Lost Tales of American Ornithology: Reuben Haines and the Canada Geese of Wyck (1818–1828)

Matthew R. Halley

Philadelphia is rightly considered the cradle of American ornithology. The first ornithologists born in America were John Bartram (1699–1777) and his son William Bartram (1739–1823). They corresponded with European naturalists who eagerly sought their field notes and drawings of American birds. On “may ye 30th 1756,” in a letter to the English naturalist Peter Collinson (1694–1768), John Bartram described his son’s pioneer ornithological activities (1992: 404, Berkeley and Berkeley, eds.):

Billy is much obliged to thee for his drawing paper . . .he hath drawn many rare birds in order to send to thee & dryed ye birds to send to his friend edwards to whome he is much obliged for those two curious bookes. . .he spent his time this spring in shooting & drawing ye rare birds of quick passage . . .

William (Billy) collected the type specimens of fourteen species in the vicinity of their home, Bartram’s Garden, that were later depicted by George Edwards (1694–1773) in Gleanings of Natural History (1760). These accounts formed the basis of the scientific descriptions of Linnaeus (1707–1778), Gmelin (1748–1804), and Latham (1740–1837). Trotter summarized the fascinating history of these specimens in Cassinia (1907).

Like the founder of Philadelphia, William Penn (1644–1718), with whom John Bartram’s grandparents had come to America, John was a devout member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Gaze upon his famous house at Bartram’s Garden, where he patiently etched into stone the words, “IT IS GOD ALONE ALMYTY LORD THE HOLY ONE BY ME ADOR’D JOHN BARTRAM 1770,” and one begins to understand the depth of Bartram’s devotion. Although his son William would lead a more secular life, he was nevertheless a product of his father’s Quaker culture. And the spiritual aspects of ornithology were certainly not lost on Alexander Wilson (1766–1813), the protégé of William Bartram, who proclaimed upon examining the feathers of the Barred Owl (Strix varia), “Who cannot perceive the hand of God in all these things!” (Wilson 1811: 63).

Why did American ornithology, and the other natural sciences, blossom first in Philadelphia, and then spread to other cities, like New York and Boston, rather than the other way around? In Philadelphia, Quakers were drawn to science for both practical (pecuniary) and spiritual reasons, and they found a shared interest with secular devotees of European scientific philosophy. To describe God’s creation in detail was a pious activity, and science also exhibited great potential to ameliorate human suffering. Three of the great scientific institutions of Philadelphia were founded in part by Quakers: the American Philosophical Society (APS), the Academy of Natural Sciences (ANSP, or Academy), and the Franklin Institute. During their

Canada Goose (Branta canadensis)

Drawn by Katrina Rakowski
formative years, the memberships of these institutions included a disproportionate number of Quakers, relative to American society as a whole. Consequently, many primary documents from the lives of early American naturalists were passed down in the private collections of Quaker families, where they were overlooked by historians of science.

In 2010, serendipitous events led me to become the resident caretaker of the Wyck Historic House and Garden in Germantown, the home of a poorly-known Quaker naturalist, Reuben Haines III (1786–1831). It was there I discovered a trove of primary documents from the dawn of American science, of which few are known to scholars. These included five unpublished letters of John James Audubon (1785–1851), that I transcribed and annotated (Halley 2015), and a hitherto unknown research diary in which Haines documented his attempts to domesticate and breed a flock of Canada Geese (Branta canadensis) at Wyck from 1818 to 1828 (Fig. 1). The diary, which is now preserved in the Wyck Association Collection (WAC, box 89, folder 60) at the APS Library, is a biographical nexus, a single primary source that connects the timelines of multiple historical figures. Better yet, it contains a unique and untold tale of American ornithology, with an all-star cast that includes Audubon’s nemesis, George Ord (1781–1866), the English-born naturalist Thomas Nuttall (1786–1859), the French-born artist and ichthyologist Charles-Alexandre Lesueur (1778–1846), and even Audubon himself.

