described by Jean Smith in her excellent article on Linton Park in the November 1981 Antiques Magazine.

It should be pointed out that others of his paintings demonstrate the ability of the self-taught painter to tackle themes which his better-trained contemporaries — educated at Dusseldorf or Paris — would have hesitated to represent. For example, in a picture that is now called The Burial but which might better be titled Discovering the Grave, Park seems to have represented the traumatic moment of anguish when a young woman at last discovers the neglected grave of her Civil War beau. And in a painting inscribed Dying Tonight on the Old Camp Ground, Park dared give vision to the poignant Civil War ballad “Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground”; in a hospital tent in the left foreground a dying soldier reaches toward a vision of wife, children, and home in the nighttime sky. The drama of the great Johnstown Flood of 1889 so moved the artist that within six weeks he had completed a large canvas, now lost, which was offered for sale with half the proceeds to go to those who had suffered in the flood.

Linton Park died in obscurity in 1906; his paintings were re-discovered during the 1930s, after modern art had taught connoisseurs to appreciate the naive vision of the self-taught artist. Linton Park now numbers among those distinguished Pennsylvania artists such as Edward Hicks, Horace Pippin, and John Kane whose art provides us with such a clear and vivacious picture of the democratic experience.

Department of Fine Arts
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

David G. Wilkins


Elk County, which traces its lineage to Northumberland County, was procured through the Purchases of 1784 and erected as a county on April 18, 1843. It has long been one of northwestern Pennsylvania’s rural beauty spots. From the time of the Indians its flora and fauna have been a primary asset. In days gone by its fish and game provided sustenance for the inhabitants’ tables. In contemporary times these same natural resources provide financial succor for the county’s
economy, because recreation is a major industry. Industrial development, on the other hand, is not expansive.

_A History of Elk County_ is the story of almost two centuries of white man's activity therein. This volume details the county's evolution and current situation. The publication is a typical county history. The first part contains a general history plus sections addressing such topics as education, culture, and recreation, the courthouse and jail, murders, transportation, ethnic history, and so forth. The second part consists of sections that focus on the various political subdivisions.

This work evolved through the support of the Elk County Historical Society and the endeavors of ambitious citizens who sought to compile and relate the county's history "so that our children could tell their children." It all began with Ridgway's sesquicentennial (1974) and _Ridgway — Our Town_, a pictorial history for use in fifth-grade social studies classes. The project was given impetus by the bicentennial celebration and the Pennsylvania tercentenary observation.

This book fills a distinct void in the history of Pennsylvania's counties. Inspection of _The Bibliography of Pennsylvania History_ reveals that Elk County has been largely ignored by historians. While the county is dealt with in several regional works, there are no previously published sources devoted to it. Except for the _Elk Horn_, a publication of the historical society, journal articles are rare. This may all say that nothing was written because there was little of general interest to write about. The county lacks the historical significance of counties like Allegheny, Lancaster, Philadelphia, or even Erie, and its noteworthy events and persons are few and far between. Elk County is an average county with average people, the kind who comprise the backbone of American society.

The writing style of the book is flowing though not always lucid. The problem alluded to is probably a result of the division of labor. While it is true that "many hands make light work" there is also some veracity in "too many cooks spoil the broth." Some twenty writers participated in the development of this volume. Were it not for these contributing authors the manuscript surely would still be in the gestation stage. On the other hand, with such a large number there is considerable variation in writing style and content. Many of these contributors developed chapters on political subdivisions. These chapters include similar content, such as schools, churches, and famous people. However, the organization and subheadings do not evidence parallel outlines. A clearer image of the evolution of these communi-
ties would have resulted if there had been more uniformity. Moreover, such organization would have facilitated comparative analyses.

An additional comment about style is in order. The chapter headings appear to be appropriate but what constitutes a chapter is questionable. Several chapters are almost microscopic. A line drawing and twenty-three lines of text comprise Chapter 9, “The Elk County Jail.”

A notable feature is printing style as related to reading ease. The pages are large. A semibold sans-serif type face is used. Also, the leading (approximately 2) and the picas per line (20) are in accordance with the research reports on readability. Illustrative materials total almost four hundred items — maps, photographic reproductions, line drawings, and tables.

The flaws are really minor in nature. A History of Elk County is a notable contribution to the annals of Pennsylvania county history that should be read by all interested in that part of the state.

Director, Graduate Program
Westminster College
New Wilmington, Pennsylvania

The Three Rivers. By WALTER C. KIDNEY. (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, 1982. Pp. iv, 76. Picture credits, reading list, acknowledgments. $7.95, paper.)

This is a beautifully illustrated and charmingly written book, not so much a history as an appreciation of the Ohio, Allegheny, and Monongahela rivers, principally portions of them in or near Pittsburgh.

The 130 illustrations include 34 in color, all good and some of remarkably fine quality. The remainder are a well-chosen selection of new and old photographs, maps, and drawings.

The text of the book is for the most part unusually well written and interesting — at times almost poetry. Who could more delightfully describe the duties of the engineer on a steam towboat of the second quarter of this century? “If the ship-up gong rang once while the engines were stopped, he prepared to reverse: pulled the gear that pulled the chain that rotated the drum that pulled the chains that raised the levers that controlled the poppet valves; pulled the lever that raised or lowered the ship-up jack that held the spider that engaged and disengaged the rocker pins that controlled the wipers;