

Letter of the Sesquicentennial Commission

Dear Sir:

I am currently engaged in a rather important project that may be of some interest to you and to the other members of the Texas Sesquicentennial Commission. My twin brother, Scott, and I are about to complete a series of paintings for a publishing project that has occupied us for more than seven years. (See the accompanying brochure) The forthcoming book ^{which} will be titled, "Of Birds and Texas," will be the result of our collaboration with Texas author, John Graves, and ^{with} book designer and printer, David Holman of Wind River Press at Austin. Both men are award winning artists. The literary ^{CRITIC} of the Dallas Morning News recently wrote that John Graves ~~was~~ the Texas writer that Texas writers most admire. His best known book is probably the famous "Goodbye to a River," published in 1960. This book had its eleventh printing, in February 1983. ~~He has written~~ ^{His major} published works include, "Hard Scrabble" (1974) and "From a Limestone Ledge" (1980), and two short works, "The Fast Running" (1974), and "Blue" () He has ^{had} numerous articles and stories published

in The Atlantic, Holiday, American Heritage,
Esquire, Texas Monthly and other magazines.
 As far as the design and printing of the ~~the~~
 book is concerned the Holman name speaks
 for itself. Davis Holman is ^{Continuum} ~~Continuum~~ a
 tradition of excellence ^{firmly} established by his father
 William ^{of the Holman House} and both Holmans
 are well-known and very highly regarded
 by ^{all} ~~the~~ collection of rare contemporary limited
 editions on Tetana. I might add here that
 this book will not be bound. The prints and
 the text will be protected by special portfolios
 which will be housed in a beautiful hand
 made box constructed of sturdy oakwood
 covered with linen. ^(see attachment on front of brochure) All of the materials
 will be of the finest PH neutral, acid-free
 quality, and the construction of the box will
 be under the supervision of Craig Jensen, Chief
 Conservator of rare books and manuscripts at the
 Humanities Research Center at the library
 of the University of Texas at Austin. His important
 collaboration in the design and construction of
 the ^{special} portfolios and the box will insure that
 the book, "Of Birds and Texas," will be of the
 finest archival quality.

Mr. Fu, I do not wish to sound presumptuous
 in my written promotion of this book project,
 but neither will I be falsely modest.

Nothing like this book has ever been published produced in the History of Texas Publishing. John Cleaves^{who}, assistant director of the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas and whose knowledge of the publishing history of Texas in our state's publishing history is encyclopedic ^{has} told me that he knows of only one book published in the great Imperial Folio size of "25" x 28" and that was a book of maps, ~~and~~ not a book of art and literature. I might ^{mention} ~~add~~ here that John Bruce's contribution will not be introductory in nature but will be a separate and complete work of ^{literature} ~~art~~, designed not just to complement the paintings, but to stand ~~equally along with~~ them. ~~Share with them an equal importance.~~ To stand along side them in equal importance.

The brochure states that Scott and I will write one page of commentary to each of the 4th colored plates. There is one exception to this. The commentary to the color plate of the Red shouldered Hawk will be by ~~some~~ John James Audubon himself to whom ^{I am pleased to} ~~dedicate~~ ^{dedicate} this book ^{respectfully}. We recently purchased ^{the} original manuscript on the Red-shouldered Hawk written ^{in the winter of 1820} for his famous ~~great~~

April 21 1837

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"Ornithological Biography" on the winter of 1838
to accompany the publication of ^{The plates} ~~the plates~~ of
of the ^{Harell} ~~improving~~ ^{for} ~~the~~ ^{bird} ~~birds~~ of America. Even
today, though superseded by more knowledge &
facts, the "Ornithological Biography" is the still
the most famous series of books on the habits of birds
ever published. Audubon's original manuscript
on the Red shouldered Hawk was edited by
a brilliant young ^{Septuag} ~~writer~~, thirty four year old
William Macmillan who ^{shall say} smoothed out the
artist's quaint English. Unfortunately much of
the ~~original~~ charm of the original text never
reached the eyes of the public - until now.
Though the edited text has been published and
quoted many times in the last 150 years ^{Audubon} ~~the~~
original manuscript will be published in our
book for the ~~very~~ first time. In a ^{very} ~~sense~~ ^{or} Audubon
himself will be a co-author ^{or} ~~contributor~~ ^{contributor}
to ^{this} ~~our~~ book on Texas Birds. ^{it is} ~~person~~ ^{person} ^{interesting} ^{to} ^{note} ^{that}
In April of 1837
Audubon made an important visit to the Texas
Coast ^{to look for new bird specimens for his great book}. He journeyed inland ^{to} meet Sam Houston
at new Texas Capital then enmesh in the stagnant
overflow and mud of the spring rains. It was
just a year after ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{Texas} ~~Texas~~ victory at San Jacinto,
which ended ^{and} ~~ending~~ its war for independence from Mexico,
and on his way to meet Houston Audubon saw for himself
the grisly remains of the Mexican army scattered over the

