

Poets, Painters, Paupers, Fools: Indiana's Stein Family. By Robert C. Kriebel (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1990. Pp. ix, 182. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Paperbound, \$16.50.)

Prolific journalist Robert C. Kriebel has previously written about Hoosier botanist Charles Deam and Lafayette history. This volume is a collective biography of John and Virginia Stein and their children, Orth and Evaleen, "four people blessed with talent yet cursed with trouble" (p. 1). The book is brief, lively, and informative.

John Stein (1832–1885), son of German immigrants, moved to Lafayette from Pennsylvania in 1851. A lawyer, Civil War veteran, and state legislator, he helped acquire Purdue University for Tippecanoe County and then served long and well as a member of its Board of Trustees. His wife Virginia (1840–1924) worked in Lafayette's public library for thirty years and held the family together through many financial and emotional crises.

Both Stein children left legacies worthy of further scholarly pursuit. Orth (1862–1901) was a brilliant and erratic journalist who traveled across America leaving scandals and one dead body behind. He worked for newspapers in many cities from Indiana to Colorado to Louisiana. His life was brief, debauched, and tragic. Evaleen (1863–1923) emerged from a shy and sickly youth to become an accomplished poet championed by James Whitcomb Riley. She also wrote many books for children, including the very successful *Little Shepherd of Provence*.

Kriebel's book is strong on description but short on analysis. He weaves the four lives together in a linear manner with scant attention to cause and motivation. He also leaves large gaps about which readers can only speculate. The limited bibliography suggests that the author may not have located sufficient materials to flesh out the bare bones of their lives. Kriebel quotes frequently from the Stein writings, a logical technique for literary subjects. More comparison of their work with that of their contemporaries would have been helpful, however. The author's prose is brisk but sometimes gets overheated. His principals wallow, warble, rumble, squat, thunder, buzz, trot, and rattle, and the effect is, ultimately, exhausting. Their lives were exciting enough without accelerating the pace posthumously.

With minor caveats, Kriebel's work is worthy and Indiana is richer for having a record of the Steins, even this abbreviated version. Historians will lament that footnotes are in the back of the book and that some of them are vague regarding locations of manuscripts cited therein. Purdue University Press has done a competent job with the production: mistakes are few, illustrations are generally well reproduced, and the index is adequate. For \$16.50,

it would be ungracious to quibble too much about this pleasant and provocative volume.

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Harlan Hubbard: Life and Work. By Wendell Berry. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990. Pp. x, 108. Illustrations, notes. \$23.00.)

This book is not so much a biography as a celebration of life. It expresses the values of its author as much as the values of its subject. Harlan Hubbard, student of life and artist of a beloved Ohio River and rural Kentucky, provides the focus for essayist Wendell Berry's latest exploration into the relationships among people and environment and locality. That the two men shared many values and that the younger author's view of the world was influenced by his older subject (in respectful relationship rather like student and teacher) makes for an impassioned narrative artfully rendered.

Chapters stand as carefully crafted vignettes placing Hubbard into context. Here was a day laborer who painted, but who also read, wrote, played the violin, took long walks through the countryside, canoed and boated on the Ohio River, worked with wood as a skilled carpenter, and kept bees. Hubbard, as a latter-day Henry David Thoreau, sought his own special, independent relationship both with nature and with society. According to Berry, Hubbard's life represented a habitual willingness to reconsider fundamentally modern society and its uses of nature. "His effort was to move backward along the line of technological development toward a complex practical orientation to the landscape," a course that constituted "reuniting in his life many of the modern divisions of labor" (p. 28).

Outlined are Hubbard's eccentric bachelorhood, his marriage to Anna Eikenhout (his partner of forty-three years), their year-long trip down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to Louisiana in a houseboat of their own construction, their building a house and studio on the banks of the Ohio at Payne Hollow (downstream and across from Madison, Indiana, in Kentucky), his art, and his life alone after Anna's death in 1986. Here was a partnership of two extraordinary people, and if the book can be said to have a shortcoming, it is that Anna, as one of the partners, seems to be made overly secondary to her husband. Together at Payne Hollow they sought fully to respect its "essential dignity and integrity" as a place (p. 88) through the buildings they built, the gardens they tended, and the wilder aspects of nature they spared. They, not