

forming the originals of the present work, should have found a resting-place in the National Museum of this country, inasmuch as it comprised examples of both sexes of nearly every known species in various stages of plumage, each carefully labelled with its correct scientific appellation, the date when and the place where killed, the sex ascertained by dissection, and the colouring of the soft parts; besides which, it comprised the finest specimens I had been able to procure during the long period of ten years, collected together at an expense of more than £2000, and at the cost of three valuable lives, namely, that of Mr. Gilbert above referred to; that of Mr. Johnson Drummond, who was killed by a native while seeking for specimens in Western Australia; and that of a fine young man, one of the attendants assigned to me by Sir John Franklin, who was accidentally killed by the explosion of a gun he was removing from a boat when landing on one of the islands in Bass's Straits. Regretting that I could not afford to make a donation of it, I addressed a letter to J. E. Gray, Esq., the chief Zoological officer of the British Museum, in which, after stating that the entire collection amounted to nearly 600 species, and upwards of 1800 specimens, with the full complements of eggs of more than 300 species, I made the following offer,—“I believe that in some instances the Government has lent its aid and support to works of such magnitude as the ‘Birds of Australia’ by taking a certain number of copies; were this done in my own case, and not less than twenty-five copies were taken, I should be most happy to present to the Museum both the Collections above-mentioned, but should such an arrangement be declined then I beg to offer them to the Trustees for the sum of £1000.” To my own, as well as to the regret of nearly every scientific man in Europe, my offer was declined by the Trustees. Upon this circumstance becoming known to Edward Wilson, Esq., of Lydstip House, near Tenby in Pembrokeshire, that gentleman immediately purchased the entire collection for his brother, Dr. T. B. Wilson, of Philadelphia in North America, whither it will be shortly removed, and where it will be at all times available for the purposes of science, and form a portion of perhaps the most extensive ornithological collection in the world.

In conclusion I would beg to say, that having brought the “Birds of Australia” to a close, after devoting nearly ten years to its production, I trust it will be admitted that it has been terminated in the same spirit with which it was commenced, and that any errors which may be found will be viewed with leniency, when the extent of the work, and the difficulty of procuring and arranging so large a mass of materials, is taken into consideration; should my labours, such as they are, merit the approbation of those who have so liberally supported it,