours' of the land, its major habitats and landscapes; secondly, an insight into areas of outstanding natural



books for £27, inc p&p; until December 24, 2009, by calling 020-7242 9292, and quoting 'House & Garden' NS ☐