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Letter from John James Audubon to Edward Harris, January 21, 1834

John James Audubon

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Charleston S. C. ^a Jan. 21st 1834 -

My Dear Friend. -

Your kind letter of the 4th Instant only reached me this afternoon. - The one you mention having just now come to hand through the News paper containing your article respecting The Rallies Carolines did come. I did not write since then having had the hope that ere this I should have had the pleasure of shaking you by the hand and that also of presenting you to my excellent friend the Rev^d John Bachman of this City, at whose house we all have been enjoying the revelations of true hospitality. -

The several tender letters which have reached us from my son Victor, now in London, have induced me to abandon for the present, my plans to revisit the Floridas &c, and I contemplate sailing for England this Spring at as early a period as future circumstances will admit of. - You I wish you to keep to yourself until we meet. - I am desirous to remain a few weeks at Baltimore, and a few days at Phil^a before we reach New York; but even these arrangements or Wether may prove barred. - I shall write to you previous to my departure and from intermediate places to give you a full view of our proceedings.

I find you a Copy of a Paper drawn by our
Friend Bachman connected with the habits of the
Vultures of our Country, exhibiting the results of a series of
experiments, made to prove that these Vultures are
altogether without perception of the presence of smell
applied to them since time immemorial, through either
superstition or Ignorance. — These experiments have
proved as successful as those which I made some
15 Years ago, publishing about 8 Years ago but the
truth of which have not only been doubted, but
have furnished my Enemies with what they in their
Ignorance & Envy & Jealousy have thought fit to attach
my general Character to &c. &c. —

I find you this paper with a view that as
soon as you have read it, you have it to the
Secretary of the Lyceum of New York with the
Not of the Reverend John Bachman which accompanied
this. — I do this that no tricks may be played from
that quarter — we have forwarded 2 other papers
written by the same John Bachman to England
one to be published in London's Magazine, where
I have been repeatedly attacked by a man who knew
he lied when he wrote against me, the other to
be read at the Royal Society of London &c. —
We have attacked the habits of the Vultures anew.
I have before what I find your undeniable
proof that they will kill and devour
a Horse when standing in defiance of all the horrid
penal to the contrary, &c. — The History of the

Rattle Snake is proceeding apace, and depend
upon me, that I will take all fair opportunities to prove
to my Cousins that "Honesty is the best policy". —

Your Gun must now be underway as my late
Victor would have told you that it was begun
& would be put out as soon as possible. —

I have written to Victor to have several hundred
Copies of the paper put him printing & did paper of
among my European Subscribers to "The Bird of
America" and the Printer is now at work here to
give me 200 Copies of the one I now put in the
original — Copies will be forwarded to you as soon
as possible — If you can expose The Villain through
the Medium of the New York Gazette, pray do so —
The other please put in the New York Post Office
a copy to my New York Subscribers, of whom
you will find a list at Berthoud's, counting
house — The rest to full papers as you may
think will put some interest in "The American
Nov. 4 or 5" —

Do not find any of the Books &c. for which
I have written. — we are all well. —
before I close I must tell you that I have rec^d
 $\frac{1}{2}$ a dozen Titmouse from Boston, and that the
Species inhabiting the Southern District of New Country
is perfectly distinct from that found in the Middle
or Northern States. — Indeed the amount of my
discovery is almost bartholomew, and the World will
I dare say doubt them for a time, as much
as any of the Strays but true facts which I have
promulgated —

If when I return to the United States, early next
Spring your duty on the fatigues of a great
long Journey with you as an attendant and friend -
I shall be most sadly disappointed. —
Give our best regards to Your whole family
I believe to be sincerely Your friend —
John J. Hutchinson

To Mr. J. J. Hutchinson

New York.

To procure for me the Phalarope of which you
speak, I fear that someone will observe it
I subscribe it, after which you know much of
the Value would be gone. —

Jan 7/54

Charleston, S.C. Jan[uar]y 21st 1834 —

My Dear Friend,

Your kind letter of the 4th Instant only reached me this afternoon.— The one you mention having sent never came to hand although the newspaper containing your article respecting the *Rallus carolinus* did come. — I did not write since then having had the hope that ere this I should have had the pleasure of shaking you by the hand and that also, of presenting you to my excellent friend the Rev'd John Bachman of this City, at whose house we all have been enjoying the realities of true hospitality. —

The several latter letters which have reached me from my son Victor, now in London, have induced me to abandon for the present my plans to revisit the Floridas, etc., and I contemplate sailing for England this spring at as early a period as future circumstances will admit of. — This I wish you to keep to yourself until we meet. — I am desirous to remain a few weeks at Baltimore, and a few days at Phil'a before we reach New York; but even those arrangements or wishes may prove barren. — I shall write to you previous to my departure, and from intermediate places to give you a full knowledge of our proceedings. —

I send you a Copy of a Paper drawn by our friend Bachman connected with the habits of the Vultures of our Country exhibiting [*sic*] the results of a series of experiments made to prove that these Vultures are altogether without possession of the powers of smell assigned to them since time immorial [*sic*], through either Superstition or Ignorance. — These experiments have proved as successful as those which I made some 15 years ago, published about 8 years ago but the truth of which have not only been doubted, but have furnished my enemies with what they in their Ignorance Envy & Jealousy have thought fit to attack my general character &c, &c. —

I send you this paper with a wish that as soon as you have read it, you hand it to the Secretary of the Lyceum of New York with the note of the Reverend John Bachman which accompanies this. — I do this that no tricks may be played from that quarter — We have forwarded 2 other papers written by the same John Bachman to England: one to be published in Loudon's Magazine where I have been rascally attacked by a man who knows he lies when he wrote against me; the other to be read at the Royal Society of London &c. — We have studied the habits of the Vultures anew — I have besides what I send you undeniable proof that these Birds Will Kill and devour a Horse when wounded in defiance of all the high powers [or: hopes proven] to the Contrary. &c. — The History of the Rattle Snake is proceeding apace, and depend upon this, that I will take all fair opportunities to prove to my Enemies that "Honesty is the best policy." —

Your Gun must now be underway as my Son Victor writes sometime since that it was begun & would be sent out as soon as possible. —

I have written to Victor to have several hundred Copies of the papers sent him printed & disposed of among my European Subscribers to "The Birds of America" and the Printer

is now at Work here to give me 200 copies of the one I now sent in the Original —
Copies will be forwarded to you as soon as possible — If you can expose the Vilains [*sic*]
through the Medium of the New York Gazette, pray do so — the others please put in the
New York post office addressed to my New York Subscribers, of whom you will find a
list at Berthoud's Compting house—the rest to such persons as you may think will feel
some interest in the "The American Woodsman".

Do not send any of the Books &c. for which I have written. — We are all well. —
Before I close I must tell you that I have rec'd ½ a dozen titmice from Boston and that the
species inhabiting the Southern Districts of our Country is perfectly distinct from that
found in the Middle or Northern States. — Indeed, the amount of my discoveries is
almost burthensome and the Wor[ld] will I dare say doubt them for a time, as much as
any of the strange but true facts which I have promulgated —

If when I return to the United States, early next Spring you deny me the satisfaction of a
good long journey with you as an assistant and friend — I shall be most sadly
disappointed. —

Give our best regards to your whole family & believe to be sincerely Your Friend —
John J. Audubon

To Ed'd Harris Esq.

New York

Do procure for Me the Phalarope of which you speak. I fear that someone will observe it
& describe it, after which you know much of the Value would be gone. —