

Alice Ford • Pickering Apts. 206 • Newtown, PA 18940

May 31.93

Dear Stuart,

Your letter shows me that you have no real idea of how things are with me right now. You appear to think that regardless of my health I should carry a torch for all you hope to do with your new venture. I have stopped writing, and only hope to survive the efforts of the past few years long enough to see them through publication. That remains to be seen.

You must not put me in the position of having to refuse the MS you say you intend to send me when it is ready. You must, must regard this as a matter for your Massachusetts agent. I feel obliged to share some of my experience in such affairs: John K. Terres, once editor of AUDUBON magazine, tried to draw me into a collaboration--force me. This was at a time when Waldemar Fries threatened to come to my New York apartment and force me to share my knowledge and papers with him. I cannot describe how offensive both were. Fries enlisted help and attention where he could.

I cannot count the number of requests for information from strangers anxious to believe they own an Audubon painting or a Hicks canvas. All but one or two have been shameless in their determination to involve me, somehow sell something.

This week I received a long legal form from Villard Books, requesting my signature and permission for use of quotes from the 1826 Journal under my copyright--thousands of words in paragraphs. I had received a maudlin letter from the writer, of whom I'd never heard, saying she had read all of my books but "that more remained to be said." "Will you help me?" she had the effrontery to ask. "I have a frog in my throat as I ask this?" I was sickened, did not reply. Her title: The Life and Art of John James Audubon in the Wilderness. You surely must know about Ron Tyler's costly, Austin, limited edition which the UTP is publishing in a trade edition, under an equally florid Audubonesque, catchy title? He has often written for information. If you have seen this text for an Audubon show in Orange you can hardly fail to see how reckless he is with biographical information. I am in his biography, but wrote to say I would not be responsible for his cosmetic use of hard-gotten, serious research. I may have been crazy to cite his errors in time for him to correct his magnum opus, but I did so, and with enough contempt.

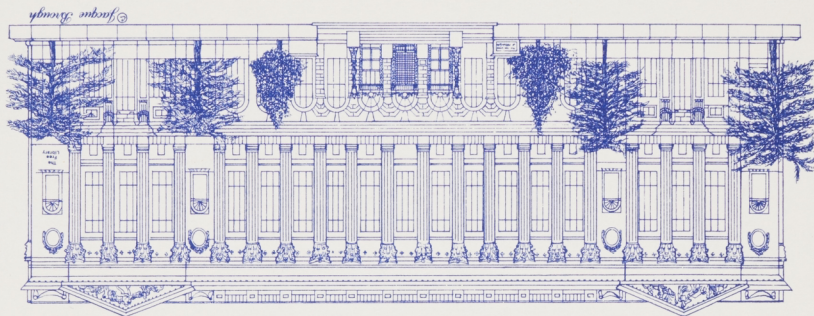
As far as I know I shall ask the Free Library of Philadelphia to call for your folio and the set of proofs you sent with it and the brochure and tear sheets. But for a few weeks I am under orders to rest, completely. You will agree that I accepted the folio with real and sensible reluctance, though I hoped that it would not bring with it some predictable or unpredictable obligation. The more you tell me about your art and motives the more confused I become. I am certainly not the person to speak with authority about it, or to feel at home in this situation. I shall let you know before long how an offer to the FLP turns out. Try a little harder to put yourself in my situation--see it more clearly with the help of the above. I AM TIRED, TIRED!!!!!!

Sincerely,

Alice Ford

Evening: I have offered your Folio to the Free Library of Philadelphia, with the proofs, and with a request that they collect it--a mere 25 miles. This would help very much. No shipping or insurance costs. I urged them to get in touch with Mrs. Spawen across the Circle, since she knows the work.

The Free Library of Philadelphia



not know about their library — its use, scope, etc.
But if you agree, that would have been the place
to offer it. I feel sure that they will accept
the work of one of their successful students!
I await your wishes.

Sincerely, Alice Ford

AFair
#206 Pickering Spz
Newtown, Pa 18946



Mr. Stuart Gentling
4801 Harley Street
Ft. Worth, Tex 76107

