

1 August 1985

Dear David,

Now that it is the first day of August I think it is a good time for us to review our situation as far as the bird book project is concerned. ~~Through these~~
~~to much~~ Though there has been much accomplished in the last two years with which tall of us can be proud, now that we have arrived at what, I hope, is the final phase of the publication process, there are some very disturbing signs on the horizon ^{which hint} that all is not going well. Indeed, I am beginning to fear that the very success of this enterprise is seriously threatened.

In approximately two weeks I am going to have to go contact our customers again and to explain to them why there is yet another delay. Since you are removed from the reality of business, to deal directly with these people, perhaps you may not appreciate the delicacy of the situation. Most of my customers are friends, but even the patience of friends can be tested to the limit, and there are definite ~~or some~~ signs that this limit is ^{being} ~~about~~ ^{very near} ~~to be~~ ^{reached}.
11 What is going to make it especially difficult for ~~me~~ Ralph and me is that we can not in good conscience give ^{our} ~~them~~ ^{patrons} a new publication date or guarantee, in spite of your private assurances

Things, that ~~our patrons~~ ^{they} will receive their books before Christmas, which is the time that many of ~~our~~ ^{them} have planned to present the books as gifts to friends or family members. I am beginning to fear that while many of ~~our~~ ^{our} friends will complain about not receiving their books on August 15th, there will be more friends than I had anticipated ~~will~~ who will withdraw their money from our Escrow account and wait until we are actually able to deliver a product. In addition to friends and other local customers who ~~we~~ know our reputation and have placed their trust in us, there are at least fifty or sixty customers who are not familiar with ~~us~~ ^{Scott Malone}, ^{and} who have purchased the books through book stores, relying on the credibility of the book dealers. It is from the ranks of these ^{summer} people that I expect the greatest number of complaints and withdrawals. I do not think that I need to tell you what the economic impact on our business would be if 35 to 50 subscribers decide that they want their money back. Not only would this represent a huge loss of income, but once word spread ^{abroad} ~~about~~ among dealers and ^{other} potential customers about the loss of confidence in our project then

Bro Shutter

future sales would be very seriously threatened. You know what a small world the fine art book business is and how fast bad news can travel among dealers and collectors.

In the course of making changes

We have been regrettable delays on both sides. I have told you from the beginning that, since we are neophytes to the publishing business, practically every aspect of creating ^{and marketing} a publication of this magnitude ~~of our time took~~ was a has been a learning experience, and that I ^{would} greatly rely on your advice and counsel concerning the problems and pitfalls which inevitably occur on such projects. Unfortunately I have received practically no help from you in this regard.

I cannot help but think, David, that while Scott and I respect your taste and skills and have faith that you will eventually produce a fine book, I cannot help but think, David, that I made ~~a~~ a very big mistake in choosing you to do the color reproductions for this publication. In fact it is proving to be the biggest mistake and potentially the most costly mistake of the whole project. And oddly enough ^{choosing you} ~~it~~ ^{was} is one of the few times in the course of producing this book that I ^{did} ~~have~~ not ^{need} ~~listen~~ ~~to~~ ~~my~~ ~~instincts~~. My original plan, you may recall,

was to have two or three top-notch
Commercial printers in the Fort Worth - Dallas
Area ~~to~~ print the color plates. This
^{was} the plan I would have pursued had
you not written ^{me} that letter of July 25,
1984, which, though you have since disavowed
it, was a clear offer on your part, intended
to persuade me to give you the extra
business of ^{doing} the color work. At that time
you did not even have a color press, and
I had never seen any examples ^{of color printing} from your
shops. But the confidence ^{you} expressed in your
letter and the fact that ~~I might get~~ ^{you promised} to
superior color work with custom service
and an enhanced reputation for the
book, persuaded me ~~against~~ to ignore my
nagging doubts, to take you at your word,
and put the whole enterprise into your hands.

The Contract that Denny Ferguson and I
first presentedⁿ you was based entirely on your
offer of July 25th, 1984 and was in no way
an attempt on my part to put you at risk.
The unfortunate delays which came about in
the course of reaching an agreement more to your
liking, have cost this project dearly. I might
add here that I already had another printer
and book designer (both of national stature) ready
to undertake the project if you had ~~delayed~~ ^{taken}

more than
agreeing to the ~~Contract~~ ^{body} another 24 hours
to agree to this ^{first} ^{version of the} ~~Contract~~. You came that close
to losing the whole job - ^{with} ~~but~~ not color work.

Since ^{we} ~~you~~ signed the Contract on February
8th 1985, you have been paid, along with
the \$9,000 deposit of ^{September 1} 1984, a total of
\$107,000.00 and ^{by} ~~as~~ this first week of August,
six months later, I have ^{with} ~~three~~ prints
to show for it. In fact it took me three weeks
from the beginning of June (when you told me
that you would be ready to print the first
plates) to finally see something, approximating
a demonstration of your color press. Even then
you had already printed the Canvas books,
and ^{were about to complete} ~~completed~~ the Book Series the next
day with out ^{any notion or one} ~~any~~ ~~trouble~~ ~~at~~ ~~all~~
one bit since you ~~about~~ ~~trous~~ ~~you~~ ~~were~~
~~proceeding~~ ^{in any way} ~~Consulted~~ about color adjustment
^{or} ~~and~~ ~~corrections~~. That was on June 19th. Now
42 days later I have only one new print
to show ~~for it~~ ^{from your shop}.