The last member of the Haines family to live at Wyck was Mary Troth Haines (1893–1983), from 1935–1973. She subsequently transferred the house and its collections to the Wyck Charitable Trust, several years before her death. Ever since, a succession of caretakers have lived at Wyck and helped maintain the house, grounds, and collections. By serving in that capacity in 2010, and again from June 2017 to the present, I restored a bond between Wyck and the Academy that had been broken when Reuben Haines died in 1831. This occurred by sheer coincidence, of course, but I have felt a small degree of obligation to tell his story.

The Life of Reuben Haines III
Reuben Haines III was born in 1786, the son of Caspar Wistar Haines (1762–1801) and Hannah (Marshall) Haines (1765–1828), and the Wyck estate was passed down on his father’s side. Their ancestor Hans Milan, a Quaker immigrant from Holland or lower Rhineland and an early settler of Germantown, built the original foundation of Wyck in 1690. Thereafter, his descendants occupied and expanded the structure for 283 years – nine generations (1690–1973) – gradually accumulating a trove of rare artifacts and manuscripts that today constitutes one of the oldest continuous primary records of American history.

Reuben Haines was well read and overtly practical in business and civic life, and he left behind numerous diaries and notebooks that cover a variety of intellectual topics (Fig. 2). His love of learning was fostered during his childhood at Wyck, where his father had a respectable library. When he was 13 years old, he attended the Friends’ Academy at Westtown (Weston), a Quaker boarding school situated 25 miles west of Philadelphia. In fact, he was enrolled in its inaugural class, in 1799. According to a handwritten class roster at the APS Library (WAC box 88, folder 23), Reuben was assigned student number 23 at Westtown. His close friend Thomas Say (1787–1834), who would later become the “Father of American Entomology
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In 1803, Reuben founded the Philadelphia Hose Company with a small group of Quaker men; he pioneered the use of leather hose for fighting fires in Philadelphia (Vaux, 1854), an achievement that brought him prestige in scientific circles by the age of 17. In subsequent years, he attended the University of Pennsylvania, which at the time was located on 4th Street, south of Arch Street. He studied botany with Benjamin Smith Barton (1766–1815), chemistry with James Woodhouse (1770–1809), and anatomy with his first cousin once removed, Caspar Wistar “the younger” (1761–1818). Both were descendants of Caspar Wistar (1696–1752), the famed button and glass-maker whose wife Katharine (1703–1786) inherited Wyck from her mother Margaret Milan.

Reuben was born into a wealthy and well-connected Quaker family, which afforded him a degree of freedom and leisure that few Americans knew. He traveled frequently to regional Quaker meetings, and amassed a large network of contacts in the Delaware Valley and beyond. This network would later prove critical to the Academy’s success, as he served as its Corresponding Secretary for seventeen of its earliest and most vulnerable years (1814–1831).

Reuben was elected to the Academy – of which his friend Say was a founder – on November 16, 1813, and shortly thereafter he replaced Dr. Camillus M. Mann in the post of Corresponding Secretary. Mann was the only founder of the Academy who was struck off the membership rolls, for reasons that apparently included dereliction of his secretarial duties. In an unpublished letter dated August 24, 1814, now preserved at the Haverford College Library (Haverford, PA), another Academy founder John Barnes welcomed Haines to the position and apologized for Mann’s “negligence”; but little is now known about the reasons for Mann’s departure, or even the date of his death (Nolan 1909). Haines’s interest in science, secretarial skills, wealth and influence made him the ideal replacement. It was not long before Haines carried word of the Academy’s
early success to his associates in New York including Samuel L. Mitchell (1764–1831) and DeWitt Clinton (1769–1828) who would soon thereafter found a similar society, the New York Lyceum of Natural History, now called the New York Academy of Sciences (Baatz 1990).

