Crows attracted by the Scent of the Deer We Caught yesterday
Our Hands sailing all day

SUNDAY November 26<sup>th</sup> 1820

Drawed all day, floated 18 Miles—the family in the Skiffs came on Board this Morning. Nearly frozen, the Thermometer down at 22—the ground very hard, and my being without a Shirt—Made Me feel rather unpleasant.

the Woman of the Skiffs Mending My Good Brown Breeches—

to Look on those people, and consider coolly their Condition, then; compare it to mine; they certainly are more Miserable to Common Eyes—but, it is all a Mistaken Idea, for poverty & Independance are the only friend that will travel together through this World.

Shot at an Eagle With a White head and Brown Tail.

Ducks, Geese, Swans, & other Birds all going southwardly—

MONDAY November 27<sup>th</sup> 1820

the weather raw and Cloudy. Finished my drawing of the White headed Eagle, having been 4 days at it—

That Noble Bird weighed 8<sup>1/2</sup> lb, Measured 6 feet 7/2/12 his Total Length 2:7/2/12—it proved a Male, the heart extremely large, My Ball having passed
through his Gizzard I could not see any of the Contents—

Those Birds are becoming very Numerous, hunt in pairs, and roost on the Tall trees above their Nests—One this morning took up the head of a Wild Goose thrown over board, with as much ease as a man could with the hand—they chase Ducks and if they force one from the Flock he is undoubtedly taken, carried on a Sand Bank and eat by Both Eagles—they are more shy in the afternoon than in the morning—they seldom sail High at this season, Watch from the tops of trees and Dash at any thing that comes near them—to secure a Goose, the Male & Femelle, Dive alternatively after it and give it so little time to breath that the poor fellow is forced in a few Minutes.

We are all unwell having eat too freely of the Buck. Mr Shaw went off this morning to Mr Lovelace’s boat—Made a good run—saw a Large Flock of White Gulls—but not a Land Bird—Much to My surprise I have not yet seen a Pelican, nor a Swan on the Barrs or in the River—Malards are the only Ducks we now see—No Game, to be procured Not able to hunt on the shores—We are Landed at the foot of Flour Island, opposite the first Chicasaw Bluff—the First High Ground since the Chalk banks—

While Looking at My Beloved Wife’s Likeness this day I thought it was altered and Looked sorrowfull, it produced an Immediate sensation of Dread of her
being in Want—yet I cannot hear from her for Weeks to Come—but Hope she and our Children are Well—

The Eagles along the Banks of this River, retire in bad weather to the Inner parts of High Cypress Woods and remain on Low Limbs for whole day, I had an opportunity of seeing several from our Landing place, with my spy glass.—

TUESDAY November 28th 1820

As it is a rainy morning, I cannot, hunt, and will take this opportunity to retaling to you such incidents relative to my Life as I think you may at some future period be glad to know—

My Father John Audubon, was born at Sables D’Olorme in France; the son of a man who had a very Large familly, being 20 males & one femelle. his Father started him at a very early age Cabin Boy on Board a Whaleing Ship—of course [his youth his] by education he was [no more than what is call here w] nothing; but he naturally was quick, Industrious and soberly Inclined; his voyage was a hard one but he often assured me that he never regretted it—it rendered him Robust, active and fit to go through the World’s rugged paths. He soon became able to command a Fishing Smack, to purchase it, and so rapidly did he proceed on the road of Fortune, that when of Age, he commanded a small Vessel belonging to him, trading to St. Domingo—
A Man of Such Natural Talents and enterprise could not be confined to the common drudgery of the Money Making Animal, and entered an officer in the French Navy's Service under Louis the 16th was fortunate and Employed an Agent at St. Domingo to Carry the trade—Every movement was a Happy hit, he became Wealthy = the American Revolution brought him to this Country Commander of a Frigate under the Count Rochambeau, he had the honor of being presented to the Great Washington, and Major Croghan of Kentucky who has told me often that he then Looked Much Like me was particularly well acquainted with him. My Father was in several Engagements in the American service and at the taking of Lord Cornwallis—

