

3 August 1989

Dear Alice -

Sorry about the delay in getting back to you. First of all, let me say that Scott and I were not being rash about our desire to send you a copy of our 46 lb. book OF BIRDS AND TEXAS. Now that you have decided to remain in Pennsylvania we will be sending it to you in a few days.

Scott told me that he would be honored if you would autograph a copy of your book for him to keep for himself.

Now to answer your questions about the final destination of the Audubon Brat-tailed Grackles painting that we sold at Sotheby's in 1987. At the time I received your first letter asking about the picture, I did not even know that Sotheby's had sold the painting to Herschel and Adler Gallery in New York. You were the first person to tell me this.

Our "discovery" of the painting and the circumstances of our purchase of it and the role it played in the production of our own book which had been dedicated to Audubon are incredible enough, but

a little more than one week after
I received your first letter & also got
a letter from Mrs Francis ~~to~~ # You
of Maryland with whom I had
Corresponded in 1886 and 87. You probably
know her as the scholar working at
the American Museum of Natural History
who compiled the recently published
Index and Guide to Audubon's Birds
of America.

By sheer coincidence she was invited
to tea at the home of her daughter's good
friend, and there on the wall was
hanging the original painting that we
sold at Sotheby's!!! I am sending you
a Xeroxed copy of her letter, and perhaps
you can discreetly investigate who the
new owner of the Baldtailed Grackles
might be. She did not give me the
name of that owner. I will also try
to find out.

I did not ask her for permission
to send you a copy of the letter but when
I write her I will tell her that I have
done so.

I am also sending you copies of two
essays I wrote about the Grackle discovery
and our research. I hope they will
be of some interest to you. As I have

Said, Scott and I will be sending
you a copy of our book which contains
a reproduction of the Boat-tailed Grackles
and three full pages about its history.
Until then —

All the best —

Squirt Gentling