Reuben and his wife Jane lived in central Philadelphia during the winter months, and spent their summers at Wyck from 1812–1820. The couple moved into Wyck permanently in 1820, where they lived the rest of their days. In 1824, Reuben and Jane hired the eminent architect William Strickland (1788–1854) to renovate the first floor of Wyck and install its now iconic doors. Around this time, George Ord commissioned the French naturalist Jacques-Gérard Milbert (1766–1840) to paint a watercolor of the house and farm (Fig. 4). The house has barely changed since the painting was made; the second-floor windows of my bedroom and bathroom are visible, although some details are off, like the placement of the chimneys. Notwithstanding, the painting provides an incredible window into a bygone era, a pastoral Germantown that has since been engulfed by urban development. So much has changed in 200 years — and not all for the better. Observations of Passenger Pigeons (*Ectopistes migratorius*) at Wyck in 1829 and 1830, which I discovered in the family’s unpublished meteorology register and uploaded to eBird.org (Cornell Univer-

Figure 4. Signed painting of Wyck by Jacques-Gérard Milbert (1766–1840), commissioned by George Ord and depicting the property as it looked in 1824, prior to or during the renovations by William Strickland. Milbert returned to Europe in 1824 and never again returned to America, and the paper is watermarked “1830 — J. Whatman,” so the painting was probably executed in France and later sent to America. This explains a few architectural inaccuracies. The house (left) and carriage house (right) are pictured from the southwest. Both structures are still standing. The fence bordering Germantown Ave. can be seen on the far side of the house. On the modern map, this vantage would be achieved near McCallum St. between Walnut Lane and Harvey St. Courtesy of the Wyck Association.
Haines lived at Wyck until his untimely death of a laudanum (opium tincture) overdose on October 19, 1831, an event that was mourned in Philadelphia and abroad. It happened just weeks after his wife Jane conceived their last daughter, Jane Reuben Haines (1832–1911), who would live her entire life at Wyck. Their close-knit Quaker community was devastated. Some authors have called it suicide (e.g., Stroud 2000), but it is not known whether or not Reuben’s death was intentional, or simply an accident. According to a letter from Richard Harlan (1796–1843) to William Swainson (1789–1855), namesakes of Harlan’s Hawk (Buteo jamaicensis harlani) and Swainson’s Hawk (Buteo swainsoni), respectively, Haines suffered from “hereditary monomania,” a 19th-century psychiatric diagnosis for people who pathologically fixated on a particular idea or subject — i.e., partially insane, but mostly cogent. The focus of his pathology is obscure, but it seems that Haines was in the habit of self-medicating his condition. The ornithologist Charles Lucien Bonaparte (1803–1857), a friend and colleague of Haines who lived in Philadelphia from 1824–1826, mourned his death in a letter to William Cooper (1798–1864), as Stroud quoted (2000: 126): “No death could affect me more than that of my excellent friend Reuben!”

Today, Reuben Haines is virtually unknown to scholars, and the small collection of his documents that are preserved in the Academy Archives (Collection 396) bears an underwhelming description: “[Haines] was interested in science in general, but apparently a specialist in no single branch.” He was even (inadvertently?) omitted from Nolan’s (1909) history of the Academy. Notwithstanding, a handwritten eulogy that was presumably read aloud at his funeral (WAC, box 90, folder 78), contained the following noteworthy passage:

When Reuben Haines joined [the Academy of Natural Sciences], it was composed of a few members & was just struggling into existence. He brought to it indeed no peculiar stores of scientific knowledge & yet, to no one, except its munificent President [William Maclure (1763–1840), “father of American geology”), is the Academy more indebted for its present prosperous condition, than to our lamented friend.

Breeding of Canada Geese at Wyck

Before the discovery of the diary, the only evidence that there was ever a flock of geese at Wyck, was a rare passage that George Ord (1781–1866) wrote in the second edition of Wilson’s American Ornithology (1824, VIII: 59–60), of which Ord was editor. The following two paragraphs were omitted from later editions:

Mr. Reuben Haines of Germantown, in the county of Philadelphia, possesses a flock of geese. The original pair were taken on board of a vessel on our coast, having been driven to sea by a storm. The person into whose hands they came, finding that they evinced no disposition to breed, gave them to Mr. Haines, who owned them for one year without perceiving any symptoms of an increase. He was now informed that Wild Geese would not breed unless they were provided water to swim in; hence he constructed for them a convenient pond, which he was enabled to effect by means of a rivulet of limpid water, running through his grounds. In April, 1822, the goose laid six eggs, four of which, in due time, produced as many goslings, and all were raised.