* Note. Make a point that this book was conceived by Texan Still
Texas painter, Texas writer, Texas printer and Texas artist. It
was made in Texas by Texan

The Cattlefields. It is a pleasant coincidence to observe that the sesquicentennial of Texas Independence and of Audubon's ~~only~~ ^{big first} ~~visit~~ ^{visit} to Texas the visit to Texas of Audubon, the world's most famous ornithologist artist, should fall within slightly more than one year of each other.

Mr. Lee, I had ^{hardly} ~~frankly~~ ^{not} given ~~any~~ ^{any} thought to submitting, our ~~project~~ ^{book} for consideration as an official Texas State Sesquicentennial ~~project~~ ^{project}, until I met Mr. Jack Maguire in Austin ~~about~~ ⁱⁿ the winter of 1912. He had been informed of what we were doing, and was most ^{interested} ~~interested~~. My Austin attorney ^{had} arranged a meeting, at the Sheraton Hotel in Austin, and I ~~hastily~~ ^{hastily} gathered about 15 paintings and hurried down from Fort Worth to meet him. He was very excited about the ~~whole~~ ^{whole} ~~idea~~ ^{idea}, the concept of the book and the fact that ^{John} Graves and David Holman were involved. ~~It was then~~ ^{it was then} that he ~~suggested~~ ^{suggested} to me for the first time that the book, "Of Birds and Texas" would make an outstanding, sesquicentennial project and should be recognized as such. He urged me to submit the proper material to you and the Commission as soon as ^{we were} ~~we were~~ certain of the publication date and had solidified our plans for the final concept. That has now been done. The publication ^{delivery} date for the books is March 1, 1915. ^{from the cost of the book (2000 pieces)} ~~Now~~ ^{Now} we have sold almost one-half of the edition of 500 ^{books} with only a minimum of promotion and publicity. I ^{could} ~~could~~ not be surprised if all the books are sold out before the March 1st ¹⁹¹⁵ delivery date.

It was an exciting Texas project, ^{exciting} ~~exciting~~ Texas project.

printed by Tatro, Texas Printing

~~I don't think the spirit of the book is sufficient to justify the large frontispiece, but not just because the book will be sold in.~~

Though

Though I am, of course, extremely interested in the book becoming a commercial success, ~~I still think~~ if its title page has the seal, that is not the reason why I want its title page to bear ~~the seal of~~ the Sesqui-centennial logo. The books will all be ~~gone~~ sold out by the time the project might be accepted to bear that seal. What we really want is ~~the official recognition~~ that a book of this size (it will weigh over 40 lbs!) and beauty, a landmark in the history of the publisher, receive the official recognition that it so justly deserves. One of my genuine fears is that because the book is selling so well to libraries and to private collections, it will ~~be~~ quietly ~~absorbed~~ disappear from public sight and never really be ^{well} known.

I am enclosing with this letter several brochures, and a selection of slides of the bird and landscape pictures which will be published in the book. Also included among the slides is a ^{watercolor} portrait of Audubon by Scott. It is 4 inches in diameter and will be reproduced ~~in the book~~ on the page dedicating the book to ^{Audubon's} memory. I am also enclosing a brief biography of John Gould, Scott and me which might be of some use to you. If by chance you are interested

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^{or do}
in the technical aspects of this project as methods of reproduction, kind of paper, style of type etc. I would gladly provide you with that information. I am looking forward to hearing from you and the Commission. If you would like to talk to me by phone, feel free to call me collect at 1-817-732-4427. I am most easily reached before 11:00 in the morning. Should you have trouble contacting me, I can be reached through Mr. Ralph Carr who is the business manager for this ~~project~~ project. His number is 1-817-732-0342.

Sincerely yours
Robert Glatting