

SCOTT AND STUART GEWHLINGS¹
OF BIRDS AND TEXAS

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12/15/98

Dear Stuart,

This is just a quick update on the new edition of *Of Birds and Texas*.

As a follow-up to our last conversation, I'm enclosing here a tentative outline of a "new" book. Remember I mentioned that I thought it was a little difficult to present our conception of a new book because we hadn't yet quite decided on what elements we would finally include. And I thought that because we didn't know what a new book would look like, most people were coming down on the side of republishing the old book exactly as is. This is still an option, of course, and the two publishers I've talked with at length think this is the way to go--again, though, it's because they can't envision what the new book would contain. I'd like to give them an idea; thus, the enclosed outline.

One conclusion I reached is that a new book would have to be just that--while we can use some elements from the original folio edition, and should use them, we have to pick elements that are non-repetitious and make the most sense in a book about a book that most of the readership has never seen (or heard of, for the most part).

Thinking along these lines, you will see that I haven't included the Tennison foreword, although we could if you really wanted to--your new essay talks some about you and Scott as kids, which I thought adequately replaced what this foreword was trying to do. I have also decided that the Graves essay--which I love--doesn't belong in the "new" version. It has been republished a couple of times, with the latest revised version appearing in John's recent anthology *A John Graves Reader*. Since the focus has shifted to the making of the original book and since you talk about both the Tennison foreword and the Graves essay in your own "Audubon and Us," including those elements in the new book may give it the "hodge-podge" feel.

Much of what is in the longer dedication to Audubon appears in the new essay, and I'm recommending that the dedication be shortened drastically and/or redone.

The original introduction should be included, because it talks about your art, but it needs to be edited to fit the new edition. The commentaries should also be included but in edited form. An added text to precede the remarques will be needed, as you already mentioned yourself.

I've made some editing suggestions, although I think a careful reading and editing will be necessary to avoid repetitions and make sure we're describing the folio edition clearly. As I noted on the phone, we will need some additional illustrations

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that show the folio box, the title page, perhaps a text page, etc., or no one will know what we're writing about.

Now, you just have to decide whether you want to publish this new version--following my recommendations or not--or whether you want to publish the original book, in its entirety. It needs to be one way or the other to continue talking with publishers.

TCU Press has expressed strong interest--they have a great Fort Worth connection as you know (they're going to do a book on the Bass Hall angels, I understand). I believe all of the Texas university presses will also be very interested as long as the project comes with some monetary support.

I have estimates for the editorial and composition work and am waiting for some printing estimates so we will know how much money we're talking about. George has also done the assembly for a book at an 8 1/2-by -11 inch trimsize and a sample text page, both of which I'm sending here. This assembly includes everything--we can eliminate elements as soon as we know in what direction the content is headed.

Let me know if you have questions or want to talk further. I'll be around over Christmas--family is coming to us this year.

Mainly, I need to know WHICH book you want to publish--old or new. Then I'll get the formal proposal together and we'll see who wants it the most!

With very warm wishes for the holidays,

Sannon

xc: Catriona Glazebrook, TAS

2 page -
dummy
text!