On the 15th of April, in the following year, the goose again commenced laying; on the 24th she began to sit upon six eggs; and brought forth three young on the 24th of May, three of the eggs being addled. Both male and female, from the commencement of laying, were extremely watchful of their nest, which was situated in a retired spot, they never leaving it for a moment unguarded; and during incubation the male sat in absence of his mate. On the approach of anyone they betrayed strong symptoms of alarm; and when the young were hatched, the gander would advance, in a threatening attitude, toward intruders upon their premises. They would seldom wander far from their favorite stream, on the grassy margin of which they delighted to repose and preen themselves, after the exercise
of bathing, surveying, with looks of affectionate complacency, their interesting progeny. For some unknown cause the old goose has not laid the present year, 1824; and none of the young, even of the first year, although apparently full grown, have given evidence of an inclination to produce: hence it is probable that this species does not breed until three years old.

Haines acquired his first two Canada Geese in 1818, from a man named Dan Robbins, who had domesticated and raised them on his farm at Hemstead Harbour, Long Island. In those days, the species was a common passage migrant and did not breed in the Philadelphia region, where it was known by two names: Canada Goose and Wild Goose. Haines brought the pair of geese to Wyck, where he "pulled" their wings to prevent them from flying away. Nevertheless, when wild migratory flocks passed overhead, the captive geese became restless (zugunruhe, in German) and more than once escaped the confines of their pen, wandering off in the direction of "paper mill run" (the creek that once flowed where Lincoln Drive is today). On one of these excursions, the gander was killed and eaten by Haines's neighbor, who mistook it for a wild bird. The following year, Haines bought two more geese, which he thought were both males, but which later turned out to be a male and female. What followed was a sequence of trial and error, in which Haines gradually figured out how to successfully breed Canada Geese in captivity. To my knowledge, it represents the first well documented case of captive breeding of that species.

Haines was ambitious, but lacking in experience. When the female that he acquired in 1818, perished in 1820, Lesueur performed an autopsy that revealed the cause of death to be "want of grass and green food." Nuttall, who had recently returned to Philadelphia from a multi-year expedition to the Arkansas territory (Nuttall 1821), insisted that Canada Geese would not breed at Wyck until there was an ample body of water on the property. Haines then "dam'd up the run in [the] meadow which furnished them an abundant supply," or as Ord referred to the stream in American Ornithology (1824: 59), "a rivulet of limpid water." There is a first edition of Nuttall's (1821) travelogue in the Wyck library that dates to this period, that was inscribed by the author, “Thos. Nuttall to my friend R. Haines.”

Nuttall was proved correct later that year when the pair nested for the first time, although the eggs were destroyed in a hailstorm on May 11, 1821. The first successful breeding attempt at Wyck occurred the following year, when a clutch of goslings hatched on May 26, 1822. The "old pair" nested again the following year, and Ord came up with a brilliant solution to protect the eggs from predators: swap the Canada Goose eggs with those of a domestic goose, incubate them indoors, and then swap them back again right before hatching!

Haines marked each bird that hatched at Wyck by mutilating the goslings of each brood in the same way (e.g., amputating a toe). This enabled him to keep track of the lifespans and reproductive history of each cohort, and the dates and causes of their deaths. Even so, despite their markings, Haines had difficulty telling the sexes of brood-mates apart when they had attained adult plumage, conceding in early 1824 that they were "all so much alike that I could not distinguish them from each other until the breeding season when I could distinguish the males from their motions and voice."

By 1824, the flock consisted of seven individuals. It is no wonder that Haines was impressed when Audubon "almost instantly [told] all the males from the females and old pair from the others, and the 1 year from 2 year old," during his visit to Wyck on July 25 of that year (Fig. 1B). Haines would be dead by the time Audubon revealed (in publication, at least) the source of his intimate knowledge of Canada Geese in the third volume of Ornithological Biography (1835: 9):

I kept the whole flock three years. The old pair never bred while in my possession, but two pairs of the young ones did, one of them raising three, the other seven...When I left Henderson, my flock of geese was given away, and I have not heard how it has fared with them.