Before his Return to Europe he purchased a Beautiful Farm on the Schuillkill and Perkioming Creek in Pennsylvania; the Civil Wars of France and St. Domingo, brought such heavy ravages of Fortune on his head, that it was with the utmost Difficulty that his Life Was Spared—

he along with thousands now saw his Wealth Torn from him, and had Little More left than was Necessary to Live and Educate Two Children Left out of five—having 3 older Brothers killed in the Wars—

he remained in France reentered in the Service under Bonaparte; but the French Navy prospered not and he retired to a Small [but] beautiful Country Seat,
Three Leagues from Nantes in Sight of the Loire and ended his Life happy= Most Men have faults, he had one that never Left him untill sobered by a Long Life common to Many Individual, but this was Counter balanced by Many qualities—his Generosity was often too great—as a Father I never complained of him and the many Durable Friends he had prove him to have been a good Man—

[Two lines blotted out here]

My Mother, who I have been told was an Extraordinary beautifull Woman, died shortly after my Birth and My Father having remaried in France I was removed thereto when only Two Years Old and receive by that Best of Women, raised and cherished [by her] to the utmost of her Means—My Father gave me and My Sister Rosa an education appropriate to his purse. I studied Mathematicks at an early Age, and had many Teachers of Agreeable Talents. I perhaps would have much stored up, if the Continual Wars in Which France Was engaged had not forced me away when only Fourteen Years Old = I entered in the Navy and was Rec'd a Midshipman at Rochefort Much against my Inclinations—the Short Peace of 1802 between England & France ended My Military Carreer [—]. & [but] the Conscription determined My Father on sending me to America and Live on the Mill Grove Farm I have mentoned above—he sent me to the care of Miers Fisher, Esq a rich and honest Quaker of
Philadelphia who had been his agent for many years, and who received me so Politelly that I was sure he Esteemed My Name—

A Young Man of Seventeen sent to America to Make Money (for such was My Father’s Wish) brought up in France in easy Circumstance who had never thought on the Want of an article I had had at Discretion, was but ill fitted for it—

I spent much Money and One Year of My as Happy as the Young Bird; that having Left the Parents sight carolls Merily, While Hawks of All Species are Watching him for an easy prey

I had a Partner with whom I did not agreed, he [— — — —] [tried] waited his opportunity [— — — —] [that] We parted forever.

Here it is well I should Mentioned, that I Landed in New York, took the Yellow Fever and did not reach Philadelphia for Three Months—

Shortly after My Arrival on My Farm, Your Mother Lucy Bakewell came with her Father’s Familly to a Farm Called Fatland Ford and divided from mine only by the [road going from] Philadelphia Road.

We soon became acquainted and I attached to her. I went to France to Obtain My Father’s Consent to Marry her, and returned with a Partner, Ferdinand Rozier of Nantes entered in Business for the thoughts of Marriage brought Ideas so new to me that I [entered] began with pleasure in the [Business] War to
secure my Future Wife and Familly the Comforts We had both been used to—I travelled through the Western Country and Made Louisville my Choice for a residence—On my return and being of age I married your Beloved Mother on the 5th of April 1808 and removed to Kentucky—Louisville did not suit our Plans and we left that place with a View to Visit St. Louis on the Mississipi; but it is so seldom that our Wishes are favored that we did not reach that Place, for My Partner not being on good Terms with My Wife, I left her and You Victor at Henderson, you when there a babe, having reached St. Genevieve through Many Dificulties, Ice, &c I parted from Mr Rozier and Walked to Henderson in Four Days 165 Miles.

