

Mollie, Scott and I have a proposal that
we would like the museum to seriously consider.
^{by telling you what we are doing so.}
I wish to preface our proposal ~~by saying that~~
we still owe the Camp Bowie National Bank
approximately _____ to complete our repayment
of the loans for our original ^{bird} book publishing project.
I realize that ordinarily this should not be any
of the museum's concern except that the funding of our
publication was linked very closely by the bank
to the museum's intent to purchase all the bird
paintings. ~~The fact that we copyrighted paper~~
~~copy of the book, brought about by printer's delays, left~~
~~the book unprotected by the down turn of the~~
~~Texas economy in the museum's pocket.~~
^{also}

It is also not the museum's fault that we
incurred large cost over run because of printer's delays -
a burden that was
~~cost that was~~ greatly exacerbated by the downturn
of the Texas economy. However, both the museum's
acquisition efforts and our ability to raise money
through book sales ~~was not able to~~ to repay our
loans ~~and~~ and provide funds for costly
book promotion have been seriously hampered
by the poor Texas ~~economy~~ business climate. It is
hard for us to believe that we still owe the bank
money in spite of the fact that we have literally
paid back hundreds of thousands of dollars. The year
1987 was our "window of opportunity" for
promoting our bird book. Sales have ^{steadily} tapered off
in 1988 and for all practical purposes the book

project is finished. Although the book sold well during 1987, sales were largely blazed on my efforts to secure magazine publicity and garner important critical reviews. ~~Throughout the entire project to secure~~ After the book was finally published in late 1986 the increased costs ate up all our revenue, and we never had a single cent available for vital advertising & ~~book sales~~ ^{book sales}. It is now up to us to basically repay the remaining amount of money through painting sales which have also been hit hard by the difficult economy. In spite of all the money that we have repaid, the bank has not released a single lien on ^{any of our property} our ~~property~~. All the remaining hard books and extra prints, our Amsterdam edition of Auden's Book of America, our art gallery and ^{even} our home ^{- about} ~~between~~ a million and a half dollars worth of assets - remain mortgaged for an \$5,000 debt.

Financially, if I may be candid, I must say that it was a mistake to ~~have~~ ^{committed} to have ~~sold~~ the original hard paintings ^{in situ} to the Museum of Science and History. In those more optimistic days of 1984 when Ralph Can was approached by Museum Board members, Scott and I had already been offered ^{by a patron} a sum \$50,000 ^{for} more paintings. Then the museum has undertaken to pay ^{for the paintings}. The pictures however would not remain ^{now} in Ft Worth and the collection might eventually ^{have been} broken up.

Scott and I really wanted the entire collection to remain in Fort Worth where they were created, and we were willing to ^{pay} her money so that they could stay in our city. Although our Contract ⁽¹⁹⁸⁸⁻¹⁹⁹³⁾ with the museum board allowed eight years for full payment to be made we had an understanding that every effort would be made to purchase the collection in three years. ~~It is~~ I should have known that there would be problems when it took the museum lawyers and board of trustees eight months to get our agreement ^{of 1984} typed in Contract form for our signatures. Most of the donations were engineered by Cornelia Blake, and when she retired from the board, there was no one with her interest and ability left, ^{willing} to finish the project over the ~~next~~ ^{last} two years.

Whatever may be the museum's attitude now, I find it very difficult to believe ~~(that the museum intended to buy only those paintings that were convenient to purchase and that when the Contract expired it would leave us with the remaining pictures to keep or to contribute to the museum if we wished to keep the collection intact.)~~ that the museum ~~intended~~ intended to buy only those paintings that were convenient to purchase and that when the Contract expired it ~~would~~ ^{would} leave us with the remaining pictures to keep or to contribute ^{to the museum if} we wished to keep the collection intact.

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