On July 26, 1824, Haines and Audubon traveled via carriage to Mill Grove, on the banks of the Schuylkill River near the modern town of Audubon, Pennsyl-
July 26. Reuben Haines, a generous friend, invited me to visit Mill Grove in his carriage, and I was impatient until the day came. His wife [Jane], a beautiful woman, and her daughter [Sarah], accompanied us. On the way my heart swelled with many thoughts of what my life had been there, of the scenes I had passed through since, and of my condition now. As we entered the avenue leading to Mill Grove, every step brought to my mind the memory of past years, and I was bewildered by the recollections until we reached the door of the house, which had once been the residence of my father as well as myself. The cordial welcome of Mr. Watherell [sic], the owner, was extremely agreeable. After resting a few moments, I abruptly took my hat and ran wildly towards the woods, to the grotto where I first heard from my wife the acknowledgment that I was not indifferent to her. It had been torn down, and some stones carted away; but raising my eyes towards heaven, I repeated the promise we had mutually made. We dined at Mill Grove, and as I entered the parlour I stood motionless for a moment on the spot where my wife and myself were for ever joined. Everybody was kind to me, and invited me to come to the Grove whenever I visited Pennsylvania, and I returned full of delight. Gave Mr. Haines my portrait, drawn by myself, on condition that he should have it copied in case of my death before making another, and send it to my wife.” [For a fascinating take on the whereabouts of Audubon’s self-portrait, see Halley 2015].

As for the Canada Geese, Haines took Audubon’s advice (i.e., “confining them all together prevented their breeding”) and the old pair subsequently built a nest in 1825. In his financial ledger for May 29, Reuben wrote: “Wild goose hatched out. 4 goslins. GeorgeOrd to spend day with me.” Four days later, Haines wrote: “6 mo. 2. found one dead in creek drowned having got out of the pen from its mother.” Three of the goslings survived to adulthood, two males and one female, and in December 1827, Haines acquired two more adult females from “Dr. Sharpless.” But alas, the project met with catastrophe on April 3, 1828, when a dog killed one of the geese from Sharpless, and four others went missing, including the old gander. Haines gave up.
In late 1827, a few months before the demise of Haines’s flock, Audubon wrote from Scotland, where he was busy preparing the first plates of *The Birds of America* (Fig. 5, Halley 2015):

“I am engaged in the publication of my work at last, and I hope some years hence to return to my own Dear Beloved Woods to close my career listening to the sound of the Wood Thrush so melow & pleasing!

For ever your
most sincere
and attached friend
John J. Audubon

Please take my good friend to my Father’s old plantation of Mill Grove, and show him where first American Ornithology grew in the heart of Audubon!”

Years later, after *The Birds of America* was a sensational hit, Audubon’s name was again moved to nomination for Academy membership on September 27, 1831, and this time the vote passed despite Ord’s continuing enmity. However, on the day that the Academy voted to make Audubon a corresponding member – October 25, 1831 – his friend and confidante Reuben Haines missed the vote. He had passed away only six days before.

**Complete Transcript of the Research Diary**

For perpetuity, I had APS Library staff digitally scan each text-bearing surface, and then I carefully transcribed the complete text from the digital image. I deciphered confusing words by comparing their letter shapes to those of known words, denoted illegible words by an ellipsis in brackets […], and whenever possible retained the orthography of Haines’s writing (including spelling). My one exception to this approach was to drop the Quaker date form in the second column for ease of reference (i.e., “6 mo. 14.” was changed to “14 Jun”). The archaic form is retained in the third column to preserve the character of Haines’s script. Haines often used quotations to indicate repeating information, and this convention is retained. What follows is the first transcript of this rare document, heretofore unknown to scholars:

![Figure 5. Excerpt of a letter from John James Audubon to Reuben Haines III, received by Reuben on December 3, 1827. See Halley (2015) for full transcript and analysis. Courtesy of the Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College Library, Haverford, PA.](image-url)
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Canada Goose
Anas canadensis

1818

14 Jun  Imported from the flock of Dan Robbins, Hemstead harbour, Long Island, a pair that has been raised on his farm for which I paid him when in New York, 5 mo. 30., $5. [...] from New York. 1 year old

1819

Geese showed great disposition to wander when the wild flocks were passing over and although they were prevented flying, their wings being pulled. They were found 2 miles off up paper mill run and brought home by John Beck John Johnson farmer. At this time the gander was missing for several days until I learned that near 6 [...] was coming by my pond at spring, or woods back-end of Ger. [...] saw two wild geese he approached within stone’s throw when one supposed to be a wild one that had been enticed from a flock flew off, the other my gander not being able to fly, he knocked over carried him home and made his repast upon him.

