

STUART W. GENTLING

Feb. 6. 1994

Dear John,

Kit Ward, our literary agent who lives near Boston, has received a number of very interested responses from big-name publishers who have seen a copy of OF BIRDS AND TEXAS. Although they have all been told your "Recollections" text would not be available, they have apparently admired it so much that I have been requested to ask you if there is any possibility that you or Chama Press could be persuaded to change your minds on this. And, if there were no chance of this, might you possibly write a new piece of shorter length to introduce the new book.

Quite honestly, though I was very disappointed in having been denied access to a work of art whose existence Scott and I helped to bring about, I accepted the situation. I then actually began to think of creating a substantially new book that would be all Scott's and mine and would in fact bear a new title. This new book would contain many watercolor and pencil studies created while we were working on OF BIRDS AND TEXAS, and for an introductory text I planned to write a piece on our almost surrealistic discovery of the original Audubon painting and how it literally rescued our book (which had long been dedicated to Audubon) from disaster. I have tentatively titled our new book OF BIRDS AND TEXAS, AUDUBON AND US.

I have been told by Ms. Ward that the interested publishers do like this new concept, but that they are also full of admiration and praise for "Recollections of a Texas Bird Glimpser" and would be much more disposed to publish our project if this work or something else by you could be included. We were intending to have a well-known bird or conservation person write some sort of introduction anyway, so we certainly would be honored if you would consider doing something new for us if there is absolutely no way that we can have access to your OF BIRDS AND TEXAS contribution.

I need to tell Kit Ward something soon so I would really appreciate it if you could let me know your thoughts at your earliest convenience. Until then I hope you are all well at Hard Scrabble and that the fishing is good. Give my love to Jane.