

According to the Encyclopedia, John James Audubon, the great American naturalist, was born in Haiti in 1785 and died in the United States in 1851. But according to recently published data there is some reason for believing that he may have been the missing dauphin of France - that son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette who was barricaded in a dark room in a Paris prison and fed through bars for months after his father and mother were guillotined in the French Revolution.

That little prince was called King Louis XVII by the Royalists although he never sat on a throne and is supposed to have died in the prison when he was ten years old. His prison keepers said he was buried, but there were rumors that he had escaped. Some said that a wooden image had been buried in his place, others that a deaf mute boy had been substituted for him.

At the time of his supposed death a French sea captain named Audubon adopted a boy of the same age. In the adoption papers the names of his parents were omitted. The Audubons loved him and brought him up as a gentleman, but they were anxious to get him out of France, they sent him to America.

Although he was unusually bright and observant he seemed to remember nothing before his adoption. He once said "My own name I am never permitted to speak."

He was deeply interested in nature and was always in the woods studying or drawing animals, flowers, and birds. He painted over 1,000 birds in America. Many of the birds are now extinct. He was a great hunter and traveled constantly with the Indians up and down the rivers, drawing and painting.

When Audubon's son died, his mother said "Oh that he should have died without knowing the secret of his Father's birth."