17 Sep  This day brought from Charles Massy’s farm Lower Dublin. Two Canada Geese supposed to be both ganders from the circumstances of their having been several years on his farm without breeding.

1820

Wild goose died and being dissected by C. A. Lesueur. Found her craw distended with indian corn and gravel, death supposed to be for want of grass and green food, having been closely confined to the barn yard and wood yard.

1821

18 Apr  Discovered this spring that the supposed ganders were a pair from their voices and actions, being both different, the gander throwing about his head and contorting his neck like a snake, and having been informed by Thomas Nuttall that it was necessary to have a pond of water sufficiently deep for them to swim in before they would breed. I dam’d up the run in meadow which furnished them an abundant supply, the goose selected a situation on the top of the milk house which was sodded over, began to lay and then to cover the eggs over with grass which she plucked with her bill.

11 May  A heavy shower of hail which, falling on the roof of the shed SW of the house, ran down and filled the goose nest that was on the milk house directly under the eve. This broke up the nest and prevented the eggs hatching or attempting to make another nest this season.

1822

26 May  Last month finding the wild goose after reconnoitering her old situation on the milk house abandoned it and selected a very [...] situation in an old pig pen and under awn of a good roof N. of the barn, gave orders to my people that no one should disturb her. Had the pleasure today see her bring off her nest. 4 goslings and found when examining the nest, 2 rotten eggs. The 4 goslings thrive very well and in the fall assumed the same plumage as the parents. 1 of the above, a goose, killed by a dog on 23 Apr., 1826. 1 went off with wild flock in spring 1823. 1 of the above, a gander, killed by dog on 19 Feb., 1827. 1 of the above living gander on 4 Apr., 1828.

1823

During the spring flight of the wild geese my flock betrayed great restlessness and one of the young ones, hatched 26 May last year, disappeared.

15 Apr  Old goose selected a situation at the foot of the N. wing wall of bridge into the barn against the fence of the nursery and this day laid 1st egg. From the nursery I took out the egg, marked it and put it in the house carefully and replaced it with a common goose egg, by the advice of my friend G. Ord who feared from the
exposed situation of the nest it might be robbed.

17 Apr  Before noon today goose laid her 2nd egg, took it from her.

19 Apr  Before noon today goose laid her 3rd egg, took it from her.

23 Apr  Showed a disposition to sit though occasionally off but both her and the gander watched the nest so closely that I could not examine it further.

24 Apr  Goose began to sit. Got an assistant to hold the gander whilst I examined the nest, found she had laid altogether 6 eggs. Took out the 3 tame goose eggs I had placed in the nests and replaced her own.

24 May  In morning found 1 goslin under goose, hatched 2 more in course of the day.

25 May  Left her nest with 3 goslins, 3 eggs being rotten.

1 Jun  Put geese & goslins in pen with chickens in consequence of which one of the latter was killed then let them out.

26 Jul  Amputated the thumb of the right side of the two goslins hatched 5 m. 24. last. 1 goose killed by dog – 2 m. 18. 1827. 1 gander killed by dog – 4m. 3. 1828.

1824

Old geese, 3 young of 1822 and 2 of 1823 all so much alike that I could not distinguish them from each other until the breeding season when I could distinguish the males from their motions and voice. Put them in a fine large pen of good grass with a dam of clear water, several bushes in the pen and a heap of brush wood but they would not breed.

25 Jul  John J. Audubon of Louisiana visited me at Germantown. He states he has reared many wild geese, wood ducks, &c. &c. and has no doubt that my confining them all together prevented their breeding. Had I put one pair alone in the pen he has no doubt they would have bred as usual. He evinced great knowledge of these birds, picked out almost instantly all the males from the females and old pair from the others, and the 1 year from 2 year old.

1825

24 Apr  Early part of this month the 7 wild geese separated into pairs. I only penned them at night untill with us a few days. I have ceased to confine them as they have located themselves about the meadow &c. This day discovered the old pair had made a nest at the side of the fence south of coach house, on examining it found it to contain 3 eggs nicely covered over with grass.

