

Sept 21, 1892

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- 1) $\frac{3}{4}$ the are birds well known in the rest of U.S.
- 2) Many are gamebirds
- 3) John Gould, highly respected ^{no copyright} but would cooperate for convenient reading
- 4) Only criticism = Book too big, to read closely.
- 5) Title and format could be changed for a national audience
- 6) Commentaries and Book reviews

Dear Mr. Ward,

As a result of recent conversations with my brother Dr. Peter Kentling, concerning his garden book project and his enthusiasm at finding ~~a agent~~ you for an agent, it occurred to me that you might also be interested in a publication that my twin ^{brother} Scott and I completed in 1886. Our book is a great imperial or elephant folio filled "Of Birds and Texas." It measures 23" X 30" X 8" and contains 50 color plates (10 landscape prints and 40 bird prints) plus 87 pages of text printed by hand set metal type and letterpress. Scott and I ~~now~~ wrote the commentaries to each of the plates and highly respected brother John Gould provided the main essay titled "Recollections

Managed Helen

resides in many important ~~collections~~ public and private collections throughout the world in spite of the fact that it was never advertised outside of the state of Texas. People Magazine did ^{mainly} a two page story about us and the book ~~and~~ ^{that} our discovery and sale of a long lost Audubon Original painting, (our book was dedicated ^{in homage} to Audubon long before we discovered the painting). We sold the painting at Sotheby's in 1987 for the largest sum ever realized by an Audubon bird painting at auction. The sale greatly helped us to pay the publishing cost ourselves. The attendant publicity ^{came from our aid and benefactor} ~~was~~ ^{Great bird} ~~entirely~~ ^{entirely} ~~noted~~ ^{noted} that the ~~bird~~ ^{bird} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~literally~~ ^{literally} ~~tossed~~ ^{tossed} us out from the grove!

Except for that publicity "of Birds and Texas" ~~was never shown~~, as I have said, never advertised outside of Texas, nor have we ever approached a single publisher to do a smaller version. In a way our book has the unique distinction of having been successfully marketed or market tested while remaining essentially "virginal" as far as national exposure or having been shopped around to various publishing houses.

~~However~~ ^{My} ~~big~~ ^{big} ~~gully~~ ^{gully} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~25~~ ²⁵ ~~books~~ ^{books} ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~a~~ ^a ~~result~~ ^{result} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~People~~ ^{People} ~~Magazine~~ ^{Magazine} ~~article~~ ^{article}.

I am sending, along with this letter a list of ^{impressed} comments from various art and book people. ^{They are} ~~It is~~ ^{impressive} by any standards. In the next few days I will be sending you additional copies of important book reviews and related material. If you are interested in our project, I urge you to read it all, for

The constant ^{work} ~~promotions~~ ^{other} ~~activities~~
and ~~the~~ labors and interruptions to our ^{lives}
as ~~people~~ ^{artists} (we are not wild life painters) exhausted
our enthusiasm for such ~~ambitious~~ ^{of} project. ~~Also~~
^{also} I wanted all of the original plates to sell before
we published the smaller, commercial version. With
only 40 copies left I ^{now} regard the original edition
to be technically sold out, ~~and~~ we have had
enough ~~of~~ a respite from it to consider undertaking
the publication of the ^{smaller} book. We ^{deliberately} do not want to
do it ourselves. ~~and~~ ^{rather} we would like an agent to
shop the book around to see if we might
interest a major publisher with ^{a good} national
distribution network.

Although our book was titled "Of Birds
and Texas" ~~the~~ ^{3/4} of the birds portrayed in
the plates are species that inhabit the rest
of the United States. — plates depict game birds.
^{from the beginning} We chose our subjects ^{bird} carefully to ^{interest} ~~have~~ a national
audience. In addition to the color plates, Scott and
I ^{do} painted at least ²⁵ ~~about 25~~ water color "remarques"
and studies ^{of a large number of bird species} which could be added to create
a book with a new format. ^{and finally} Though we like
the original title "Of Birds and Texas", we are perfectly
willing to change it to appeal to a wider
^{readership} ~~audience~~.

Mrs. Ward, I do believe that there are
several factors about our book that might
interest you. It is a first-class production that
has garnered ^{impressive} ~~positive~~ ~~from~~ critical praise. The book

Some
inspite of ~~the repetitiveness~~ repetitiveness each article
offers special insights. I will also send you a
portfolio of text and color plates ~~as well as~~ ^{and eventually} a
complete copy of the book itself.

If our book project does not interest you
or fit in with ~~the~~ the kind of books that
you handle as agent, I would greatly appreciate
it if you could suggest an agent who might be
interested. You are the very first agent that we
have ~~been~~ approached. I cannot tell you how
many times prominent people have expressed
surprise that we haven't published such a
handsome work for sale to ~~the art~~ art and
bird ^{book} lovers in the rest of the country. I truly
believe that our first book could be a successful
national publication and I look forward to
hearing ~~from~~ from you on finding out what
you think. ~~Please feel free to call me collect~~

If you wish to talk to me my telephone
number is 1-817-738-4427.

Sincerely yours
Shirley

P.S. I might add that Scott and I are now working
on a book about the Aztecs that ~~has~~ ^{is} already attracting
major notice by ~~art~~ museums and the Mexican govt.
But that's another project.

Successful