Your present Uncle T. W. Bakewell Joined me in opening a House at New Orleans that the War with England Made us Remove to Henderson.—

This Place saw My best days, My Happiest, My Wife having blessed me with Your Brother Woodhouse and a sweet Daughter I Calculated, to Live and died in Comfort, Our Business Was good of course We agreed. but I was intended to meet Many Events of a Disagreeable Nature; A Third Partner Was taken in and the Building of a Large Steam Mill, the Purchasing of Too Many goods sold on Credit of course Lost. reduced us—Divided us—

Your Uncle who had maried a Short time previous
removed to Louisville—Men with whom I had Long been connected offered me a Partnership. I accepted and a small ray of Light reappeared in My Business but a Revolution ocassioned by a Numberless quantities of Failures, put all to an end; the Loss of My Darling Daughter affected Me Much; My Wife apparently had Lost her spirits. I felt no wish to try the Mercantile Business. I paid all I could and Left Henderson, Poor & Miserable of thoughts.

My Intention to go to France to see My Mother and Sister was frustrated, and at Last I resorted to My Poor Talents to Maintain, You and Your Dear Mother, who fortunately [now] apparently became easy at her Change of Condition, and gave me a Spirit such as I really Needed, to Meet the surly Looks and Cold receptions of those Who so shortly before where pleased to Call me Their Friend.

in Attempting the Likeness of James Berthoud, Es° a Particularly good Man and I believed the Only Sincere Friend of Myself and Wife We ever had—to please his Son & Lady I discovered such Talents that I was engaged to proceed and succeeded in a Few Weeks beyond my Expectations.

Your Mother who had remained at Henderson to come by Watter, was at Last obliged to come in a Carriage, and for the second time You had a sweet sister born. How I have dwelt on her Lovely features, when sucking the nutritious food from her Dear
Mother—Yet she was torn away from us when only 7 months old = having taken all the likeness Louisville could afford I removed to Cincinnati, leaving you all behind until satisfied of some Means of Making something for a Maintanance—Through Talents in stuffing Fishes I entered in the service of the Western Museum at One hundred and Twenty five Dollars per Month, and raised a Drawing School of 25 Pupils, Made some Likeness, and had You around Me Once More—but small towns do not afford a support for any time.

Ever since a Boy I have had an astonishing desire to see Much of the World & particularly to Acquire a true Knowledge of the Birds of North America, consequently, I hunted when Ever I had an Opportunity, and Drew every New Speciman as I could, or dared steel time from my Business and having a tolerably Large Number of Drawings that have been generally admired, I Concluded that perhaps I Could Not do better than to Travel, and finish My Collection or so nearly [so] that it would be a Valuable Acquisition—My Wife Hoped it might do Well, and I Left her Once More with an intention of returning in Seven or Eight Months; I wrote to Henry Clay Esq with Whom I Was acquainted and he Enclosed Me in a Very Polite & Friendly Letter One of General Introduction = I received Many from Others—General Harrison, &c—

from the day I left Cincinnati until the present My Journal gives you a rough Idea of My Way of
Spending the tedious Passage in a Flat Boat to New Orleans—

We moved from our Landing of Last Night and only crossed the River for the rain. Lowered the Smoake so Much that it was impossible to see, beyond 20 or 30 Yards; played great deal on the flutes, Looked at My Drawings, read as Much as I Could and yet found the day very Long and heavy for Although I am Naturally of light spirits and have often tried to Keep [my spirits] these good, when off from my Home, I have often dull Moments of Anguish—[it stopped] the rain abated for a few Minutes. Cap o C. Joseph & I took a Walk to a Sand Barr Where Joseph Killed a Large blue Crane, unfortunately a Young one—saw few Geese, many Cardinals, some Carolina Wrens—We are better to day—[fortunatly] Luckily our Boat does not Leek—Saw a few Purple Finches=

Wednesday November 29th 1820

the rain that begun two days since, accompanied us the whole of this day, yet We Left our Harbour at about 7 this morning and removed 20 miles—We passed the second Chicasaw Bluff, raining so much that I could not draw them; they are Much More Interesting than the Chalk Banks indeed they Look grand and Imposing. they are from 150 to 200 feet High Irregularly Caving down and Variegated in stratas of Red, Yellow, Black, and deep Lead Colors,