I might add here that while Scott
and I find ~~you~~ the prints quite beautiful
in their own right, they are still significantly
different in color from the original paintings
In the past ~~are~~ the reproductions ^{of our whole} on Rag paper
which have been produced by ^{local} ~~commercial~~
firms have, ^{quite} ~~frankly~~, been closer in fidelity
^{much}

to our originals than the work that you
have done so far. I want you to understand
that while Scott and I are not completely
satisfied yet, we are ^{nevertheless} encouraged by ~~you~~
the color richness of your ^{prints} ~~prints~~, and we feel
that as you get a better acquainted with
your press, we can expect prints that will
be somewhat more faithful to the original.

David, you and I must come to a ^{concrete}
meeting of ~~the~~ minds, as to the time required

You and I, David, have come to the
point in this project when we must have
a complete mental understanding, ~~of that~~
and agreement about a final publication
date for the book. I never thought that I
would be saying this, but ~~you~~ the pursuit
of quality can no longer be the prime
consideration for this book. Timing and
deadline are of equal importance. I now
realize that we are going to lose ^{some} customers
after August 15th. And I am fully aware
that I will ^{be given} only one more chance to
name a dead line ~~for~~ our remaining
~~outsider~~ faithful customers or to new ones.
It will be a ~~dead line~~ ^{publishing date} that must be
met, no matter who does the printing.

Since ^{very} June
to

Up to ~~now~~ I have been waiting, for
you to give me ^{for writing} an approximate publication
date, one that would be realistic and that
would not put too much pressure on you.
During ~~that~~, our visit ~~for you~~ on June
15th you told us it would take until
late November or early December before
we could get the finished books to our
customers. ~~I don't think so.~~

This book has to be completed and
ready for delivery by the first week of December.
It is the final date that I will name
for subscribers and I expect it to be met. I
do not know what is causing your delays in
the color work. I fully expected to have
at least 15 or 20 color plates by now. (Theoretically
from June 1st to August 1st I should have
30 plates ~~to~~ — 15 plates per month. As you
promised.) My anxiety is increased, not only
by your lack of production, but by your
failure to ^{keep} Ralph or me properly informed
of reasons for such delays. We are not ~~agreed~~,
and if problems arise, we are ^{want only to help} ~~not going to be~~
~~angry with you~~, and to be worried or properly
informed so that we can be honest to our customers.

Ralph and my brother and I are on the front
lines, so to speak, and we must daily face

big young
over promise

premises from ^{concerned} our subscribers. The Pace of the project is no longer in our hands, and I am beginning to think that you, David, have been too insulated from ^{your} customers to regard them seriously. If our customers are not satisfied ^{by early December}, then our business ^{may} well ~~fall~~ ^{faller}, and I have no idea how long it would take for you to be paid for all your work.

I must have a reliable deadline in order to deal with future customers, many of whom will doubtless be aware of post delays. I am about to launch a ~~major~~ publicity campaign through national magazines and I must be able to say with certainty that ^{early} December 1975 is the absolute deadline as I will ~~simply~~ not be able to sell ^{any} more books until the publication process is actually complete. You might also keep in mind that every month's delay costs me about [£]12,000.00 which ^{has now only in the year} is steadily drained our ^{available} financial resources, since ~~lost~~ ^{lost} in the year.

You must remember that I can not touch our Escrow Account funds until after the book on Monday for delivery and dissatisfied subscribers may withdraw their funds from this account at will.

In order to speed up the publication process and to insure that we have books ready for delivery during the first week in December I propose the following:

1) That you print as soon as possible, the TITLE PAGE for the book. (I plan to send portfolios of 10 or more bird plates accompanied by the title page & participation book stores ^{to show to} ~~other book~~ ~~sold books to their customers~~) & customers who have bought books are are anxious about delivery).

Aug 1st
2) As of today 35 bird plates and 10 landscape plates remain to be printed as well as the portrait of Audubon for the dedication page, the Audubon Breckle painting for the text page, and the facsimile of the Audubon Manuscript for the text section on The Red-Shouldered Hawk.

I have decided to let Mathews Printing Company in Fort Worth do all 10 of the landscape prints for the first portfolio. This will give you, David, 4 months to print the entire text which you said you could do at the rate of 5 or 6 pages a day, and the remaining bird plates. Theoretically then you could print all the bird plates in slightly over three months. ^{at the rate of only 11 plates per month} I would assume that during that time you and your assistants will be able to do much of the text printing as well. ^{your} ~~and~~ you would ^{then} have a month's grace to finish everything up to meet the early December dead line.

3) We will review our progress by October

13th to see where we stand. If you
are not on schedule by that time as for
the ~~color work~~ ^{and plates are} concerned - or close to
schedule, then ~~you~~ I will probably
"form out" many of the remaining ~~plates~~ ^{and pictures} to someone
or ^{to} another printer, and allow you to concentrate
on the remaining printing the text.

This is not a scenario that I had planned
or

Dungen Lumber
O Cattle Egrets
Ind ^{road} Road
Zone Tail