25 Apr  Found one of the young geese at work making a nest plucking grass with her bill and turning her head round and depositing it in a heap. When she retired found she had deposited no eggs in it but a broken egg with a soft shell was found yesterday behind the barn probably hers. Old goose laid her 4th egg.

28 Apr  “ “ began to sit partially on 5 eggs.

30 Apr  “ “ regularly on 6 eggs.

29 May  “ “ hatched out 4 goslings, left 2 rotten eggs.

2 Jun  found one of the goslins dead in creek.

1826

16 Apr  Wild geese began to separate early in this month during the warm weather but cold weather and snow succeeding again formed a flock often mild weather has returned and they have attacked one of the young males (as they did 10 days ago) and this evening alarmed by a noise found 9 of them in the pond in goose pen and one probably driven out of the pen by the others was within the jaws of a dog that tore it considerably.

22 Apr  The remaining 3 goslins living in full plumage marked by cutting off the last joint of the right wing 8m.16 1826. Found the old goose had made a nest and laid egg in nursery corner between stone bridge & barn, found 1 egg laying on the ground in nursery put it in nest. No produce this year, both eggs rotten.

23 Apr  The injured goose continued apparently well but this morning found it dead in pen from peritoneal inflammation, found several eggs in her considerably pro-
gressed. She appears to be one of the 4 goslins hatched 5m.26th 1822. so that as early as the 4th year the geese breed.

15 May One of the above a gander killed by dogs.

1827

19 Feb This morning at 3 oclock heard a dog at wild geese found 2 so much torn had them killed. 1 a gander no mark probably one of 5m. 1822, 1 a goose (small eggs in) thumb cut off. One of 5m. 25

3 Apr During the month the geese seemed disposed to separate in pairs but none of them laid any eggs.

22 Dec Doctor Sharpless sent me out a pair of young wild geese he had shot the tips of the wings off at Tuckerton beach Nov. 1st last. When first caught they required to be stuffed with indian meal under which treatment they became very soon tame and are now quite as domestic as mine raised on the [...]. Soon after they came, introduced my flock of 5 to them. The old gander made a great honking and flew at them several times. The strangers were disposed to be sociable but the others soon left them.

23 Dec One of my geese has been civil enough to leave his companions and attach himself to the strangers but even he occasionally gives them a peck with his bill.

24 Dec The strangers appear to be incorporated with natives but keep at the lower end of the line in morn.

1828

1 Feb Found one of the wild geese from Dr. Sharpless very singularly affected either by Rheumatism or an injury of the back had lost the power of adjusting the centre of disparity generally kept its legs extended back but when it attempted to walk, pushed itself forward on its legs [...] and rolled over on its left side. Put it in the water. First found it could not balance itself on the pond and was in danger of getting drowned with its head under its wing. Put it with a bucket it and fed it in the house. Eat well.

22 Mar Goose gradually mended. Put in coop on grass in front of house but one of the old ganders picked it so much was obliged to remove it to garden last night one of the ganders kept a great noise all night, found he was attempting to get into the garden to the sick goose then so much better as to walk about. Let him in this morning and they appear to agree very well together except that he chases her about.

29 Mar Turned out marked goose with the flock a few days ago, but find today one of the ganders beating it & picking it so that I had to separate them again.

3 Apr Found the well goose from D. Sharpless killed by dogs last night with 3 ganders & old gander missing. 1 gander right thumb and [...] wing amputated, hatched 24 May, 1823. 1 goose last joint of right wing amputated, hatched 29 May, 1825. 1 goose last joint of right wing amputated at Tuckerton beach...10 Nov., 1827. 1 old gander missing. Left 1 gander, no mark & 1 of D. Sharpless sick goose?

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Matthew R. Halley
Wyck Historic House & Garden
6026 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144

Original record of nomination of “J. J. Audubon, Natchez Correspondent,” on July 27, 1824, by C. A. Lesueur, R. Haines, and I. Lukens. Audubon was the only nominee rejected by vote (“X”) on August 31 of that year. Courtesy of the Library and Archives of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University (Collection 115).